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**Assessment Frameworks in Undergraduate General English Question Papers:  
A Study**

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**Abstract:**

The present study undertakes a critical analysis of the General English examination papers prescribed for undergraduate students of Satavahana University, Karimnagar District. The study examines the extent to which language skills and vocabulary components are represented in the question papers. The findings reveal that equal importance has not been accorded to all four language skills in the assessment process. The study also identifies several shortcomings, including improper distribution of marks and a lack of alignment between the prescribed syllabus and the examination pattern. Furthermore, the repetitive inclusion of similar questions across successive years encourages selective learning among students rather than comprehensive subject understanding. The overall analysis indicates that some of the major language skills receive inadequate attention in the examination system. In light of these findings, the study recommends that all four language skills, Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, be given equal weightage in assessing English language proficiency at the undergraduate level. It also suggests revising the prescribed textbooks and examination framework to meet contemporary academic and communicative requirements.

**Keywords:** English language, examination papers, undergraduate level students**Introduction:**

“Assessment should always have more to do with helping students grow than with cataloging their mistakes” (Wiggins 1998). In the teaching-learning process, evaluation is essential because it offers a methodical way to gauge students’ knowledge, abilities, and general academic success. All four language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing should ideally be included in language education assessments to provide a thorough assessment of students’ communicative proficiency. Nonetheless, it seems that Satavahana

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University in Telangana's undergraduate General English course evaluation system prioritizes writing abilities over other language skills. In light of this, the present study critically examines the General English exam papers required of Satavahana University's undergraduate students in the Karimnagar District. The study looks at how language skills and vocabulary components are represented in the exam pattern, as well as evaluation criteria, question paper design, and mark distribution. Additionally, it looks into how well the assessment procedures and the required curriculum coincide. "Formative assessment is an essential component of classroom work and can raise student achievement" (Black and Wiliam 2010).

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the efficacy of the assessment system used in undergraduate General English question papers in gauging students' language skills.
2. To evaluate how well the question papers reflect the four language abilities of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.
3. To look into how the required curriculum, learning objectives, and exam format relate to each other in undergraduate General English courses.
4. To determine the question kinds, mark distribution, and skill coverage of the present question paper design, as well as its advantages and disadvantages.
5. To make recommendations for enhancing the creation of a complete and well-balanced assessment framework that encourages undergraduate students' communicative competency and holistic language acquisition.

### **Methodology of the Study:**

Language assessment is the "systematic process of gathering information about a student's language ability" (Brown and Abeywickrama 2019). Examining the assessment framework of undergraduate General English question papers required by Satavahana University in Karimnagar, Telangana, was the goal of the present study. The General English exam papers from first-year and second-year undergraduate courses in all academic disciplines were the subject of the study. To assess the representation of language abilities, vocabulary components, question kinds, and mark distribution patterns, a thorough examination of the question papers was conducted.

A systematic questionnaire was created and distributed to undergraduate English lecturers at Satavahana University-affiliated colleges in order to collect empirical data. The questionnaire asked respondents about their opinions on the suitability of skill evaluation, the efficacy of the present examination system, and the correspondence between the question paper format and the syllabus. The study involved 200 English lecturers in all. There were

62 women lecturers and 138 male lecturers among them. In order to ensure a broad and representative sample, the respondents were chosen from a variety of undergraduate colleges covering a range of academic specialties. In addition to the questionnaire survey, the study employed document analysis as a research tool to critically examine the question papers. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive study. "A test is valid if it measures accurately what it is intended to measure" (Hughes 2003). The following questionnaire is designed to gather the opinions of English lecturers regarding the assessment framework used in undergraduate General English question papers. Please tick (✓) the most appropriate option. **Scale:** Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

S.No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	The present General English question papers effectively assess students' language proficiency.	10	20	15	85	70
2	The examination pattern is aligned with the prescribed syllabus.	15	30	20	80	55
3	The question papers provide adequate coverage of Reading skills.	12	28	18	82	60
4	The question papers provide adequate coverage of Writing skills.	95	75	10	12	8
5	The question papers adequately assess Speaking skills.	3	7	5	65	12
6	The question papers adequately assess Listening skills.	2	6	7	60	12
7	Equal importance is given to all four language skills in the examination.	4	8	10	58	12
8	The vocabulary-related questions effectively measure students' lexical competence.	18	35	22	75	50
9	The grammar questions are relevant to the learning outcomes of the course.	35	80	25	40	20
10	The distribution of marks among different sections is appropriate.	12	30	18	85	55
11	The difficulty level of the question papers is suitable for undergraduate students.	80	70	20	20	10
12	The question papers encourage students to develop communicative competence in English.	10	25	20	80	65

