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**A Corpus-Based Analysis of the English Placement Test's
Efficiency at Ain Temouchent University's Intensive Language
Teaching Centre**

*A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for a
Master's Degree in Didactics and Applied Languages*

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Dedication

I dedicate this research work with deepest gratitude and affection to:

*My beloved **mother**, whose unwavering love, endless sacrifices, and support have been my guiding light throughout this journey. To the cherished memory of my late **father** and **grandfather**, to my dear **siblings**, **grandmother**, and the rest of my family, whose unconditional love and belief in me have been my greatest strength. To my **closest friends** and those special individuals who stood by me, offering encouragement, laughter, and faith in my success, your presence has been a true blessing.*

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Abstract

This study explores the under-researched phenomenon of English proficiency testing within Algerian Centres for Intensive Language Teaching, addressing a significant research gap. It evaluates the efficiency and accuracy of the English placement test employed at Ain Temouchent University's Intensive Language Teaching Centre in assessing learners' proficiency levels. Employing a corpus-based methodology, the research analyses the linguistic features of the placement test through word frequency analysis, lexical richness, and grammar pattern examination. Data were collected via two semi-structured questionnaires targeting teachers of English at the Intensive Language Teaching Centre and the test proposer to assess the alignment of placement test results with learners' actual proficiency and international standards. Findings indicate that although the test is linguistically well-designed and aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and Cambridge testing principles, its practical effectiveness is limited by the absence of speaking and listening components and an overemphasis on grammar. Teachers generally perceive the test as outdated and insufficiently comprehensive, highlighting discrepancies between passive and active language skills among learners. Comparisons with internationally recognized tests, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language and the International English Language Testing System, reveal differences in format and skills coverage, but confirm similarities in scoring criteria and proficiency descriptors. The study concludes with evidence-based recommendations to expand the test to cover all four language skills, update its content and format, improve validity and reliability through systematic development, and establish ongoing feedback mechanisms to enhance assessment quality.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

- 1- CEIL:** Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues.
- 2- EFL:** English as a Foreign Language.
- 3- CEFR:** Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- 4- TOEFL:** Test of English as a Foreign Language.
- 5- IELTS:** International English Language Testing System.
- 6- ILTC:** Intensive Language Teaching Centre.

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General Introduction

English has solidified its position as the world's most spoken language, with an estimated 1.5 to 2 billion speakers globally, encompassing native, second-language, and foreign-language speakers (British Council, 2020; Ethnologue, 2023). Approximately 400 million individuals speak English as their first language, making it the third most spoken native language after Mandarin Chinese and Spanish (Ethnologue, 2023). Additionally, around 1.1 billion people use English as a second language for education, work, or daily communication, while 750 million are learners of English as a foreign language (EF English Proficiency Index, 2022). The widespread adoption of English is driven by its role as the dominant language of international business, science, technology, and academia, as well as its status as a global lingua franca (Crystal, 2003). In Algeria, as in many other countries, English proficiency is increasingly seen as a valuable skill, particularly in higher education and professional settings. The Intensive Language Teaching Centre (CEIL) at the University of Ain Temouchent is an institution that aims to enhance students' English language skills through structured programs and assessments.

The efficiency of English proficiency tests is a critical area of research, as these tests not only evaluate language skills but also influence teaching methodologies and learning outcomes (Hill & Parry, 1994). Traditional testing methods often focus on reading comprehension and multiple-choice questions, which may not fully capture a student's ability to use English in real-world contexts (British Council, 2020). This gap between test English and real-world English can lead to an impoverished learning experience, where students are trained to perform well on tests rather than to communicate effectively in diverse settings (Hill & Parry, 1994).

In the CEIL context, knowing the effectiveness of its English proficiency tests is vital in ensuring that the tests capture the goals of the centre's education and the needs of its learners. This study seeks to assess the effectiveness of the tests as a measure of true proficiency in the language

and how they might be improved in terms of reflecting real-life uses of the language. In doing this, it hopes to join the general debate on the teaching and learning of a language as well as its testing.

1. Statement of the problem

Assessing English language proficiency is critical to language education, particularly in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language. In Algeria, the Intensive Language Teaching Centres (CEILs) play a significant role in providing English language instruction to university students and other learners. To the best of our knowledge, only two research studies with similarities to the present study on local English proficiency tests in Algerian CEILs were found. The two research studies provide some insights into the assessment practices at CEILs in Algeria. The first study, *An Investigation of EFL Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions towards the Placement Test Assessment* (Outas & Belaoura, 2021), examines the validity and reliability of the placement test at CEIL Jijel University. The second study, *The Role of Grammar and Vocabulary-based Placement Tests in Identifying EFL Learners' Entry-level at the CEIL of Chlef* (Benali Reguieg et al., 2023), evaluates the effectiveness of an online grammar-vocabulary placement test in placing learners according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). While these studies offer valuable contributions, several gaps remain unaddressed. Namely, the phenomenon of English proficiency testing in Algerian CEILs is understudied. While the two studies provide insights into the placement tests at CEIL Jijel and CEIL Chlef, there is a lack of research on the efficiency and accuracy of English proficiency tests at other CEILs, including Ain Temouchent University. This gap limits our understanding of how these tests function across different Algerian universities and whether they consistently measure learners' proficiency levels. Another gap is that neither of the two studies employs corpus analysis as a methodological tool. Corpus analysis would provide an objective and data-based method for

assessing the linguistic features of the tests, including the vocabulary complexity, grammatical structures, and the type of texts being used. Such an approach highlights the methodological gap in the existing studies, as the tests' linguistic requirements and their compatibility with international standards might not be represented fully. Finally, the studies do not explicitly compare the local CEIL tests to internationally recognised English proficiency tests, such as the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System). Such a comparison would help determine whether the local tests meet global standards and adequately prepare students for international contexts where English proficiency is required.

2. Research Aims and Objectives

To address these gaps, this study aims to:

- Explore the Understudied Phenomenon of English Proficiency Testing in Algerian CEILs.
- Evaluate the efficiency and accuracy of the English placement test used at the Intensive Language Teaching Centre (CEIL) of Ain Temouchent University in measuring learners' proficiency levels in the English language.
- Employ corpus analysis as a methodological tool to objectively evaluate the linguistic features of the English proficiency test.
- Compare the local CEIL Test to internationally recognised English Proficiency Tests such as TOEFL and IELTS.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations for refining the local test design, content, and assessment criteria.

3. Research Questions

The research study attempts to answer the following questions:

- How efficient and accurate is the English placement test at the CEIL of Ain Temouchent University in measuring learners' language proficiency?
- What are the teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the English placement test at CEIL of Ain Temouchent University?
- To what extent does this test align with internationally recognised English Placement tests such as TOEFL and IELTS?

4. Research hypotheses

Based on the aforementioned questions, it is hypothesized that:

- The English placement test at the CEIL of Ain Temouchent University is efficient and accurate in measuring learners' language proficiency.
- Teachers perceive the English placement test at CEIL Ain Temouchent as effective in assessing learners' language abilities; however, they may identify specific areas where the test could be improved.
- The English placement test at CEIL Ain Temouchent shows slight alignment in a few aspects with internationally recognised tests like TOEFL and IELTS.

5. Research methodology

In this research on the efficiency of the CEIL placement test of English at Ain Temouchent University, a mixed-methods approach was employed to evaluate the test's effectiveness. Three key research instruments were utilized. First, a corpus analysis of the test was conducted to examine its structure, content, and alignment with language proficiency standards. Second, a semi-

structured questionnaire was administered to CEIL English teachers to gather their critical insights on how well the placement test reflected students' proficiency levels in the classroom. Finally, a second semi-structured questionnaire was sent to the test developer teacher to uncover its origins, its process of design, and conformity with international standards. An assessment of the test's efficacy, precision, and conformity with international standards is performed using this triangulation of sources.

6. Structure of the research:

This research study is organised into three major chapters. The first is the literature review in Chapter One. It begins by introducing the research topic before discussing an overview of international tests in English and the criteria used to evaluate them. Then there is further explanation of how tests have been criticised and a detailed discussion on the theoretical framework used by the research study. The chapter also examines English language proficiency tests in Algerian CEILs, highlighting the issues and concerns that are unique to this setting, and summarises the discussed key points as a conclusion. Chapter Two deals with research methodology. It starts with an introduction, declaring the research objectives and design. The research population and sampling method are then described, along with a description of the research instruments employed. The procedures used in data collection and the data analysis procedures are explained. An overview of the methodological approach concludes the chapter. Chapter Three presents the study's findings and discussion. It begins with an introduction, followed by a step-by-step analysis of the findings. The findings are then discussed and interpreted in relation to the research hypotheses, leading to practical recommendations and suggestions for improvement. Lastly, the limitations of the study are discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary of the most significant findings and implications for the discipline.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Chapter One: Literature Review

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1.1. Introduction

This chapter comprehensively reviews the existing research on the key aspects of international English proficiency testing and its application in Algerian CEILs. It examines the landscape of major English tests, their evaluation criteria, and common criticisms. The discussion then explores relevant theoretical frameworks before focusing on English testing practices in Algerian CEILs and the associated challenges.

1.2. Overview of International English Tests

When it comes to proving your English skills for studying abroad, working overseas, or moving to a new country, international tests like IELTS, TOEFL, and others are the go-to benchmarks. These exams measure how well someone can listen, read, write, and speak in English, often using frameworks like the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) to standardize scores (Kings Education, 2024). But not all tests are created equal; each has its own quirks, audiences, and even regional biases.

Take IELTS, for example. Run by organizations like the British Council, it's accepted by over 11,000 universities and institutions worldwide (IELTS, n.d.). What's interesting is that IELTS offers two versions: one for students aiming for university (Academic) and another for people applying for work visas (General Training). Meanwhile, TOEFL leans heavily into American English and is a favourite for U.S. and Canadian universities (SBS, 2024). Then there's Cambridge English, popular in Europe, with exams like the C1 Advanced that stick with you for life, with no expiry date (Kings Education, 2024).

However, here is the catch: critics argue these tests might not be as fair as they seem. Researcher Mohsin Hamid (2014) points out that exams like IELTS and TOEFL tend to favour

“inner-circle” English varieties (think British or American accents) over the rich diversity of global Englishes. This could disadvantage test-takers from countries like India or Nigeria, even if their English skills are strong. On top of that, newer digital tests like Duolingo’s English Test are shaking things up with quick, online formats, though some question their accuracy (SBS, 2024).

How these exams are scored also varies wildly. IELTS uses real humans to assess speaking skills, which feels more personal, while PTE grades everything by algorithm (Kings Education, 2024). This makes you wonder: can a computer really judge language fluency as well as a person? These differences matter because universities and governments often pick one test over another based on what they value most, whether face-to-face interaction or advanced technological efficiency.

1.3. Criteria for International English Tests

International English proficiency tests are designed to assess the language abilities of non-native speakers, ensuring they meet the linguistic requirements for academic, professional, or immigration purposes. These tests evaluate four core skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The criteria for these tests often emphasize validity, reliability, practicality, authenticity, and washback, as outlined by Bachman and Palmer (1996) and Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) (Kabir, 2018).

Validity is a foundation of language testing, ensuring that the test measures what it claims to measure (Weir, 2005). For instance, the IELTS writing test has been scrutinized for its content validity, particularly in non-native contexts like Bangladesh, where tasks may not fully align with the target language use (TLU) domains of local test-takers (Kabir, 2018). Similarly, Arefsadr et al. (2022) found that IELTS candidates often score lower in writing due to test design and scoring

criteria that prioritize native-speaker norms over communicative proficiency, which may not reflect the test-takers' true abilities in World Englishes (WEs) contexts.

Reliability ensures consistency in test results across different administrations and raters. The IELTS employs multiple raters and analytic scales to enhance reliability, yet inconsistencies persist, particularly in writing assessments where rater bias and topic familiarity can influence scores (Kabir, 2018; Arefsadr et al., 2022). For example, Mickan and Motteram (2006, as cited in Kabir, 2018) noted that IELTS writing tasks often require general knowledge and critical thinking skills beyond language proficiency, disadvantaging test-takers from certain educational backgrounds.

Practicality refers to the feasibility of administering the test, considering factors like cost, time, and resources. While tests like IELTS and TOEFL are widely accepted, their high costs can be prohibitive for candidates in developing countries (Kabir, 2018). Recent developments, such as the approval of four new English language tests for Canada's Student Direct Stream (CIC News, 2023), highlight efforts to diversify options and improve accessibility.

Authenticity involves the degree to which test tasks mirror real-world language use. Critics argue that IELTS writing tasks lack authenticity in non-native contexts, as they often reflect anglophone cultural and rhetorical norms (Arefsadr et al., 2022; Kabir, 2018). For example, Moore and Morton (1999, as cited in Kabir, 2018) found that IELTS Task 2 essays differ significantly from university assignments, raising questions about their relevance to academic success.

Washback, or the impact of testing on teaching and learning, is another critical criterion. Positive washback occurs when tests encourage effective language learning practices, while negative washback may lead to teaching to the test (Hughes, 2014). In Bangladesh, the prevalence

of IELTS coaching centres that focus on test-taking strategies rather than genuine language proficiency exemplifies negative washback (Kabir, 2018).

Institutions like Murdoch University (2021) and the University of Reading (2024) provide guidelines on acceptable English proficiency tests, emphasizing the need for tests to meet these criteria to ensure fairness and accuracy. As the demand for English proficiency testing grows, incorporating World Englishes perspectives and addressing the diverse needs of global test-takers will be essential for the continued relevance and validity of these assessments (Arefsadr et al., 2022; Kabir, 2018).

1.4. Criticism of International English Tests

International English proficiency tests, such as IELTS and TOEFL, have faced significant criticism regarding their fairness, cultural bias, and impact on language teaching and learning. One major critique is the native-speaker bias embedded in these tests, which often prioritizes Inner Circle (e.g., British, American) linguistic norms over World Englishes (Zhang, 2022). This bias disadvantages test-takers from Outer and Expanding Circle countries, where English is used as a second or additional language but follows different communicative conventions. For example, Zhang (2022) argue that standardized tests fail to account for local linguistic innovations, penalizing test-takers for deviations from native-speaker standards even when their usage is intelligible and contextually appropriate.

Another criticism concerns washback effects, where high-stakes testing influences teaching practices in ways that may not align with broader language learning goals. Bailey (1999) defines washback as the impact of testing on teaching and learning, which can be either positive (encouraging communicative competence) or negative (promoting test-taking strategies over

genuine proficiency). In many cases, international English tests lead to narrow teaching methodologies, as instructors focus excessively on exam preparation rather than fostering real-world language skills (Khamis, 2019). ETS (2010) acknowledges this issue, noting that selective testing, where only certain skills are assessed, can distort curricula by sidelining unassessed competencies such as pronunciation or pragmatic fluency.

