

**1. AN IMPACT STUDY OF TWO IELTS USER GROUPS :
CANDIDATES WHO SIT THE TEST FOR IMMIGRATION
PURPOSES
and
CANDIDATES WHO SIT THE TEST FOR SECONDARY
EDUCATION PURPOSES**

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1.0 Background

Since the launch of the IELTS test in 1989, the number of candidates taking the IELTS test has continued to grow with an increasing number sitting the test for reasons other than it was originally designed for. The test in its original format was designed to assess whether candidates were ready to study or train in the medium of English and increasingly candidates who intend to complete Secondary School studies or need proof of English Language proficiency for immigration purposes are sitting the test. In 1995, the New Zealand Immigration Service adopted the test as the preferred English Language test and in 1998 the Australian government decided to use the IELTS test for immigration purposes after withdrawing funding for the **access:**¹ test. As a result of these two policy decisions, the incidence of candidates presenting for the IELTS test in Australia and New Zealand for immigration reasons has increased significantly. Also in Australia, the number of students coming to the country to complete their Secondary School studies has been slowly increasing and a number of secondary schools have approached IELTS centres to discuss the appropriacy of the IELTS tests for candidates in the age range of 15 to 17.

With the increase in candidature of both user groups, there is an increasing need to investigate and analyse how each group is performing on the test in terms of nationality, age, gender and other factors. At the time this research project was proposed, impact studies were being carried out to investigate the views and attitudes of IELTS user groups and also to establish a profile of the IELTS test taking population. Given these impact studies were under way and the fact that the two user groups in this project had the potential of becoming a significant presence in the IELTS test taking population, a study into the particular groups was considered important.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 User Group 1

Candidates who present for IELTS for immigration purposes

A sample population of immigration candidates was constructed detailing age, gender, date of birth, nationality, first language, band scores and whether a candidate had sat the IELTS test previously. The sample population consisted of 379 records. The original criterion for inclusion in the sample population was if a candidate had nominated immigration on the application form as the reason for taking test. Another criteria was added to the original as it was discovered candidates were not always nominating reasons for taking test on the application form. The second criteria was the information completed on candidate Curriculum Vitae form which he/she fills out before sitting the Speaking test. On this form, the question "why are you taking this test?" is posed and it was discovered that candidates always completed this accurately. By using both criteria, accuracy in constructing the sample population was ensured. The sample population was drawn from candidates who sat the IELTS test at the University of Technology (UTS), in September, October, November and December, 1999. Once the sample population had been constructed, it was analysed to establish a profile of the group according to nationality, age, gender and performance on the Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening modules of the test. This profile was then compared to the profile of all candidates who sat the test in 1999 at the University of Technology, Sydney centre – 4,675 candidates.

¹ Australian Assessment of Communicative English Skills test commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, 1992

In addition to this analysis, a sample of immigration candidates was surveyed via a questionnaire to determine their attitudes towards the test. A total of 8 Australian and New Zealand IELTS centres were invited to take part in the survey and the questionnaires were given to candidates who had nominated immigration on their application form as being the reason for sitting the test. The questionnaires were distributed on the day of the IELTS test once the candidates had completed all four test modules. The centres which took part in the project were:

<i>Centre</i>	<i>Number of completed questionnaires returned</i>
<i>Sydney (UTS)</i>	63
<i>Perth</i>	4
<i>Auckland</i>	21
<i>Wollongong</i>	13
<i>Gold Coast</i>	6
<i>Brisbane</i>	12
<i>Melbourne (Hawthorn)</i>	25
<i>Melbourne (RMIT)</i>	44
<i>TOTAL</i>	188

2.2 User Group 2

Candidates who present for IELTS for secondary education purposes

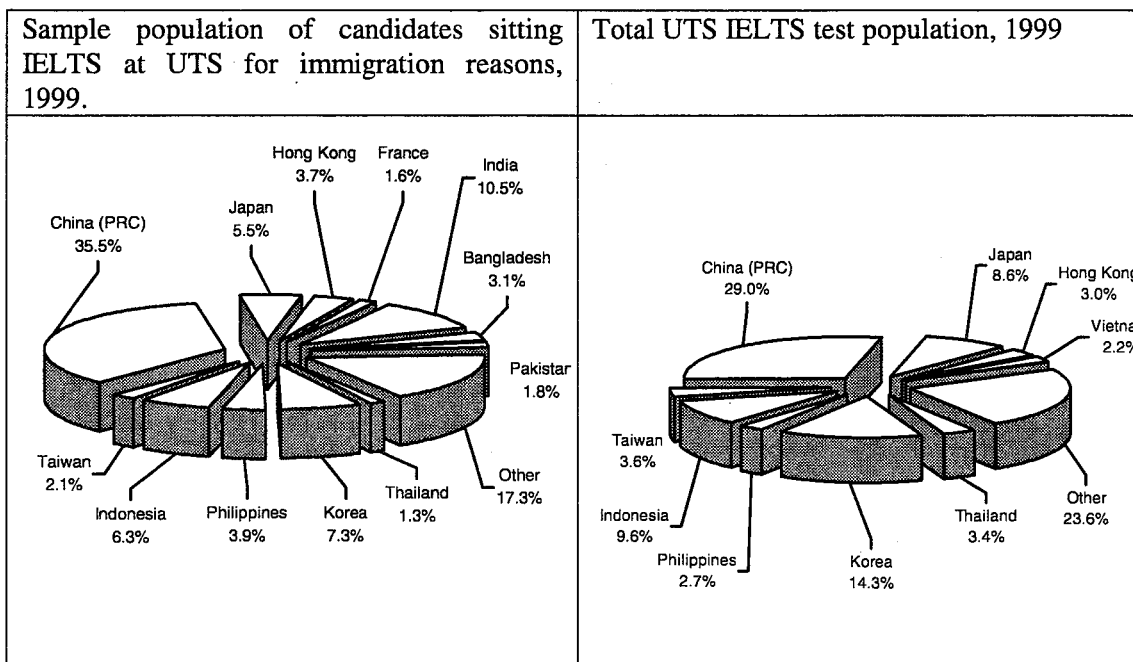
A sample of IELTS candidates in the age range of 15 to 17 was selected from the UTS 1999 IELTS test population. An organisation which is involved in sending Japanese students to an Australian high school for a year was asked to take part as the organisation had used the IELTS test in previous years to assess students' on-arrival English proficiency levels and their proficiency levels once they had completed 10 months schooling in Australia. 41 Japanese students made up the sample and sat the General Training module of the test at the University of Technology on February 27 1999 and 27 November 1999.

The analysis of the secondary school age group took the form of a comparison of test performance in the February and November tests. This comparison was broken down into each test module with particular reference to the Listening and Reading modules. Performance on the Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking module was investigated by comparing band scores across the two tests. The analysis was augmented with a survey of the group which probed views and attitudes towards the IELTS test. The survey was carried out via a questionnaire which was distributed to the candidates once they had finished all 4 test modules in the November test. The reporting of both the analysis and results of the survey were grouped according to the Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking modules of the test.

3.0 Research Findings For User Group 1 – Candidates who present for IELTS for immigration reasons

3.1 Profile of User Group 1

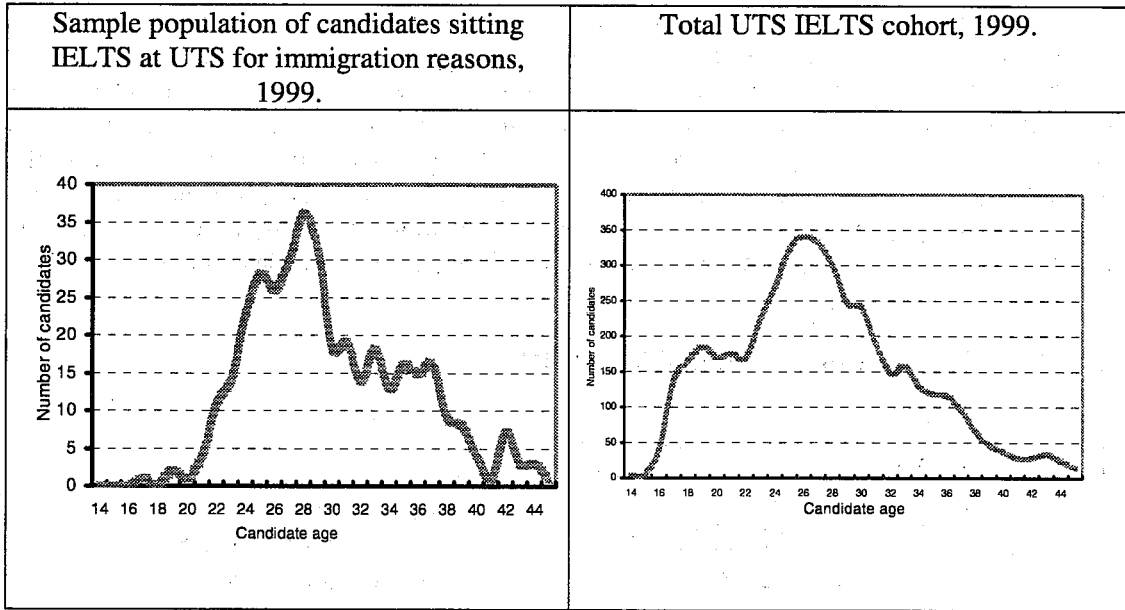
3.1.1 Nationality



Graph 1 Enrolment patterns according to nationality groupings, immigration sample vs UTS 1999 cohort

We can see that candidates from China (PRC) are the single largest grouping in the immigration sample comprising over 35%. This trend is also seen in the total UTS 1999 cohort although the percentage here is lower at 29%. The predominance of this nationality group at the UTS centre has only occurred since 1998 with the Korean group predominating in previous years. Indeed, in the immigration sample the Korean group is only 7.3% as opposed to 14.3% of the total UTS 1999 cohort. Candidates from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan make up a noticeable component of the sample at 10.55%, 3.16% and 1.84% respectively whereas in the total UTS 1999 cohort they only contribute 4.4% when combined. In 1999, candidates from India sitting the test at UTS increased significantly when compared to 1998 – an increase of 180% which was the fastest growing group in terms of enrolments at the UTS centre. The contribution of the Taiwanese, Indonesians, Thais, Japanese and Philippines is also important to note as they are the most significant groups to present for the test – a trend which is also seen in the 1999 UTS group.

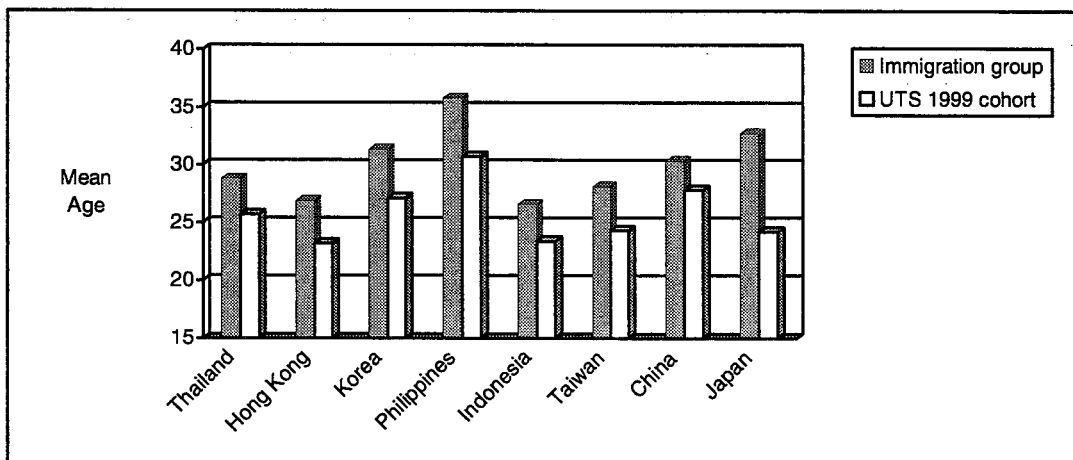
3.1.2 Age profile



Graph 2 Age profile, immigration sample vs UTS 1999 cohort

The mean age for the immigration group was 30.36 with a minimum age of 17 and a maximum of 49. We can see from Graph 2 that there is a peak at age 28 with few candidates between the ages of 14 to 20 sitting the test for immigration reasons. If we compare this age group (14 to 20) to the total UTS 1999 group there is a noticeable difference as significant numbers are present in the total UTS test population because of academic module candidates sitting the test for entry into undergraduate courses. The total UTS 1999 group also differs from the immigration group as the mean age is lower at 26.99. Apart from these two differences, the two groups are reasonably similar in terms of spread of ages and the decreasing numbers in the older age ranges.

If we compare the mean ages between selected nationalities across the two groups we can see that across the board, the mean ages are higher for immigration candidates. This is to be expected given the mean age of the whole immigration group is almost four years higher.

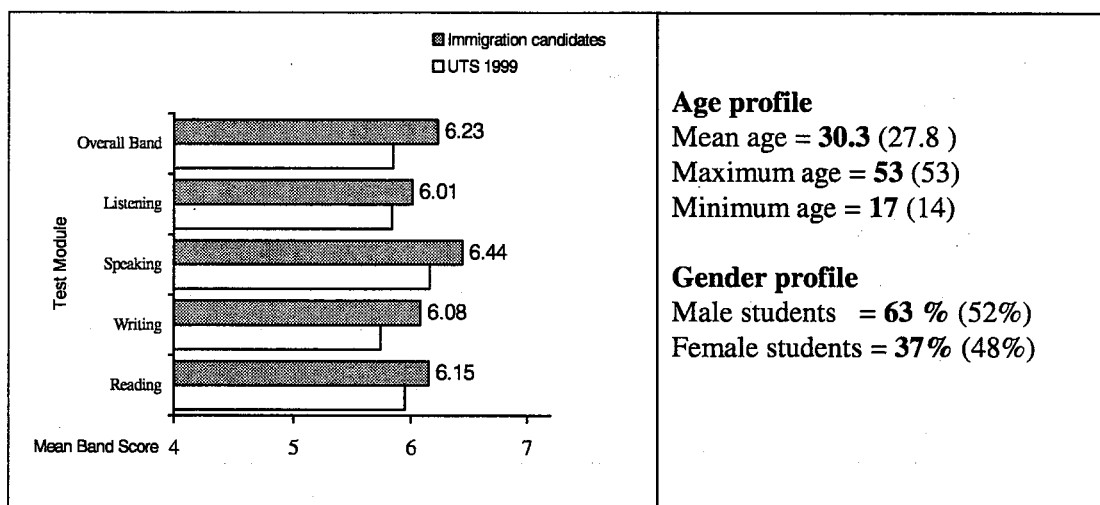


Graph 3 Mean ages across selected nationalities, immigration sample vs UTS 1999 cohort.

3.1.3 Performance profile

The nationality performance profiles created in this report show performance on each test module (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking) as well as overall performance, minimum and maximum age of the group and how the group is divided in terms of gender. It is important to note that the mean band scores illustrated should be treated with caution as a variety of factors could be responsible for the differences in the scores between the nationality groups in the immigration sample. Whether a student has pre-departure English language training as opposed to intensive on-arrival training, how many times the candidate has taken the test and the age of the candidate are all important variables which could affect the final result.

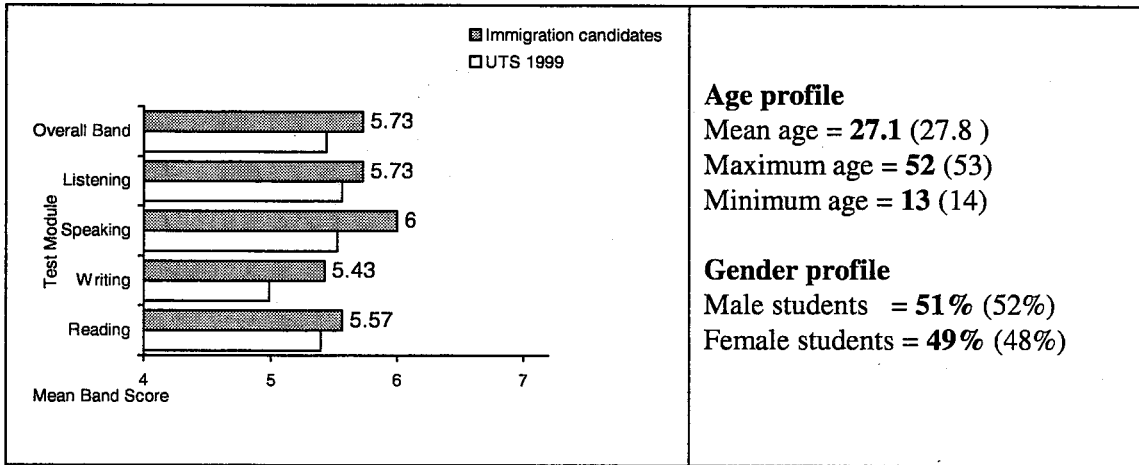
3.1.3.1 IELTS candidates from China (PRC)



Graph 4 Performance profiles of immigration candidates from China PRC vs UTS 1999 cohort.

Immigration candidates from China (PRC) are achieving quite high mean scores on the IELTS test and it is significant to note that these scores are even higher than those of the UTS 1999 cohort. The performance on the Speaking test is high at 6.44 and remains, along with the Philippines group, one of the highest of the nationalities tested at UTS. The overall profile is still reasonably “flat” and there is a predominance of males presenting for the test when compared to the UTS 1999 cohort where the gender spread is more even.

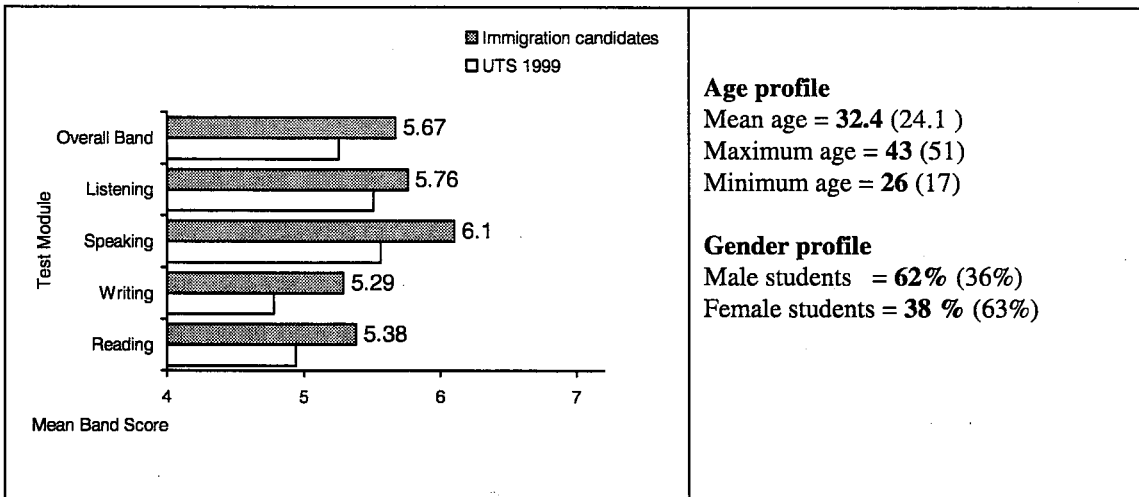
3.1.3.2 IELTS candidates from Korea



Graph 5 Performance profiles of immigration candidates from Korea vs UTS 1999 cohort.

The composition of this group is similar to the UTS 1999 cohort when comparing mean ages, age range and gender spread. The performance on each module, however, is uniformly higher than for the UTS cohort with Writing being the weakest skill and Speaking the strongest.

