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DE LITERATURA E LÍNGUA INGLESA II

TOEFL TEST AS A TOOL FOR THE ADMISSION ON 'CIÊNCIA SEM FRONTEIRAS' PROGRAM

TRABALHO FINAL DE GRADUAÇÃO

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Abstract

Considering that UFSM is an official applicator center of TOEFL ITP since 2012 and also taking into account the novelty of the Ciência sem Fronteiras program in Brazil, this study is about TOEFL ITP. It aims at describing and analyzing this test within this academic exchange program of Ministério da Educação (MEC), in order to identify to what extent and how it assesses the English proficiency of its candidates. Since it was not possible to have access to a sample of the TOEFL ITP, the corpus of the present study is the TOEFL ITP Official Handbook, which is a guide to inform candidates about the structure of the TOEFL ITP. Firstly, I described the test in terms of its structure and, then, I analyzed it in terms of the competences explored, the genre and the current teaching perspectives through the elements of the texts, headings and the possible correct answers of the questions. Results indicate that the TOEFL ITP is considered a testing because it is independent of teaching and also because its correction and classification procedures are previously decided, standardized and unbiased. Furthermore, the TOEFL ITP explores mostly Linguistic, Pragmatic and Discourse competences and it does not approach any competence regarding social or cultural themes, that is, Sociolinguistic and Sociocultural competences. In terms of genre perspective, the TOEFL ITP does not cover this perspective; it explores the language in structured and compartmentalized ways. For these reasons, it does not follow the contemporary approaches of reading teaching.

1. Introduction

The Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM) participates in the academic exchange program of Ministério da Educação (MEC), called Ciência sem Fronteiras (CsF), which was established on July 26th, 2011, by the Brazilian government to offer scholarships for scientific projects abroad. According to MEC, the main goal of the program is to promote the consolidation and expansion of science, technology and innovation in Brazil by means of international exchange and mobility (BRASIL, s/ano). The project comprises about 18 areas, according to the information displayed in the official website of the program. It offers up to 101,000 scholarships in four years, so that undergraduate and postgraduate students can study abroad in order to maintain contact with competitive educational systems in technology and innovation (CIÊNCIA SEM FRONTEIRAS, s/ano).

This program adopts the TOEFL test (Test of English as a Foreign Language) as a tool for the admission of students in English speaking countries in order to evaluate the candidate's English language proficiency. According to ETS[1], the TOEFL test is recognized by more than 9,000 colleges, universities and agencies in more than 130 countries, including Australia, Canada, the U.K. and the United States of America (ETS, s/ano). Nowadays, according to ETS, there are two versions of TOEFL test being administered, they are called: iBT (Internet-based Test) and ITP (Institutional Testing Program). The TOEFL iBT test, administered via Internet, measures the ability to use and understand English at the university level and evaluates how to combine listening, reading, speaking and writing skills to perform academic tasks. Differently, the ITP program offers colleges and universities the opportunity to administer an assessment of English-language skills and it can be used for placement, progress, evaluation and other situations (ETS, s/ano).

The UFSM administers both versions of TOEFL test since 2012. For this reason and also taking into account the novelty of the CSF program in Brazil, TOEFL test is the corpus of this study. Furthermore, as a language student at UFSM and a future English teacher, I see the importance of studying this test to understand how TOEFL works in order to interpret which are its implications in teaching and learning processes. More specifically, I want to

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[1] Educational Testing Service (ETS) administers international tests including the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), Graduate Record Examination (GRE), General and Subject Tests, and The Praxis test Series — in more than 180 countries, and at over 9,000 locations worldwide (ETS, s/ano).

understand how this test works in order to teach students who want to apply for CsF exchange program.

Thus, this paper aims at describing and analyzing the TOEFL ITP test within the academic exchange program CsF, in order to identify to what extent and how it evaluates the English proficiency of candidates for the program. In order to accomplish this objective, I analyzed the whole test in terms of structure, sections, subsections, time and number of questions. Besides that, competences, texts and genres explored in the test were also identified. This paper seeks to understand which teaching perspective this test projects.