The authenticity of test tasks has also been questioned. Fulcher and Davidson (2009) argue that many standardized test tasks do not reflect real-world language use, particularly in academic or professional settings. For instance, IELTS Writing Task 2 requires test-takers to produce an argumentative essay under strict time constraints, a task that may not align with the extended, research-based writing expected in universities (Read, 2022). Similarly, speaking tests often employ artificial interaction formats (e.g., scripted examiner questions) that fail to measure spontaneous conversational ability effectively (Fulcher & Davidson, 2009).

Additionally, reliability in scoring is an enduring problem. Raters, even after strict rater training, may be inconsistent in subjective scoring in writing and speaking tests, as well as whenever raters unwittingly favour certain linguistic styles or accents (Read, 2022). Test anxiety and unfamiliarity with test styles further reduce scores, i.e., scores may not always truly reflect proficiency (Khamis, 2019).

Finally, the economic and accessibility barriers of these tests have been criticized. High registration fees and limited test centre availability disproportionately affect test-takers from low-income regions, reinforcing global inequities in education and migration opportunities (Zhang, 2022).

In conclusion, although international English tests perform a crucial gatekeeping role, their adherence to native-speaker norms, controversial washback impact, and absence of task

authenticity cast doubt upon their fairness and validity. Future reforms should consider incorporating World Englishes perspectives and designing assessments that better reflect real-world language use.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

The evaluation of language proficiency tests requires a robust theoretical foundation to ensure their validity, reliability, and overall usefulness. This study adopts Bachman and Palmer's (1996) framework of test usefulness as its primary theoretical lens, which provides a comprehensive approach to assessing the quality and effectiveness of language tests. According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), a test's usefulness is determined by six interrelated qualities: reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactiveness, impact, and practicality. These components collectively ensure that a test not only measures what it claims to measure but also aligns with real-world language use and educational objectives.

Reliability refers to the consistency of test results across different administrations, ensuring that scores remain stable regardless of external factors (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). In the context of the CEIL's English proficiency test, reliability would involve examining whether the test produces consistent outcomes for students with similar proficiency levels.

Construct validity, the cornerstone of Bachman and Palmer's (1996) framework, ensures that the test accurately assesses the intended language abilities. This involves defining the construct (e.g., communicative competence) and verifying that test tasks align with it. For instance, if the CEIL test aims to measure academic English proficiency, its tasks should reflect the linguistic demands of university settings.

Authenticity evaluates how closely test tasks mirror real-world language use (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). A test lacking authenticity may fail to predict how test-takers perform in actual communicative situations. For example, a writing task that requires students to compose an academic essay would be more authentic than one that focuses solely on grammar drills.

Interactiveness considers the degree to which test-takers engage with the test tasks, drawing on their language knowledge, cognitive strategies, and personal experiences (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). A highly interactive test would involve tasks that require critical thinking and problem-solving, rather than rote memorization.

Impact examines the test's broader effects on stakeholders, including students, teachers, and institutions (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Positive impact might include improved teaching practices, while negative impact could lead to "teaching to the test" at the expense of broader language skills.

Finally, practicality assesses whether the test can be administered efficiently given available resources, such as time, funding, and personnel (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). A test that is too costly or time-consuming may not be feasible for institutional use.

This framework will guide the evaluation of the CEIL's English proficiency test at Ain Temouchent University, addressing its strengths and limitations in terms of reliability, validity, and alignment with students' academic needs. By applying Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on language test validation and improvement, particularly in Algerian higher education contexts.

1.6. English Proficiency Tests in Algerian CEILs

Intensive Language Teaching Centres (CEILs) serve as vibrant language education hubs within Algerian universities, playing a dual role in enhancing linguistic competencies and facilitating academic and professional advancement. Established through collaborations between the Algerian government and the Ministry of Higher Education exemplified by institutions like CEIL Jijel (founded in 2011) and CEIL Ain Temouchent these centres cater to diverse populations, including university students, PhD candidates, faculty members, professionals, and international students (CEIL Batna 2, 2023; Université Sétif-1, 2024). CEILs offer instruction in multiple languages, with English programs ranging from general proficiency courses to discipline-specific training, such as English for Law, Medicine, and Management, tailored to meet both academic and labour-market demands.

A cornerstone of CEILs' operations is their placement testing systems, which ensure accurate proficiency assessment and appropriate course allocation. While methodologies vary across centres, most employ standardized written tests focusing on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. For instance, CEIL Ain Temouchent administers a 50-question multiple-choice (MCQ) grammar-vocabulary test to place learners in seasonal programs, while CEIL Jijel utilizes the New Headway Placement Test a 100-question MCQ exam divided into grammar (31 items), vocabulary (44 items), and reading (25 items) aligned with CEFR levels. Scoring thresholds determine placement: below 49 (A1), 49–65 (A2/B1), 65–85 (B2), and 86+ (eligible for advanced oral testing for C1/C2). Other CEILs, such as those at Université Sétif-1 and Université M'hamed Bougara (Tizi Ouzou), leverage digital platforms like Moodle for efficient online testing, whereas CEIL Chlef has developed its own CEFR-aligned grammar-vocabulary test to balance accuracy with administrative practicality (Benali Reguieg et al., 2023; UMMTO, 2024).

Beyond placement, CEILs like Ain Temouchent also support international mobility by issuing proficiency certifications for programs like Erasmus+, underscoring their role in global academic integration. By combining internationally recognized frameworks with localized adaptations, Algerian CEILs attempt to optimize language education while addressing institutional and learner-specific needs.

International English proficiency tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS, are well-known for their comprehensive four-skill assessments, which evaluate listening, reading, writing, and speaking abilities. These tests aim to provide a holistic measure of a candidate's communicative competence and are widely used for academic admissions, professional certifications, and immigration purposes (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). In contrast, placement tests at Algerian CEILs, such as the grammar-vocabulary-based test implemented at Hassiba Benbouali University of Chlef (UHBC), focus on evaluating knowledge of language structures and lexical items to determine learners' proficiency levels efficiently (Benali Reguieg et al., 2023).

The four-skill approach in international tests ensures that candidates are assessed across both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) skills. This comprehensive evaluation is handy for contexts where communicative competence is critical. However, these tests are resource-intensive, requiring significant time and effort for administration and scoring. For example, TOEFL includes integrated tasks that combine multiple skills in a single question, making it rigorous but costly in terms of human resources (ETS, 2020).

On the other hand, CEILs in Algeria have shifted towards grammar-vocabulary placement tests to address the practical challenges posed by traditional four-skill assessments. At UHBC CEIL, the grammar-vocabulary test uses an automated system to randomly generate questions aligned with CEFR levels (A1–A2+) and provides immediate results without human intervention.

This streamlined approach reduces costs and eliminates errors while focusing on foundational skills that predict overall language ability (Benali Reguieg et al., 2023). Edwards (2018) supports this shift by arguing that input skills like grammar and vocabulary are essential for building proficiency before tackling productive tasks such as speaking and writing.

While grammar-vocabulary tests work well for first placement, they lack the depth of international four-skill measures in expressing communicative competence. Yet their value accounts for the fact that they are most appropriately used in contexts like CEILs, where one's biggest concern is quickly sorting learners by proficiency level rather than assessing their overall language potential.

1.7. Challenges and Considerations in Algerian CEIL Testing

Placement testing in Algerian Centers for Intensive Foreign Language Teaching (CEIL) faces several challenges, despite its critical role in accurately assessing learners' proficiency levels. One major issue is the reliance on grammar and vocabulary-based tests, which, while efficient, may not fully capture students' communicative abilities. For instance, Benali Reguieg et al. (2023) found that transitioning from a four-skills placement test to a grammar-vocabulary format at CEIL Chlef improved logistical efficiency but raised concerns about the test's ability to reflect holistic language competence. This shift, though cost-effective, risks misplacing learners who may excel in speaking or listening but struggle with discrete-point grammar questions.

Another challenge is the validity and reliability of placement tests. A study by Outtas and Belaoura (2022) at CEIL Jijel revealed that while teachers and learners generally perceived the New Headway placement test as fair, its exclusion of speaking assessments limited its accuracy for higher-level placements. Their findings indicated weak correlations between test scores and

learners' self-assessments, suggesting that students often misjudged their own proficiency (Outtas & Belaoura, 2022). This aligns with broader critiques of multiple-choice formats, which may not adequately measure productive skills or contextual language use (Becky et al., 2020).

Administrative and logistical constraints further complicate CEIL testing. Benali Reguieg et al. (2023) noted that time pressures and limited resources often force institutions to prioritize scalable, automated tests over comprehensive evaluations. Additionally, teacher training in test administration remains inconsistent. Outtas and Belaoura (2022) reported that CEIL instructors often lacked formal training in assessment design, leading to variability in scoring and feedback. Such inconsistencies underscore the need for standardized protocols to ensure inter-rater reliability.

Finally, the tension between practicality and pedagogical goals persists. While grammar-focused tests streamline placement, they may inadvertently narrow classroom instruction to test-aligned content, neglecting communicative approaches (Benali Reguieg et al., 2023). Addressing these challenges requires balancing efficiency with inclusivity—for example, integrating adaptive technologies or hybrid models that combine discrete-point and performance-based tasks (Becky et al., 2020). Future reforms should also prioritize teacher training and piloting alternative instruments to align testing with CEIL's educational objectives better.

1.8. Conclusion

This review highlights tensions between global language testing standards and localized educational needs. While international tests like IELTS and TOEFL face critiques for cultural bias and validity gaps (Brown et al., 2014), Algerian CEILs prioritize grammar-vocabulary assessments for practicality, often at the expense of communicative competence (Benali Reguieg et al., 2023). Bachman and Palmer's (1996) framework highlights the necessity of balancing validity, reliability,

and context-specific adaptations; this balance is underexplored in Algerian research. This study addresses this gap by evaluating Ain Temouchent University's CEIL test to inform equitable, pedagogically aligned assessment reforms.

Chapter Two

Methodology

Chapter Two: Methodology

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2.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology employed in this study to achieve the research objectives. It outlines the research design, target population, sampling procedure, and data collection tools. It also clarifies data collection and analysis procedures to guarantee the validity and reliability of the study. By providing a clear and structured method, this chapter sets the stage for the findings and conclusions of the study.

2.2. Research objectives and their alignment with questions and hypotheses

This study aims to address significant gaps in understanding the efficacy of English proficiency testing within Algerian Centre for Intensive Language Teaching (CEIL) contexts. Its objectives are: (1) to explore the understudied phenomenon of English proficiency testing in Algerian CEILs; (2) to evaluate the efficiency and accuracy of the CEIL Ain Temouchent University's proficiency test in measuring learners' language abilities; (3) to employ corpus analysis as an objective tool for evaluating the test's linguistic features; (4) to compare the CEIL test with international standards (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS); and (5) to provide actionable recommendations for refining the test's design and assessment criteria.

These objectives are structured around three central research questions. First, how efficient and accurate is the CEIL Ain Temouchent University's English proficiency test? This question directly aligns with the second objective, aiming to assess the test's validity through empirical analysis. Second, what are teachers' perceptions of the test's effectiveness? This qualitative dimension supports the first objective's focus on contextualizing testing practices within Algerian

CEILs while identifying practical strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, how closely does this test map up to standards like TOEFL and IELTS from around the world, too? This bridges goal number four and allows us to compare local practices to global standards.

The study's hypotheses further operationalize these questions. The first hypothesis posits that the CEIL test is efficient and accurate, reflecting the second objective's evaluative focus. The second hypothesis anticipates that teachers perceive the test as effective but note areas for improvement, tying the first and fifth objectives by balancing stakeholder insights with recommendations. The third hypothesis suggests partial alignment between the CEIL test and international standards, which the fourth objective will validate through comparative corpus analysis.

By design, the hypotheses serve as testable predictions derived from the research questions, which in turn are anchored in the study's broader objectives. For example, corpus mining (third goal) is like building a bridge between testing how accurate something is (second aim) and comparing it to major global standards (fourth major goal). Similarly, teacher perceptions (second question) contextualize empirical findings, ensuring recommendations (fifth objective) are both data-driven and pedagogically informed. This tripartite structure of objectives, questions, and hypotheses ensures a systematic approach to addressing gaps in local testing practices while contributing actionable insights for CEIL test reform.

2.3. Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods design to holistically evaluate the efficiency of the CEIL placement test at Ain Temouchent University. Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches addresses the study's multidimensional aims (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). First,

corpus analysis quantifies the test's linguistic features (word frequency, lexical diversity and grammatical complexity) and alignment with international standards (TOEFL/IELTS), providing objective insights into its structural validity. Alongside, semi-structured questionnaires administered to CEIL teachers and the test designer capture qualitative perceptions of the test's accuracy, classroom relevance, and design rationale.

The triangulation of corpus analysis and semi-structured questionnaires strengthens methodological rigor through three interconnected mechanisms. First, it balances objective and subjective insights: corpus data quantifies the test's structural validity (e.g., alignment with TOEFL/IELTS frameworks), while teacher and designer perspectives contextualize statistical findings, such as discrepancies between test scores and classroom performance. Second, it addresses the study's complex aims by evaluating the test's technical efficiency using holistic quantitative metrics. (e.g., reliability), whereas qualitative responses reveal its practical effectiveness, including teachers' misplacement or curricular misalignment observations. Third, it enables comparative analysis by leveraging corpus-derived benchmarks to contrast CEIL's grammar-vocabulary focus with international four-skill standards, while questionnaires identify institutional constraints (e.g., resource limitations) that hinder adopting global models in Algeria's context. Together, this merging of data sources ensures a nuanced evaluation of the CEIL test's efficiency, directly informing actionable recommendations for its refinement.

Synthesizing corpus linguistics with stakeholder perspectives aligns with the study's goal of generating actionable, evidence-based recommendations for test refinement, a critical need in under-researched Algerian CEIL contexts.

2.4. Target Population and Sampling

The target population of this study consists of two groups:

- CEIL teachers of English at Ain Temouchent University who observe the outcomes of the English placement test in classroom instruction. Their classroom observations provide empirical evidence of the test's real-world effectiveness in reflecting learners' language competencies.
- The teacher who proposed the test, their involvement in the test's development, offers critical insights into understanding its origins, validity, and alignment with international standards.

A census sampling approach is applied to the CEIL English teachers, inviting all available instructors (estimated at 10-15 individuals) to participate. This ensures inclusivity, as their observational insights into student proficiency levels post-placement directly address the research questions regarding the test's practical alignment with learner abilities. The teacher who proposed the test is included as a purposive sample, selected for their unique role in shaping the test's structure and content.

