

The pro and con sides to using multiple choice tests at the college level

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Your full June 10, Pros and Cons of Using Multiple Choice Tests at the College Level Multiple choice tests are one way of examining students' knowledge, in which they are given several options out of which they have to select one.

This type of examination is conducted normally at higher level of studies, like in colleges and universities. There can be many pros and cons of using multiple choice questions at college level. This paper tends to describe two pros and two cons of multiple choice tests; and, the final paragraph is personal reflection on the topic.

Hughes suggests that multiple choice tests benefit those examiners who do not have ample time going through long essays and marking them. Scoring hundreds of long essays is impossible when time is short, and thus, examiners find it practically easy to mark multiple choice tests. The number of test-takers is also important. Multiple choice tests are famous for their practicality and reliability in this manner. They can be scored very easily through a computer scanner. This has also reduced the testing time. So, time is saved at every step while using multiple choice tests.

Tamir suggests in his research that multiple choice tests are especially beneficial for those students who are not good at writing. Writing is a skill which every student does not possess; and, often times it so happens that those students pass with flying marks who are skilled at explaining the theoretical portion. Multiple choice questions benefit those who are skilled more at understanding concepts, whether or not they can write well.

Now, let's discuss the cons. Ajideh and Esfandiari compared the usage of multiple choice tests and cloze-tests while examining vocabulary proficiency of the students. The sample contained 21 Iranian EFL students. They found

out that the students who performed on cloze-tests could have shown the similar results when they were examined through multiple choice tests. So, according to the researchers, multiple choice tests could be substituted for multiple choice tests. This explains that students' proficiency does not increase when the method of examination is multiple choice tests.

Woodford and Bancroft assert that when a student is examined through multiple choice questions, he has 25% possibility of guessing the right answer, even if he does not know the answer at all. He can guess by eliminating the possibly wrong answers, thus reaching the possibly correct answer. Thus, even if he does not possess sufficient knowledge, his right guessing may lead him to success. This is the discrepancy of multiple choice tests, which can be eliminated through theoretical tests.

It is concluded that, although multiple choice tests have many pros in terms of time efficiency and ease of checking, yet the cons outweigh in a sense that multiple choice tests do not tend to measure the students' writing skills, and productive and receptive capabilities. These skills are mandatory for success in the long term, and multiple choice tests fail to measure them. A multiple choice test is more like a guessing game, in which the student has the potential to pass by guessing the right answer, even if he is not equipped with enough knowledge. His knowledge can be better measured through theoretical examination.

Works Cited

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