2. Review of Literature

The corpus of the present study is considered a testing, according to Marchezan (2005, p. 26). In order to understand this statement, the concepts of evaluation and testing will be presented in this section. Evaluation and testing are distinguished primarily by the commitment to return the test results. The process of evaluation is committed to the process of teaching/learning, whereas tests aim to measure de product of the learning process. (Ibid., p. 27).

According to Marchezan (2005, p. 27), an evaluation is related to the feedback on the results obtained by students in conjunction with the teacher. In this case, the evaluation is designed by the teacher himself/herself because it is part of the teaching process and it is based on what was actually studied in class (Ibid., p. 27).

In contrast, testing does not require any contact between the committee of examiners and test takers. Tests aim to establish the level of knowledge of students, classifying them by their results (Ibid., p. 27). For this, the procedures of correction and classification are previously decided, that is, the decisions to be made from the results are determined *a priori*, which are standardized and unbiased (Ibid., p. 27). When published, the students do not have access to detailed results, and the process of testing is completed (Ibid., p. 27).

For all these reasons, the TOEFL ITP is considered a testing because it is independent of the teaching process, has its own objectives for the testing, classifies test takers just by their results and also test takers are not informed about the correction of the test (Ibid., p. 27).

Generally, each test explores specific competences, which will be the focus of the testing. In the TOEFL ITP, these competences were analyzed in terms of Linguistic Competence, Discourse Competence, Pragmatic Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence and Sociocultural Competence (LITTLEWOOD, 2004, p. 503). In the following section, theses concepts will be presented.

2.1. Communicative Competences in TOEFL ITP test

According to Littlewood (2004, p. 503), some aspects of the communicative competence must be considered in this study, such as: Linguistic Competence, Discourse Competence, Pragmatic Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence and Sociocultural Competence (LITTLEWOOD, 2004, p. 503). Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) also assume that communicative language teaching (CLT) should be based on some model of *communicative competence* (CELCE-MURCIA et al., 1995, p. 5).

In terms of Communicative Competence, Littlewood (2004) understands that the knowledge and abilities that second language learners need to acquire are divided into these five subcategories or competences. The Linguistic competence includes the knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, semantics and phonology; test takers must use the linguistic competences in the second language to understand the functioning of the language in order to identify the meaning created in a determined context (Ibid., p. 503). Moreover, Linguistic competence comprises the basic elements of communication: the sentence patterns and types, the constituent structure, the morphological inflections, and the lexical resources, as well as the phonological and orthographic systems needed to realize communication as speech or writing (CELCE-MURCIA et al., 1995, p. 18). In the TOEFL ITP case, test takers have to know language in order to understand what is in the text (including oral or written texts) and what is being requested by the questions. Also, Littlewood (2004) suggests that this competence is the real focus of the second language teaching/learning (Ibid., p. 503) because it is the first step for L2 students to act actively in the language, understanding and communicating themselves through this language.

The knowledge which enables test takers to engage in continuous discourse by linking ideas in longer oral/written texts, maintaining longer spoken turns, participating in interaction and opening conversation and closing them is called the Discourse Competence (Ibid., p. 503). Besides that, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) states that this competence concerns the selection, sequencing and arrangement of words, structures, sentences and utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written text (Ibid., p. 14).

Littlewood (2004) considers the Pragmatic Competence as the knowledge related to the use of linguistic competence in order to interpret the meaning created by the context in oral or written texts and also to convey meanings for it (Ibid., p. 503). Furthermore, "it is the knowledge of communication strategies and how to use them", state Celce-Murcia et al, (1995, p. 26).

Regarding the Sociolinguistic Competence, Littlewood (2004, p. 503) states that it consists primarily in the knowledge of how to use language appropriately in social situations, by conveying suitable degrees of formality, directness and etc. when it is necessary. Celce-Murcia et al, understand this competence as a functional knowledge because it conveys communicative intent, that is, matching actional intent with linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force (Ibid, p. 17).