2.5. Research Tools

2.5.1. Description of the CEIL EFL Teachers' Questionnaire

A semi-structured questionnaire blends closed and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Designed for CEIL English teachers at Ain Temouchent University, this tool investigates mismatches between the placement test's outcomes and observed students' proficiency in the classroom. Q1 asks respondents to quantify how frequently students struggle due to placement-level inaccuracies. Q2 employs a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree

to Strongly Disagree) to measure teachers' perceptions of the test's reliability across grammar, vocabulary, and speaking skills, identifying domain-specific validity gaps. Q3 uses a similar Likert scale to assess the alignment between test results and teachers' initial classroom proficiency evaluations, probing practical validity. Q4 synthesizes these insights with a numerical Likert-type scale (1–5) to rate the test's overall placement accuracy, translating qualitative observations into a quantifiable metric. Finally, Q5 invites open-ended reflections on systemic causes of discrepancies between test scores and classroom performance.

2.5.2. Description of the Questionnaire Administered to the Teacher Who Proposed the Placement Test

This semi-structured questionnaire was designed to examine the development, validity, and alignment with international standards of the English placement test administered at the University of Ain Temouchent. Targeting the teacher who originally proposed the test, it combines closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative assessments and qualitative insights. Q1 investigates the test's origins, asking whether its questions were adapted from existing materials or created specifically for CEIL, with a follow-up prompt for elaboration. Q2 explores whether the test was initially intended to include an oral proficiency component, clarifying its original design scope. Q3 employs a 5-point Likert scale to gauge the teacher's perception of the test's overall effectiveness in measuring student proficiency. Q4 assesses the degree to which the test was designed to align with international frameworks like the CEFR or tests such as TOEFL/IELTS. Q5 delves deeper into comparative analysis, probing differences between the CEIL test and TOEFL/IELTS in task types, scoring criteria, and proficiency descriptors. Q6 invites the respondent to identify specific strengths or weaknesses that influence their rating of the test's effectiveness. Q7 examines which aspects of the test, such as task design or skill coverage,

demonstrate alignment or divergence from global standards. Q8 explicitly contrasts the advantages and limitations of the CEIL test relative to TOEFL/IELTS. Q9 solicits recommendations for improving the test's validity or international alignment. Finally, an open-ended prompt encourages additional insights that may not have been addressed in the preceding questions.

The primary aim of this questionnaire is to trace the test's conceptual foundations, evaluate its adherence to internationally recognized assessment criteria, and identify actionable areas for refinement. By triangulating Likert-scale data (Q3-Q4) with comparative analysis (Q5-Q8) and open-ended reflections (Q6-Q9), the instrument captures a holistic view of the test's design logic and practical efficacy, ultimately informing evidence-based recommendations for its optimization.

2.5.3. Corpus Analysis

Corpus analysis is the systematic examination of a collection of naturally occurring language data, known as a corpus, to identify patterns and extract linguistic insights (Leech, 1992). It offers a powerful approach to understanding language use in authentic contexts.

The English placement test at the Intensive Language Teaching Center (CEIL) of Ain Temouchent University can be categorized as a small, specialized corpus. The significance of using a specialized corpus lies in its ability to provide focused and context-specific information (Vaughan & Clancy, 2013). Analysing this test as a corpus allows for direct insights into its content, structure, and the language proficiency it assesses, making it invaluable for evaluating its effectiveness within the specific context of CEIL.

AntConc software (version 4.3.1) will be employed to conduct the corpus analysis. AntConc is a widely used corpus analysis tool that offers functionalities such as word frequency analysis, collocation analysis, and the identification of lexical richness and grammar patterns

(Anthony, 2024). These tools are crucial for achieving the research objectives. Specifically, word frequency analysis will reveal the most common vocabulary used in the test, indicating potential areas of focus in English language instruction. Collocation analysis will identify recurring word combinations, shedding light on formulaic language and potential challenges for test-takers. Moreover, the identification of grammar patterns will help evaluate the test's alignment with established grammatical structures and its ability to assess learners' grammatical competence. By systematically analysing these aspects, the research aims to comprehensively evaluate the English placement test's efficiency, contributing to informed decisions about its design and implementation.

2.6. Data Collection Procedures

2.6.1. Administration of the CEIL EFL Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to CEIL EFL teachers and distributed via email to 14 participants, and 9 responses were received. Ethical considerations were followed, including ensuring voluntary participation. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study, with all responses anonymized to protect participants' identities.

2.6.2. Administration of the Questionnaire Designed for the Teacher Who Proposed the Placement Test

The questionnaire was designed and emailed to the teacher responsible for proposing the English placement test at CEIL. The response was successfully received. Ethical considerations were upheld, including voluntary participation and informed consent. Confidentiality was ensured by anonymizing the data and protecting the participant's identity.

2.6.3. The Placement Test of English at the CEIL of Ain Temouchent (the placement test attached in Appendix 02)

To accomplish the study and achieve its main objective, the necessary permissions were secured. After obtaining approval from the head of CEIL, an official copy of the test, stamped by the CEIL administration, was requested and received. The head of CEIL was fully informed about the research purpose, and authorization was granted to disclose the test's questions and content for analysis. Ethical considerations were observed, ensuring transparency and adherence to institutional protocols.

2.7. Data Analysis

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative thematic analysis to evaluate the English placement test's accuracy and alignment with classroom proficiency at CEIL, Ain Temouchent University.

2.7.1. The Semi-Structured Questionnaire of the CEIL EFL Teachers

➤ Quantitative Analysis:

Closed-ended questions (Q1 - Q4) use descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency counts, mean scores) to quantify:

- Frequency of student struggles due to placement inaccuracies (Q1).
- Teachers' perceptions of test reliability across grammar, vocabulary, and speaking skills (Q2 - Q3).
- Overall test accuracy rated on a five-point Likert scale (Q4).

➤ **Qualitative Analysis**

Open-ended responses (Q5) undergo thematic analysis guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach to categorize recurring themes (e.g., systemic flaws in test design, external factors affecting performance).

2.7.2. Corpus Analysis of The Placement Test

To evaluate the linguistic and structural efficiency of the English placement test, this study employs **corpus analysis** using *AntConc software (version 4.3.1)*. The methodology consists of three key analytical phases, each leveraging specific computational tools to examine distinct linguistic dimensions:

2.7.2.1. Word Frequency Analysis (Word List Tool)

The Word List tool is used to extract and rank the test's lexical items by frequency. This phase identifies:

- High-frequency function and content words, revealing the test's lexical priorities.
- Vocabulary distribution across frequency tiers (e.g., core vs. low-frequency words), assessing lexical accessibility for target learners.

2.7.2.2. Lexical Richness Assessment (Word List + Keyword List Tools & Type-Token Ratio)

To measure lexical diversity and distinctiveness, the analysis combines:

- **Keyword List tool:** Compares the test corpus against the British English Corpus to identify statistically overrepresented words, highlighting thematic focus and potential cultural biases.

- **Type-Token Ratio (TTR):** Calculated as unique words (types) ÷ total words (tokens), this metric quantifies lexical variety.

2.7.2.3. Grammatical Pattern Analysis (Concordance, Collocate, and N-Gram Tools)

The study dissects grammatical structures by analysing the top 10 verbs, top 5 prepositions, and top 5 conjunctions (drawn from the Word List frequency rankings). Tools applied include:

- **Concordance (KWIC):** Examines function words (verbs, prepositions and conjunctions) in context, revealing tense usage and syntactic roles.
- **Collocate Tool:** Identifies statistically significant word pairings, exposing recurrent grammatical relationships.
- **N-Gram Tool:** Extracts frequent multiword sequences, mapping common phraseological patterns.

By triangulating results from these tools, the study:

- **Evaluates lexical-thematic alignment:** Does vocabulary reflect real-world communicative needs?
- **Assesses grammatical complexity:** Are structures (e.g., conditionals, perfect tenses) appropriately graded for the test's proficiency targets?
- **Identifies design gaps:** For instance, overreliance on social themes or underrepresentation of low-frequency vocabulary.

This corpus-driven approach ensures a **data-validated** review of the test's efficiency, informing revisions for balanced linguistic coverage and pedagogical relevance.

2.7.3. The Semi-Structured Questionnaire Designed for the Teacher Who Proposed the Placement Test

- Quantitative Likert-scale responses (Q3-Q4) are analysed statistically to assess perceived test effectiveness and alignment with international standards (e.g., CEFR, TOEFL/IELTS).
- Qualitative comparative analysis (Q5-Q9) examines differences in task types, scoring criteria, and proficiency descriptors between the CEIL test and global benchmarks.
- Open-ended reflections (Q6-Q9) are thematically coded to identify strengths (e.g., contextual relevance) and weaknesses (e.g., skill coverage gaps).

2.8. Conclusion

All in all, this chapter has given an exhaustive description of the research approach followed for this study. The research design, the sample strategy, data collection instruments, and analytical methods were judiciously decided to correspond to the research aims. The systematic procedure defined assures credibility and replicability of the study. The following chapter, "Results and Discussion," will discuss and interpret the empirical data, bridging the theoretical framework and methodological approach with practical insights to address the research questions.

Chapter Three

Data Analysis, Suggestions and Recommendations

Chapter three: Data analysis, Suggestions and Recommendations

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3.1. Introduction

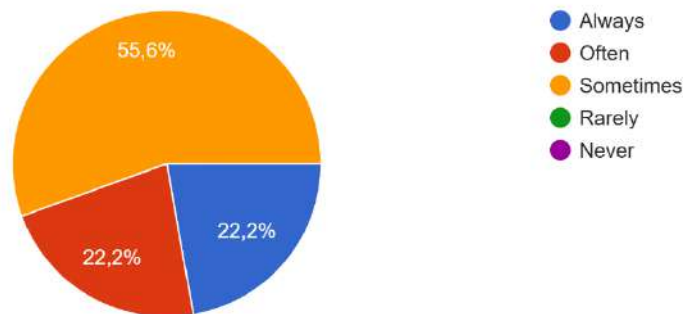
This chapter presents the study's findings, analyzing the collected data in relation to the research objectives and questions. The results are systematically presented, followed by a detailed discussion that interprets their significance within the context of existing literature. The chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions based on the findings, providing insights for future research and practical applications.

3.2. Presentation of Results

3.2.1. Questionnaire of the CEIL EFL Teachers

Q1: How frequently do students in your class struggle due to being placed in a level that does NOT match their actual proficiency?

Figure 3.1: Frequency of Student Struggles Due to Mismatched Proficiency Levels

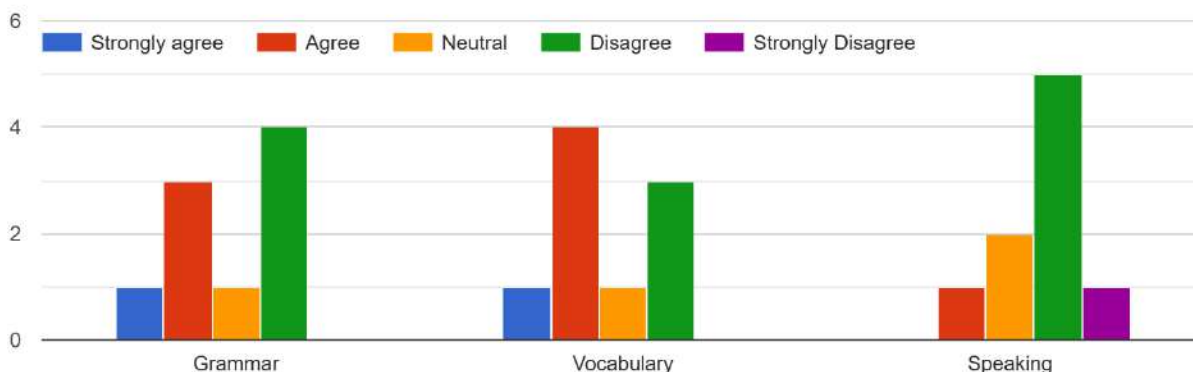


The chart illustrates how often students are perceived to struggle in class as a result of being placed in a level that does not accurately reflect their actual proficiency. Based on responses from 9 participants, the majority of respondents (55.6%) indicated that this issue occurs "Sometimes," while 22.2% reported it happens "Always", and another 22.2% said it occurs "Often." Notably, there were no responses for "Rarely" or "Never," highlighting that all participating educators

observe this problem to some degree. This data suggests that misplacement is a persistent and recognized challenge, with nearly half of teachers observing it frequently ("Always" or "Often"), and the majority acknowledging it at least occasionally, indicating a need for improved placement processes to better match students' true language abilities

Q2: To what extent do you agree with this statement: "The CEIL test results reliably reflect students' true language abilities" in:

Figure 3.2: Perceived Reliability of CEIL Test Results Across Language Skill Areas

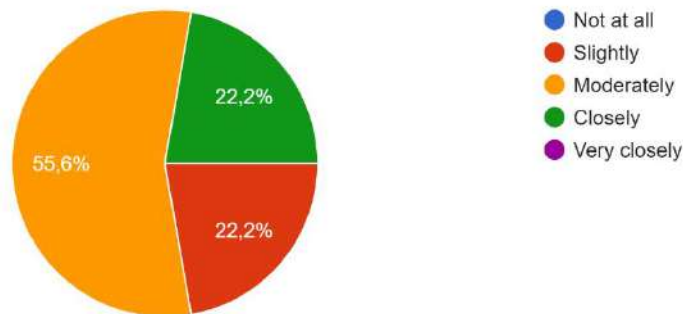


The responses assessing the statement "The CEIL test results reliably reflect students' true language abilities" reveal distinct patterns across language domains. For grammar, opinions are divided with 1 respondent strongly agreeing, 3 agreeing, 1 remaining neutral, and 4 disagreeing (no strong disagreements), indicating predominant scepticism. Vocabulary receives more favourable responses, with 1 strongly agreeing and 4 agreeing (totalling 5 positive responses), though 3 respondents disagree and 1 remains neutral. Speaking shows the strongest criticism: no respondents strongly agree, only 1 agrees, 2 are neutral, while 5 disagree and 1 strongly disagrees, demonstrating particularly low confidence in the test's speaking assessment. Across all domains, reliability perceptions decrease progressively from vocabulary (moderate confidence) to grammar

(mixed) to speaking (strong scepticism), with disagreement outweighing agreement in both grammar and speaking sections.

Q3: How well do the placement test results correspond to your own initial assessment of students' proficiency levels in the classroom?