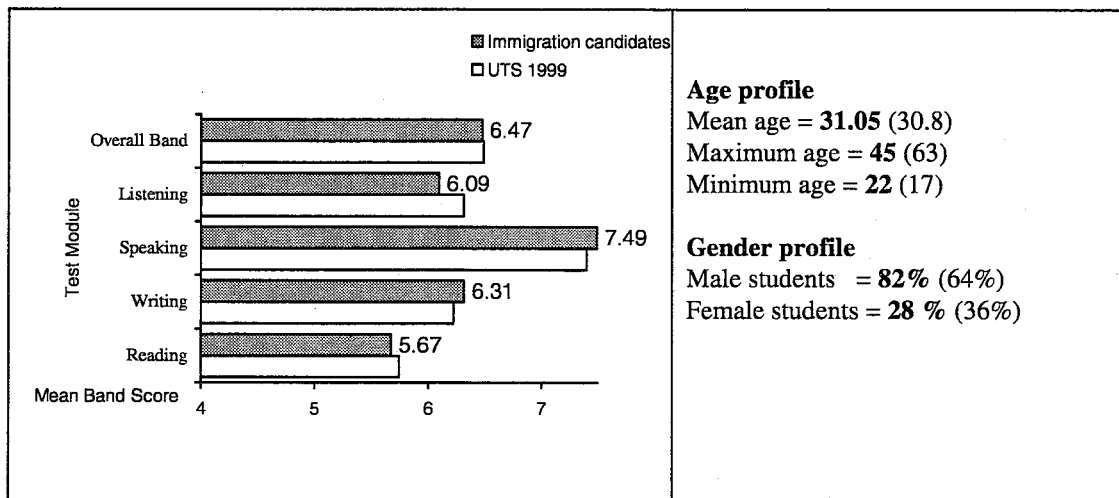
3.1.3.3 IELTS candidates from Japan



Graph 6 Performance profiles of immigration candidates from Japan vs UTS 1999 cohort.

The strongest module performance for this group was Speaking which is quite high at a mean of 6.1. As in the UTS 1999 cohort, Writing remains the weakest module. At 32.4 the mean age is one of the highest for the immigration group and is noticeably higher than the UTS 1999 cohort. Males predominate for immigration which is in contrast to the UTS group where females are in the majority.

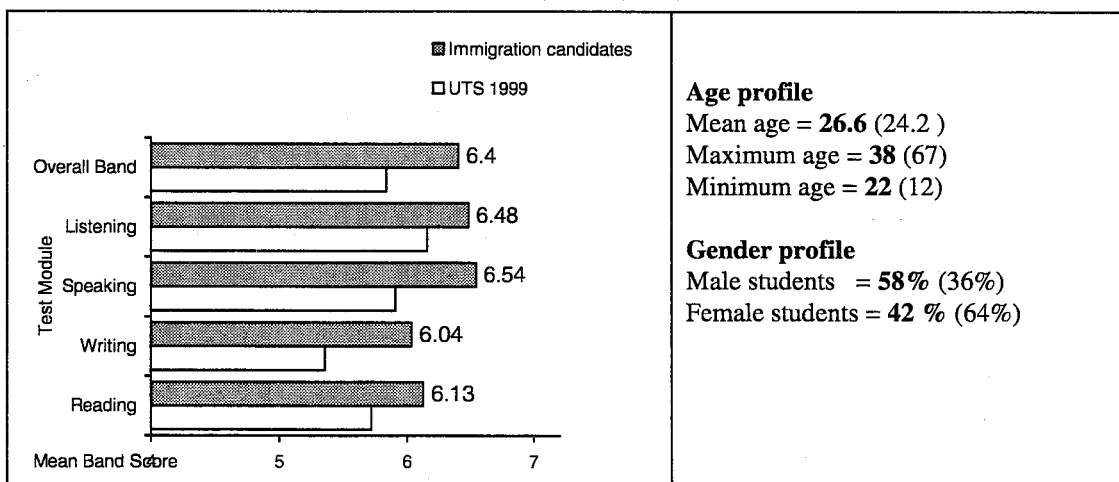
3.1.3.4 IELTS candidates from India



Graph 7 Performance profiles of immigration candidates from India vs UTS 1999 cohort.

With an overall band mean score of 6.47, candidates from India are the highest scoring group in the immigration sample. Performance on the Speaking test is particularly impressive and it is interesting to note that Reading is the weakest skill which is in contrast to many of the other groups where Writing is the weakest. As with the Japanese and China (PRC), males predominate.

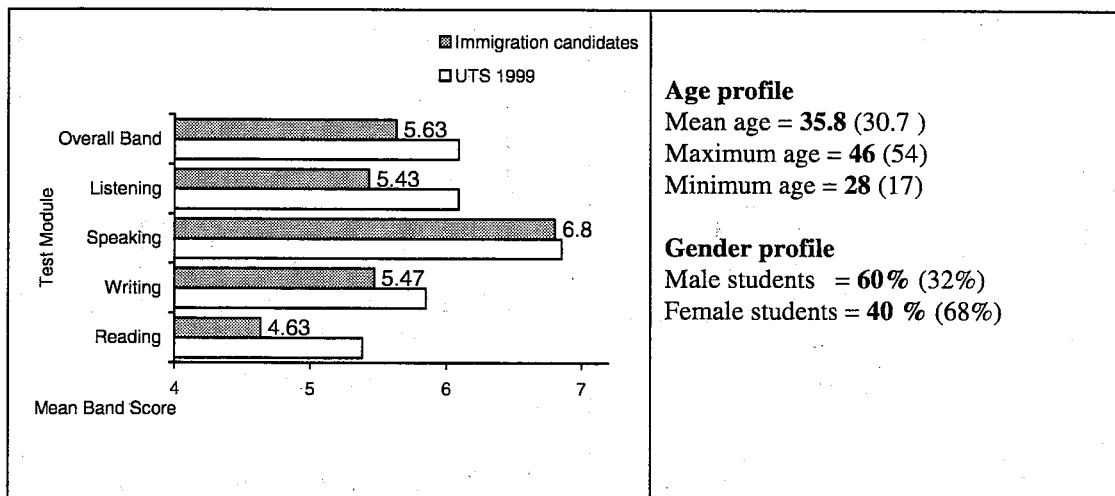
3.1.3.5 IELTS candidates from Indonesia



Graph 8 Performance profiles of immigration candidates from Indonesia vs UTS 1999 cohort.

The Indonesian group is second to the India group in overall performance. The overall performance profile is different as it is significantly “flatter” than the Indian group with only a half band difference between the weakest (Writing) and strongest (Speaking) skill. Again we see males predominating, a reverse trend to that of the UTS 1999 group whereas the mean age is very similar in both groups.

3.1.3.6 IELTS candidates from The Philippines



Graph 9 Performance profiles of immigration candidates from Philippines vs UTS 1999 cohort.

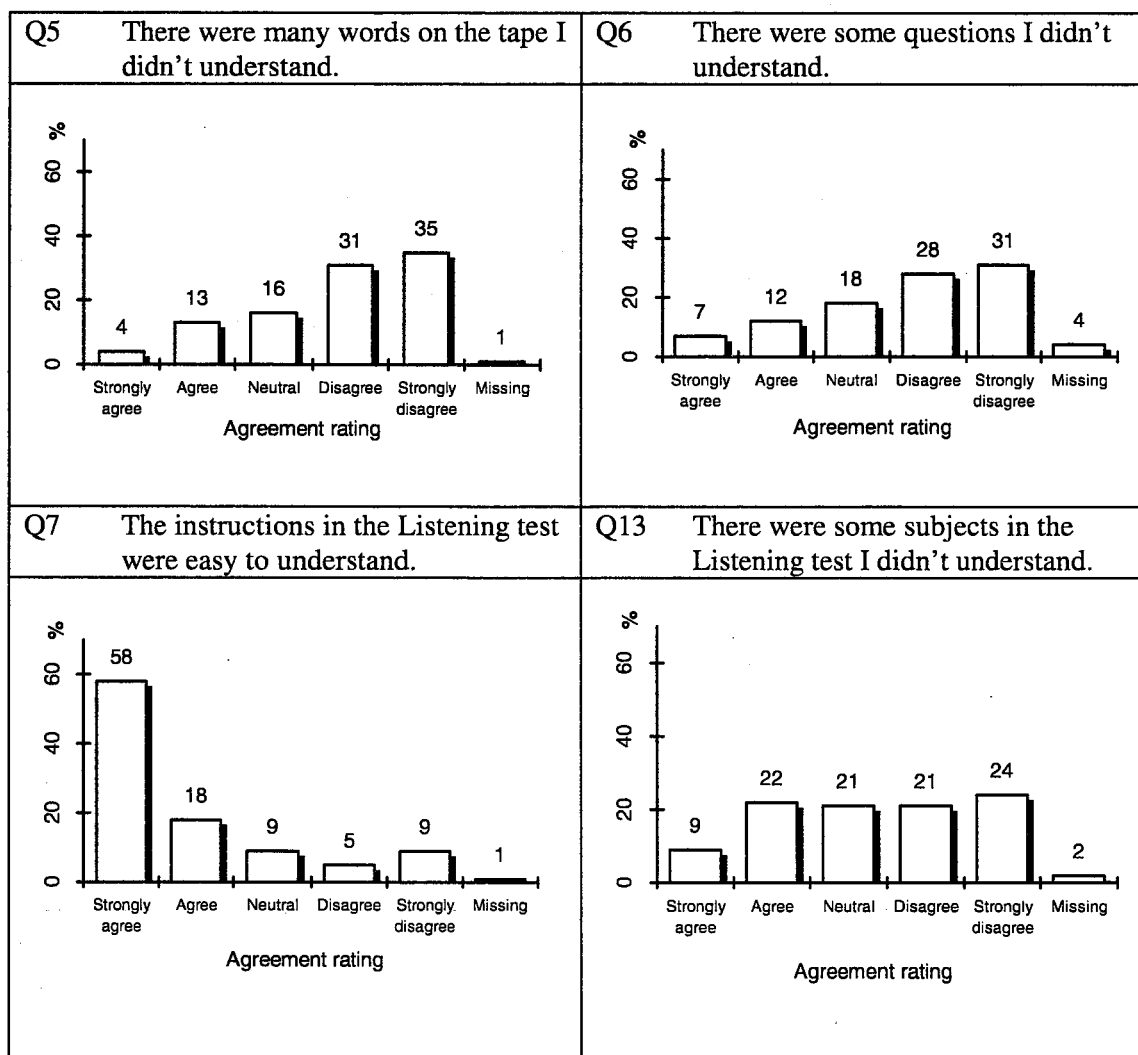
Performance of candidates from the Philippines who present for the IELTS test for immigration reasons is weaker across all modules when compared to the UTS 1999 cohort. For all the other groups investigated in this study the trend is the opposite. The majority of candidates from the Philippines who sit the test at UTS sit the academic module. These candidates come to Australia to take up employment as registered nurses and have been recruited by the New South Wales Nurses Registration Board, NSW HEALTH². The Board has contacted UTS on a number of occasions to verify whether the IELTS test is an appropriate test to be used for screening English proficiency of prospective employees. Speaking is the strongest skill by far with Writing being the weakest and it is interesting to note there is a difference of over 2 bands between the two. The mean age is quite high at 35.8 and is the highest of the groups investigated

3.2 Survey of User Group 1: To establish views and attitudes towards the IELTS test

3.2.1 Listening Test

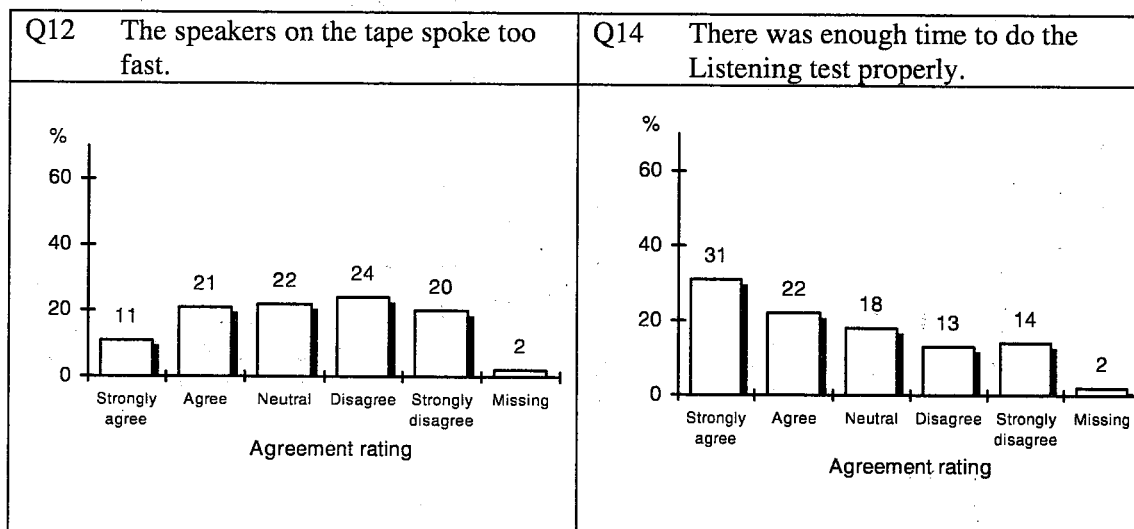
Eight IELTS test centres in Australia and New Zealand participated in distributing the IELTS candidate questionnaire and 188 candidates responded. In the questionnaire the candidates were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with a proposition. The highest level of agreement was strongly agree and the highest level of disagreement was strongly disagree. Please refer to Appendix 1.1 for the questionnaire instrument used in survey.

² Report commissioned by International Programs "The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) at UTS, 1989 to 1997". International Programs, University of Technology, Sydney, 1998"



Prompts 5, 6, 7 & 13 on the questionnaire dealt with any problems the candidates might encounter with language, subjects, rubrics or instructions in the test. It is apparent that no significant problems occurred with the instructions with 78% stating they found them easy to understand. The ability to deal with the 'words' and 'questions' in the test is not as high as with the instructions but is nevertheless significant with only 17% stating there were words on the tape they didn't understand and only 19% stating there were some questions they didn't understand. The reaction to prompt 13 which asked whether there were 'subjects' in the Listening test they didn't understand is interesting as it shows 31% had difficulty with these subjects – a disapproval rating significantly higher than prompts 5, 6, & 7. This result would suggest some candidates were having difficulty with the subject matter in the Listening although the word 'subject' was not specifically defined in the questionnaire.

Prompts 12 & 14 addressed the issue of timing and pacing of the Listening test



The response to prompt 14 which asked whether the candidates had enough time to do the test properly is positive with 54% stating they agreed or strongly agreed and 18% stating they were neutral on the subject. The response to whether the speakers spoke too fast is different as perhaps one might expect. This refers to the candidate's ability to deal with the pacing of speech involved in the test. 23% said they agreed or strongly agreed with the proposition whereas 44% didn't agree ie they didn't think the speakers spoke too fast. Given the different levels of difficulty and language complexity in the four sections of the test, this response could be anticipated as language complexity is often equated with speakers talking too fast for adequate comprehension on the part of the listener. The misgivings some candidates had about the overall timing of the test and speed of delivery of some of the speakers is further evidenced by some of the comments made in the questionnaire:

Too short time given to read the questions first.

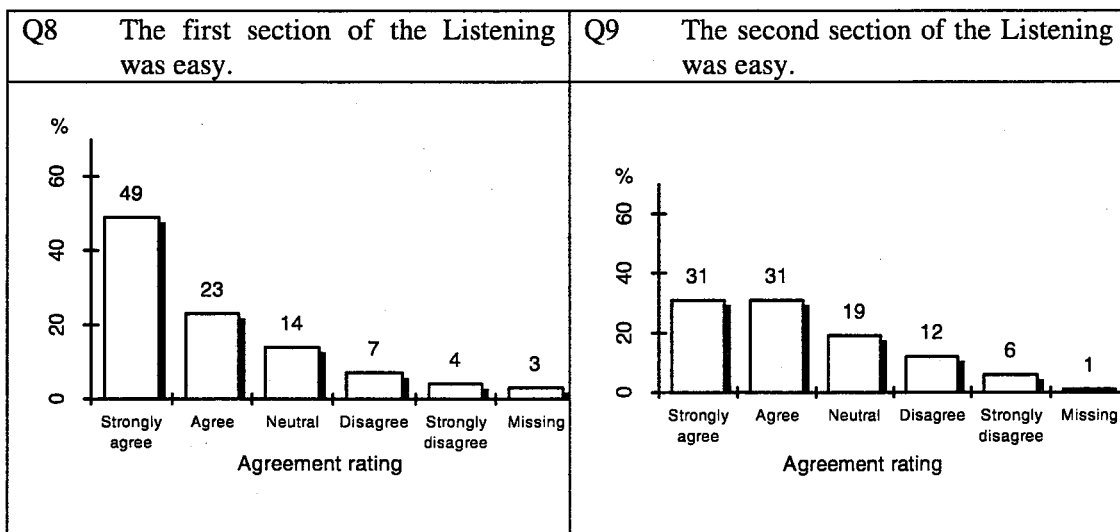
The first section is very easy but too slow compared to the rest. You tend to relax and think it is easy but then suddenly the speaker on the tape start to speak very fast. The fourth section is way too fast and some difficult words very difficult to catch.

Sometimes I feel when I write some words down I miss the listening.

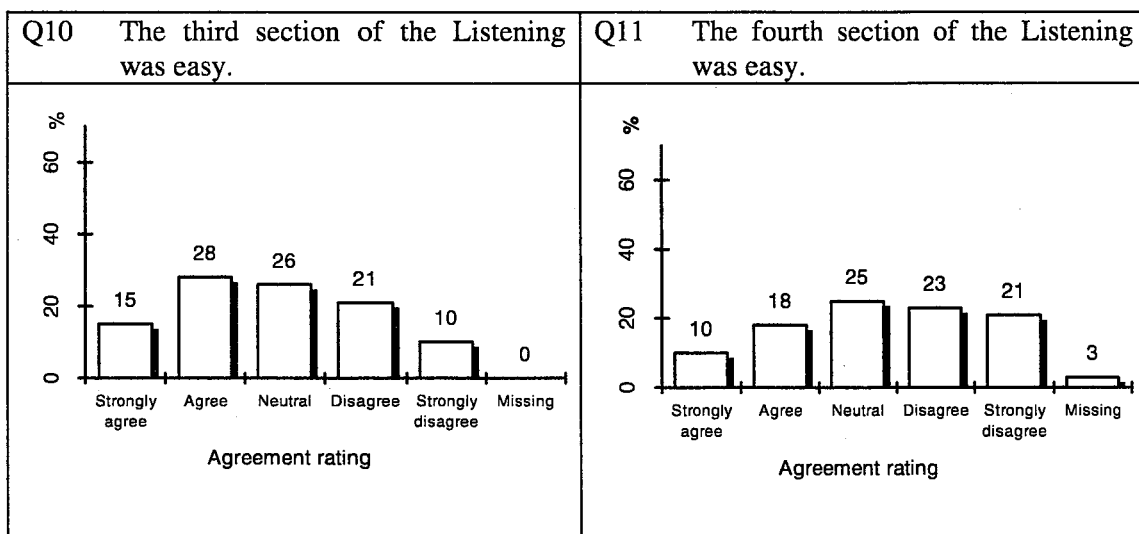
Somewhere the speaker speaks too fast.

I found reading the questions time was much less than it required. That makes me to difficult to coordinate between questions and listening.

Prompts 8, 9, 10 & 11 surveyed the candidates' views of the 4 sections in the Listening test. The structure of the prompt for each section was the same and asked the candidate to agree or disagree with the proposition that the section was easy or not.