Finally, the linguistic knowledge related to cultural aspects is considered the Sociocultural Competence which includes awareness of the background knowledge and cultural assumptions which affect meanings and which may lead to misunderstandings in intercultural communication (Ibid., p. 503). Regarding Sociocultural Competence, Celce-Murcia et al., understand that it is the knowledge of how the speaker expresses messages appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication, in accordance with the pragmatic factors related to variation in language use (Ibid, p 23).

In general, there is a relation between testing and teaching and learning processes. Testing influences these processes. It occurs because test takers need to be prepared for these tests; therefore, there is a need for teachers and courses to adapt their material and approaches to teach students. In order to understand the relation of what is required, nowadays, in terms of EFL teaching in Brazil and what is required by the TOEFL tests, I analyzed written texts and questions of the Official Handbook in terms of the EFL perspective (BRASIL, 2006). In the following section, this concept will be discussed.

2.2. EFL teaching and genre in Brazil

In terms of the current teaching perspective, Orientações Curriculares Nacionais para o Ensino Médio (OCNs) (BRASIL, 2006, p. 113) proposes an education based on contemporary epistemological conception:

> Referimo-nos à concepção epistemológica que defende que o conhecimento não deve ser apreendido de maneira fragmentada ou compartimentada – por separação e redução (MORIN, 2000)

According to OCNs, the teaching of foreign languages should be based on a social and culturally situated knowledge, which helps to expand the world view of students, to improve their sense of citizenship and also to develop critical skills. It also indicates an example of

how knowledge can be taught in a compartmentalized way, which would contrast with the epistemological view suggested by the OCNs.

> Um exemplo disso é o trabalho de leitura que utiliza textos não autênticos, ou seja, aqueles construídos com tempos verbais limitados a um conhecimento estrutural e gradativo, isto é, que narram ou descrevem somente no tempo presente ou só no passado, denotando uma narrativa artificial (...). Aliás, a respeito desse tipo de "compreensão", trata-se de uma concepção antiga, que não mais condiz com o trabalho de leitura que pretende formar leitores independentes e críticos (BRASIL, 2006, p. 113).

Thus, according to the OCNs, teaching nowadays is based on genre perspective. Regarding genre, Bhatia (2004) explains that "genre is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purposes identified by a professional or academic community". Furthermore, according to the author, it is, most often, highly conventionalized and structured with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional values (BHATIA, 2004, p. 23). Through this statement, Bhatia (1993, p. 14) says that these constraints are responsible for people being able to recognize a genre and distinguish different genres. He also states that this recognition may be the result of the use of some specific lexico-grammatical resources, certain kinds of meaning associated with specific genres, the position of certain rhetorical elements or even special meanings realized through certain expressions typically associated with only a restricted number of genres (Ibid., p. 14). Besides that, Swales (1990) suggests that genre is typically identified on the basis of a shared set of communicative purposes. Even though it has its constraints on allowable contributions, it is not static (BHATIA, 2004, p. 23). The author also indicates that genre is essentially referred to a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of goals of a social institution, which gives rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discoursal resources (Ibid., p. 23).

To sum up, the process of teaching and learning foreign languages nowadays, according to OCNs (2006), aims at understanding language, culture and knowledge as an open and dynamic set, which encompasses the genre perspective.

3. Methodology
3.1. Corpus

The initial idea was to collect a sample of the TOEFL ITP. Firstly, I tried to obtain a sample test from 'Inglês sem Fronteiras'[2] program and, even this institution being a test center, it was not possible to obtain a sample for analysis purpose. So, the second step was to try to find these tests available online, but it was not available. For this reason, the next step was to get in contact with Mastertest, the company responsible for TOEFL tests in Brazil, in order to request a sample of the ITP test; however, I did not get a response from Mastertest. Finally, I decided to analyze the Official TOEFL Handbook (2012), which contains information about the TOEFL ITP Level 1 and Level 2 tests, focusing on the perspective of test takers. It was also hard to find this material, but I found it available online on ETS Global website. This handbook offers instructions and examples of questions to test takers. After selecting the Official TOEFL Handbook (2012), I decided to analyze the Level 1 of the TOEFL test, which tests from Intermediate to Advanced levels, because it is the version required to apply for CsF.