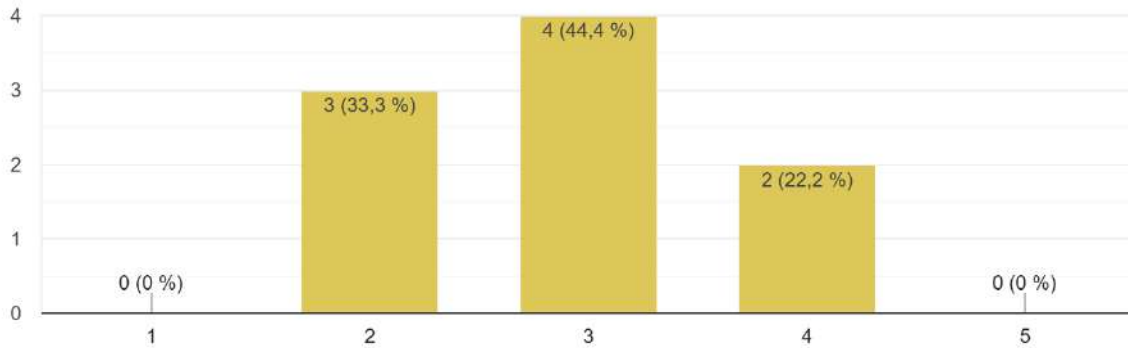
Figure 3.3: Alignment Between Placement Test Results and Teachers' Initial Proficiency Assessments



According to the chart, which summarizes responses from 9 teachers, the majority (55.6%) feel that placement test results only "moderately" correspond to their own initial classroom assessments of students' proficiency levels, while an equal proportion of respondents (22.2% each) report that the test results either "slightly" or "closely" match their own evaluations; notably, no respondents selected "not at all" or "very closely." This distribution indicates that while the placement test provides a somewhat useful benchmark, most teachers perceive a gap between standardized test outcomes and their professional judgment, suggesting that the test is only partially effective in reflecting students' true abilities as observed in the classroom, and highlighting the potential value of supplementing test results with teacher insights for more accurate placement decisions.

Q4: Based on your answers to the former questions, on a scale of 1 to 5, how accurately do you believe the CEIL placement test assigns students to their appropriate proficiency level?

Figure 3.4: Perceived Accuracy of CEIL Placement Test in Assigning Appropriate Proficiency Levels



Based on a survey of 9 respondents, the data reveals perceptions regarding the CEIL placement test's accuracy in assigning students to suitable proficiency levels, using a scale from 1 to 5. The most frequent response, representing 44.4% of the total, indicated a rating of "3," suggesting a moderate level of perceived accuracy. Approximately 33.3% of respondents rated the test's accuracy as "2," while 22.2% gave it a rating of "4." Notably, no respondents selected either "1" or "5," indicating that all participants believe the test has at least some level of accuracy. However, none consider it to be completely accurate in placing students, highlighting room for improvement in the test's design or implementation to better align with actual student proficiency.

Q5: According to your experience, what are the most common reasons for discrepancies between students' placement test results and their actual classroom performance?

To explore teachers' perspectives on the reasons behind discrepancies between students' CEIL English placement test results and their actual classroom performance, the following are the full, verbatim responses from eight participants who answered the open-ended question. Participant 1 did not provide a response.

- **Participant 2:**

“One of the most main reasons for discrepancies between students’ placement test results and their actual classroom performance is the test’s heavy focus on grammar rather than a balanced assessment of all language skills. In fact, many students passively understand the language; they can read, comprehend, and even conjugate verbs correctly when given enough time, yet they struggle with speaking and writing effectively. Additionally, some students resort to cheating on placement tests, while others have even admitted to randomly guessing answers and getting them right by chance, often placing them in levels beyond their actual proficiency.”

- **Participant 3:**

“The test focuses on few aspects of the English language, such as Grammar and Vocabulary. These two elements are not sufficient to designate the true level of learners in a certain language. There must be a spoken and a written test. I know it is somehow inconvenient to do a spoken test due to time limit and high number of participants. However, there should at least be a text with questions to test their comprehension and another section for writing to assess how well they put words and grammar into practice. The unavailability of these types of assessments is the reason behind finding some learners in inconvenient level which makes it really hard for the teacher to make a balance between those who really know the language and those who do not!”

- **Participant 4:**

“Based on my three years of teaching experience, I’ve noticed several common reasons for discrepancies between students’ placement test results and their actual classroom performance. First, test anxiety or unfamiliarity with the test format can negatively affect a student’s placement test score. Some students might perform poorly under timed or high-pressure situations, even

though they have stronger skills that emerge once they feel comfortable in a regular classroom environment. Second, there's often a gap between passive knowledge and active application. A student might do well on a placement test that focuses on grammar or vocabulary recognition but struggle with real-time communication or practical language use in class. Conversely, others may perform modestly on the test but excel in speaking and interaction because they're more confident in communicative settings. Lastly, external factors, such as the student's motivation, learning style, or even personal circumstances on the day of the test, can impact their results. Once they settle into the classroom and become familiar with the teaching methods and their peers, their true abilities often become clearer.”

- **Participant 5:**

“The test is limited to the writing skills. In addition, the test conditions are not appropriate which allow cheating. It is also important to note that one test cannot depict one's abilities.”

- **Participant 6:**

“- Difficulty in understanding.

- An un comfortable learning environment.

- distracted mind.

Loss of interest.”

- **Participant 7:**

“Test Anxiety, lack of Motivation, factors such as fatigue, illness, or distractions during the test can influence results. Students may have different learning styles and strengths, which may not be fully captured by a standardized placement test. Also, placement tests often focus on

grammar and vocabulary, potentially overlooking communicative skills like speaking and listening.”

- **Participant 8:**

“Some students underperform on placement tests due to stress, while others may perform well but struggle in the real classroom. Placement tests are usually very flat and fail to accommodate different students language utilization styles.”

- **Participant 9:**

“Unfortunately most of the time students struggle into their journey of learning English due to the mess placement of their actual level and usually because of the nature design of the CEIL test it emphasizes on specific areas of skills like grammar and reading neglecting speaking and listening which they are considered to be essential part to be test in”

Thematic analysis highlighted the following major themes from the responses:

- **Theme 1: Overemphasis on Grammar and Limited Skill Coverage**

Many participants (2, 3, 5, 7, 9) criticized the CEIL placement test for focusing predominantly on grammar and vocabulary, neglecting essential skills such as speaking, listening, and writing. This narrow focus was seen as a major factor causing inaccurate placement.

- **Theme 2: Discrepancy Between Passive Knowledge and Active Use**

Several teachers (2, 4, 7, 8) highlighted that students may demonstrate passive understanding (reading, grammar recognition) but struggle with active language skills like speaking and writing, which the test does not adequately assess.

- **Theme 3: Test Anxiety and External Factors Affecting Performance**

Participants (4, 7, 8) noted that test anxiety, stress, motivation, fatigue, illness, and distractions can negatively influence test performance, leading to results that do not reflect students' true abilities.

- **Theme 4: Mismatch Between Test Design and Classroom Realities**

Participants (4, 6, 9) observed that the test design does not accommodate diverse learning styles or reflect the dynamic nature of classroom language use, contributing to misplacement.

- **Theme 5: Inappropriate Test Conditions and Cheating**

Some teachers (2, 5) raised concerns about test conditions that may allow cheating or guessing, further distorting placement accuracy.

In summary, these themes collectively suggest that the CEIL placement test may not fully capture students' comprehensive English proficiency, leading to placement inaccuracies.

- High frequency of pronouns (*I, they, we, you, he, she*) and personal names (Steve, Jean, Linda, Paul) suggests many questions involve dialogues or personal contexts.

c) Function Words vs. Content Words

- Function words (articles, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions) dominate the highest ranks, which is typical in English texts.
- Content words like:
friends (5), *school* (4), *birthday* (3), *apartment* (3), *party* (2), *restaurant* (2) indicate thematic focus on social and everyday life topics.

d) Range (Distribution Across Text)

- All words have a range of 1, meaning each word appears in only one segment or file (the entire test is treated as one file).
- This limits insight into dispersion but is expected given the corpus size.

e) Lexical Coverage and Frequency Tiers

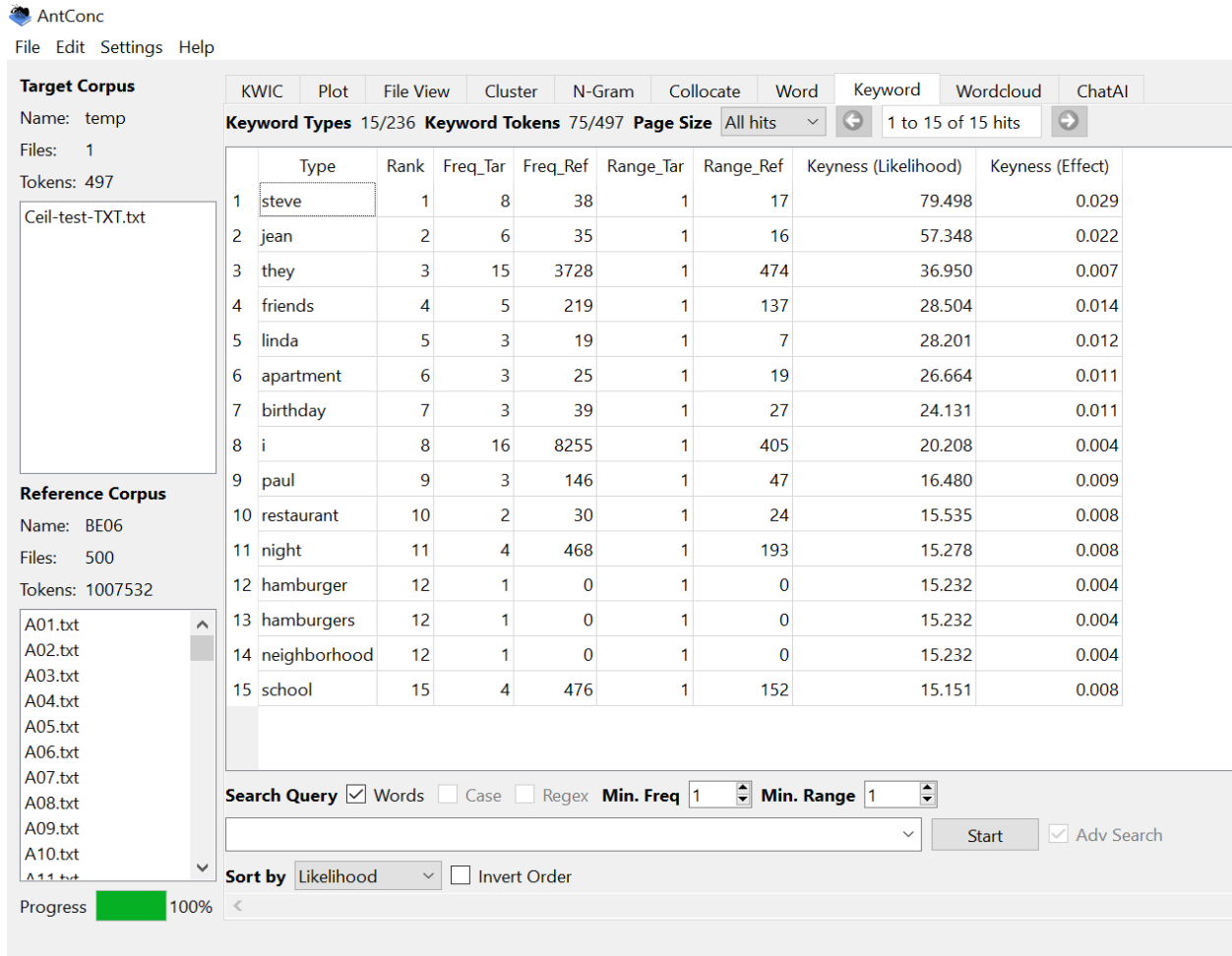
- High-frequency words ($\text{freq} \geq 5$) are mostly basic English vocabulary and pronouns, suitable for beginner to intermediate learners.
- Mid-frequency words ($\text{freq} 2-4$) include verbs (*go, had, study, work, would*), nouns (*class, country, home*), and adjectives (*very*).
- Low-frequency words ($\text{freq} = 1$) cover a wide range of vocabulary, including proper nouns (*Anderson, Andy, Bob*), verbs (*answered, drive*), and nouns (*coffee, police, theater*), showing lexical diversity.

This analysis indicates the test uses a well-balanced mix of high-frequency English words and relevant thematic vocabulary, appropriate for assessing general English proficiency in social and everyday contexts.

3.2.2.2. Lexical Richness

3.2.2.2.1. Keyword Tool

Figure 3.6: AntConc Keyword Analysis Results: MCQ English Placement Test vs. British English Corpus (BE06)



The "Keyword" tool compares the placement test corpus to the British English Corpus (BE06) to identify words that are unusually frequent or distinctive in the test. Keyness values (Likelihood and Effect) show statistical significance.

a) Most Distinctive Words:

- *Steve, Jean, friends, Linda, Paul* (personal names and social nouns) top the list, indicating a strong focus on conversational and social contexts in the test.
- Other high keywords: *apartment, restaurant, night, hamburger(s), neighbourhood, school*.

b) Pronouns and Function Words:

They and *I* appear, but with lower keyness than the names and topic words, suggesting that this test uses these pronouns more than typical British English, but not as distinctively as the content words.

c) Personalization & Social Themes:

- The prominence of personal names (*Steve, Jean, Linda, Paul*) shows that the test heavily features named characters, likely in dialogues or scenarios.
- Social and daily-life vocabulary (*friends, apartment, birthday, restaurant, night, hamburger, neighbourhood, school*) are much more frequent than in general British English, highlighting a focus on everyday situations and interactions.

d) Cultural Context:

Words like *apartment* and *hamburger* may reflect American English or international contexts, which are less common in the British English reference corpus.

e) Lexical Distinctiveness

The keyness scores confirm these words are statistically significant outliers compared to general British English, making them strong indicators of this test's unique content.

This placement test is highly distinctive for its use of personal names and vocabulary related to social life, food, and places, setting it apart from standard British English. This suggests a strong focus on conversational, real-life scenarios ideal for placement and communicative language assessment.

3.2.2.2.2. Type-Token Ratio (TTR) Calculation

Total Tokens: 497

Total Types: 138

Formula:

TTR = Number of Types / Number of Tokens

Calculation:

TTR=138/497≈0.278

The TTR (Type-Token Ratio) is approximately 0.28 (rounded to two decimal places), indicating that about 28% of the words in the test are unique. For a short text like a 50-question test, this reflects a moderate level of lexical richness. As a general rule, longer texts tend to have a lower TTR due to word repetition; thus, given the length of the test, this value is both reasonable and expected.

3.2.2.3. Grammar Patterns

3.2.2.3.1. Verbs

1) Have:

Figure 3.7: Concordance Lines for the Verb "Have" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' tab selected. The search results are displayed in a table with four columns: File, Left Context, Hit, and Right Context. The search parameters are: Name: temp, Files: 1, Tokens: 497, Page Size: 100 hits, and 1 to 7 of 7 hits.