The reaction to section 1 was overwhelmingly positive with 79% stating they considered it easy whereas for section 2 the reaction was a little less favourable with 62% stating they found this section easy.



The reactions to section 3 & 4 were markedly different to the previous two sections with only 43% stating they thought section 3 was easy and only 28% stating section 4 was easy. Given the different levels of difficulty of the sections in the Listening test this reaction could perhaps be predicted.

Overall, the reaction to the Listening test in the survey was positive and this is further borne out by some of the comments offered in the completed questionnaires:

This is a very good test, real situations, from easy to difficult distributed fairly, tricks are reasonable, do not ask for examinees too much knowledge about detailed understanding of a particular situation which sometimes could be unfair to a new comer.

Words and sentences easy to catch except for the last section. Overall, not too difficult.

Not very difficult, very nice.

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The test is well designed, but we could have more time between the sections.

I did miss some points, but generally it's pretty easy just a matter of concentration.

There were, however, some critical comments about the Listening test with issues such as accents used, test appropriacy for immigration candidates and clarity of accents used on the tape:

English accent is hard to understand.

Real British accent sounded out of place in Australia where people are sometimes harder to understand.

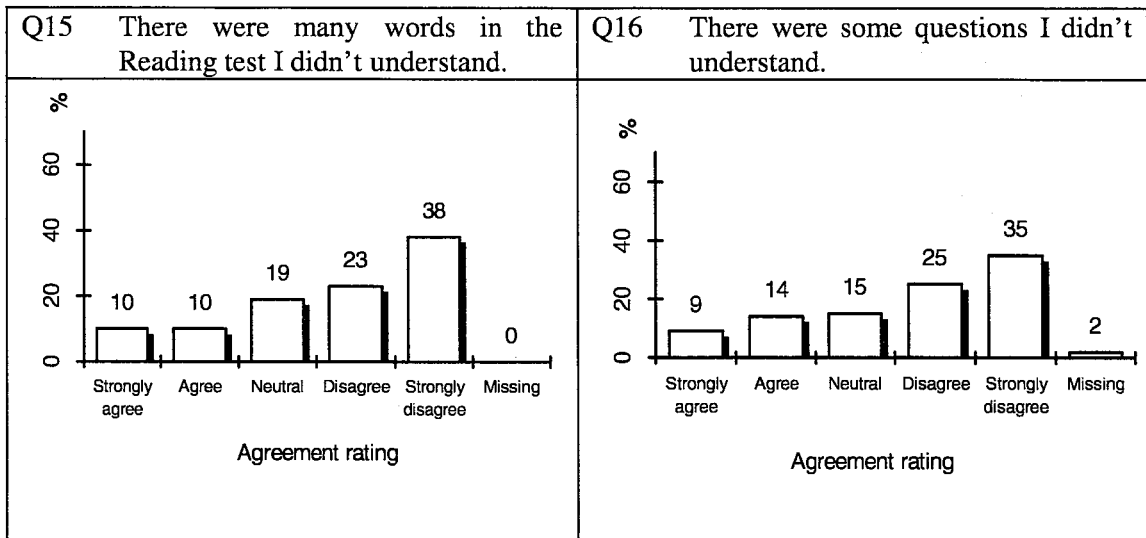
Listening test is too hard for me, it is not suitable to candidate for immigration.

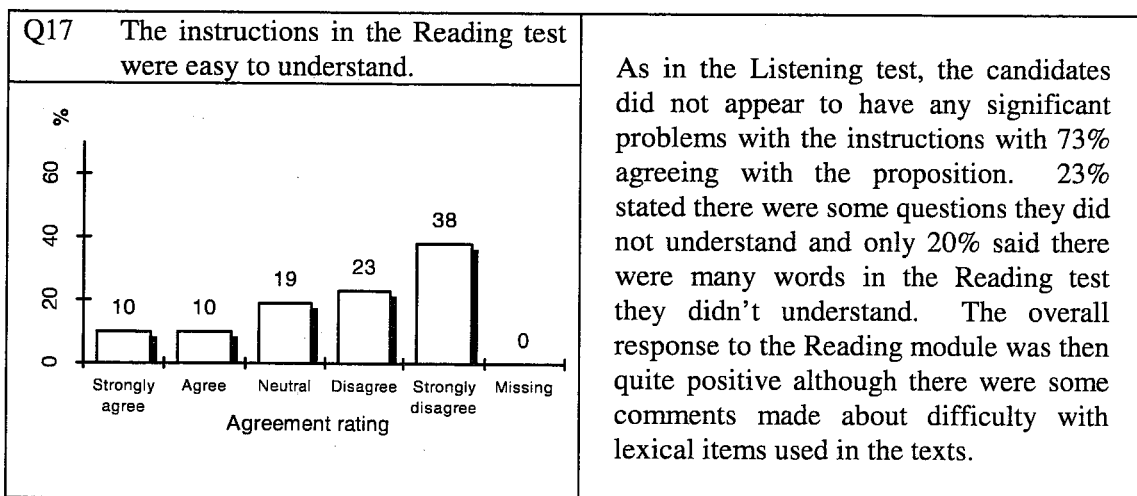
It was very basic and doesn't really serve the purpose of an ENGLISH TEST.

Listening test is terrible. I had no enough time to do listening and writing down simultaneously.

3.2.2 Reading Test

For the Reading test, the candidates were asked for their attitude to the instructions, timing and the three different sections of the test.



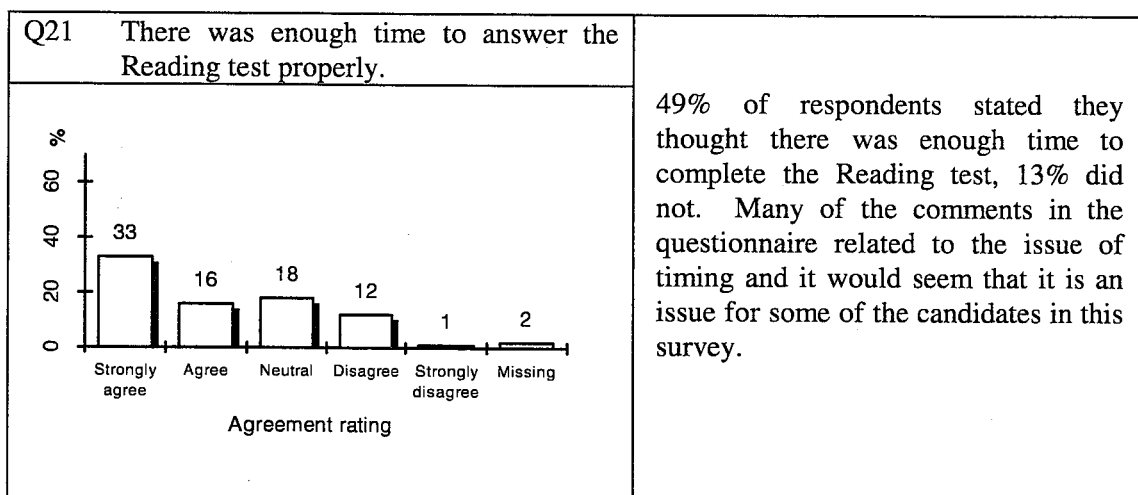


There are so many complicated vocabs there.

Good, but some words and questions can't understand properly.

Last section of the Reading test was difficult & couldn't understand some of the terminalism (sic) or jargon.

Prompt 21 addressed the issue of timing and asked the candidates whether there was enough time to answer the Reading test properly.



Some of the comments relating to timing were :

I think they(sic) is not enough time, certainly when you start the last sections, when it gets difficult, you become nervous and it gets difficult to concentrate and that's how you make mistakes. Fifteen minutes more would have been perfect.

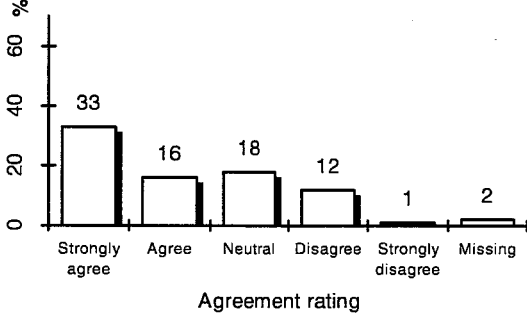
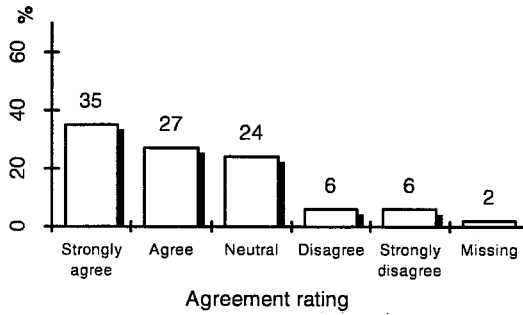
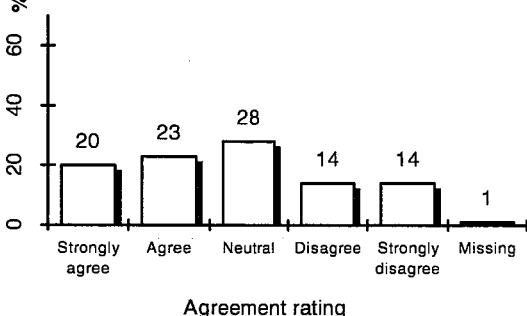
The test time is too short to finish the reading test, I need a half hour more at least.

Not enough time.

There should be an additional minutes for you to review the answers. Pls. extend 10 minutes.

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Prompts 18, 19 & 20 related to the candidate's impressions of the three sections of the Reading test.

<p>Q18 The first section of the Reading was easy.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Agreement rating for Q18</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Agreement rating</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strongly agree</td> <td>33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Strongly disagree</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Missing</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Agreement rating	Percentage	Strongly agree	33	Agree	16	Neutral	18	Disagree	12	Strongly disagree	1	Missing	2	<p>Q19 The second section of the Reading was easy.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Agreement rating for Q19</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Agreement rating</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strongly agree</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Strongly disagree</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Missing</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Agreement rating	Percentage	Strongly agree	35	Agree	27	Neutral	24	Disagree	6	Strongly disagree	6	Missing	2
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Agree	27																												
Neutral	24																												
Disagree	6																												
Strongly disagree	6																												
Missing	2																												
<p>Q20 The third section of the Reading was easy.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Agreement rating for Q20</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Agreement rating</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strongly agree</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agree</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Strongly disagree</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Missing</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Agreement rating	Percentage	Strongly agree	20	Agree	23	Neutral	28	Disagree	14	Strongly disagree	14	Missing	1	<p>The response to perceived "easiness" of section 1 was very positive with 66% stating they thought it was easy and 62% stating section 2 was easy. Section 3, however, did not elicit such a positive response with only 43% declaring they agreed/strongly agreed with the proposition it was easy. It is also significant that for section 3, 28% said they were "neutral" to the proposition.</p>														
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Strongly agree	20																												
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Strongly disagree	14																												
Missing	1																												

The most interesting responses to the different sections of the Reading test were in the comments made. One feature of the test which comes in for some criticism was the use of True/False/Not Given item type in the Reading module. Some of the comments made were:

There are too many true or false questions which are sometimes confusing. Question difficult to answer. That is to say two answers can be correct.

True-or false-not-given questions are confusing. some questions can be inferred but it can be classified as "not given" or "true".

I think that TRUE, FALSE or NOT GIVEN question is not good. FALSE and NOT GIVEN are similar and confusing.

It is difficult to distinct (sic) No and Not Given in the question No, Yes, Not Given.

Most of the disputes comes from "true/false/not given", sometimes this is examining the logic method of thinking.

Although there were criticisms of item type and timing used for the Reading test, there were some positive comments made by the candidates in the survey:

Generally speaking, it is a good and efficient test.

Reasonable and acceptable.

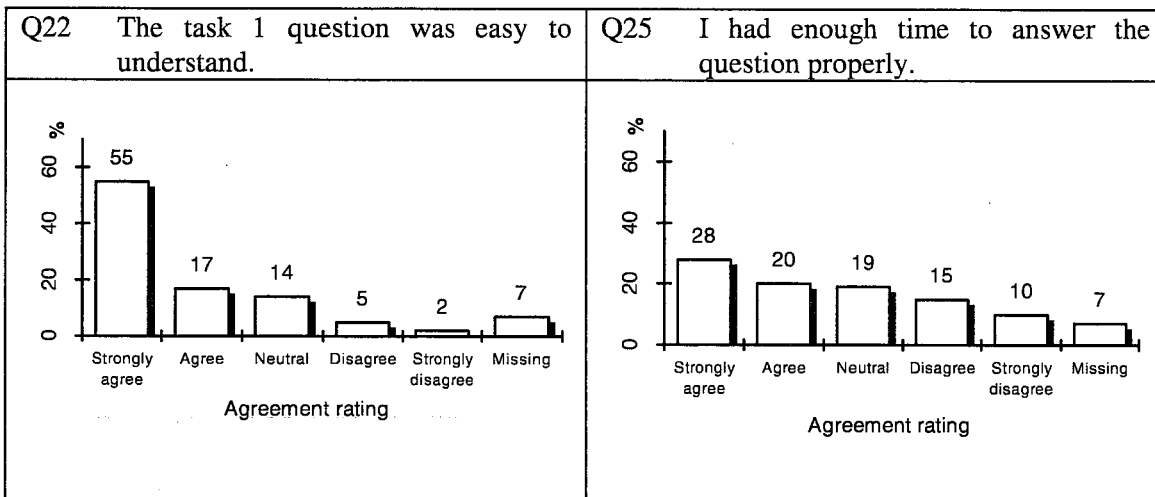
It is better to put a reading passage and questions about it on the same pages.

Sometime I can understand very well about passage, but I can't choose the answer because it is confused. I prefer to TOEFL which I took before.

3.2.3 Writing Test

For the Writing test, the candidates were asked for their impression of Writing task 1 and Writing task 2.

Writing Task 1



The response to ease of task 1 was very positive with 72% of candidates agreeing with the proposition. The issue of timing for task 1 was less clear cut with 25% stating they did not have enough time to complete the task. The importance of timing was stressed in some of the comments made on the questionnaire:

1 hour was too short to finish both tasks.

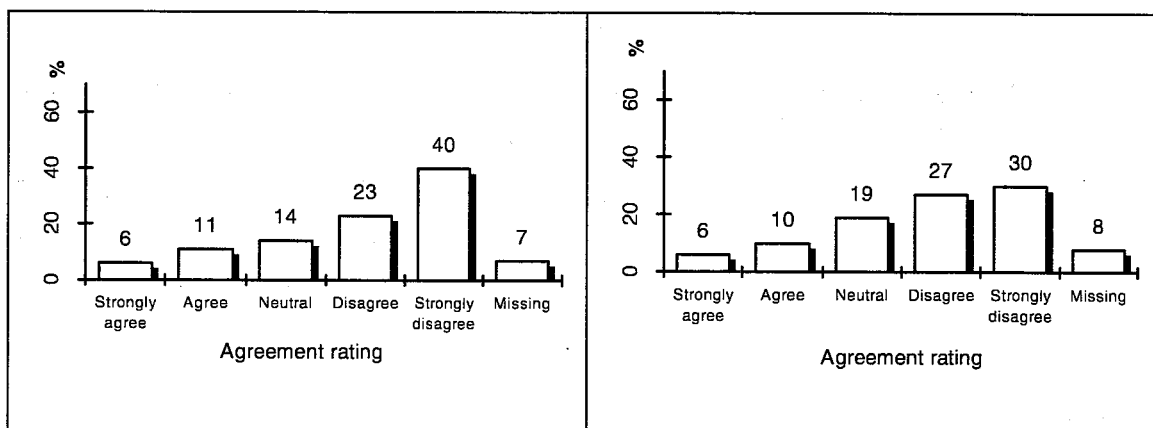
Time allocation is very important in this section. I will rate this section as fair level of difficulty.

The time for the task 1 is used more than 20 minutes generally if you want to perfectly show what the graph shows.

Prompts 23 & 24 probed the issue of difficulty for the candidate because of the subject dealt with or the lack of vocabulary required to complete the task.

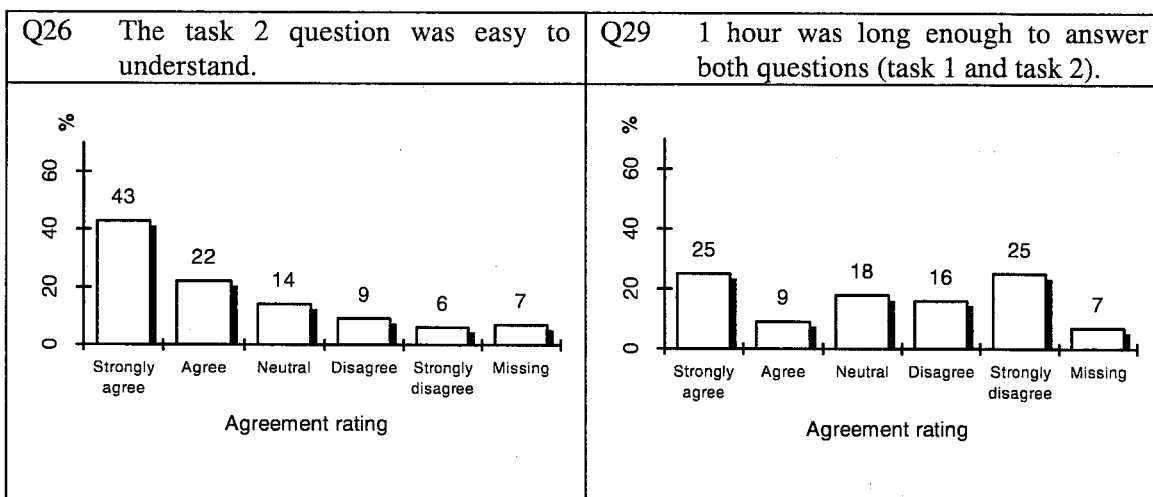
<p>Q23 It was difficult to write an answer because I did not know the subject.</p>	<p>Q24 It was difficult to write an answer because I did not have the English words.</p>
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The issue of task 1 subject being a problem in the test is reasonably strongly refuted with 63% disagreeing with the proposition that it was difficult to write because of the subject matter. The issue of having the necessary vocabulary range to complete task 1 is not as clear with 16% saying this was an issue for them.

Writing Task 2



The response to ease of task 2 was similar to the attitude to ease of task 1 although 65% of candidates agreed with the proposition as opposed to 72% for task 1. Length of time allowed for both task 1 and task 2 appeared to be an issue for some candidates with 41% stating they did not think 1 hour was long enough for both tasks – this would had further strength to the responses to prompt 25 which elicited a response of 25% expressing dissatisfaction with the time allocated for task 1.