3.2. Analysis

The first step of the analysis was to identify the structure of this test, that is, how it is organized in terms of sections and subsections, the duration of this test and the number of questions in each section. The second step was to identify the competences, texts and genres explored in this test. These aspects were analyzed through the identification of linguistic elements of the headings and the possible correct answers. Then, in the third step, I interpreted the aspects identified.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Describing the TOEFL ITP

Firstly, the TOEFL ITP is considered a testing because it is independent of the teaching process and its procedures of correction and classification are previously decided. The ITP test is structured in two Levels: 1) Basic to Intermediate and 2) Intermediate to Advanced. The focus of this study is Level 2 because it is the version required to apply for CsF. It has 140 questions and up to two hours to complete it. This test is divided into three

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[2] Inglês sem Fronteiras (ISF) is a program that aims to offer English courses to undergraduate and postgraduate students of public and private higher education institutions so that they can reach the level of proficiency required in language exams for admission in English-speaking universities (CIÊNCIA SEM FRONTEIRAS, 2014).

sections: 1) Listening Comprehension, 2) Structure (written) Expression and 3) Reading Comprehension. Also, this test does not have a section devoted to evaluate oral skills.

According to the official TOEFL handbook, the TOEFL ITP tests are paper based, and the content of the test is exclusively academic. Then, the tests do not focus on the content of a particular field of study or area. It aims at evaluating the English language proficiency of non-native English speakers and their overall ability to use English language.

Skills are evaluated in three different areas, which are: 1) Listening Comprehension measures the ability to understand spoken English as it is used in colleges and universities; 2) Structure and Written Expression, which measures the ability to recognize selected structural and grammatical points in standard written English; and 3) Reading Comprehension measures the ability to read and understand academic reading texts.

Each section of the tests has a time limit in which test takers must only read the texts and answer the questions on the section they are told to; they are not allowed to work on the other sections. Moreover, the instructions to each section are part of the timed test, so test takers should become familiar with it before the test in order to use time profitably. In addition, test takers may not make any notes on the test book.

4.1.1 Listening Comprehension section

According to the Official TOEFL Handbook, this section is designed to measure the ability to understand spoken English. It is structured in three parts (A, B and C), each one is administered by the audio recording. All questions have multiple-choice format and four possible answers for each one. Questions and passages are not repeated. In part A, test takers may hear short conversations between two people and, after this, they hear one question about it. In part B, test takers may hear longer conversations and then they hear several questions. In Part C, the narrator gives an instruction for the following questions, then they may hear several talks and, after each conversation, some questions about them.

4.1.2 Structure and Written Expression section

This section, according to the Official TOEFL Handbook, is designed to measure the test takers' ability to recognize language that is appropriate for standard written English. There are two kinds of questions in this section, with special instructions for each one.

In the Structure section, there are incomplete sentences and, in order to complete the sentence adequately, test takers are supposed to identify the best answer in the four possible answers below the question. Differently, in the Written Expression section, each sentence has

four underlined words or phrases and they are marked with (A), (B), (C) and (D), then test takers have to identify one underlined word or phrase that must be changed in order to complete the sentence adequately.

4.1.3 Reading Comprehension section

This section is designed to measure the ability to read and understand short passages similar in topic and style to academic texts. Test takers have to read a variety of short passages on academic subjects, and each passage is followed by a number of questions about it. According to the Official Handbook, the passages provide sufficient context in order to avoid creating an advantage to individuals in any one field of study. Furthermore, test takers have to answer the questions about the information in a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in this passage.

4.2. Analyzing each section of TOEFL iTP

4.2.1 Listening Comprehension section

According to the Official TOEFL Handbook, the Listening section is designed to measure the ability to understand spoken English. In order to test this skill, there is a record which presents passages, questions and four possible answers. In this section, I present the analysis of the competences explored in this section based on the examples presented in the Official TOEFL Handbook.

Regarding the aspects of the Communicative Competence cited by Littlewood (2004, p. 503), three competences were identified in this section: Linguistic competence, Pragmatic competence and Discourse Competence. In terms of Pragmatic competence, inferences and implicatures were identified, according to Yule (1996).