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Ceil-test-...	If they were still living in the country, they would	have	a party. Jean told Steve that she missed their
2 Ceil-test-...	the country. Since they moved into their new apartment, they	have	been very busy. Although they enjoy living in the
3 Ceil-test-...	and saw Paul, Linda, and their other friends. "We could	have	called, but we wanted to surprise you", said Linda. "
4 Ceil-test-...	I'm not sure who took the book. Paul might	have.	Can you tell me when they left? If Sandy
5 Ceil-test-...	dialled the number. "No one answered," Steve said. "They must	have	gone out". Steve called another friend, but he wasn'
6 Ceil-test-...	Jean recently moved to an apartment in the city. They	have	lived in their new apartment for two weeks. Before
7 Ceil-test-...	Sandy had known it was going to snow, she would	have	worn her boots. 20. He sang that song last week,

Figure 3.8: Common N-Gram Patterns with the Verb "Have" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' tab selected. The search results are displayed in a table with four columns: Type, Rank, Freq, and Range. The search parameters are: Name: temp, Files: 1, Tokens: 497, Page Size: 100 hits, and 1 to 7 of 7 hits.

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 have a	1	1	1
2 have been	1	1	1
3 have called	1	1	1
4 have can	1	1	1
5 have gone	1	1	1
6 have lived	1	1	1
7 have worn	1	1	1

The analysis of the verb "have" using the concordance and n-gram tools reveals its versatile grammatical functions within the corpus. Concordance lines show that "have" frequently appears as an auxiliary verb forming present perfect and modal perfect constructions, such as "have been very busy," "have called," and "have gone out." It also functions as a main verb in phrases like "have a party," indicating possession or occurrence. The n-gram results support these findings by

highlighting common collocations such as "have been," "have called," "have lived," and "have a," which emphasize the verb's role in perfect tenses and as a lexical verb. The absence of significant collocates in the collocate tool suggests that "have" is used in a wide variety of contexts without a consistent set of neighbouring words appearing frequently enough to be statistically notable. Overall, the combined data from the concordance and n-gram tools provide a clear picture of "have" as a multifunctional verb, primarily serving auxiliary and main verb roles in the test items.

2) Is:

Figure 3.9: Concordance Lines for the Verb "Is" in the Placement Test Corpus

AntConc
File Edit Settings Help

Target Corpus
Name: temp
Files: 1
Tokens: 497

KWIC Plot File View Cluster N-Gram Collocate Word Keyword Wordcloud ChatAI

Total Hits: 7 Page Size 100 hits 1 to 7 of 7 hits

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt cell ...	s the cheapest place in the neighborhood and the food	is very good too.	I usually order a cup of
2 Txt cell ...	school at night. I work as a manager. My boss	is very kind.	Everybody likes her very much. I study
3 Txt cell ...	so I can study by myself before class. The class	is difficult.	so I must study hard if I want.
4 Txt cell ...	It was sent by her friends Linda and Paul. Today	is her birthday	and she is sad. If they were
5 Txt cell ...	sang that song last week, didn't he ? My name	is Lori.	I work during the day and go to
6 Txt cell ...	friends Linda and Paul. Today is her birthday and she	is sad.	If they were still living in the country.
7 Txt cell ...	will be here tomorrow. 7. How much bread do we need ? 8.	is that book hers ? 9.	Please read the instructions carefully. 10. The

Figure 3.10: Common N-Gram Patterns with the Verb "Is" in the Placement Test Corpus

AntConc
File Edit Settings Help

Target Corpus
Name: temp
Files: 1
Tokens: 497

KWIC Plot File View Cluster N-Gram Collocate Word Keyword Wordcloud ChatAI

N-Gram Types 6/455 N-Gram Tokens 7/496 Page Size 100 hits 1 to 6 of 6 hits

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 is very	1	2	1
2 is difficult	2	1	1
3 is her	2	1	1
4 is lori	2	1	1
5 is sad	2	1	1
6 is that	2	1	1

The analysis of the verb "is" using the concordance and n-gram tools in AntConc highlights its central role as a linking verb in the MCQ placement test corpus. The concordance lines show "is" commonly used to connect subjects with adjectives or noun phrases, such as in "is very good too," "is very kind," "is difficult," "is her birthday," "is Lori," "is sad," and "is that book hers?" These examples illustrate "is" functioning to express states, qualities, and identification, as well as forming questions. The n-gram results reinforce these patterns, with frequent bigrams like "is very," "is difficult," "is her," "is lori," "is sad," and "is that," mirroring the structures observed in the concordance lines. Overall, both tools confirm that "is" is primarily used for description, identification, and question formation in the test items, reflecting its typical grammatical functions in English.

3) Are:

Figure 3.11: Concordance Lines for the Verb "Are" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the following details:

- Target Corpus:** Name: temp, Files: 1, Tokens: 497
- Search Settings:** KWIC, Plot, File View, Cluster, N-Gram, Collocate, Word, Keyword, Wordcloud, ChatAI
- Search Results:** Total Hits: 6, Page Size: 100 hits, 1 to 6 of 6 hits

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt ceil ...	gets up at 6:00 every day. 2. You always shout when you	are	angry. 3. When my children are hungry, I feed them. 4.
2 Txt ceil ...	Steve said he would call them up . "I hope they	are	home," said Jean as Steve dialed the number. "No
3 Txt ceil ...	You always shout when you are angry. 3. When my children	are	hungry, I feed them. 4. Does Jane work on Saturday ? 5.
4 Txt ceil ...	Example: They	are	over there. 1. Mark gets up at 6:00 every day. 2. You
5 Txt ceil ...	one was at home. "I don't know where they	are "	said Steve. Suddenly they heard a knock. Jean opened
6 Txt ceil ...	Jerry went to the party, and Andy did too. 14. When	are	you going to stop smoking so much ? 15. By the

Figure 3.12: Collocation results for the Verb "Are" in the Placement Test Corpus

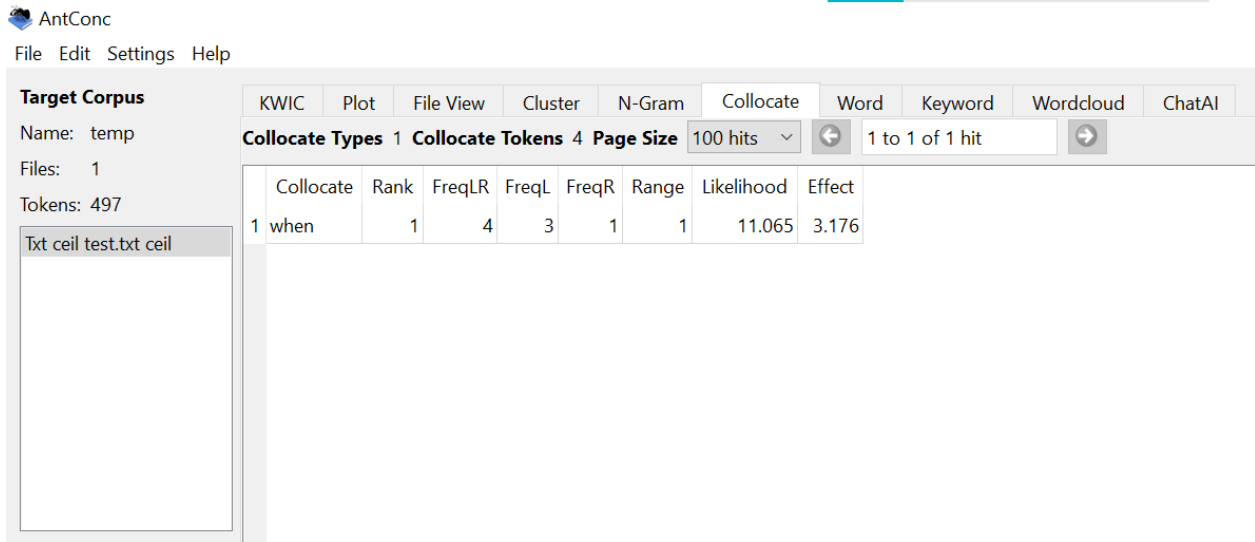
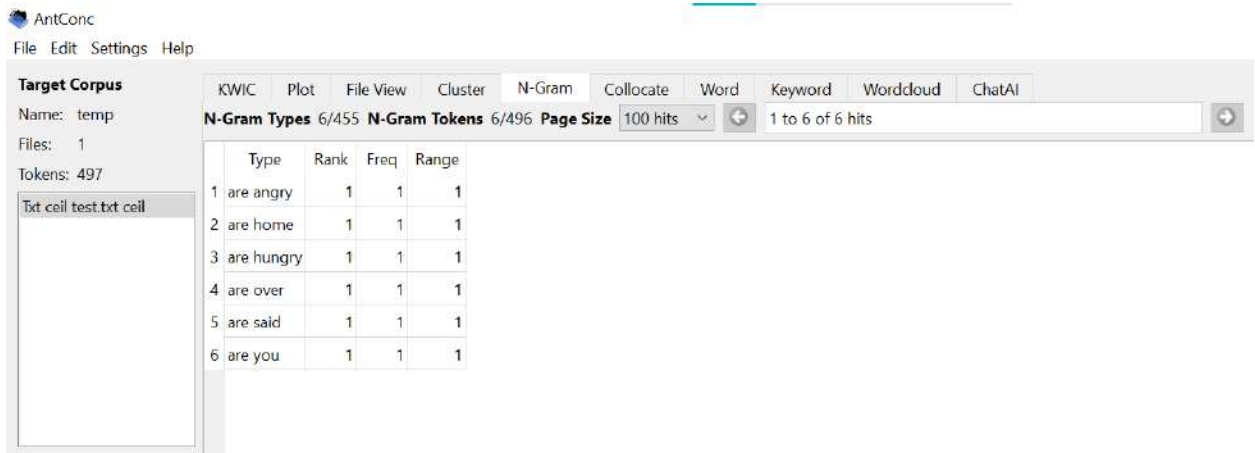


Figure 3.13: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "Are" in the Placement Test Corpus



The analysis of the verb "are" in the corpus, based on the AntConc concordance, collocate, and n-gram tools, reveals several key grammatical patterns. The concordance lines show "are" used as an auxiliary verb in both statements and questions, frequently linking subjects to adjectives or participles (e.g., "are angry," "are home," "are hungry," "are over there") and forming present continuous or passive constructions (e.g., "are you going"). The n-gram tool further highlights these patterns, with bigrams such as "are angry," "are home," "are hungry," "are over," "are said," and "are you" reflecting both descriptive and interrogative uses. The collocate tool identifies

"when" as a significant collocate for "are," suggesting that "are" often appears in subordinate clauses introduced by "when," as seen in examples like "when you are angry" or "when my children are hungry." Overall, these results indicate that "are" primarily functions as a linking and auxiliary verb, supporting descriptions, states, and questions, and frequently appears in complex sentences involving temporal clauses.

4) Said:

Figure 3.14: Concordance Lines for the Verb "said" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the following data:

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt ceil ...	Jean told Steve that she missed their old friends. Steve	said	he would call them up . "I hope they are
2 Txt ceil ...	he would call them up . "I hope they are home,"	said	Jean as Steve dialed the number. "No one answered,"
3 Txt ceil ...	We could have called, but we wanted to surprise you",	said	Linda. "Happy Birthday!"
4 Txt ceil ...	he wasn't at home either . "Keep on trying," Jean	said.	Steve called all of their friends, but no one
5 Txt ceil ...	was at home. "I don't know where they are "	said	Steve. Suddenly they heard a knock. Jean opened the
6 Txt ceil ...	Jean as Steve dialed the number. "No one answered," Steve	said. "	They must have gone out". Steve called another friend,

Figure 3.15: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "said" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc N-Gram analysis results:

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 said steve	1	2	1
2 said he	2	1	1
3 said jean	2	1	1
4 said linda	2	1	1
5 said they	2	1	1

The concordance results for the verb "said" demonstrate its primary function as a reporting verb within direct and indirect speech contexts in the corpus. The six concordance lines

consistently show "said" introducing or following reported speech, as in “Steve said he would call them up,” “Jean as Steve dialed the number”. ‘No one answered,’ “Steve said,” and “Steve said”. ‘They must have gone out.’” This usage highlights "said" as a pivotal element in narrative sequences, facilitating the transition between narration and dialogue or quoted material. The left and right contexts further confirm that "said" is most frequently followed by pronouns (he, Jean, Linda, they) or proper nouns (Steve), which refer to the speaker in the reported speech.

The n-gram analysis reinforces these observations, with the most frequent bigrams being "said Steve," "said he," "said Jean," "said Linda," and "said they." The frequency of these bigrams, though relatively low due to the corpus size, underscores the typical syntactic pattern of "said" followed by a subject, which is characteristic of English narrative and dialogue structure. The presence of both proper names and pronouns as immediate collocates reflects a variety of speakers being reported, further supporting the narrative function of "said" in the test material.

5) Go:

Figure 3.16: Concordance Lines for the Verb "go" in the Placement Test Corpus

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt ceil ...	My name is Lori. I work during the day and	go	to school at night. I work as a manager.
2 Txt ceil ...	very much. I study nursing at school. I like to	go	to school early so I can study by myself
3 Txt ceil ...	to do well. After class, my friends and I usually	go	out for something to eat. Last night we went
4 Txt ceil ...	to a restaurant across from our school. We like to	go	there because it's the cheapest place in the