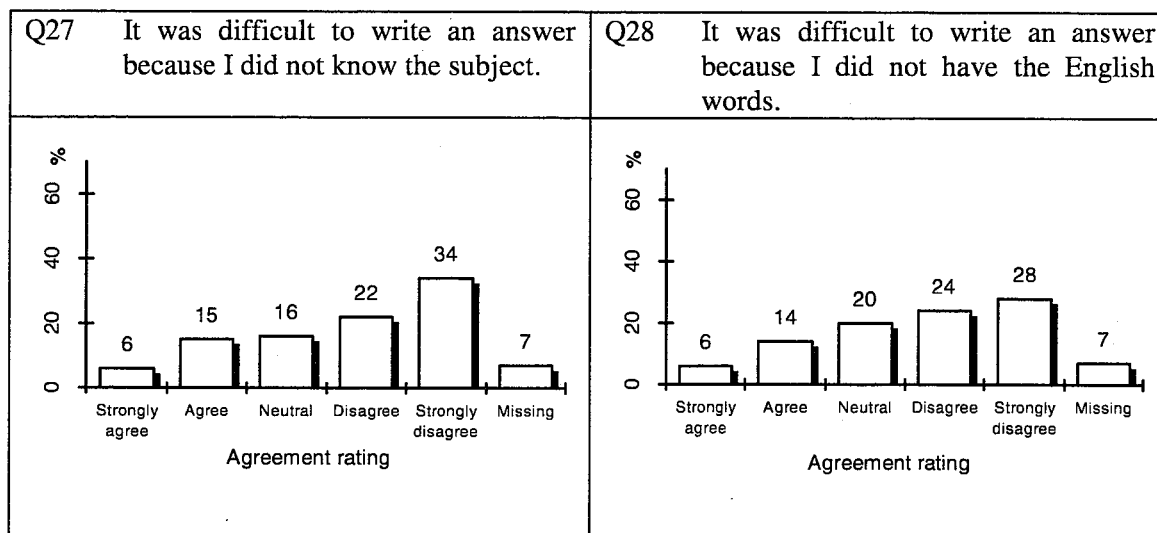
Some of the comments related to task 2 confirmed the problems some candidates were having with only being allowed one hour for the writing test:

To write a really good letter or essay with substantial arguments for and against a certain issue, it is necessary to have more time. Within 1 hour, I mostly focused on structure and to achieve the required words in each task rather than on the contents.

To finish task 2 on time is not difficult at all. The only problem is that such a short time is pretty hard to arrange your ideas properly. That is, it is hard to write a very good article for this topic in such a short time.

There is time pressure from the start to the end.

Prompts 27 & 28 addressed the issue of difficulty for the candidate because of the subject dealt with or the lack of vocabulary required to complete task 2.



The issue of task 2 subject being a problem in the test is apparent with 21% agreeing with the proposition that it was difficult to write an answer because of the subject. The issue of subject occurred a number of times in comments written on the questionnaire:

It was difficult to write task 2 because I did not have an opinion.

The task 2 is very difficult because I haven't enough material to write about it.

Task 2 is quite hard. The situation is not familiar to me, hard to think of something to write.

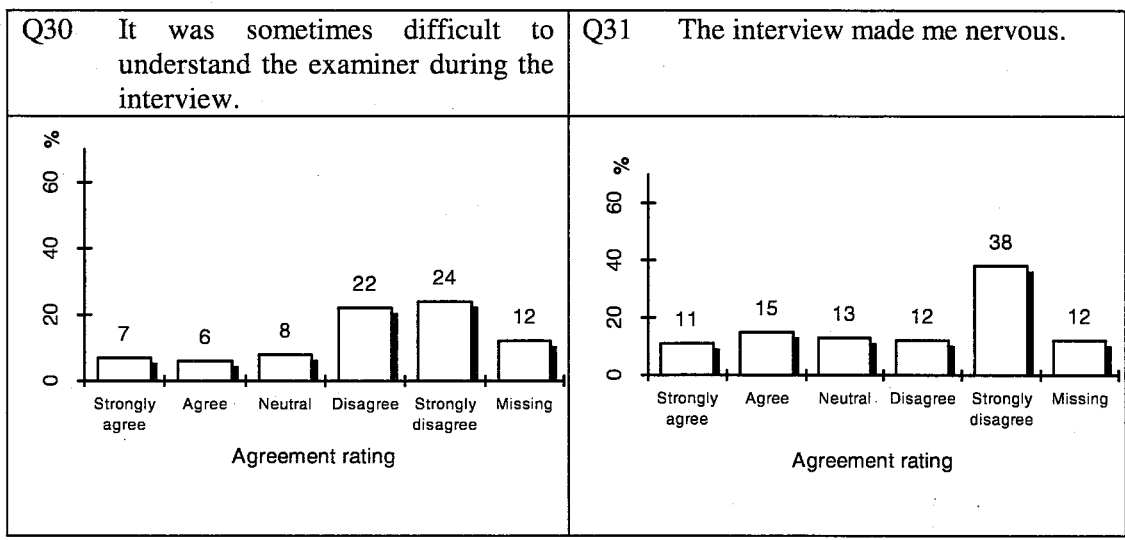
Writing test task 2 is more difficult for me to finish in 40 minutes.

3.2.4 Speaking Test

The first two prompts on the Speaking³ test asked the candidates whether they found it difficult to understand the interviewer and whether the interview made them nervous.

³ Editor This study was conducted in 1999. In July 2001 the format of the IELTS Speaking test changed, but remains as a one to one interview with an IELTS examiner, lasting 11-14 minutes.

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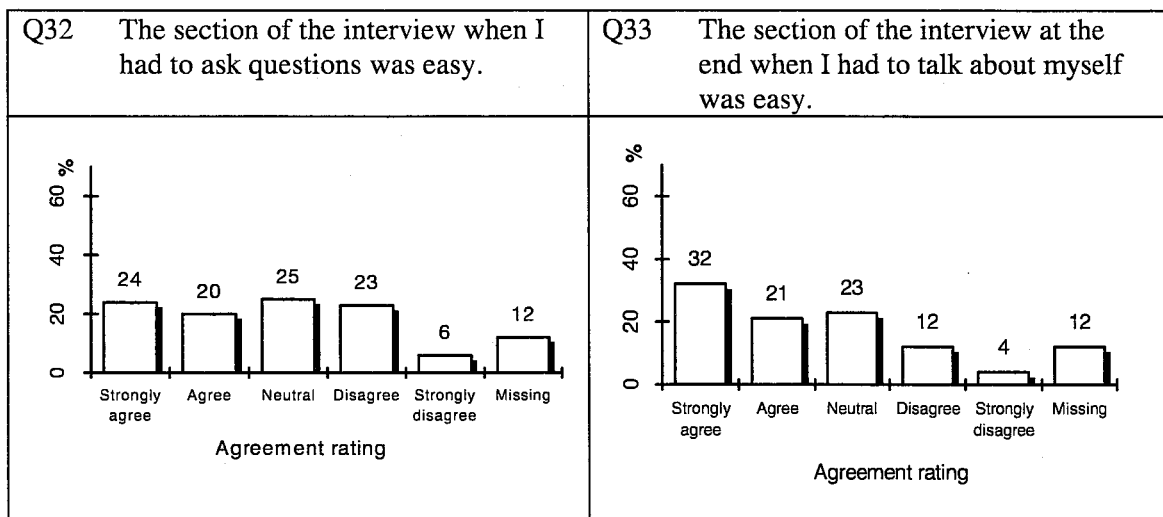
Most candidates did not have any significant difficulties with the Speaking test with only 13% having difficulty with understanding the examiner and 26% stating that the interview made them nervous. The comments on the Speaking test in relation to the interaction between the candidate and the examiner were mainly positive:

I have no comments on the speaking test. I was nervous but the teacher made me feel relax.

Examiner is very friendly and I don't feel nervous.

The interviewer made me relax. He explained the instruction clearly.

Prompts 32 & 33 investigated the candidates' opinion of different phases in the interview with particular reference to phase 3 where he/she is required to obtain information from the examiner and phase 5⁴ where speculation about the future is asked for.



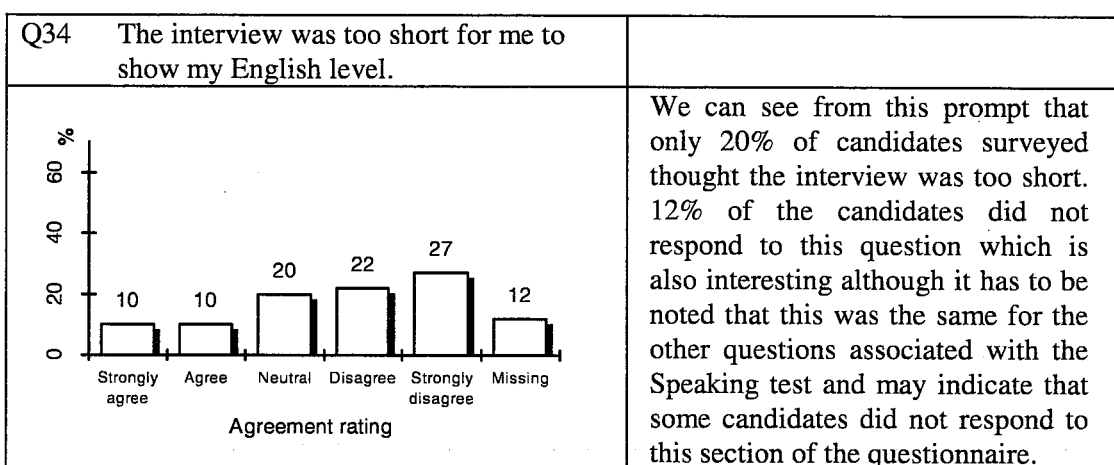
⁴ Editor: Phases 3 & 5 have been replaced in the new format with the 'long turn' where a candidate has to speak on a selected topic for 1 – 2 minutes after a 1 minute preparation period, and a section of follow up questions on the given topic.

The response to prompt 32 was interesting as we can see some candidates had difficulty with phase 3 of the interview – 29% disagreed with the notion that it was easy and this is noted in some of the comments on the questionnaire. It is informative to compare this response to prompt 33 which investigated the candidates’ attitude to the latter part of the interview where he/she is invited to speculate about the future as only 16% of the candidates stated they thought this section was not easy. It was interesting to note, however, that some candidates expressed misgivings about being asked about the future:

I don't think it is very proper to ask personal questions, such as my future.

Roll-play section is hard to imagine question for a short time.

The final prompt in the questionnaire asked the question whether the interview was too short to show English level.



The final section of the questionnaire was open ended and invited the candidates to comment on anything they liked or disliked about the questionnaire.

The question “Is there anything you *like* about the IELTS?” produced the following comments:

Like or dislike? It's hard to say. But I would say it is better than TOEFL.

Yes. It test your real ability of English Language.

It is not difficult and it is arranged very well. The staff member are very friendly and helpful.

Practical. Fair in terms of not asking for very deep understanding of some local or area customs, etc.

It's very practical compared with Japanese English test.

I believe the speaking test is the best way to see if somebody can express himself can understand English.

I like the interview test, free talking is quite comfortable.

It is very good test for me to understand my English ability.

the writing section is good because you can give your own opinion about the theme, if you agree or disagree.

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The question "Is there anything you *dislike* about the IELTS?" produced the following comments:

Some of the questions seemed to judge my I.Q. rather than my English ability. The test was a bit tricky.

Yes, the topic is unfamiliar and sometimes makes me nervous.

Writing the essays. Sometimes that is not indicate our ability to write in English. Some people may can not write well because they do not know the subject (what to write) not because they cannot writing in English.

The Listening module is too long, I mean each section should use the multiple choose.

Too expensive. Time is not enough!

The final question was "Do you have any general comments to make about the IELTS test?" and some of the following comments were made:

I think IELTS exam is difficult for general I wonder general is made more easy. but academic is suitable.

Just give us some more time.

IELTS should be separated by age and level of English, so on the Writing task would be easier for young people to talk about another thinks instead of general interests, which just mature people liked and know how to talk about it.

Good. More efficient than TOEFL. It focuses on the practical skills.

Try to get the speaking section more controllable. I mean get more standardised ways to ask questions and the scope the question refers.

It's practical and helpful for daily life. After preparing IELTS you do feel the improvement of English.

Test seems appropriate for migration purposes.

Not enough materials to prepare for the exam. Only one sample paper is not enough.

Fair!!

4.0 **Research Findings For User Group 2** **Candidates who present for IELTS for secondary education purposes**

Forty-one Japanese secondary school students arrived in Sydney, Australia in February 1999 to spend Year 11 in an Australian high school. They sat the IELTS test on 27 February, 1999 which was a week after they had arrived from Japan and sat the test again on 27 November 1999 which was two weeks before they were due to return. The students sat the General Training module both times and sat different versions of each module in each test. The module versions used were:

	Listening version	Reading version	Writing version
Test A	14	9	29
Test B	16	11	36

4.1 Performance in Listening Test A and Test B

	Listening Band Score			Listening Band Score	
	Test A	Test B		Test A	Test B
Student 1	4	4.5	Student 26	3.5	6
Student 2	3	4	Student 27	4.5	6
Student 3	3	3	Student 28	3	6.5
Student 4	4	4.5	Student 29	3.5	6
Student 5	3	4	Student 30	2	4.5
Student 6	4	6	Student 31	3.5	6
Student 7	5	6	Student 32	3	4.5
Student 8	4	4.5	Student 33	3	6
Student 9	4.5	6	Student 34	3	4
Student 10	4	4.5	Student 35	5	6
Student 11	5	6	Student 36	4	5
Student 12	3	4.5	Student 37	4	6
Student 13	4.5	4.5	Student 38	3.5	5
Student 14	4	5	Student 39	5.5	6.5
Student 15	3	4	Student 40	2	3
Student 16	4.5	6	Student 41	4	5.5
Student 17	3.5	4.5	Student 42	3	4.5
Student 18	2	4.5	Student 43	3.5	5
Student 19	4	5.5	Student 44	5.5	5
Student 20	4.5	5.5	Student 45	6.5	6
Student 21	3.5	4	Student 46	4	5.5
Student 22	4.5	6	Student 47	3	5.5
Student 23	3.5	6	Student 48	4	4
Student 24	4	5.5	Student 49	1	4.5
Student 25	4	5.5	Student 50	4.5	5

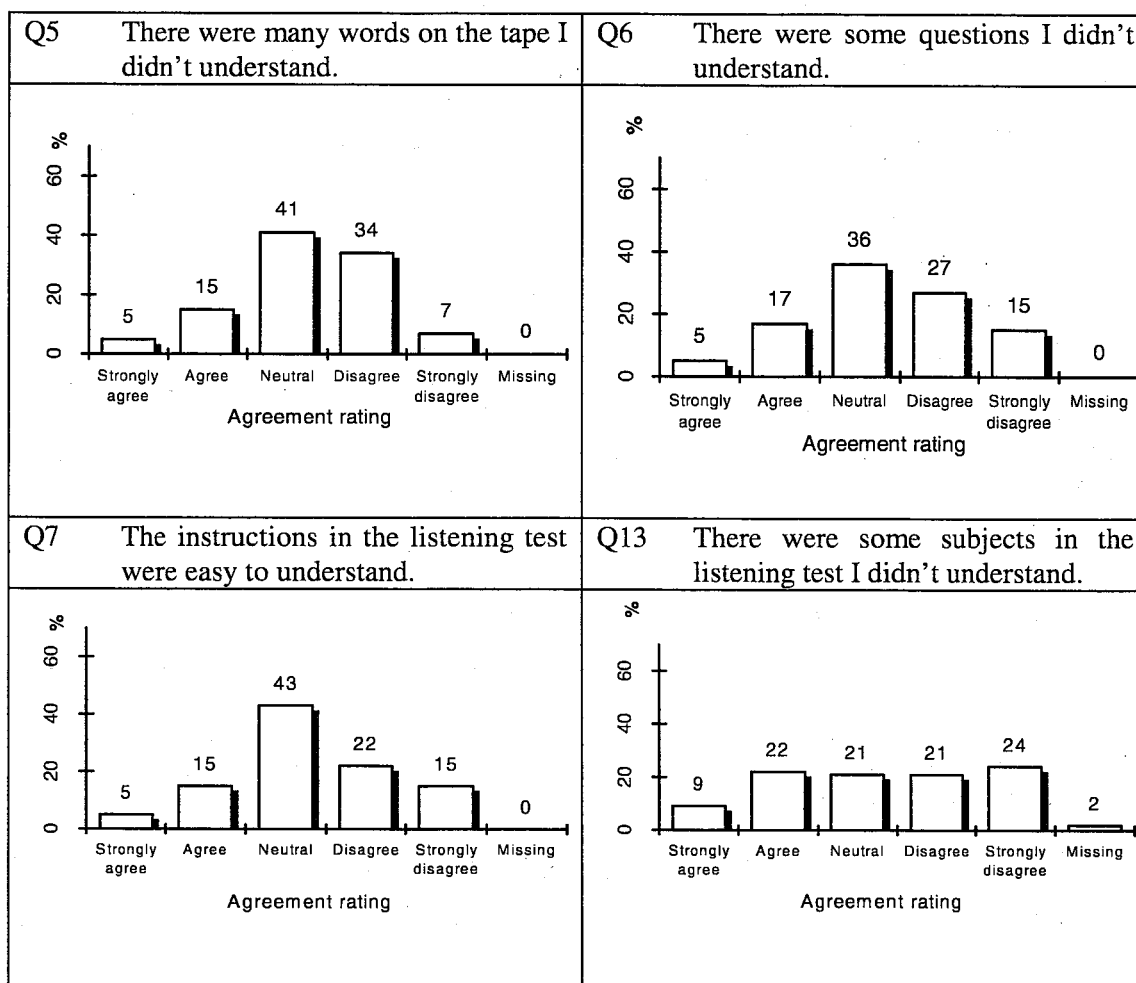
Mean improvement in Listening Band Score from Test A to Test B	1.35
Maximum improvement in Listening Band from Test A to Test B	3.5
Minimum improvement in Listening Band from Test A to Test B	-0.5

Table 1 Comparison of candidate performance on 2 Listening tests taken 9 months apart (User Group 2)

From the table above we can see that the mean improvement in performance on the Listening test was 1.35 bands with two students achieving a lower score than on Test A (students 44 and 45) and one student achieving an improvement of 3.5 bands which is quite impressive (student 28). Comparing the overall improvements in the Listening Band Score to the other band improvements, Listening ranks as the third highest improvement after Writing and Speaking.

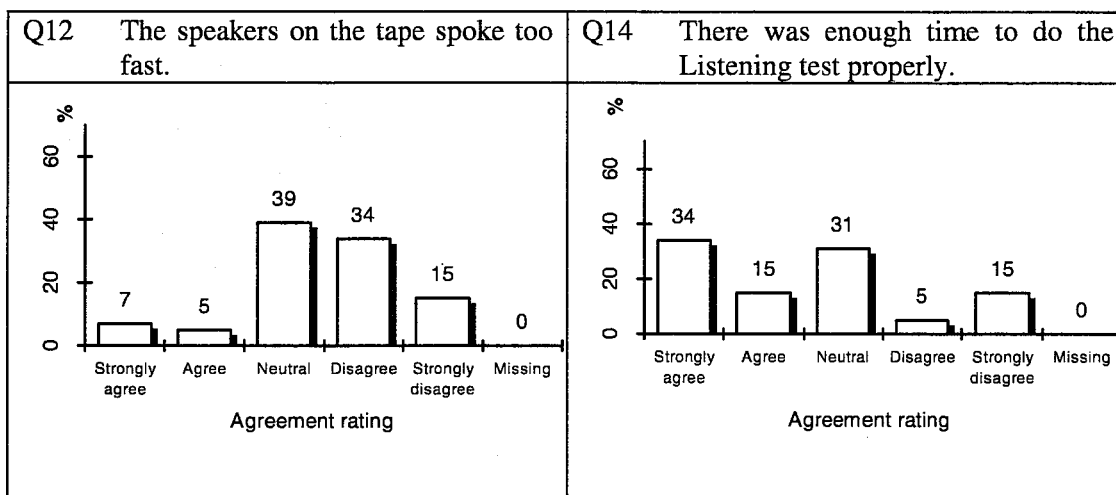
4.2 Attitudes towards the Listening test

All candidates in the secondary school age user group were surveyed at the end of Test B to establish their views on the IELTS test. In the questionnaire the candidates were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposition. The highest level of agreement was strongly agree and the highest level of disagreement was strongly disagree. Please refer to Appendix 1.1 for questionnaire instrument used in survey.