Figure 1 shows a sample question in which the Linguistic and the Pragmatic competences are explored because, in order to identify the best answer for this question, test takers have to know the vocabulary presented to understand the meaning built in this situation. Also, it tries to simulate a real situation and the listener has to interpret the meanings that are implicit behind the words in order to find the best answer. For this reason, I recognize this question as exploring the Linguistic and Pragmatic competences (see Figure 1).
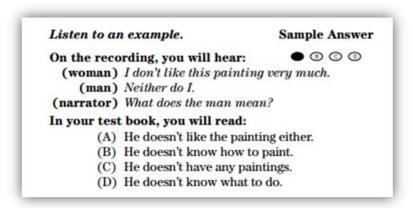
Figure 1 – A brief conversation and a question about it.

Considering that the best answer for this question is (A), we can learn from this conversation that neither the man nor the woman likes the painting. For this reason, I understand that the answer expected from this kind of question demands Linguistic and Pragmatic competences by the test takers. There is no demanding for grammatical structures in this question, but test takers must understand the functioning of the language in order to identify the meaning created by the dialog.

According to Yule (1996, p. 40), the speaker is who communicate meaning via implicature, and the listener (or the reader in written texts) is who recognize these communicated meanings via inference. In Figure 1, the implicature is that the woman did not like the painting while the inference is "behind" the expression "*neither do I*" and means that the man did not like this painting either. There is an agreement in this conversation even the participants are not saying the usual words or expressions for an agreement, such as "I agree with you".

Yule (1996, p. 37) stated that people involved in a conversation will follow the cooperative principle; they will cooperate in terms of *quantity, quality, relevance and manner*. Firstly, in terms of quantity, the amount of information in this conversation between the woman and the man is the necessary one to communicate the expected meaning. The same applies for quality, because both discourses are built honestly without hidden meanings. Thinking about the relevance and manner, the information given is just accurate to the reader understand the meaning. These aspects can be shown in the conversation by the expression "*neither do I*", said by the man, which expresses an agreement to the previous sentence "*I don't like this painting very much*".

Figures 2 and 3 are examples of the Linguistic and Discourse competences because test takers need to understand a longer conversation in order to identify the correct answer for the question (see Figures 2 and 3).
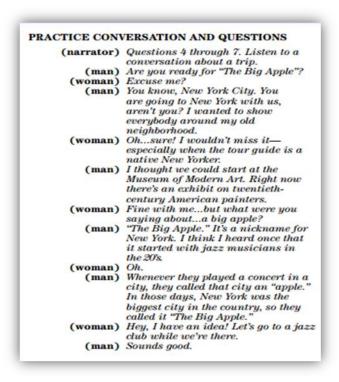
PRACTICE CONVERSATION AND QUESTIONS

(narrator) *Questions 4 through 7. Listen to a conversation about a trip.*
(man) *Are you ready for "The Big Apple"?*
(woman) *Excuse me?*
(man) *You know, New York City. You are going to New York with us, aren't you? I wanted to show everybody around my old neighborhood.*
(woman) *Oh...sure! I wouldn't miss it— especially when the tour guide is a native New Yorker.*
(man) *I thought we could start at the Museum of Modern Art. Right now there's an exhibit on twentieth-century American painters.*
(woman) *Fine with me...but what were you saying about...a big apple?*
(man) *"The Big Apple." It's a nickname for New York. I think I heard once that it started with jazz musicians in the 20's.*
(woman) *Oh.*
(man) *Whenever they played a concert in a city, they called that city an "apple." In those days, New York was the biggest city in the country, so they called it "The Big Apple."*
(woman) *Hey, I have an idea! Let's go to a jazz club while we're there.*
(man) *Sounds good.*

Figure 2 – Long conversation.

Questions:

4. **You will hear:**
   (narrator) *What is the man planning to see?*
   You will read: (A) An art exhibit.
   (B) A Broadway play.
   (C) A modern dance production.
   (D) An opera.

5. **You will hear:**
   (narrator) *What can be inferred about the man?*
   You will read: (A) He is a jazz musician.
   (B) He wants to join the woman's club.
   (C) He is in his twenties.
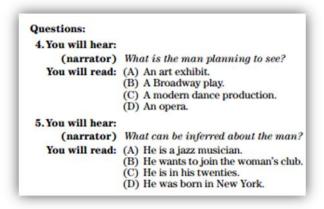   (D) He was born in New York.