Figure 3.17: Collocation results of the Verb "go" in the Placement Test Corpus

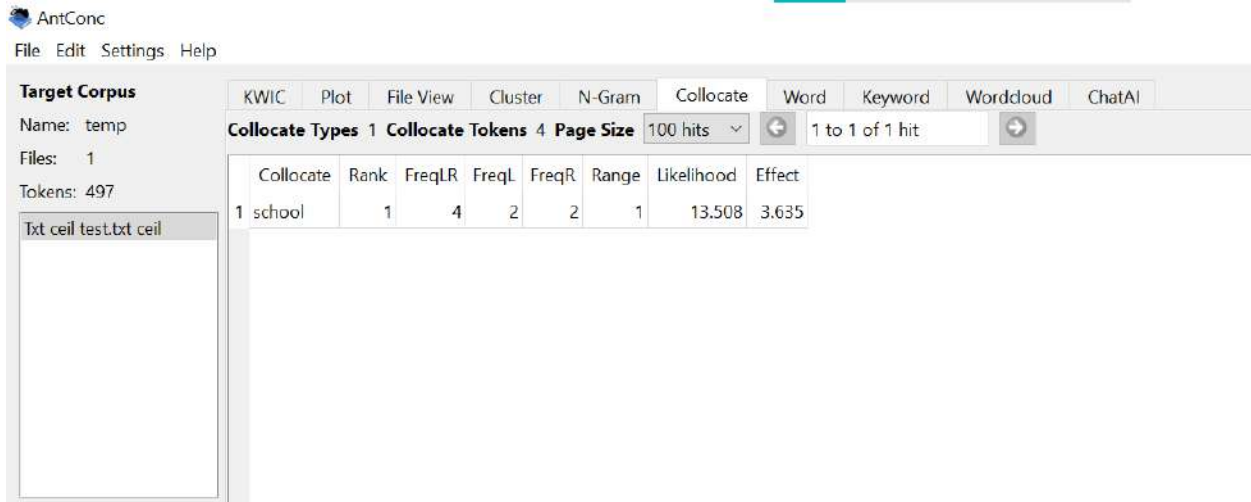
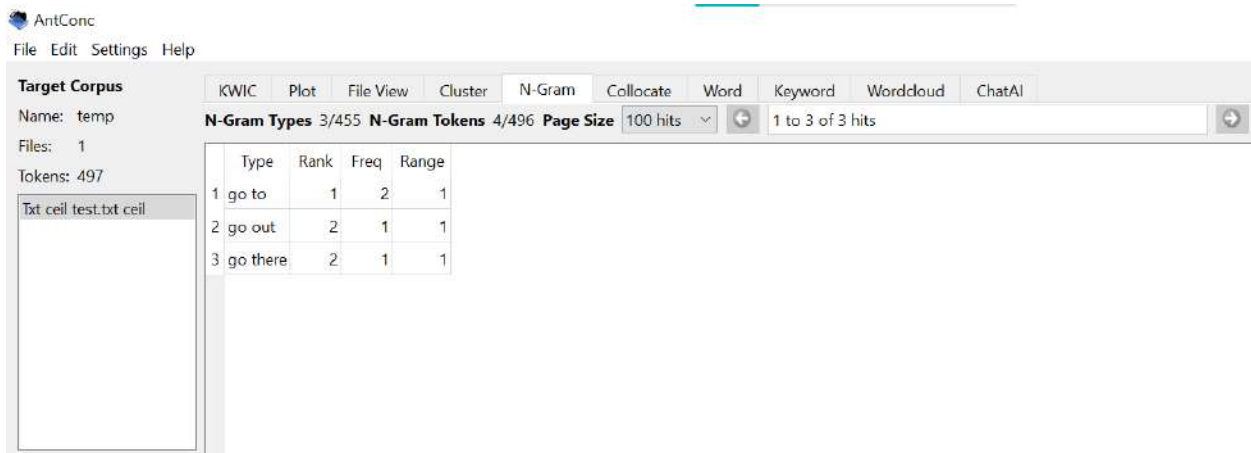


Figure 3.18: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "go" in the Placement Test Corpus



The analysis of the verb "go" using concordance, collocate, and n-gram tools reveals consistent usage patterns in the target corpus. The concordance lines show that "go" frequently appears in everyday contexts, such as "go to school," "go out for something," and "go there because," indicating its role in expressing movement or purpose. The collocate results further highlight "school" as the most significant right-side collocate of "go," with a high likelihood and effect score, confirming that "go to school" is a dominant phrase in this dataset. Supporting this, the n-gram tool identifies "go to" as the most frequent two-word sequence, followed by "go out" and "go there," which aligns with the concordance findings and demonstrates the productivity of

"go" in forming common English expressions. Together, these results indicate that "go" is primarily used to describe habitual actions or movements, especially related to attending school and social outings, within the analyzed corpus.

6) Had:

Figure 3.19: Concordance Lines for the Verb "had" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'KWIC' tab selected. The search results are displayed in a table with four columns: File, Left Context, Hit, and Right Context. There are four hits for the word 'had'.

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt ceil ...	have. Can you tell me when they left ? If Sandy	had	known it was going to snow, she Would have
2 Txt ceil ...	in their new apartment for two weeks. Before that they	had	lived in a house in the country. Since they
3 Txt ceil ...	By the time we got to the theater, the movie	had	started. 16. Mr. Anderson's car was stolen last night. 17.
4 Txt ceil ...	they enjoy living in the city, they sometimes wish they	had	stayed in the country. Yesterday, Jean received a birthday

Figure 3.20: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "had" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' tab selected. The search results are displayed in a table with four columns: Type, Rank, Freq, and Range. There are four N-gram patterns for the word 'had'.

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 had known	1	1	1
2 had lived	1	1	1
3 had started	1	1	1
4 had stayed	1	1	1

The concordance results for "had" reveal four occurrences in the corpus. In each instance, "had" is used as an auxiliary verb forming the past perfect tense, followed by a past participle: "had known," "had lived," "had started," and "had stayed." The context provided in the

concordance lines shows that "had" is used to indicate actions completed before another past event, such as in "If Sandy had known it was going to snow..." and "By the time we got to the theater, the movie had started." This consistent grammatical function is further confirmed by the n-gram results, where the four two-word sequences "had known," "had lived," "had started," and "had stayed"-each occur once. The n-gram data reinforces the observation that "had" is primarily used to construct the past perfect tense in this corpus, always preceding a past participle to describe a completed action relative to another point in the past.

7) Was:

Figure 3.21: Concordance Lines for the Verb "was" in the Placement Test Corpus

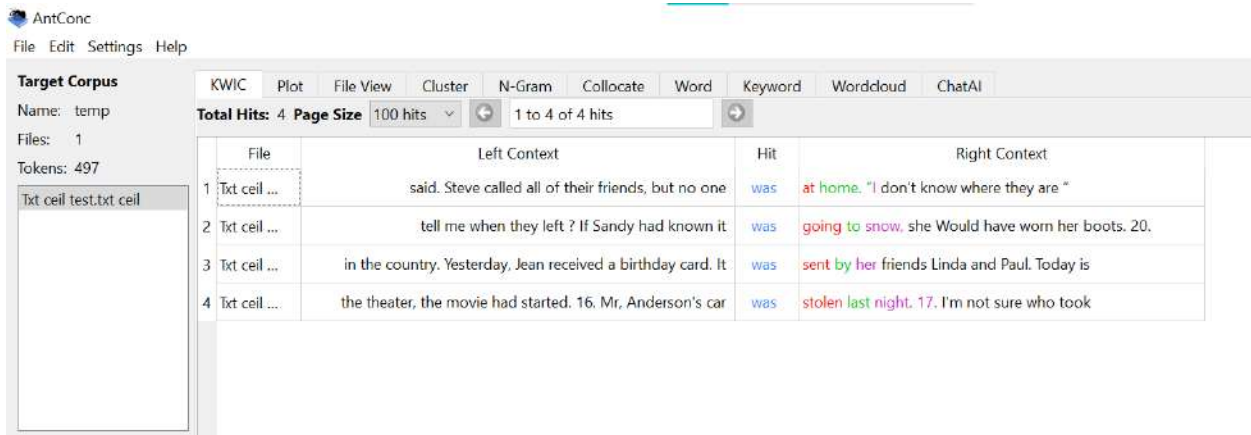
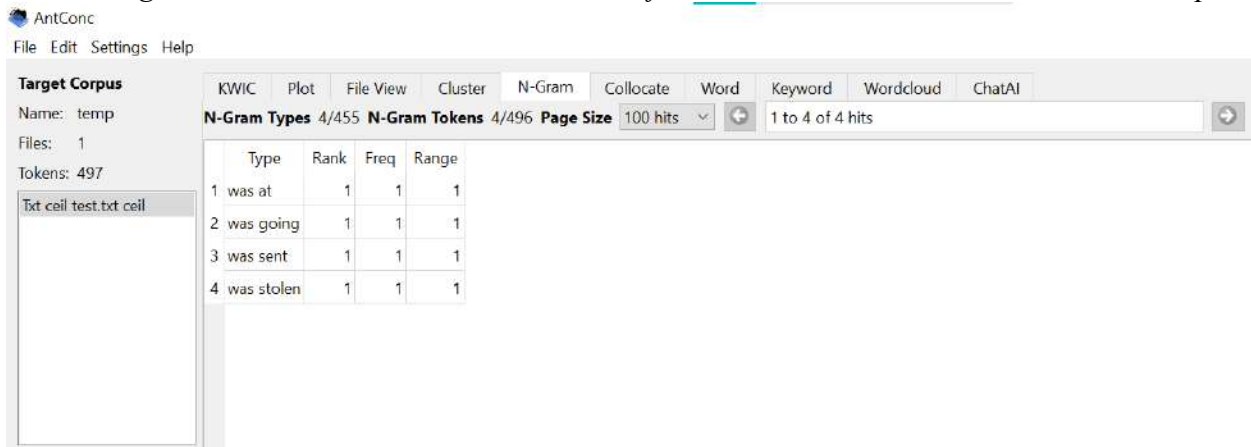


Figure 3.22: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "was" in the Placement Test Corpus



The verb "was" appears four times in the concordance results. In these examples, "was" is used both as a linking verb and as an auxiliary in passive and progressive constructions. The contexts include "was at home," where "was" links the subject to a location; "was going to snow," which forms part of a future-in-the-past construction; "was sent by her friends," demonstrating passive voice; and "was stolen last night," another passive construction. The n-gram tool lists "was at," "was going," "was sent," and "was stolen," each with a frequency of one. This confirms that "was" serves multiple grammatical roles in the corpus: as a linking verb, as part of the progressive aspect, and as an auxiliary in the passive voice. The variety of collocates reflects the flexibility of "was" in expressing state, action, and passive meaning in the past tense.

8) Called:

Figure 3.23: Concordance Lines for the Verb "called" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc software interface. The 'Target Corpus' is named 'temp' and contains 1 file with 497 tokens. The search results are displayed in a table with the following columns: File, Left Context, Hit, and Right Context. The search results are as follows:

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 txt ceil ...	t at home either . "Keep on trying," Jean said. Steve	called	all of their friends, but no one was at
2 txt ceil ...	one answered," Steve said. "They must have gone out", Steve	called	another friend, but he wasn't at home either . "
3 txt ceil ...	saw Paul, Linda, and their other friends. "We could have	called,	but we wanted to surprise you", said Linda. "Happy

Figure 3.24: Collocation results for the Verb "called" in the Placement Test Corpus

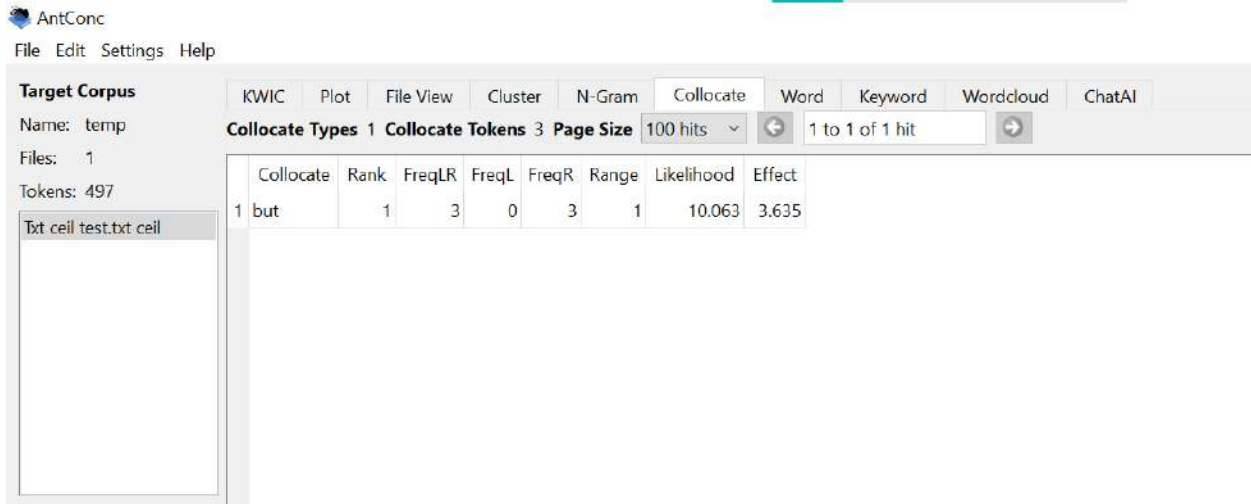
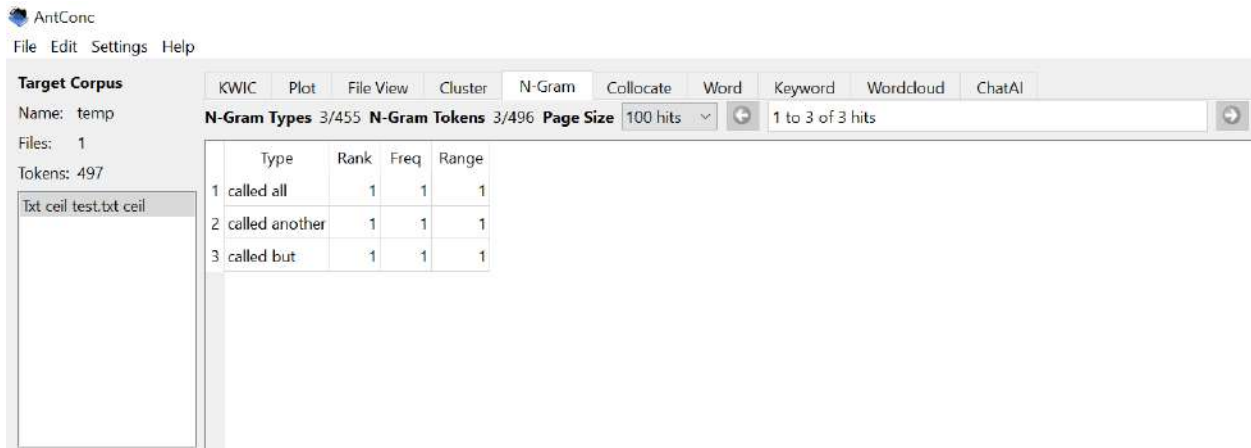


Figure 3.25: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "called" in the Placement Test Corpus



The AntConc analysis of the verb **"called"** using the concordance, collocate, and n-gram tools provides a detailed account of its usage patterns within the target corpus. The **concordance** results (KWIC view) reveal that "called" appears three times in the dataset, each instance embedded in conversational or narrative contexts, such as "called all of their friends," "called another friend," and "called, but we wanted to surprise you." This indicates that "called" is primarily used to make a phone call to someone, often as part of a sequence of actions involving multiple people or attempts.

The **collocate** analysis further supports this interpretation, showing "but" as the most significant collocate (with a high likelihood score of 10.063 and an effect size of 3.635). The presence of "but" as a collocate suggests that "called" frequently appears in contrastive or adversative contexts, where the act of calling is followed by an unexpected or negative outcome (e.g., "called, but no one was at home"). This pattern highlights the narrative function of "called" in expressing unsuccessful attempts at communication or unmet expectations.

The **n-gram** analysis identifies the most common two-word sequences (bigrams) involving "called," such as "called all," "called another," and "called but." These n-grams reinforce the findings from the concordance and collocate analyses, illustrating that "called" is typically followed by determiners or conjunctions that introduce further information about the recipients of the call or the result of the action.