Prompts 5, 6, 7 & 13 on the questionnaire dealt with any problems the candidates might encounter with language used, subjects, rubrics or instructions in the test. It would appear that some of the candidates had problems with the instructions in the test as only 20% stated they found them easy to understand as opposed to the immigration user group where 78% found them easy. The ability to deal with the 'words' and 'questions' in the test is also interesting as only 18% agreed with the proposition there were words on the tape they didn't understand whereas 23% said there were some questions they didn't understand. The reaction to prompt 13 which asked whether there were 'subjects' in the listening test they didn't understand shows that 20% had difficulty with these subjects – a disapproval rating which was lower than for the immigration group. For prompts 5, 6, 7 & 13 the incidence of candidates marking a 'neutral' response to the proposition is as high as 41% which might suggest the candidates are not be willing to give frank views on the test.

Prompts 12 & 14 addressed the issue of timing and pacing of the listening test

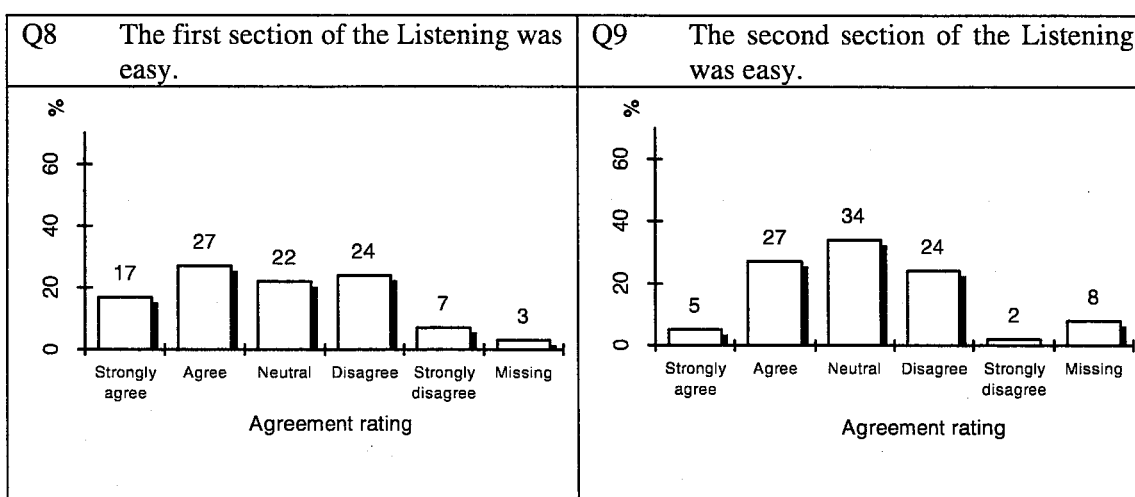


The response to prompt 12 is of note as only 12% stated they thought the speakers on the tape spoke too fast which is quite low. 49% said they had enough time to do the test properly with 20% stating they didn't. Generally speaking, the candidates did not seem to have any serious misgivings about the overall timing of the test and speed of delivery although comments were made which indicated some were having difficulty with the instructions at the beginning:

I couldn't understand that how to answer the question at first so I was waiting for the next question but it was already gone so I missed some questions and I think I could answer them.

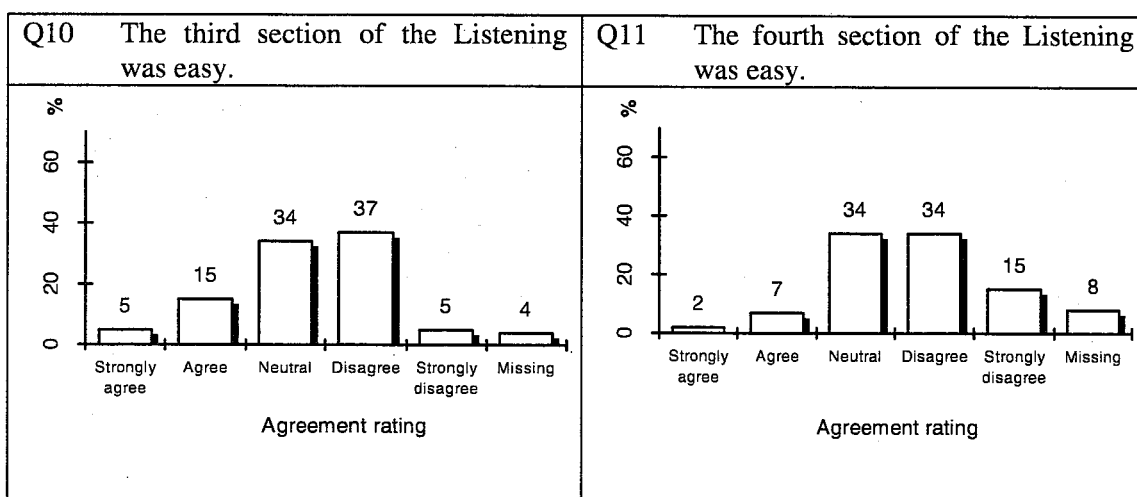
Sometimes I don't understand, when did say the answers. That's mean I lose the question/answer.

Prompts 8, 9, 10 & 11 surveyed the candidates' views of the 4 sections in the Listening test. The structure of the prompt for each section was the same and asked the candidate to indicate how easy they found each Listening section.



The reaction to section 1 was reasonably positive with 44% saying they considered it easy and 31% expressing some difficulty. For section 2 the reaction was even less favourable with 32% stating they found this section easy and 26% expressing some difficulty.

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The response to prompts 10 and 11 is even stronger than to 8 & 9 with only 20% stating they thought section 3 was easy and a mere 9% stating section 4 was easy. It would seem from these figures that the candidates had quite a lot of difficulty with section 4 and slightly less difficulty with section 3. It would be interesting to probe this issue further as the survey results would tend to indicate a distinct difference in attitude towards the different sections and it would be interesting to investigate whether there are significant performance differences between the sections. Difficulties with sections 3 & 4 are also borne out in some of the comments made on the questionnaire:

The third section was difficult because what the radio speaker say is different from the answer we have to write.

I almost didn't understand

There were no critical comments about the Listening test with issues such as accents used and test appropriacy for secondary school age and most of the comments were positive:

I think it was a bit easy to understand.

I prepared for Listening test in advance, so I didn't panic.

This was my second time and I thought both of them were really good in testing my listening skills.

4.3 Performance in Reading Test A and Test B

	Reading Band Score	
	Test A	Test B
Student 1	3	3
Student 2	2	3
Student 3	3	3
Student 4	2	4
Student 5	3	4
Student 6	3.5	4
Student 7	3.5	5
Student 8	2	4.5
Student 9	4	6
Student 10	3	3.5
Student 11	4	5
Student 12	2	3
Student 13	3.5	3.5
Student 14	3	3.5
Student 15	2	4
Student 16	3.5	4.5
Student 17	3	4.5
Student 18	2	3
Student 19	3.5	3.5
Student 20	3.5	4
Student 21	3	3
Student 22	3	4
Student 23	4	5
Student 24	3.5	4.5
Student 25	4	4.5

	Reading Band Score	
	Test A	Test B
Student 26	3	5
Student 27	3	4
Student 28	3	4.5
Student 29	3	5
Student 30	3.5	3.5
Student 31	2	4.5
Student 32	3	3
Student 33	3	5
Student 34	3.5	3
Student 35	3.5	4.5
Student 36	2	4
Student 37	3.5	5
Student 38	3	5.5
Student 39	4.5	4.5
Student 40	2	2
Student 41	3	4.5
Student 42	3	4.5
Student 43	3	5
Student 44	4.5	6
Student 45	5	6.5
Student 46	3.5	5
Student 47	2	4
Student 48	2	4.5
Student 49	2	3.5
Student 50	3.5	3.5

Mean improvement in Reading Band Score from Test A to Test B	1.12
Maximum improvement in Reading Band from Test A to Test B	2.5
Minimum improvement in Reading Band from Test A to Test B	-0.5

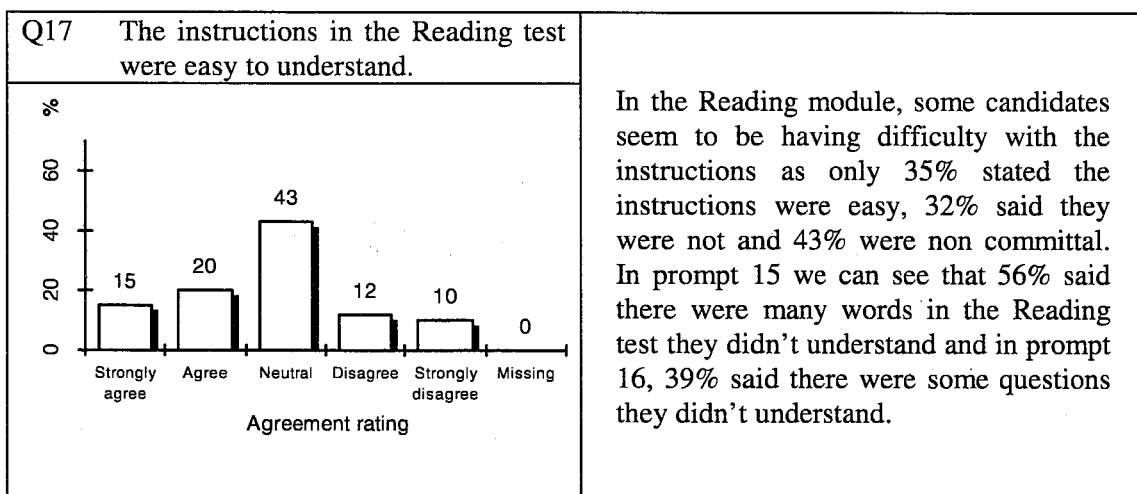
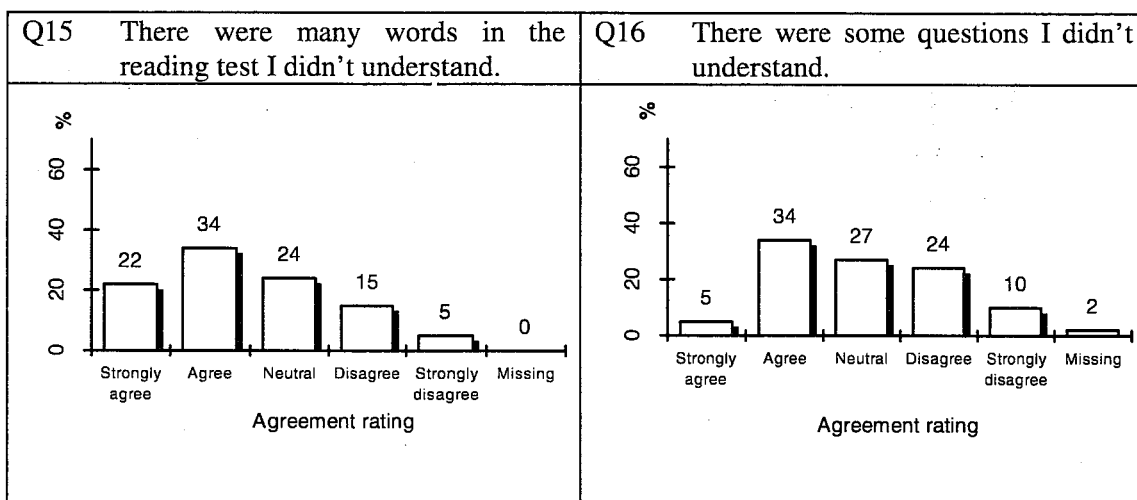
Table 2 Comparison of candidate performance on 2 Reading tests taken 9 months apart (User Group 2)

With performance in the Reading module we can see that the mean improvement was 1.12 bands which was the lowest mean improvement across the four IELTS test modules. One student achieved a lower score than on Test A (student 34) whereas 10 students did not appear to achieve any improvement in Reading between Test A and Test B which is surprising as they had been studying for 10 months in an Australian high school by the time they sat Test B. 5 of the students recorded 0.5 band improvement in performance, 12 a 1 band improvement in performance and 10 a 1.5 band improvement. It would be interesting to investigate how the candidates performed on sections 1, 2 & 3 of the Reading test to see whether the low overall band improvement in Reading performance can be attributed to any

particular Reading section. As different Reading versions were used in the two tests, this is problematic and beyond the scope of this project as the items in each version have differing levels of difficulty and discrimination and cannot be directly compared. It is interesting, however, to look at the students views of the Reading test and see whether their perception of the Reading module matches the difficulties some of them were encountering with it.

4.4 Attitudes towards the Reading test

For the Reading test, the candidates were asked for their attitude to the instructions, timing and the three different sections of the test.



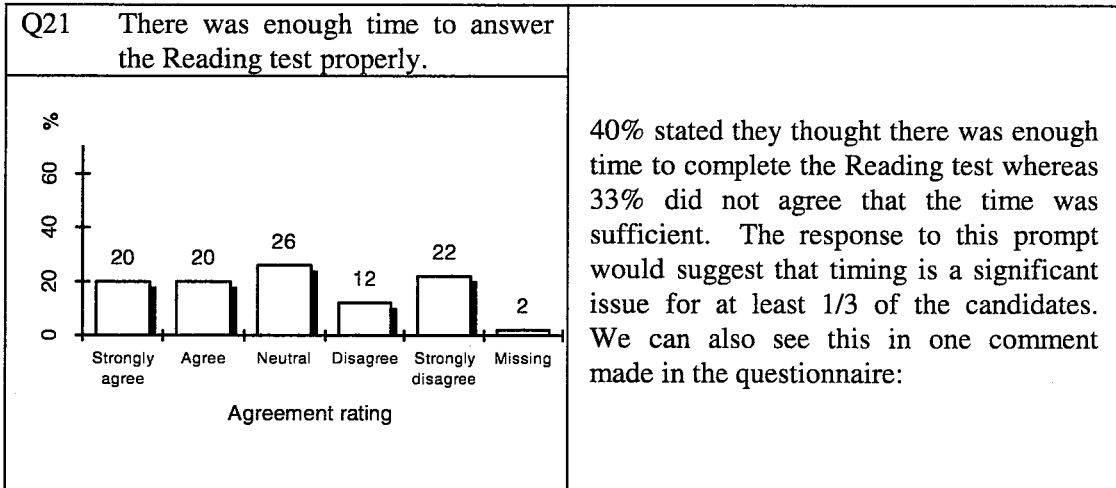
The response to these three prompts would tend to confirm the suspicions raised earlier about the candidates finding the Reading module difficult. The issue of difficulties with the vocabulary and questions used in the texts are raised in some of the comments made in the questionnaire:

I can't understand some question at all. please more easy questions.

I was nervous when I saw the Question papers because there were many words there so they made me feel nervous.

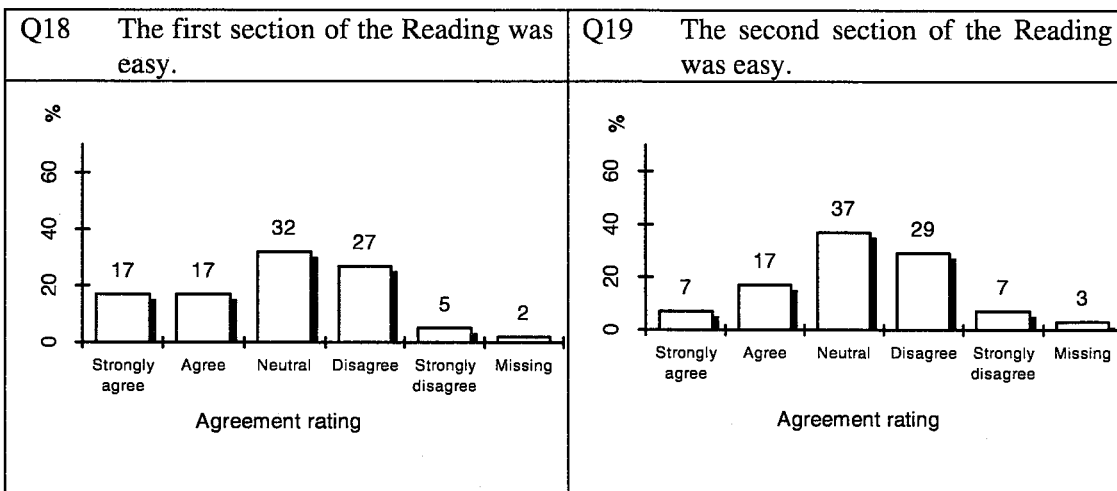
It was a bit hard to me, because I don't understand some words.

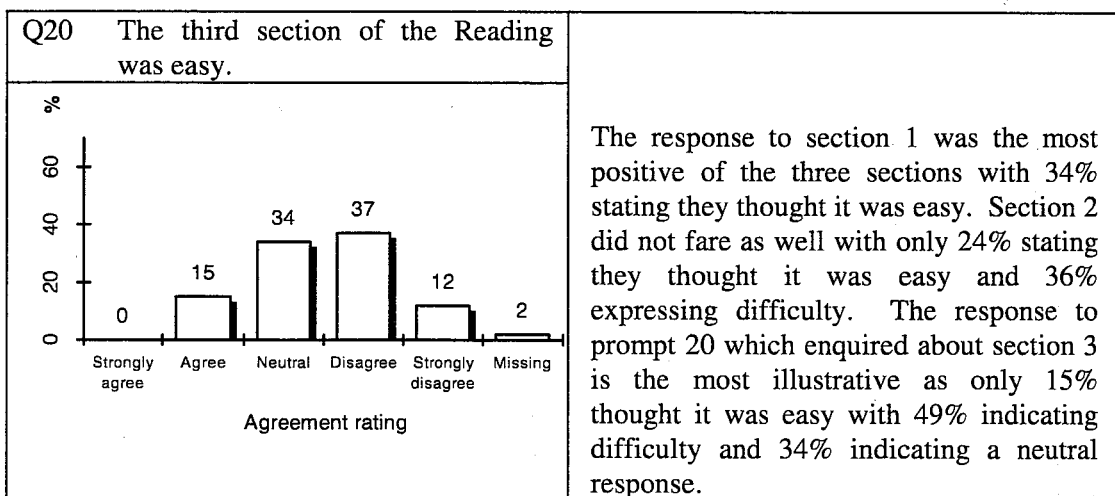
Prompt 21 addressed the issue of timing and asked the candidates whether there was enough time to answer the Reading test properly.



There were many questions but not enough time.

Prompts 18, 19 & 20 related to the candidate's impressions of the three sections of the Reading test.





It is apparent from the responses to these three prompts that many candidates experienced significant difficulties with the Reading module with section 3 in particular causing the greatest concern. General comments made on the questionnaire support this:

I think that was quite hard. If I had a word which I can't understand that hard to do that question. Some part is not so difficult but some part was difficult.

Sometimes I couldn't understand the meaning of the sentence.

It was a bit hard to me, because I don't understand some words.