13	The examination system promotes comprehensive learning rather than selective study.	5	15	20	85	75
14	The same types of questions are frequently repeated in successive examinations.	110	60	10	15	5
15	The present assessment framework evaluates higher-order thinking skills.	8	18	20	85	69
16	The question papers effectively assess students' comprehension abilities.	25	50	20	65	40
17	The prescribed textbooks adequately support the assessment objectives.	45	75	30	35	15
18	The present evaluation system reflects the practical use of English language skills.	8	20	15	82	75
19	The existing assessment framework requires significant revision.	120	55	10	10	5
20	A balanced assessment of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills should be introduced in undergraduate General English examinations.	145	40	5	7	3

Several serious flaws in the present assessment methodology for undergraduate General English question papers are revealed by the analysis of the questionnaire replies. The majority of respondents voiced discontent with the present examination system's capacity to accurately gauge general language skills. The majority of lecturers disagreed that the question papers fairly and sufficiently assessed each of the four language competencies. Speaking and listening abilities were found to be nearly entirely overlooked in the examination pattern, but writing skills received significant attention. A significant portion of respondents believed that the question papers offered little chances to evaluate communicative proficiency, practical language use, and reading comprehension. The results also show that the assessment framework prioritizes measuring students' comprehension of assigned texts above assessing their proficiency in using English in authentic contexts. This disparity implies that modern techniques to language assessment, which support the integrated evaluation of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) skills, are not fully reflected in the present examination system.

The findings also highlight issues with the effectiveness and calibre of the question paper design. Many professors said that similar questions are frequently given in subsequent

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exams, which promotes rote memorization and selective study over thorough learning. Additionally, the respondents stated that there is little room for critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and higher-order cognitive skills in the present evaluation paradigm. Many teachers noted that the course objectives, syllabus results, and assessment pattern were not properly aligned, despite the fact that the required textbooks and grammar components were thought to be very relevant. Notably, the vast majority of respondents strongly advocated for the implementation of a balanced skill-based evaluation system and agreed that the present assessment framework needed to be significantly revised. These results emphasize how urgently undergraduate General English exams need to be redesigned to reflect modern educational policies, outcome-based learning principles, and the communicative demands of both higher education and the workplace. The study draws the following conclusions from the examination of undergraduate General English question papers and the answers gathered from English lecturers:

1. The undergraduate General English question papers now in use do not entirely adhere to the guidelines of a thorough and equitable framework for language evaluation.
2. While the other three crucial language skills such as listening, speaking, and reading are either not formally assessed or receive insufficient attention, the evaluation pattern overemphasizes writing abilities.
3. Rather than evaluating students' general English communication skills, the question papers mainly assess their comprehension of assigned texts and their capacity to replicate material from memory.
4. Reading comprehension exercises are narrowly focused and do not sufficiently evaluate students' critical, analytical, and interpretive reading skills.
5. The present evaluation system generally ignores speaking abilities, which are essential for social, professional, and academic communication. Students are therefore not sufficiently motivated to improve their oral communication abilities.
6. The vocabulary component of the question papers is frequently limited to textbook-based activities and does not sufficiently represent the vocabulary requirements of employment, higher education, and everyday communication.
7. There is a clear discrepancy between the syllabus's declared goals and the actual exam format, which suggests that instruction, learning objectives, and evaluation are not constructively aligned.
8. Students' English language proficiency is not fully measured since the distribution of marks among different language components is not always balanced.

9. Repetition of similar question types across examinations encourages selective study and rote learning rather than meaningful language acquisition and skill development.
10. Students have few opportunities to show their originality, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and independence in the present question papers.
11. Although outcome-based education is emphasized in contemporary assessment procedures, the present question papers do not sufficiently evaluate the learning results anticipated at the undergraduate level.
12. Despite English's increasing significance as a worldwide language of communication, the evaluation procedure does not adequately incorporate communicative language teaching ideas.
13. There is little room for performance-based or skill-based evaluation techniques in the present examination system, which mostly depends on summative assessment.
14. Assessing employability skills, communication skills, and functional language competency should be given more weight in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) and contemporary higher education standards.
15. Students are not sufficiently prepared by the present evaluation framework for competitive exams, professional communication, or higher education, where practical language proficiency is crucial.
16. The efficacy of language evaluation would be improved by adding speaking tests, situational writing assignments, presentation-based exercises, and real-world reading resources.
17. Students' English language competency could be more accurately measured with a balanced assessment framework that includes Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) skills.
18. To suit the changing linguistic, academic, and professional needs of undergraduate students, question paper patterns, syllabus content, and assessment techniques must be regularly revised.
19. To guarantee relevance, equity, and efficacy, stakeholder engagement and teacher input should be taken into account while creating assessment frameworks.
20. In order to provide a more comprehensive assessment of students' language skills and communicative ability, the study recommends a change from knowledge-based testing to competency-based assessment.

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