Figure 3 – Questions about the long conversation.

The best answer for question 4 is (A), "an art exhibit"; however, in the conversation, the man does not say "*I am planning to see an art exhibit*". He creates this meaning through other words, for example: "*I thought we could start at the Museum of Modern Art. Right now there's an exhibit of twentieth-century American painters*". Considering that the man is the guide of this tour, and the sentence "*I thought we could start*", it means that the man had

already planned to visit this place and test takers have to recognize this during the conversation.

In question 5, the best answer is (D), "He was born in New York". We can analyze this question through the word choices. For example, the verb *to infer* in the question "*What can be inferred about the man?"* means that test takers must understand the meaning created within the context. In this case, again, the man does not mention that he was or was not born in New York city, so test takers must recognize this by hearing and understanding the dialog. Moreover, it can be inferred through the woman' sentence: "I wouldn't miss it – especially when the tour guide is a native New Yorker". Based the aspects mentioned, I understand that both questions demand a Discourse competence from test takers.

After all, this section was analyzed in terms of its Communicative competences, as well as the next section Structure and Written expression.

4.2.2 Structure and Written Expression section

This section is designed to measure the test takers' ability to recognize appropriate language for standard written English, according to the Official TOEFL Handbook (2012). For this, there are two kinds of questions and special instructions for each one. In this study, I present the analysis of the competences explored, according to Littlewood (2004, p. 503).

In this section, Linguistic and Pragmatic competences were identified. As the test taker must understand this relation to choose the best answer, the first competence identified was the Linguistic one, due to the need to understand grammar, vocabulary, semantic and phonology to answer the questions. Also, this section explores the Pragmatic Competence. Figure 4 shows an example of question in the Structure subsection.
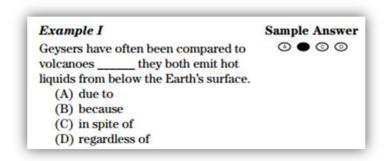

Figure 4 – Question of Structure section.

Considering that the best answer for this question is (B), we can understand that there is a relation of explanation: Geysers and volcanoes emit hot liquids from below the

Earth's surface; and for this reason they are often compared. Test takers have to be familiar with the linguistic competences to understand the question and its possible answers and also they have to know how to use these resources to interpret the meanings "behind" the words.

In the Written Expression subsection, the example is different; I could identify only the Linguistic Competence. As an example, see Figure 5.
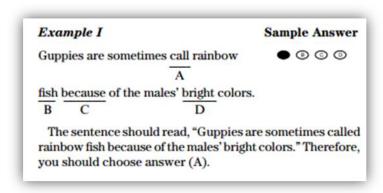

Figure 5 – Question of Written Expression section.

In the Written Expression section, the questions are different from the Structure section. Figure 5 is a sample question; we can observe that a sentence is presented and test takers have to identify which one of the four words/expressions disagree with the sentence. In addition, test takers do not have to identify a correct answer for it; they just have to identify which one is wrong. In terms of the competences explored, only the Linguistic Competence was identified, because test takers must know the language in order to identify the wrong option (LITTLEWOOD, 2004). In this example there is no requirement to convey meanings. In the next section of this study, the Reading Comprehension section will be analyzed and discussed.

4.2.3 Reading Comprehension section

The section which measures the ability to read and understand passages is the Reading Comprehension section. It contains a variety of short passages, which, according to the Official Handbook, are similar in style and topic to those found in universities and colleges. Based on the information presented in OCNs, I understand that the reading perspective adopted by the TOEFL ITP is different from the view presented in OCNs.

This section was analyzed in terms of genres of the texts (BHATIA, 1993; 2004; SWALES, 1990), the competences explored in this section (LITTLEWOOD, 2004) and also in terms of reading perspective. Figure 6 is a short passage of a text in which it is not possible to identify its source, authorship and layout (see Figure 6).

Figure 6 – Short passage.