4.5 Performance in Writing Test A and Test B

	Writing Band Score			Writing Band Score	
	Test A	Test B		Test A	Test B
Student 1	2	4	Student 26	2	6
Student 2	4	5	Student 27	2	5
Student 3	1	4	Student 28	1	5
Student 4	1	6	Student 29	2	5
Student 5	3	5	Student 30	1	5
Student 6	2	6	Student 31	1	5
Student 7	3	6	Student 32	1	4
Student 8	1	5	Student 33	1	6
Student 9	2	6	Student 34	1	2
Student 10	1	5	Student 35	5	6
Student 11	3	5	Student 36	3	5
Student 12	0	6	Student 37	3	7
Student 13	1	5	Student 38	1	4
Student 14	1	5	Student 39	4	5
Student 15	1	4	Student 40	1	3
Student 16	2	6	Student 41	2	6
Student 17	2	5	Student 42	3	4
Student 18	1	4	Student 43	2	5
Student 19	1	4	Student 44	4	6
Student 20	3	5	Student 45	4	6
Student 21	1	4	Student 46	4	6
Student 22	3	6	Student 47	2	5
Student 23	2	6	Student 48	2	5
Student 24	2	4	Student 49	0	5
Student 25	1	5	Student 50	4	5

Mean improvement in Writing Band Score from Test A to Test B	3.04
Maximum improvement in Writing Band from Test A to Test B	6
Minimum improvement in Writing Band from Test A to Test B	1

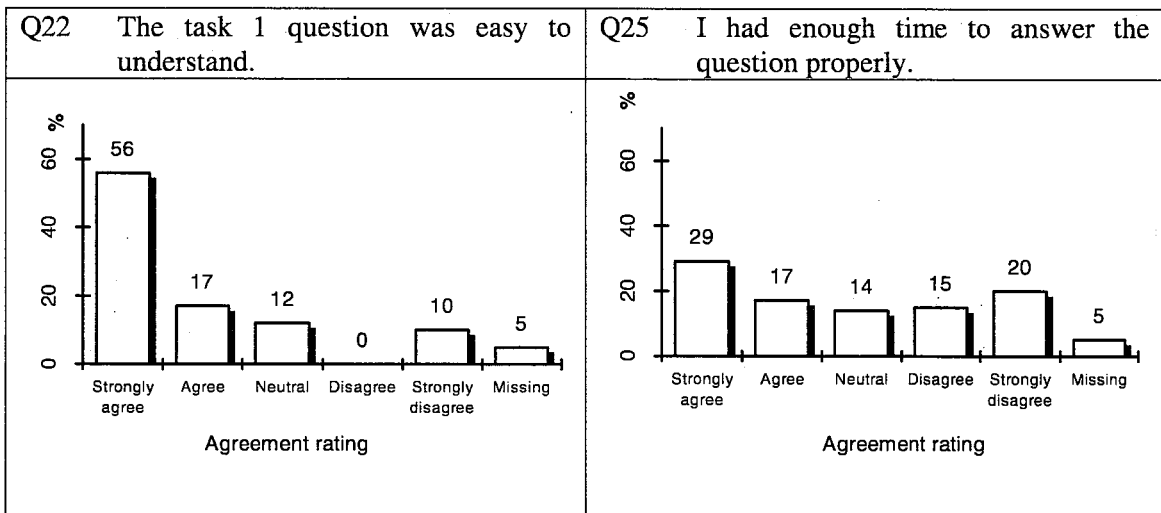
Table 3 Comparison of candidate performance on 2 Writing tests taken 9 months apart (User Group 2)

Improvement in the Writing module was the most marked across the four test modules with a mean improvement of 3.04 bands being achieved. All candidates improved their Writing in the two tests which is in contrast to the Listening and Reading modules where some experienced a fall off in their band scores. Six candidates improved by 1 band, 10 by two bands and 15 by three bands. One student achieved an improvement of 6 bands although not too much store should be put in this as it was from band 0 to band 6 and band 0 means the candidate did not attempt any of the tasks.

4.6 Attitudes towards the Writing test

For the Writing test, the candidates were asked for their impression of the task 1 and task 2 in the module.

Writing Task 1



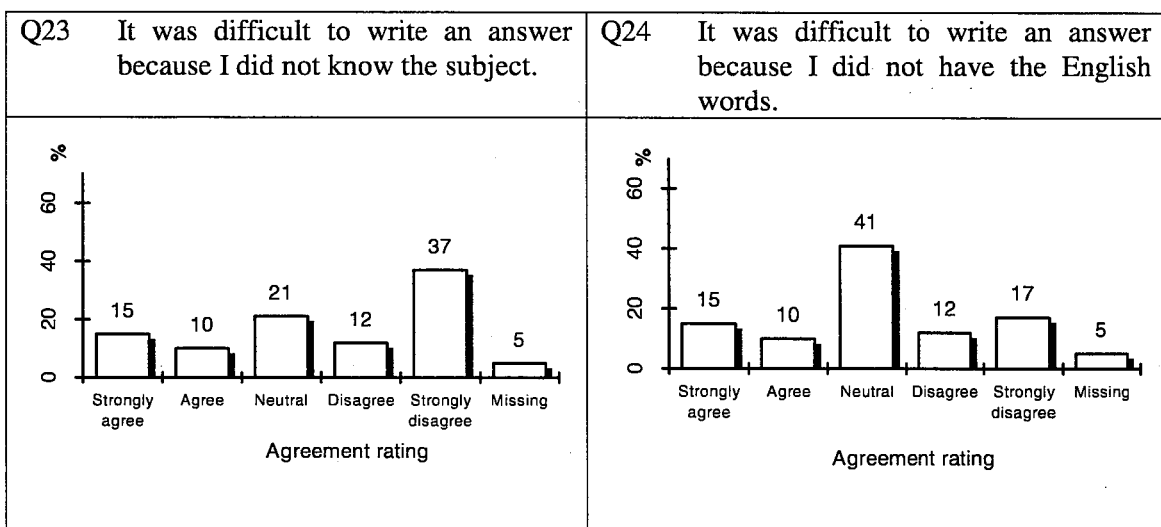
The response to ease of task 1 was very positive with 73% of candidates agreeing that task 1 question was easy to understand. 43% stated they had enough time to complete the task and 35% said they did not which would indicate some candidates had difficulty with timing. The issue of timing was detailed in some of the comments made on the questionnaire:

I didn't have enough time to write task. I wanted have another 20 minutes.

Just not enough time and question was hard to explain and to answer.

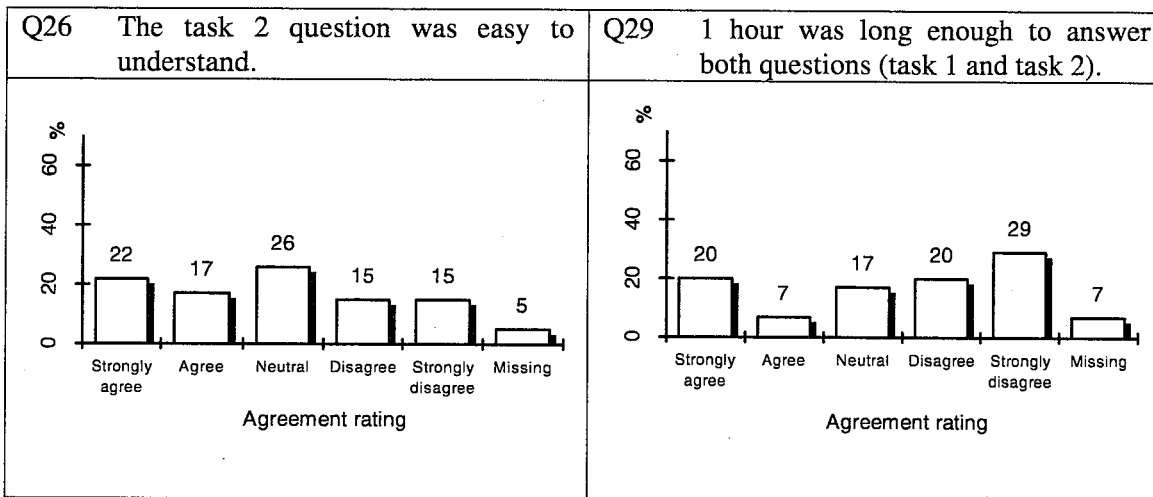
First parts was quite easy but suddenly section 2 was hard to do that.

Prompts 23 & 24 investigated the issue of whether there was any difficulty for the candidate because of the subject dealt with or the lack of vocabulary required to complete the task.



49% of the candidates didn't agree with the proposition that it was difficult to write an answer because of unfamiliarity with the subject – 25% did think it was a problem. Having the necessary vocabulary range to complete task 1 was an issue with 25% of the candidates whereas 29% said it was not; a reasonably even spread of responses.

Writing Task 2



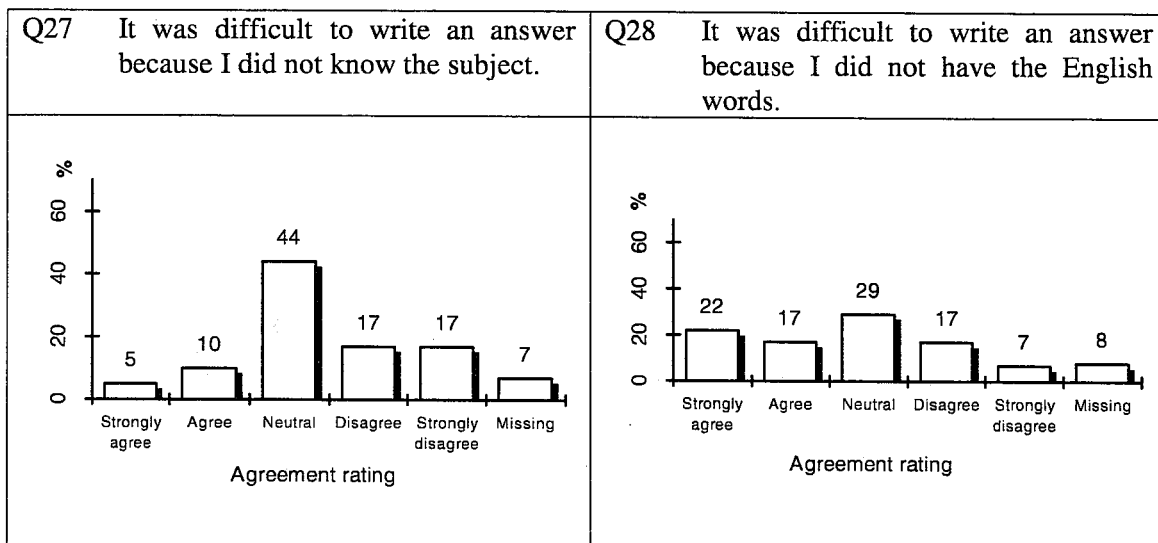
39% of the respondents considered task 2 easy to understand whereas 30% stated they thought it was difficult. Length of time allowed for both task 1 and task 2 was an issue for some candidates with 49% stating they did not think 1 hour was long enough for both tasks. Some of the comments related to task 2 confirmed the problems some candidates were having with the one hour time limit for the writing test:

I think too short.

Writing task test 2 was not enough time to think and write.

I didn't have enough time to finish.

Prompts 27 & 28 addressed the issue of whether the candidate had difficulties because of the subject dealt with or the lack of vocabulary required to complete the task.



15% of the candidates agreed with the proposition that it was difficult to write an answer because of difficulties with the subject matter whereas 34% didn't see this as a problem – the most striking feature to this prompt was 44 % were neutral to the issue. 39% thought it was difficult to write an answer because of a general lack of vocabulary.

4.7 Performance in Speaking Test A and Test B

	Speaking Band Score	
	Test A	Test B
Student 1	4	5
Student 2	3	4
Student 3	2	5
Student 4	5	6
Student 5	3	6
Student 6	3	5
Student 7	2	5
Student 8	4	5
Student 9	6	6
Student 10	4	6
Student 11	5	6
Student 12	4	6
Student 13	2	6
Student 14	3	6
Student 15	3	6
Student 16	4	6
Student 17	4	6
Student 18	3	5
Student 19	3	5
Student 20	3	5
Student 21	2	5
Student 22	4	6
Student 23	4	5
Student 24	4	5
Student 25	3	5

	Speaking Band Score	
	Test A	Test B
Student 26	4	5
Student 27	4	5
Student 28	4	6
Student 29	5	6
Student 30	4	6
Student 31	5	6
Student 32	3	5
Student 33	2	5
Student 34	3	5
Student 35	6	6
Student 36	5	6
Student 37	4	6
Student 38	4	5
Student 39	3	6
Student 40	4	5
Student 41	4	5
Student 42	4	5
Student 43	4	5
Student 44	6	6
Student 45	6	6
Student 46	4	7
Student 47	3	5
Student 48	3	6
Student 49	4	5
Student 50	5	6

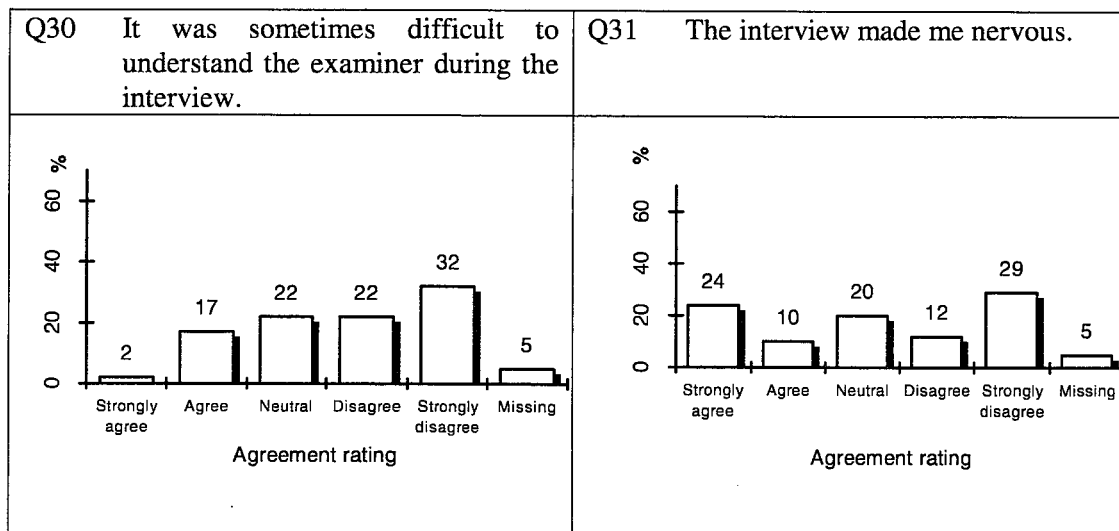
Mean improvement in Speaking Band Score from Test A to Test B	1.7
Maximum improvement in Speaking Band from Test A to Test B	4
Minimum improvement in Speaking Band from Test A to Test B	0

Table 4 Comparison of candidate performance on 2 Speaking tests taken 9 months apart (User Group 2)

From the table above we can see that the mean improvement in performance on the Speaking test was 1.7 with one student achieving an improvement of 4 bands which is quite impressive (student 13). Comparing the overall improvements in the Listening Band Score to the other bands improvements, Speaking ranks as the second highest improvement after Writing.

4.8 Attitudes towards the Speaking test

The first two prompts on the Speaking test asked the candidates whether they found it difficult to understand the interviewer and whether the interview made them nervous.



Some candidates had difficulties with the Speaking test with 19% stating they had difficulty with understanding the examiner and 34% saying the interview made them nervous. The comments on the Speaking test in relation to the interaction between the candidate and the examiner were very positive however which is perhaps surprising given the indications of disquiet felt by some of the candidates:

I like IELTS speaking test!! I was nervous but when I started interview I could relax by examiner.

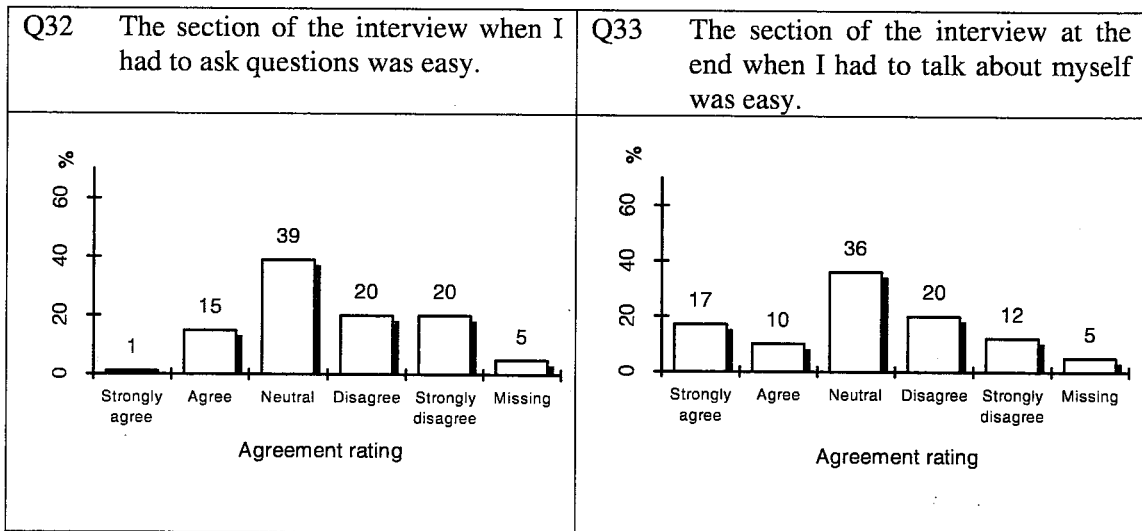
My grammar was so poor. I didn't understand what I said, but I really enjoyed speaking exam. I spoke feeling. I relaxed.

Good test as the examiner makes the atmosphere relaxed. They have to know that when we get nervous, the grammar can be destroyed.

Prompts 32 & 33 investigated the candidates' opinion of different phases in the interview with particular reference to phase 3 where he/she is required to obtain information from the examiner and phase 5⁵ where speculation about the future is asked for.

⁵Editor Phases 3 and 5 are not included in the new Speaking test format introduced in July 2001.

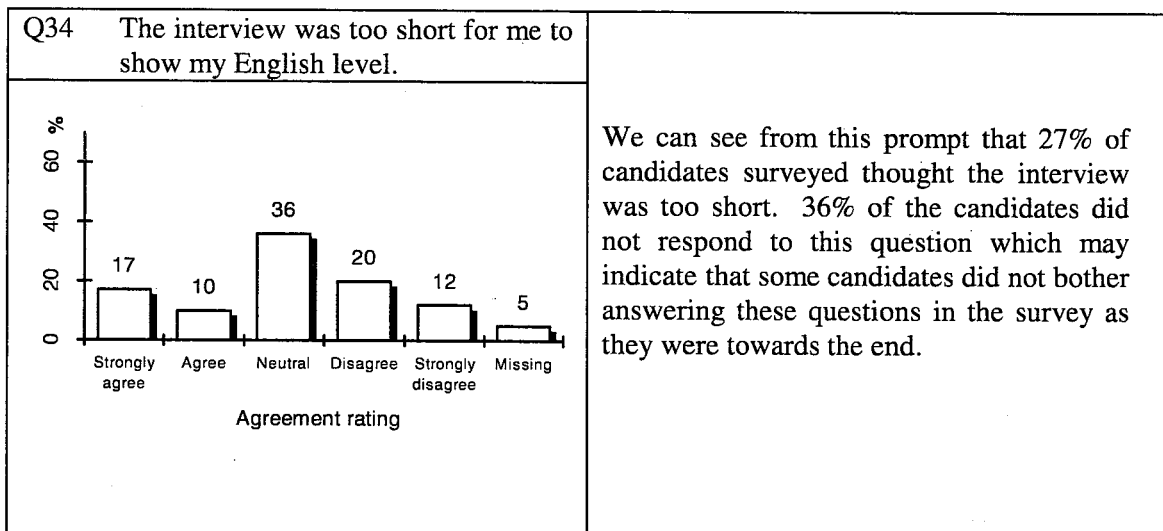
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As some of the candidates had indicated some nervousness with the interview it is perhaps not surprising that some also had difficulty with phase 3 of the interview – 40% disagreed with the notion that it was easy and this is noted in some of the comments on the questionnaire. The response to prompt 33 which investigated the candidates' attitude to the latter part of the interview where he/she is invited to speculate about the future was also interesting as 27% of the candidates stated they thought this section was easy. One comment stressed the difficulty encountered during phase 3 of the interview:

It's a bit hard to questions about the card.