9) Study:

Figure 3.26: Concordance Lines for the Verb "study" in the Placement Test Corpus

AntConc
File Edit Settings Help

Target Corpus
Name: temp
Files: 1
Tokens: 497

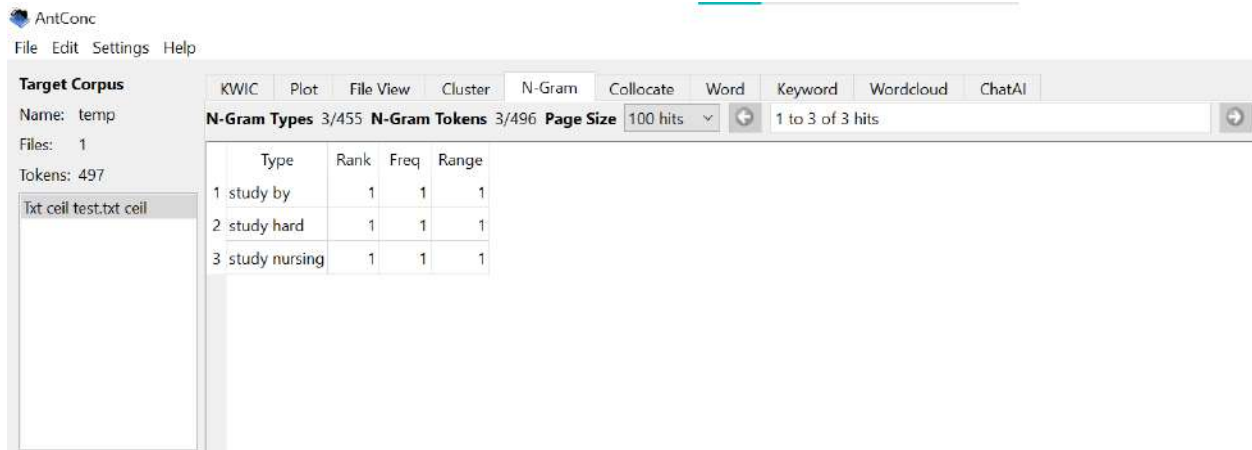
Txt ceil test.txt ceil

KWIC Plot File View Cluster N-Gram Collocate Word Keyword Wordcloud ChatAI

Total Hits: 3 Page Size 100 hits 1 to 3 of 3 hits

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt ceil ...	I like to go to school early so I can	study	by myself before class. The class is difficult, so
2 Txt ceil ...	myself before class. The class is difficult, so I must	study	hard if I want to do well. After class,
3 Txt ceil ...	boss is very kind. Everybody likes her very much. I	study	nursing at school. I like to go to school

Figure 3.27: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "study" in the Placement Test Corpus



Analysis of the test corpus results for the verb "study," as shown in the concordance and n-gram outputs from AntConc, reveals several key patterns. The concordance (KWIC) results indicate that "study" appears three times in the corpus, each within a distinct right and left context, demonstrating varied usage. The left contexts include phrases such as "I like to go to school early so I can," "myself before class. The class is difficult, so I must," and "boss is very kind. Everybody likes her very much. I," suggesting that "study" is used both in personal and academic contexts. The right contexts "by myself before class," "hard if I want to do well," and "nursing at school" show that "study" commonly collocates with adverbs or noun phrases, emphasizing self-directed effort, intensity, and specific fields of study. The n-gram analysis confirms this by listing the most frequent two-word combinations: "study by," "study hard," and "study nursing," each occurring once, which aligns with the KWIC findings and highlights that "study" is versatile in collocation, pairing with prepositions, adverbs, and nouns. Overall, the corpus data suggests that "study" is used in a range of syntactic environments, reflecting both the action of learning and the context or manner in which it occurs, with no single collocation dominating the sample, likely due to the small corpus size.

10) Would:

Figure 3.28: Concordance Lines for the Verb "would" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'Word' tab selected. The search results are as follows:

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Txt ceilsad. If they were still living in the country, they	would	have a party. Jean told Steve that she missed
2 Txt ceilIf Sandy had known it was going to snow, she	Would	have worn her boots. 20. He sang that song last
3 Txt ceilSteve that she missed their old friends. Steve said he	would	call them up. "I hope they are home," said

Figure 3.29: Common N-Gram Patterns of the Verb "would" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' tab selected. The search results are as follows:

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 would have	1	2	1
2 would call	2	1	1

The AntConc analysis of the verb "would" in the target corpus (497 tokens) reveals distinct grammatical patterns, as evidenced by concordance and n-gram data. Concordance results identify three instances of "would," all functioning within hypothetical or counterfactual frameworks. Two occurrences align with third conditional structures, marked by the collocation "would have" + past participle (e.g., "they would have a party" and "she would have worn her boots"), reflecting hypothetical outcomes of past unrealized conditions. The third instance ("he would call them up") exemplifies future-in-the-past usage, denoting a reported intention contingent on a prior context. Notably, the capitalization of "Would" in the second instance is stylistic, attributable to sentence-

initial positioning rather than grammatical irregularity. N-gram analysis corroborates these patterns, with "would have" ranking as the highest-frequency bigram (frequency = 2, range = 1), underscoring its role in conditional constructions, while "would call" (frequency = 1, range = 1) highlights its application in direct reported speech. The absence of additional collocations (e.g., "would be" or "would go") suggests a constrained lexical scope in the corpus, prioritizing hypothetical and intentional modalities. These findings align with standard English grammatical conventions, where "would" primarily operates in unreal contexts, though the limited dataset precludes broader generalizations. Together, the tools demonstrate "would" as a marker of hypotheticality and reported intention, with collocational preferences reflecting its syntactic flexibility in conditional and narrative structures.

3.2.2.3.2. Prepositions

1) TO:

Figure 3.30: Concordance Lines for the preposition "To" in the Placement Test Corpus

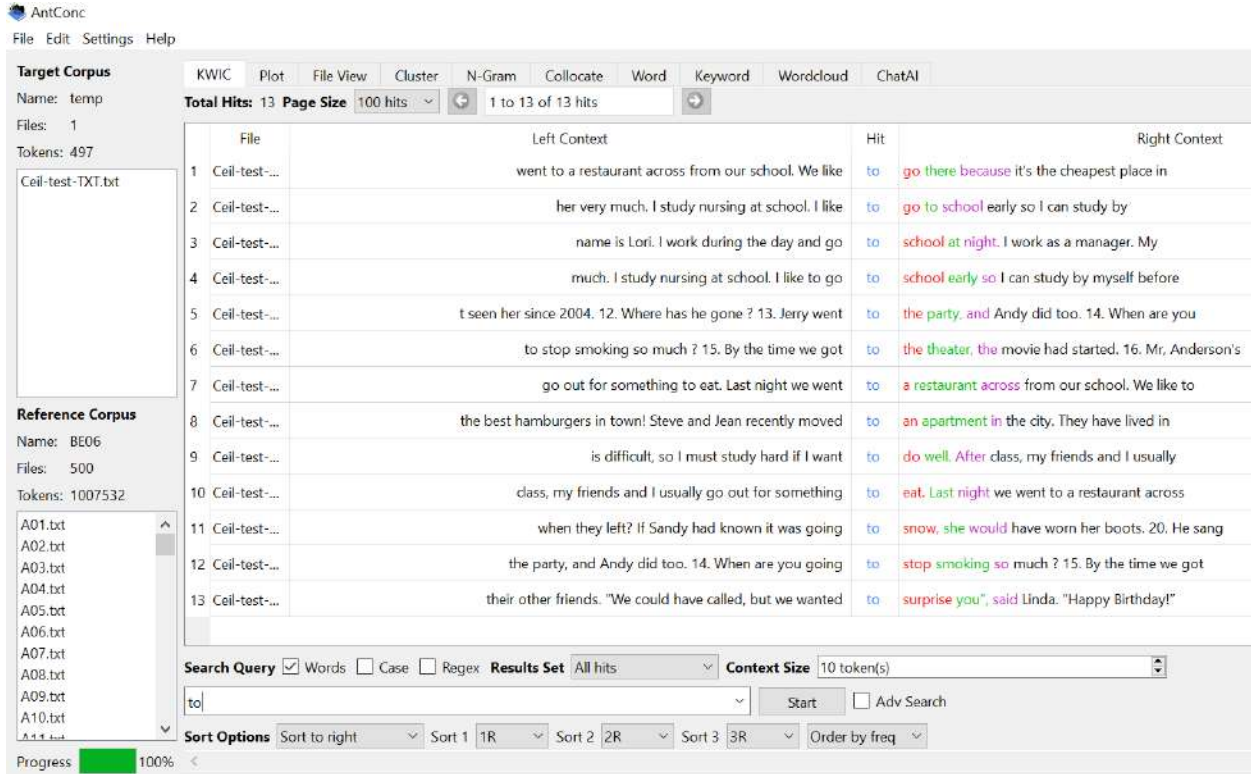


Figure 3.31: Collocation Results for the preposition "To" in the Placement Test Corpus

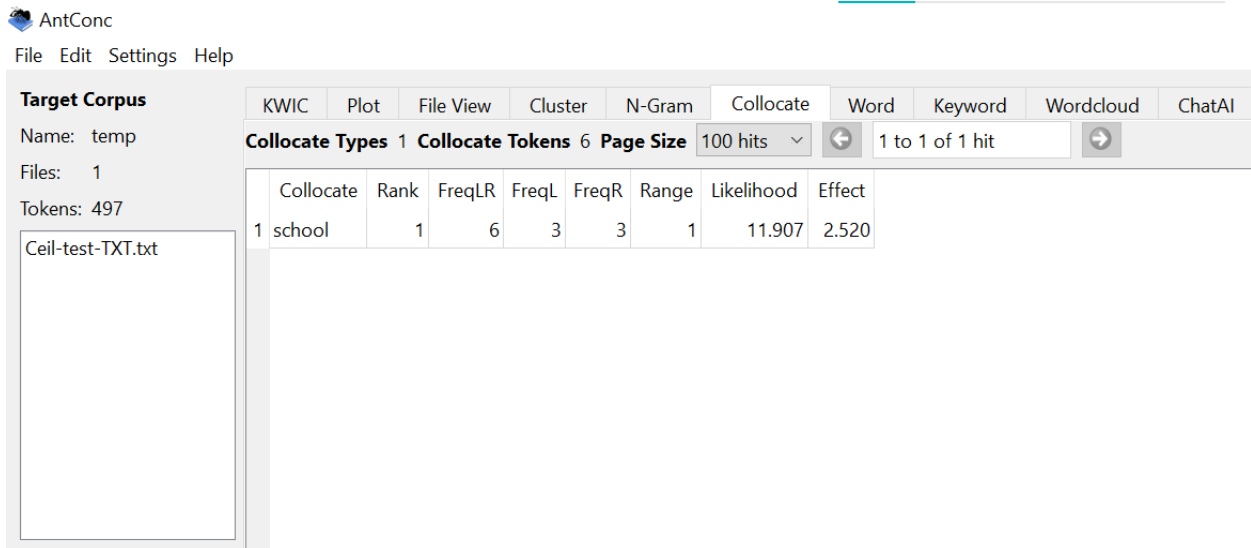
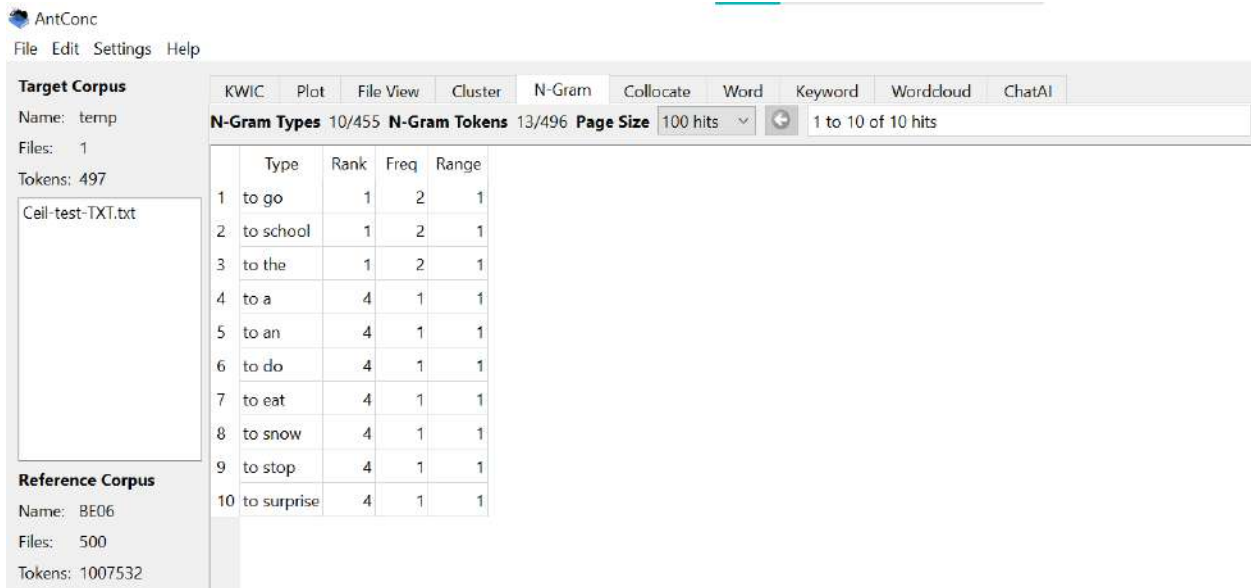


Figure 3.32: Common N-Gram Patterns for the preposition "To" in the Placement Test Corpus



The analysis of the preposition "to" in the test corpus reveals several key patterns. The concordance tool shows 13 instances of "to," with its primary usage indicating direction or purpose, such as "go to school," "went to the party," and "go to a restaurant." Notably, "to" frequently co-occurs with verbs of movement (e.g., "go," "went") and purpose (e.g., "to eat," "to study"). The collocate tool highlights "school" as the most significant collocate, appearing six times (three times on the left and three times on the right of "to"), suggesting a strong association between "to" and educational contexts. The n-gram tool further supports this, listing "to go," "to school," and "to the" as the most frequent bigrams, each occurring twice. Other n-grams like "to a," "to an," and "to do" appear once, reflecting varied but less frequent uses. The data collectively underscore "to" as a preposition that predominantly marks direction, purpose, or destination, with "school" as a prominent lexical partner. The results are consistent across tools, confirming the reliability of the findings.

2) IN:

Figure 3.33: Concordance Lines for the preposition "In" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'Concordance' view selected. The 'Target Corpus' is named 'temp' and contains 1 file with 497 tokens. The 'Reference Corpus' is named 'BE06' and contains 500 files with 1007532 tokens. The search results show 9 hits for the preposition 'in'. Each hit is displayed as a table with columns for File, Left Context, Hit, and Right Context.