As the texts presented in the TOEFL ITP do not mention this information, it seems that the purpose of TOEFL texts is in disagreement with what Swales understands as a specific genre.

> A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute a rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style (SWALES, 1990, p. 58).

Through this statement, I can understand that a genre must have specific communicative purposes and, consequently, these purposes reflected in its structure. As we can observe in Figure 6, it does not seem that it has a specific purpose. Besides that, they seem to be non-authentic texts because authorship and source were not identified. For all these reasons, these texts seem to be created for some specific purpose of TOEFL.

In terms of Competences explored in this section, two were identified: Linguistic and Pragmatic competences (see Figure 7).

Example I   **Sample Answer**

What is the main idea of the passage?

    (A) In modern society we must make more time for our neighbors.
    (B) The traditions of society are timeless.
    (C) An accepted way of measuring time is essential for the smooth functioning of society.
    (D) Society judges people by the times at which they conduct certain activities.

Example II   **Sample Answer**

In line 7, the phrase "this tradition" refers to

    (A) the practice of starting the business day at dawn
    (B) friendly relations between neighbors
    (C) the railroad's reliance on time schedules
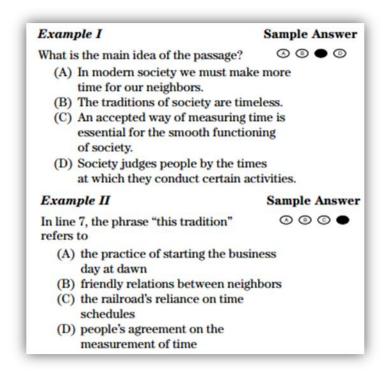   (D) people's agreement on the measurement of time

Figure 7 – Questions about the passage.

In order to analyze these two examples of questions, we can start by observing the word choice of these sentences. Example I requests the *main idea* of the text, so we can infer that test takers will need to read the whole text and use their linguistic resources in order to convey a meaning to this situation and also try to choose the best answer for it. According to Littlewood (2004, p. 503), in this kind of situation, the Pragmatic Competence is being explored. In addition, implicature and inference can also be identified in Example I. In this question, the implicature is related to the meaning communicated by the passage and the inference is what test takers can understand through this passage.

In Example II, the verb chosen is *refers to*, what indicates that test takers need to look for the expression that refers to another sentence in the text and identify the sentence that corresponds to it. Test takers have to understand the vocabulary, grammar and semantic ideas involved in the questions. In this case, the Linguistic Competence is explored.

Finally, the TOEFL ITP reading perspective, according to OCNs (BRASIL, 2006, p.113), is considered "uma concepção antiga, que não mais condiz com o trabalho de leitura que pretende formar leitores independentes e críticos" because it explores the knowledge in structured and compartmentalized ways, which contrasts to the contemporary perspective of teaching and learning foreign languages.

In relation to the Communicative Competences cited by Littlewood (2004), it was identified that the TOEFL ITP test does not explored the Sociolinguistic and Sociocultural competences, that is, the competences related to social and cultural aspects are not included in this test. Thus, the TOEFL ITP it seems not to address social and cultural issues. In addition, this testing does not cover genre perspective. This conception of reading is considered as contrasting with the current conception which intends to educate independent and critical readers (BRASIL, 2006). To sum up, OCNs states that

> ...não deve desconsiderar o caráter da leitura como prática cultural e crítica de linguagem, um componente essencial para a construção da cidadania e para a formação dos educandos (BRASIL, 2006, p. 111).

Thus, I could understand that the TOEFL ITP adopts a structuralist view regarding to reading/language conception.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this study, I analyzed the TOEFL ITP, although it was not possible to obtain a sample test. Thus, it was not possible to understand the test as a whole, which could be a negative point of this study. Therefore, it seems that the only way to analyze this test was through the Official Handbook.

The TOEFL ITP seems to adopt a structuralist view of language that does not cover genre perspective, even though this perspective is a current issue in the contemporary studies of language (BRASIL, 2006, p. 113).

For these reasons, I could identify that EFL teaching (at least in theory) seems to adopt one perspective and testing seems adopt another perspective of language

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