The final prompt in the questionnaire asked whether the interview was too short to show English level.



The final section of the questionnaire was open ended and invited the candidates to comment on anything they liked or disliked about the questionnaire.

The question “Is there anything you *like* about the IELTS?” produced a number of positive comments about the Speaking test:

Nice interviewer in speaking test.

SPEAKING, because I like to talk with someone.

The interviewer is very kind and friendly so I felt relaxing very much. Thank you.

I like speaking test because teachers are very friendly. I can talk easy.

The question “Is there anything you *dislike* about the IELTS?” produced a number of comments about the time allowed for each test module:

A bit too long. We probably need breaks between each test!

Need more time to do writing test. That's not enough to show my skills of English.

I don't like writing, because it was too short time.

I strongly feel that speaking test is not enough to show how I can speak.

The final question was “Do you have any general comments to make about the IELTS test?” and most of the comments were very positive:

There were quite difficult for me. I never had test like this It is real English.

Nothing to say. The IELTS test is the best exam I've ever done, I think. It's a good time to show our skills.

Good test! I really like this test!

I like this exam, because I can compare my English ability last exam and this exam.

5.0 Overall Findings And Conclusions

The profiling of the immigration candidate sample investigated in this report matches the total IELTS candidature for 1999 quite closely with candidates from China (PRC) comprising the largest grouping. The age profile is, however, different for the two groups with few candidates below the age of 20 in the immigration sample. The analysis of overall performance of the immigration sample does not appear to show this group is encountering any significant problems with the IELTS test and indeed when compared to the performance of the total UTS IELTS 1999 candidature, they achieved higher band scores. Some misgivings were expressed about the IELTS test in the survey conducted and these centred around the timing allocation for the Reading and Writing test modules, non-Australian accents used on the Listening modules and particular test item types used in the Reading module with Yes/No/Not Given in particular coming in for some criticism. The overall impression given about the IELTS test in the survey, however, was positive with a number of comments made about the appropriacy and effectiveness of the IELTS test for immigration purposes.

The performance of the secondary school age group in two IELTS tests 9 months apart indicated that although there was a discernible improvement for the group in terms of English proficiency, which is perhaps to be expected, some misgivings were expressed about some

components of the test. The Listening test, especially section 3 and 4, and Reading module, section 3 were both mentioned as a source of concern for some students. The response to the Speaking test was much more positive with a number of students declaring they enjoyed the whole interview. As with the immigration group, the issue of timing of each module was also mentioned.

Further research

The survey of immigration candidates was carried out in Australian and New Zealand IELTS centres. To complement this survey it would be interesting to survey immigration candidates sitting the test in New Zealand only as this would enable a comparison to be made between the two cohorts.

Given the problems some of the secondary school age group were having with sections of the Listening and Reading modules, it would also be informative to investigate further the issues with these sections that were causing problems for this group. In particular, it would be interesting to establish whether it was the textual complexity and/or subject matter dealt with in these sections of the General Training module.

Appendix 1.1

IELTS TEST - CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

A survey commissioned by IELTS Australia

What is your First Language? _____
 Age? _____ Gender (M/F) _____

How have you prepared for the IELTS test?

--	--

For the sections on the writing/reading/listening/speaking test, tick one of the boxes according to how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

LISTENING TEST	Tick ✓ 1 = Strongly agree .. 5 = Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	
There were many words on the tape I didn't understand							Q5
There were some questions I didn't understand							Q6
The instructions in the listening test were easy to understand							Q7
The first section of the listening was easy							Q8
The second section of the listening was easy							Q9
The third section of the listening was easy							Q10
The fourth section of the listening was easy							Q11
The speakers on the tape spoke too fast							Q12
There were some subjects in the listening test I didn't understand							Q13
There was enough time to do the listening test properly							Q14
<i>General comments on listening test:</i>							
.....							
.....							
.....							

READING TEST	Tick ✓ 1 = Strongly agree .. 5 = Strongly disagree						
There were many words in the reading test I didn't understand							Q15
There were some questions I didn't understand							Q16
The instructions in the reading test were easy to understand							Q17
The first section of the reading was easy							Q18
The second section of the reading was easy							Q19
The third section of the reading was easy							Q20
There was enough time to answer the reading test properly							Q21
<i>General comments on reading test:</i>							
.....							
.....							
.....							

1. Impact study of immigration & secondary school IELTS candidates

WRITING TEST		Tick ✓ 1 = Strongly agree .. 5 = Strongly disagree				
Writing test task 1						
The task 1 question was easy to understand						Q22
It was difficult to write an answer because I did not know the subject						Q23
It was difficult to write an answer because I did not have the English words						Q24
I had enough time to answer the question properly						Q25
Writing test task 2						
The task 2 question was easy to understand						Q26
It was difficult to write an answer because I did not know the subject						Q27
It was difficult to write an answer because I did not have the English words						Q28
1 hour was long enough to answer both writing questions (task 1 and task 2)						Q29
General comments on writing test:						
.....						
.....						
.....						
.....						

SPEAKING TEST		Tick ✓ 1 = Strongly agree .. 5 = Strongly disagree				
It was sometimes difficult to understand the examiner during the interview						Q30
The interview made me nervous						Q31
The section of the interview when I had to ask questions was easy						Q32
The part of the interview at the end when I had to talk about myself was easy						Q33
The interview was too short for me to show my English level						Q34
General comments on speaking test:						
.....						
.....						
.....						
.....						
.....						

Is there anything you *like* about the IELTS test?

Is there anything you *dislike* about the IELTS test?

DO YOU HAVE ANY GENERAL COMMENTS TO MAKE ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire

Appendix 1.2 – Immigration candidates' comments on Listening test

Good

British accents were difficult for me to catch. Outside was noisy (car?)

Too short time given to read the questions first

listening test is little past when we practice book.

The first section is very easy but too slow compared to the rest. You tend to relax and think it is easy but then suddenly the speaker on the tape start to speak very fast. The fourth section is way too fast and some difficult words very difficult to catch

Words and sentences easy to catch except for the last section. Overall, not too difficult.

Not very difficult, very nice.

Don't have time to write words while listening

It's better to get easier listening test.

Good organised

I prepare to listen to the second time.

It was very hard

Questions come very frequently.

the test is well designed, but we could have more time between the sections

The speed of the tape is OK

I can't hear very well the Australian accent.

The first section was quite easy, but last section is quite difficult.

good

Too little time to transfer answers

Somethings I feel when I write some words down I miss the listening

Good. It is the students responsibility to learn harder. There should be more cheaper and efficient preparing materials.

The third and fourth section, some words and questions I didn't understand. The tape spoke a little bit fast.

Too much spelling demand.

English accent is hard to understand.

We need a Australian speaker in the tape and also Australian question.

Some words cant understand as quickly we here it.

the teacher asked the questions I am not interested

It's understandable but some of the speakers didn't talk properly.

listening test is too hard for me. it is suitable to candidate for immigration.

General listening test should be different from Academic listening.

It was very basic and doesn't really serve the purpose of an ENGLISH TEST. The speakers were not very clear, something wrong with the speakers.

It was easy except last conversation about American ex-president.

In some part's the listener, should probably be confused, and it look's like an test to show a ability to react quickly

The speaker is quite fair for the listener, but he/she should speak clearly.

Pls. extend 5 minutes.

The fourth part is too difficult.

no enough instructions in the answer sheet.

I found reading the questions time was much less than it required. That makes me to difficult to coordinate between questions and listening.

I thik forth section of listening test must be easy

not easy

I didn't know what to do in the beginning, there was no enough introduction to tell us the model of the question

too fast. more instructions needed as hints. more difficult compare to others

Some questions are hard to be understood without listening the tape. I don't think it is necessary to test listening abilities in this way.

They were good actually but in the section...maybe 3 the library one was difficult for me, it was a bit too fast.

Sometimes I don't whether or not I should stop writing because I'm not sure.

only one time playing the tape

Somewhere the speaker speaks too fast.

The instruction is easy to follow. Full attention on every single words from the tape. Sometimes the speaker speak too fast & miss out certain points.

BRITISH SPEAKERS; HMM....

Overall the listening test was "OK" but the last section of questions was little bit complex.

Its better if its played twice.

Happy and satisfy.

it went out well. no comment.

I did miss some points, but generally it's pretty easy just a matter of concentration.

too fast in the fourth section, but I can still accept it.

Overall it is good but need to concentrate to catch up

It was hard to listen in one time.

A little bit hard

The speaker should a bit faster and more clearly

The listening ex. was easy

Generally os OK

gapfill is quite difficult

Listening test is terrible. I had no enough time to do listening and writing down simultaneously. And the sound effort is the worst one I have met!

LISTENING TEST'S MOST PARTS WERE EASY, SOME PART WAS A LITTLE FASTER. AS A STANDARD OF TEST, IT WAS OK.

There are some mumble words in it that result difficulties in answering some question

difficult to follow up

The speaker speak too fast and sometime not so clear.

speakers on the tape spoke too fast

How could we understand / remember every section??

Nil

listening test is easy but when we have to do reading question & answers simintenously it's difficult.

fair test for General understanding of living English.

1."If you do not know the forms of the question, that will be horrible even if you have very good listening ability. 2. At first, the recorder is not loud enough.

The listening test was easy. The records, sound, conversations everything was fine. But the problem was at the same time the candidates have to listen and write down it on the paper. It is really hard to do the two thing simontaneously.

To do it well, need some practice.

very houd to I am understand because tape very fast and many words all so yours hulef for me

The listening test is difficult. esp. a lot of trickies.

The accent was more defined and some words were spoken undertone, specially in second & third part. Objective wise questions were easy but three word questions were sometimes difficult as speaker speaks fast and in typical accent. very hard test

The test is not that easy as the practice test book, also the format is quite similar

Test seemed quite simple. Real British accent sounded out of place in Australia where people are sometimes harder to understand.

A general problem in the listening section is the right timing. Sometimes there are 2 or 3 questions at once, while sometimes one has to wait for the next question.

Hard

Very clear and very basic english its easy to understand

It's OK.

please add more time to do listening test

listening test was very easy and very godd

It is well-structured, but the last section covers too much political opinion.

it was OK

The speed of speaking is fine but the 4th section is so difficult to follow, there is not enough information - hint to catch

The last part is not easily understood completely.

Listening test must be separately taken that everyone can adjust volume.

There was a bit accent problem otherwise test of the thing was fine

If I was not too nervous in the beginning and in the end, maybe it could have been more easier.

This is a very good test, real situations, from easy to difficult distributed fairly, tricks are reasonable, do not ask for

examinees too much knowledge about detailed understanding of a particular situation which sometimes could be unfair to a new comer.

sections one-three are easy, section four is difficult. I was lost a bit.

It's much more difficult compared with sample test.

the speaker of 4th section talks in the way I am not quite familiar.

The speakers on the tape spoke too fast, the sent from speakers is not clyea.

Sometimes is confusing the order of the questions, ie, you have to write in answer sheets but in the handbook you have an order difficult to follow according to the speaker's order.

none

Appendix 1.3 – Immigration candidates' comments on Reading test

Good

not enough time last section (third) not easy

I think they is not enough time, certainly when you start the last sections, when it gets difficult, you become nervous and it gets difficult to concentrate and that's how you make mistakes. Fifteen minutes more would have been perfect.

Types of questions not so variefied. Too many YES, NO, NOT GIVEN ones in my opinion. It will be better to be permitted more time.

Some questions like 'YES' or 'NO' or 'NOT GIVE' are quite difficult for me easy.

It is difficult to answer questions.

The test time is too short to finish the reading test, I need a half hour more at least.

I couldn't understand

Texts are too long.

there wasn't enough time, third section said very badly.

not enough time.

Time is not enough to finish that.

not enough time.

There are so many complicate vocabs there.

good

The third part is too long.

Generally speaking, it is a good and efficient test. The supervisors are nice.

In second section, it is different to choose the correct heading.

No. Not given. It is difficult to select these two.

good, but some words and questions cant understand poperly

a little bit of difficulties

as the reading test is concerned well, for me I do understand it clearly.

There are too many true or false questions which are sometimes confusing.

Too short time. Question difficult to answer. That is to say two answers can be correct.

True-or false-not-given questions are confusing. some questions can be inferred but it can be classified as "not given" or "true".

still OK

Again it was very basic and not good enough to test a persons English knowledge.

Not enough time

There shld be an additional minutes for you to review the answers.

Pls. extend 10 minutes.

Too much time in the reading section.

Essay, particularly third one, was to big for the time allocated. Needs really fast reading.

not so difficult

It was good.

reasonable and acceptable

They was very difficult in this test and there was not enough time and I think not just only me that thought the same thing.

limited time

Some articles are too long and questions are too many

Last section of the reading test was difficult & couldn't understand some of the terminalism or jargon. Passage is too long on the third section. General is OK.

Overall reading test is "OK" but third section was complex not much time to read and answer them.

A simple one will do.

Happy and satisfy.

good.

to answer properly (perfect) - not enough time

Too many "yes/no/not given" questions.

Too short time to finish all the Questions.

I think that TRUE, FALSE or NOT GIVEN question is not good. FALSE and NOT GIVEN are similar and confusing.

overall it is good but sometime the topic is not familiar

It was hard to answer the questions such as answering TRUE FALSE NOT GIVEN

Confused

The reading test should be more specific about the topic that we are reading

I think the only problem in the reading ex. is the time.

Good

The topic is not general enough that if majored in chemical or the other related subjects I would do better.

YOU SHOULD EXPAND TIME FOR THIS SECTION.

I haven't enough time to answer the questions properly.

not enough time.

not good enough time to answer the reading test properly

Nil

Need more time to read & answer the Questions

fair test for General Reading.

It is difficult to distinct No and Not Given in the question No, Yes, Not Given.

The reading module is also perfect. But in the last sections the passages were too long to read & then answer it. I have a suggestion for this you can make the passage shorter with more information.

this for giste immegrason par pes not for the university sound for cluse

There are too many T/F questions.

It was easy and there was enough time to answer.

hard test

It is better to put a reading passage and questions about it on the same pages.

Generally speak, the reading test is relatively easier than the other sections.

Not too hard. But not easy to get high marks

again very basic and simple english

Not difficult as long as enough exercise is done before the test.

as above

Reading test is good and we learn more good things.

It was good

find

Sometime I can understand very well abot passage, but I can choose the answer because it is confused. I prefer to TOEFL which I took before.

Easy.

Very good way.

It was okay.

Most of the disputes comes from "true.false/not given", sometimes this is examing the logic method of thinking, but naturally this is one advanced part of understanding a language. Others are very practical, relevant skill testings.

reading test is not difficult.

It's easy compared with other section.

there are some questions can be answered either "false" and "not given"

In my opinion wy nid mor time

Try to condense information in the same page, and avoid turn over the page to read the text, makes the applicant lose time and sequence of the questions

not enough time

Appendix 1.4 – Immigration candidates' comments on writing test

1 hour schedule was a little tight.

It was difficult to write task 2 because I did not have an opinion.

Time is not enough. question is also long understand not so easy spend time.

I think the students in general didn't have enough time to finish their work. Why do we get that little time? Normally I like to write essays, but I could not concentrate at the examination, time was going so fast! We would have needed 1 hour more!

Time too limited. Have no spare time to think more carefully about how to write well, but just finish them.

The time is a little bit limited.

The task 2 is very difficult because I haven't enough material to write about it.

Not too bad.

It is not easy.

task 2 was too hard to understand

The topic isn't very close to the Uni student, but it is easy to be understood and more materials for this topic.

need more time!!

Not enough time.

Just need more time

not enough time and the subject I didn't know anything about it.

Task 2 is quite hard. The situation is not familiar to me, hard to think of something to write

The question is not clear.

good

Good, efficient test. The supervisors are good.

The second task was more academic.

Not enough situation was given. Hard to make up stories.

good but some more time need for task 2

Everything is okay and I understand clearly.

1 hour was too short to finish both tasks

In Modern world of technology this test is of no relevance.

The time was very short on this part of the test, compared to the Listening and Reading.

fair enough for the writing test

Pls. extend more 15 minutes

no enough time to write

The questions were all right, but the time was tight. I can write as well as I can.

the subject should be clear rather than ambiguous

I think, if give us more time it would be better.

limited time

Time allocation is very important in this section. I will rate this section as fair level of difficulty.

Overall writing test was "OK".

Should have more time.

Happy and Satisfy.

good.

The topic sometime is more difficult and unfamiliar than others

It was hard to make structures in short time.

Too hard.

A little less time should be given for the written test

Good

I guess that question level fluctuates time by time. Some one knows some arguments very well, he can take advantage, but the others know little about the arguments.

These may result in unfairness

NO COMMENTS

Writing test task 2 is more difficult for me to finish in 40 minutes.

Not enough time.

not good enough time

Time was just right, I would advise the IELTS to provide some rough papers for the writing test.

fair test on writing skills. More difficult part for me.

The time for the task 1 is used more than 20 minutes generally if you want to perfectly to show what the graph shows

It was also fine & understandable. In task 2 it is a bit confusing that in what aspect should I write- the cindergarten ?ys. or the mothers are returning to the workforce of their comments about the children.

this all so littleet hound

Writing is easy. But time is too limited. In ordinary life, we have time to write. Time limited makes the writing very rush and bad.

Easy and effective tool to judge the English competency.

Writing test is ranked second difficult section of IELTS test.

Would be easier with a computer.

Notepads should be provided so that answer sheet stays a bit cleaner.

To write a really good letter or essay with substantiall arguments for and against a certain issue, it is necessary to have more time. Within 1 hour, I mostly focused on structure and to achieve the requires words in each task rather than on the contents.

Tasks are suitable to all participants very good. It made me think, and sharpen my brain out.

Can we have draft paper? Because we don't have enough spaces to draft both questions. Time is not enough, 1.30 for 2 questions will be better.

To finish task 2 on time is not difficult at all. The only problem is that such a short time is pretty hard to arrange your ideas properly. That is, it is hard to write a very good article for this topic in such a short time.

writing test is good and I enjoy my writing test

It was OK

time is so limited

That's my worse part. I reckon.

Very good way.

It takes little bit time to answer the question when you don't know about the topic.

It was okay by me.

One hour is not enough. But maybe 2 hours will make most of the candidates get the same good results. For me, if I got some more time, I can do it better. For a foreigner to write in english, it is benefit for him if have time to review it few times.

The total time is not enough

There is time pressure from the start to the end.

There should be a room on the test paper to write something before start writing the article.

For writing test is not inatt time

I want more easy topic

Appendix 1.5 – Immigration candidates' comments on Speaking test

Good

The interviewer's voice was quite soft and she wasn't that friendly.
everything is suitable.

I have no comments on the speaking test. I was nervous but the teacher made me feel relax.

Some difficult as to how to answer the questions properly. May not have given core answers to them.

examiner is very friendly and I don't feel nervous.

I don't think it is very proper to ask personal questions, such as my future.

I like it.

It is difficult to prepare.

The teachers pronunciation is good and easy to be understood. but why not use earphone?

Very friendly
good.

the questions that I had to answer made me feel nervous.

It's just normal conversation. A pleasant environment made you calm and the examiner is friendly

It's not a good way to test my English ability effectively.

The examiner was very friendly and kind to me, therefore I was not nervous at all. Honestly, I really enjoyed it very much.

Tape recorder made me really nervous

Roll-play section is hard to imagine question for a short time.

good

I enjoy my speaking test coz the examiner deliver easily her words upon having the interview and I do understand everything what she was discussing for.

I had 25 minutes interview and we covered an extensive topics

still OK

no comment

Nothing!

interviewer has good attitude to the candidate

The interview was easy and I didn't have a chance to talk much.

interesting and challenging

The interviewer was good, (John Bell) He made me very comfy when I was in the room, and he spoke easy to understand.

General is the easiest part of the test.

Overall speaking test was good.

Very Good

Happy and Satisfy

good

overall it is good

The interviewer made me relax. He explained the instruction clearly.

O.K.

Good

The most nervous one can drive me mad.

NO COMMENTS

The interview is easy for me.

Good enough.

When nervous could not do the test well

The interviewer was nice, and did give me confident in expressing myself.

fair test on speaking test.

It is also correctly placed. The interviewer was nice & friendly. It was easy to talk about myself & therefore I feel free.

Make students calm down before asking questions.

this OK no problem

Good style of simulating environment

Good and exhaustive

Nice interviewer

It is very good.

Speaking test is very easy I don't have any problem to understanding.

It was fine.

When I nervous I couldn't speak well, but after I relaxed, I can do well.

Very glad to talk to the interviewer.

Very good way.

Jeniffer made me feel completely at ease, & it was nice & enlightening interacting with her.

Interviewer is first class professional people. I was very nervous at first, my voice was even trembling but face to such a nice listener, I gathered my confidence again soon.

Interview is easy

I love speaking test very much

It's interesting and the interviewer is nice.

I'm did not have problems speaking wich the interview, thys test is ezy for my.

The interviewer could give you an overview or introduction about how is going to be the interview, then you can be prepared that you have to ask her some questions. honestly I didn't expected, but it was OK.

examiner very kindful

Appendix 1.6 – Immigration candidates' likes, dislikes and general comments on test

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU *LIKE* ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

This test covers everything for testing my English skill. Like I said at the beginning. It is a very good examination.

The Speaking Test

interview

I believe the speaking test is the best way to see if somebody can express himself can understand English

It's an overall test about the four skills in English.

No

clear

I like the interview test, free talking is quite comfortable.

Reading, speaking

speaking.

Not really.

Yes, the full skills of English.

I can get the result.

No

Total system is good

Is a good opportunity for students or adults from countries which English is not the main language.

Yes, the speaking test, to help me to speak more english. listening as well.

It's a good test to assess my English ability

interviewer is very kind and interesting.

Interview.

writing

No

I thought everyone was very helpful and friendly which made it is easy to site such an examination. There are a great range of subjects, chance to know much more about the world.

yes i like multiple chose

writing

just so so.

The break between reading and writing.

yes, I like all about the IELTS

The examiner.

Everything coz you can show your capability upon speaking, wriing, reading and listening with regards to english.

Its preparation materials are easy to obtain and the structure of the test is easy to follow.

No

The examiners were pleasant especially on the speaking section.

speaking inteviewer is kind

yes I like the way how this was organised.

No

Speaking Test.

yes, it offer me special experiences.
though the result is something like a
nightmare.

It's very practical compared with Japanese
English test.

OK

no

Good facility

efficiency to register

The committees are so kind and it's not
look difficult in taking exam. Also, the
place is in city, so, it's quite comfortable
for me to come.

every staffs was very good.

Just the interview because there's no fixed
restriction in interview. no fixed answers,
you just be yourself.

It is very good test for me to understand
my English ability.

Fun.

Strictly, and challenging

No.

The good thing about IELTS test that I
like is they are doing the good Job by
giving the Education to student.

No

meet a new friends

interview.

reading

Compared with TOEFL. the IELTS tast
has interview.

Yes, it can improve my Emenglish ability

Speaking test

speaking test

Speaking

Comprehensive test

Yes it give me confidence to have a
conversation with other people.

Like or dislike? It's hard to say. But I
would say it is better than TOEFL.

Challenge

Nothing.

There were four different section
(listening, writing, reading, speaking) to
be tested.

No

speaking and interviews

I think this test can indicate our level of
english properly in the three sections
(listening, reading, speaking).

speaking test

Its good fun

Interview W/ goodlooking one

The test really made me to recap my
English. While preparing for my test, my
English improved.

It is easy-going, well organised.

Interview

No

It is easy to take because the test holds
twice a month generally.

The speaking test I enjoyed most.

Yes. It test your real ability of English
Language.

Speaking test is quite good.

It has four modules to test my English in
all aspects.

people accept the result of the test. and the
test given my English standard level.

Good aid to judge the english knowledge.
probably not.

N/A

It's well organised

No special.

Yes, it improves my memory

Held at saturday.

It is not difficult and it is arranged very
well. The staff member are very friendly
and helpful.

Yes, the examiners test speaking very
friendly

Examiners are so polite.

a way to test english level.

No

We know how to learn good Englis, and
good writing.

The English required by the test is very practical.

good structure

N/A

writing, speaking

more vocabulary

It's not difficult to me.

Yes way of exam.

Writing and reading test is good test for recognizing my level of English

I like the people who interview me.

Because she was very good and her way of asking question was superb.

Practical. Fair in terms of not asking for very deep understanding of some local or area customs, etc.

No

No.

the writing section is good because you can give your own opinion about the theme, if you agree or disagree.

with interview is good

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU *DISLIKE* ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

No.

No

Some of the questions seemed to judge my I.Q. rather than my English ability. The test was a bit tricky.

The WRITING TEST, if topic is not given in advance, we cannot be prepared to write with a good structure.

writing.

I believe it is a question of luck whether you score high marks for the listening test.

Why not permitted to retake the test within 3 months?

Reading test is a little bit difficult.

most

It would be better if every one has his own ear-phone.

I dislike the writing task 2 because sometimes it is very confused to me.

Listening

listening.

No fun.

the equipment of listening.

The time is too short.

most of all

I think both reading and listening needs easy text.

should be separate according the level of english and ages. the reading and tasks had a difficult interpretation to my age.

Too long the reading part.

Speaking test, because every examiner has different opinion.

reading

No

Not enough time for reading part.

interview. It is too short for people to understand what level they are.

have to wait for the speaking test. No M.C.

It takes almost a whole day.

Too expensive. Time is not enough

No

yes spelling is difficult for me

listening - filling in blanks. Multiple choice is better.

There should be more preparing materials for it.

No, it isn't

writing.

English test in England people

The fee is expensive.

one thing only, about the listening coz sometime the speaker didn't speak clearly.

I don't like too many true or false questions.

looking at pictures, shapes, and filling in boxes. Answers can vary but how examiners mark is a question.

too difficult

Honestly, I don't see a need for someone who has learnt English for 25 years to do this test.

No

The air conditioning in the exam hall was a bit cool.

not enough time to read and write

No.

No

writing test, it was boring.

Yes, it's listening module, I think I can understand it all without a pencil in my hand!!! but with a pencil, I find myself an idiot.

In reading section, 1 hour is a little bit short for me.

No

Yes I had to do it.

Waiting time before speaking test

The testing room is too big.

Nothing

The test started too early and my place was very far from the city. So I had to get up very early and no bus pass my place on Saturday as well.

about the answers. what you have answered have to be same as the answer sheet that examiner got, even a little bit mistakes, otherwise, you die!

There is no earphone during the listening test.

None

Time-consuming. Miss my weekend.

No.

No

No

Take up my whole Saturday.

Not enough time in reading and writing writing test.

the reading on science topic.

listening

I can't take next test within 3 months after finishing test.

Yes, the topic is unfamiliar and sometimes makes me nervous

Sometimes the subjects of reading test were not familiar for me.

writing test

Writing

The test can only be taken every 3 months

No.

No

The facility of playing tape is poor. Even in China, we use headphones, instead of a single speaker.

Writing test was not long enough to complete 2 tasks.

No

Listening. too quick to follow

Writing the essays. Sometimes that is not indicative of our ability to write in English.

Some people may not write well because they do not know the subject (what to write) not because they cannot write in English

listening test

It takes time

Delayed result. Have to be fast

No, except for the section 3 of the Reading test. I believed most of us have difficulty in choosing the correct title for the answer.

Not at the moment.

Listening

No

Listening facilities are not good.

The listening test. Because of the hearing & writing at the same time.

No

Marking of writing is subject to the subjectivity of Examiners

The speaking module is different from the other tests and I am not familiar

A little bit earlier.

listening test is very hard.

Listening

English listening test should have a speaker with flawless accent and should speak slowly.

The listening module is too long, I mean each section should use the multiple choose.

N/A

Better have earphone when take listening test

N/A

Wait 3 months to retake IELTS. The waiting period maybe too long.

I hope the start time is 9.30, so that candidates not living in city do not need to be in a hurry in the morning.

No.

Time is too short
costing my money

Make me nervous

No

The topic of the last section of the speaking was not familiar by me. Many works I don't know.

reduce the # of students in each room.

too long. interview arrange too late.

Listening

some reading test is not very well presented clearly, such as not given.

It's not necessary to take the test.

Adjustment of time.

Listening and writing test, I don't have time to think and prepare to answer. do not have enough time

No

I really prefer a more comfortable time period for writing.

time for writing is not enough

Waiting a long time for the interview.

It is too long, but I guess there is not other way to measure the English level

None

DO YOU HAVE ANY GENERAL COMMENTS TO MAKE ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

No, thanks!

There seems to be variation in difficulty between test versions.

No

I think IELTS exam is difficult for general I wonder general is made more easy. but academic is suitable.

Just give us some more time!

Not bad.

sometimes, it will be easy, and sometimes it will be difficult. I suggest that a fix form of questions should be adopted.

General Test is not easy.

Why limit the period of per exam (three months?)

MAKE IT EASY PLEASE!

overall it's good. Thanks.

Ielts should be separated by age and level of English, so on the writing task would

be easier for young people to talk about another thinks instead of general interests, which just mature people liked and know how to talk about it.

No.

No.

It's ok.

Interview!!! We have to wait 1-2 hrs generally. It's wasting time!!! I think we should divide into two or 3 groups and when one groups sit on writing test, the other do interview ISN'T IT GOOD IDEA, huh??

No

During the test time, it was almost all the time silent but there were some exceptions such as noise from the outside of the room. I believe that there could be some thing to reduce that.

No is OK

Thanks

No.

Good. More efficient than TOEFL. It focuses on the practical skills.

No comment

I hope the task 2 can change style in writing.

To get the IELTS text book in G. Coast is very difficult. I came to the centre to photocopy the textbook but the listening tape is not available to rent, because I am not a TAFE student. I think more text book and tape should be available at public librar

Please make Australian version of IELTS.

To have more time in reading and writing

Nothing at all coz I learn a lot from it.

I hope the topic covered in this test could be more diversified.

Too many "True-false-not-given" questions.

make listening test easily

Too much time is spent on the test, it is very unfair to spend a full day doing this test.

No

Just fair enough what is done in IELTS

For general training, Listening Test is too difficult.

No, I don't have.

I hope the designer of the text should consider to sweep the examiner's nervousness ASAP, especially those brought about by the listening module.

No

Try to get the speaking section more controllable. I mean get more standardized ways to ask questions and the scope the question refers.

No. and thank you

Reading section too difficult & so I need more time for that, and need more time for writing section as well.

should get high speed to face the exam.

I appreciate all the help from organiser and all candidates to make the test run smoothly.

very well organised.

Very Good

No

None

Thankyou for your help and understanding.

No.

I thought there would be a section on grammar

I think it is better than TOEFL in testing applicators English ability

I think this test is well prepared and very good

No.

No.

It's practical and helpful for daily life. After preparing IELTS you do feel the improvement of English.

No

please provide headphone. shorten the period between two exams. If I fail, I must wait for THREE MONTHS! Why can't the test change the questions frequently so that we don't need to wait.

difficult to get good scores

maybe some changes in writing assessment are needed.

TEST SEEMS APPROPRIATE FOR MIGRATION PURPOSES.

English speaker as their second language should be considerable gets higher mark as the first speaker language.

None.

No

Listening section can not perfectly examine the listening ability.

If the Listening module could be change it will be a more efficient test to justify the candidates listening ability.

Give more general information about IELTS test such as samples of test.

redue the time of giving result. about one week after test.

No.

As above.

Should be easy

It was short of instruction for answer sheet before test. Such as, pen or pencil, how to delete wrong answers, etc. It may need to take question time before test.

No

Not enough materials to prepare for the exam. Only one sample paper is not enough.

It is a good test. Examiners are very good. they are helpful.

No.

Every part of test is relatively fair to test one's English Level.

IELTS is very good. Overseas student must do IELTS test before they learn good english.

The test is good.

It was very good to people who want to coming to Australia

N/A

To understand the main meaning of the essay is more important to write down a certain word.

Very Good!

Again, it is very glad to talk to the interviewer. Her name is Ingrid.

I think you should ask about time adjustment the candidates also.

Nope.

Fair!!

No

No

No.

More time.

expensive

Appendix 1.7 – Secondary school age candidates' comments on Listening test

The third section was difficult because what the radio speaker say is different from the answer we have to write.

I almost didn't understand.

It was difficult.

I did have time to write answers, when I was writing first speaker is doing second questions.

The number parts are a bit too fast so I can't hear nor understand.

I felt the IELTS test which I did today was more difficult than the model tests.

This time is little bit easy but most listening task is difficult for us

It was a bit difficult.

It was not so hard.

very clear!

It was a little bit difficult for me.

I couldn't understand that how to answer the question at first so I was waiting for the next question but it was already gone so I missed some questions and I think I could answer them.

The tape didn't clear so I couldn't get what did he/she say.

In the room I took the exam, because the room was large, the sound reflected and I couldn't hear it clearly. The contents of the exam was good as it contained general topic.

I think it was a bit easy to understand.

I prepared for listening test in advance, so I didn't panic.

This was my second time and I thought both of them were really good in testing my listening skills.

Sometimes I don't understand, when did say the answers. That's mean I lose the question/answer.

Appendix 1.8 – Secondary school age candidates' comments on Reading test

I can't understand some question at all.
please more easy questions.

It was difficult.

I think that was quit hard. If I had a word
which I can't understand that hard to do
that question. Some part is not so difficult
but some part was difficult.

The reading passage is like information.
So it's kind of fun to read but sometimes
it's too difficult words, so I can't
understand sometimes

I was nervous when I saw the Question
papers because there were many words
there so they made me feel nervous.

Sometimes I couldn't understand but it is
basic questions so my skills is poor I
found

It was difficult

Sometimes I couldn't understand the
meaning of the sentence.

very difficult to understand

I didn't understand any questions and
sentences.

there were many questions but not enough
time

I thought this test also had general topic,
and good sources for us to pick up the
informations

It was a bit hard to me, because I don't
understand some words.

I thought it was a bit hard to find the
answers of "Not Given" sometimes.

It's hard to understand that the meanings.

Appendix 1.9 – Secondary school age candidates' comments on Writing test

The letter to a friend was easy to write
because I can write it like an informal
letter and I don't need to write should I or
Please.

I didn't have enough time to write task. I
wanted have another 20 mitutes.

It was difficult subject.

First parts was quite easy but suddenly
section 4 was hard to do that.

I had been learning formal letter such as
complain, request, suggestion, information
& apologies, very had, so I was very sad
when I read the test task.

Task 2 (general) I thought the question
was not appropriate because costumes are
very different among countries.

This time's test was I'm not interested in
the question so I couldn't write very much.

The question should change more popular
thing!

I think too short

I didn't have enough time to finish

It was a bit difficult, but I wasn't confused
because I prepared well.

Writing task test 2 was not enough time to
think and write

just not enough time and question was
hard to explain and to answer.

I misunderstood the word 'Costume' as
custom. Also, if I could write more freely,
I might have done a bit better.

It wasn't that easy because I lack
creativity.

It's hard to write "250 words" like that.

Appendix 1.10 – Secondary school age candidates' comments on Speaking test

The interviewer was very friendly so it was very easy to speak.

Question was difficult to answer. It was high level for me. I had to think a lot.

The interviewer was a nice person.

I like IELTS speaking test!! I was nervous but when I started interview I could relax by examiner.

I had a speaking test at 2.20 in 642 classroom. My examiner was a man who was so kind to me, when I got a word which I couldn't understand that words meaning, then I asked him. He taught some very easy word so I could understand properly. Moreover I

I was thinking what I am going to say, but I couldn't because examiner gave me the subject, so I didn't have a time to introduce myself

Examiner should make good behavior.

I like speaking test, examiner was good.

My grammar was poor.

I was very very nervous.

My grammar was so poor. I didn't understand what I said, but I really enjoyed speaking exam. I spoke feeling. I relaxed, but.

The examiner was not friendly so I think I couldn't do my best.

Good test as the examiner makes the atmosphere relaxed. They have to know that when we get nervous, the grammar can be destroyed.

I had a nice time.

I wanted to talk more because I couldn't show my real skill.

It's a bit hard to questions about the card.

Appendix 1.11 – Secondary School Age Candidates' Likes, Dislikes And General Comments On Test

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU *LIKE* ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

I can know how much I improve better than other test.

Speaking test was quite difficult but It's like real english.

Nothing.

nice interviewer in speaking test.

speaking test

Speaking test and listening test because they're conversation style.

examiners are very kind and helpful

I can take speaking test.

Nothing special

Writing test

Speaking test.

We can do 4 kinds of exam.

The speaking test was so funny.

Reading

Speaking test

SPEAKING, because I like to talk with someone.

Nothing special

I enjoyed the speaking and writing.

Interviewer was kind.

The interviewer is very kind and friendly so I felt relaxing very much. Thank you

We can know our EACH English skills.

Speaking test because speaking test is not boring and make me nervous.

I like speaking, because my favourite English section is speaking.

It is a very good test to test how much my English has improved.

It can test my English thoroughly

I can know my English skill on the best way.

Speaking

I like speaking test because teachers are very friendly. I can talk easy.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU *DISLIKE* ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

speaking made me nervous.

Writing time is short.

Reading was difficult.

It was very cold.

Need more time to do writing test. That's not enough to show my skills of English.

makes me nervous

nothing much

Nothing special

I waited for long time to have speaking exam.

Listening and reading.

Nothing special

the topic of speaking test was so difficult

I saw a lot of Asian who were still writing though it finished.

Interview

writing

Writing test

LISTENING, READING, WRITING, because they are difficult.

difficult

Nothing special

Nothing

The writing room was very very cold.

A bit too long. We probably need breaks between each test!

Reading test because it makes me really annoy.

I don't like writing, because it was too short time.

I strongly feel that speaking test is not enough to show how I can speak

No.

Too cold

Nothing

I dislike reading test because sometimes it shows that I don't understand.

DO YOU HAVE ANY GENERAL COMMENTS TO MAKE ABOUT THE IELTS TEST?

There were quite difficult for me. I never had test like this It is real english.

No

I enjoyed to talk with him very much in English, actually I had no confidence in my English at all but today I could enjoyed to speak English. Thankyou so much, Mr. I had a great time to talk with you.

Writing Task 1 (general test) might be a bit too easy.

Some people who take a IELTS test are not good behavior. It made annoy to me. I

don't like those people. Examiner should more strict to us!

I think this test is fair.

Nothing to say. The IELTS test is the best exam I've ever done, I think. It's a good time to show our skills.

nothing special.

I like this exam, because I can compare my English ability last exam and this exam.

Thank you very much

Nothing special

No.

Good test! I really like this test!

Nothing especially

Nothing special

No.

The listening exam was not very clear but I reckon it is very good questions! Thank you.

I think it a bit difficult for Japanese students because they can do English but it's depends on the test so it's hard for us