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Ceil-test-...	two weeks. Before that they had lived in a house	in	the country. Since they moved into their new apartment.
2 Ceil-test-...	living in the city, they sometimes wish they had stayed	in	the country. Yesterday, Jean received a birthday card. It
3 Ceil-test-...	apartment, they have been very busy. Although they enjoy living	in	the city, they sometimes wish they had stayed in
4 Ceil-test-...	in town! Steve and Jean recently moved to an apartment	in	the city. They have lived in their new apartment
5 Ceil-test-...	birthday and she is sad. If they were still living	in	the country, they would have a party. Jean told
6 Ceil-test-...	like to go there because it's the cheapest place	in	the neighborhood and the food is very good too.
7 Ceil-test-...	new apartment for two weeks. Before that they had lived	in	a house in the country. Since they moved into
8 Ceil-test-...	moved to an apartment in the city. They have lived	in	their new apartment for two weeks. Before that they
9 Ceil-test-...	coffee and a hamburger. This restaurant has the best hamburgers	in	town! Steve and Jean recently moved to an apartment

Figure 3.34: Collocation Results for the preposition "In" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'Collocate' view selected. The 'Target Corpus' is named 'temp' and contains 1 file with 497 tokens. The 'Collocate Types' is 1 and 'Collocate Tokens' is 4. The search results show 1 hit for the preposition 'in'. The results are displayed in a table with columns for Collocate, Rank, FreqLR, FreqL, FreqR, Range, Likelihood, and Effect.

Collocate	Rank	FreqLR	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1 lived	1	4	3	1	1	12.812	3.465

Figure 3.35: Common N-Gram Patterns for the preposition "In" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' view selected. The 'Target Corpus' is named 'temp' and contains 1 file with 497 tokens. The 'N-Gram Types' is 4/455 and 'N-Gram Tokens' is 9/496. The search results show 4 hits for the preposition 'in'. The results are displayed in a table with columns for Type, Rank, Freq, and Range.

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 in the	1	6	1
2 in a	2	1	1
3 in their	2	1	1
4 in town	2	1	1

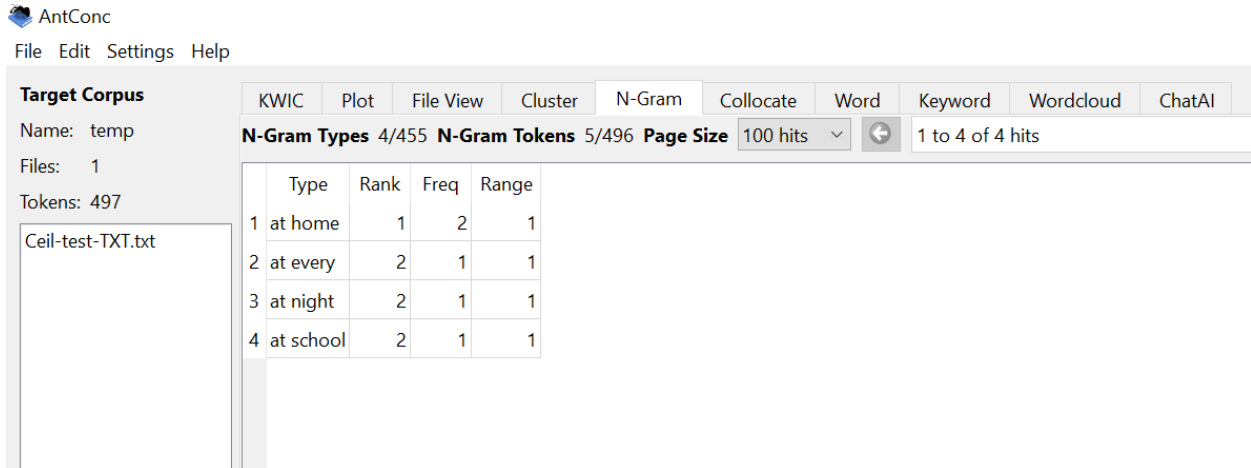
The analysis of the preposition "in" in the test corpus reveals distinct patterns across tools. The collocate tool identifies "lived" as the primary collocate, appearing four times (three instances preceding "in" and one following it), with a likelihood score of 12.812 and an effect size of 3.465, indicating a statistically significant association between "in" and contexts of residence or habitation. The concordance tool shows nine instances of "in," predominantly denoting physical or metaphorical location. Recurring contexts include "lived in the country," "living in the city," and "best hamburgers in town," emphasizing spatial relationships tied to residential, urban, or evaluative settings. The n-gram tool corroborates this, with "in the" as the most frequent bigram (six occurrences), followed by "in a," "in their," and "in town" (one each). These results highlight "in" as a locative preposition primarily marking containment or presence within generalized spaces (e.g., "the country," "the city") or specific structures (e.g., "a house," "their apartment"). The data collectively underscore "in" as a marker of spatial orientation, with "lived" serving as a key lexical partner, aligning consistently across collocational, contextual, and phrasal analyses.

3) AT:

Figure 3.36: Concordance Lines for the preposition "At" in the Placement Test Corpus

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Ceil-test-...	Example: They are over there. 1. Mark gets up	at 6:00	every day. 2. You always shout when you are angry. 3.
2 Ceil-test-...	gone out". Steve called another friend, but he wasn't	at	home either . "Keep on trying," Jean said. Steve called
3 Ceil-test-...	Steve called all of their friends, but no one was	at	home. "I don't know where they are " said
4 Ceil-test-...	Lori. I work during the day and go to school	at	night. I work as a manager. My boss is
5 Ceil-test-...	very kind. Everybody likes her very much. I study nursing	at	school. I like to go to school early so

Figure 3.37: Common N-Gram Patterns for the preposition "At" in the Placement Test Corpus



The analysis of the preposition "at" in the given corpus, based on the concordance and n-gram results, reveals its usage in specific temporal and locative contexts. The concordance tool shows five instances of "at," with three occurrences denoting location ("at home," "at school") and two indicating time ("at 6:00," "at night"). The n-gram data further supports this distribution, listing "at home," "at night," and "at school" as recurring phrases, with "at home" appearing twice, suggesting a slight preference for locative usage. Notably, "at 6:00" from the concordance is not reflected in the n-gram results, possibly due to its lower frequency or exclusion from the n-gram calculation. The corpus demonstrates that "at" is primarily employed to specify precise times or fixed locations, aligning with standard grammatical norms. The limited variety in collocations (e.g., "at home," "at school") indicates a constrained semantic range in this small dataset, likely influenced by the corpus's thematic focus on daily routines and interpersonal interactions. Overall, the data underscores "at" as a marker of spatiotemporal specificity in the examined texts.

4) BY:

Figure 3.38: Concordance Lines for the preposition "By" in the Placement Test Corpus

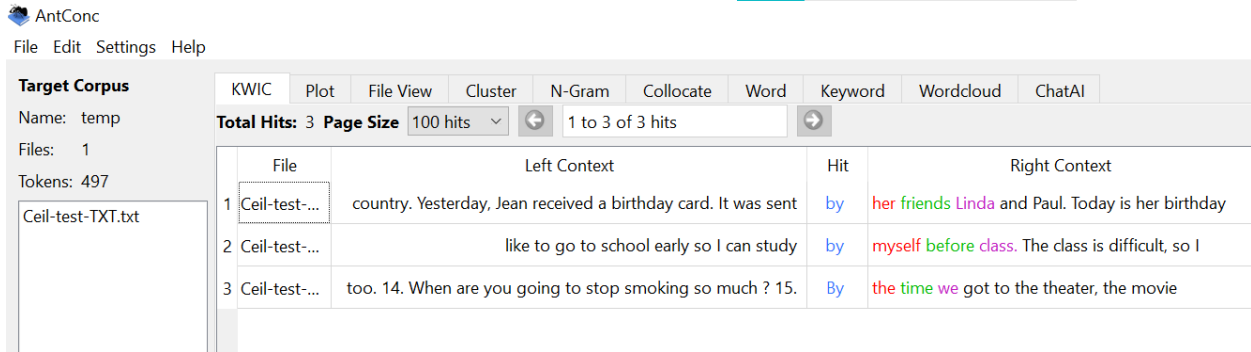
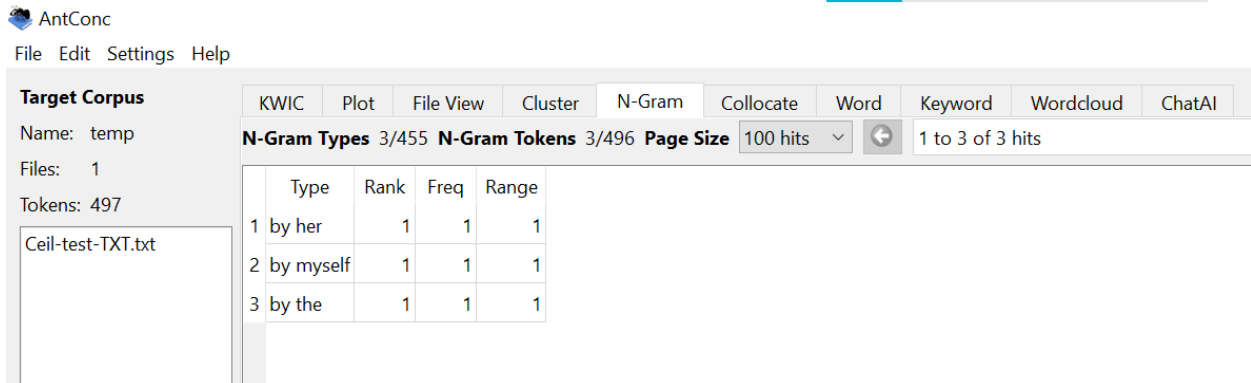


Figure 3.39: Common N-Gram Patterns for the preposition "By" in the Placement Test Corpus



The preposition "by" in the corpus demonstrates three distinct uses, as evidenced by the concordance and n-gram data. The concordance reveals that "by" functions as an agent marker in passive constructions ("sent by her friends"), denotes solitary action ("study by myself"), and indicates a temporal endpoint ("By the time we got to the theater"). The n-gram results further categorize these instances into "by her," "by myself," and "by the," each appearing once, confirming their singular occurrences. The absence of higher-frequency collocations suggests that "by" is employed in varied but infrequent syntactic roles within the corpus, with no dominant pattern emerging. The data reflects standard grammatical usage, where "by" marks agency, manner, or temporal boundaries, though its distribution is limited in this small dataset.

5) BEFORE:

Figure 3.40: Concordance Lines for the preposition "Before" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' tab selected. The search results are as follows:

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Ceil-test-...	go to school early so I can study by myself	before	class. The class is difficult, so I must study
2 Ceil-test-...	They have lived in their new apartment for two weeks.	Before	that they had lived in a house in the

Figure 3.41: Common N-Gram Patterns for the preposition "Before" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the 'N-Gram' tab selected. The search results are as follows:

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 before class	1	1	1
2 before that	1	1	1

The preposition "before" appears twice in the corpus, serving exclusively as a temporal marker in both instances. The concordance lines show it introducing a preceding event ("before class") and a prior state ("Before that they had lived in a house"). The n-gram analysis corroborates these findings, listing "before class" and "before that" as the only two phrases, each occurring once. This restricted usage aligns with "before" functioning solely to sequence events in time, with no spatial or metaphorical applications present. The consistency in its temporal role suggests a narrow but clear semantic function within the corpus, adhering to conventional grammatical norms

without deviation. The limited frequency, however, precludes broader generalizations about its usage patterns.

3.2.2.3.3. Conjunctions

1) AND:

Figure 3.42: Concordance Lines for the conjunction "And" in the Placement Test Corpus

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Ceil-test-...	very good too. I usually order a cup of coffee	and a hamburger. This restaurant has the best hamburg	
2 Ceil-test-...	2. Where has he gone ? 13. Jerry went to the party,	and Andy did too. 14. When are you going to stop	
3 Ceil-test-...	he ? My name is Lori. I work during the day	and go to school at night. I work as a	
4 Ceil-test-...	if I want to do well. After class, my friends	and I usually go out for something to eat. Last	
5 Ceil-test-...	restaurant has the best hamburgers in town! Steve	and Jean recently moved to an apartment in the city.	
6 Ceil-test-...	a birthday card. It was sent by her friends Linda	and Paul. Today is her birthday and she is sad.	
7 Ceil-test-...	uddenly they heard a knock. Jean opened the door	and saw Paul, Linda, and their other friends. "We could	
8 Ceil-test-...	by her friends Linda and Paul. Today is her birthday	and she is sad. If they were still living in	
9 Ceil-test-...	ecause it's the cheapest place in the neighborhood	and the food is very good too. I usually order	
10 Ceil-test-...	a knock. Jean opened the door and saw Paul, Linda,	and their other friends. "We could have called, but we	

Figure 3.43: Common N-Gram Patterns for the conjunction "And" in the Placement Test Corpus

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1 and a	1	1	1
2 and andy	1	1	1
3 and go	1	1	1
4 and i	1	1	1
5 and jean	1	1	1
6 and paul	1	1	1
7 and saw	1	1	1
8 and she	1	1	1
9 and the	1	1	1
10 and their	1	1	1

The conjunction **"and"** in the corpus demonstrates a high frequency of use, with 10 occurrences identified in the concordance data, indicating its central role in coordinating ideas within the text. The concordance lines reveal that "and" primarily functions to link nouns ("coffee and a hamburger," "Linda and Paul"), clauses ("Jerry went to the party, and Andy did too"), and verb phrases ("work during the day and go to school at night"). This aligns with its standard grammatical role as a coordinator of equivalent syntactic units. The n-gram analysis further breaks down these instances into distinct collocations, such as "and a," "and Andy," and "and the," each appearing once, suggesting varied but balanced usage without a dominant pattern. Notably, "and" frequently connects human subjects ("Jean and Paul," "my friends and I"), reinforcing its role in structuring social and narrative cohesion. The absence of repeated n-grams beyond single occurrences implies a diverse application of "and" across different contexts, reflecting its versatility in the corpus. Overall, the data underscores "and" as a fundamental cohesive device, facilitating both syntactic parallelism and thematic continuity in the examined texts.

2) BUT:

Figure 3.44: Concordance Lines for the conjunction "But" in the Placement Test Corpus

The screenshot shows the AntConc interface with the following details:

- Target Corpus: Name: temp, Files: 1, Tokens: 497
- File list: Ceil-test-TXT.txt
- Search criteria: KWIC, Page Size: 100 hits, 1 to 4 of 4 hits
- Concordance table with columns: File, Left Context, Hit, Right Context

File	Left Context	Hit	Right Context
1 Ceil-test-...	said. "They must have gone out". Steve called another friend,	but	he wasn't at home either. "Keep on trying,"
2 Ceil-test-...	work on Saturday ? 5. Did you see Bob last night ? No,	but	I saw his wife. 6. I will be here tomorrow. 7.
3 Ceil-test-...	on trying," Jean said. Steve called all of their friends,	but	no one was at home. "I don't know
4 Ceil-test-...	Paul, Linda, and their other friends. "We could have called,	but	we wanted to surprise you", said Linda. "Happy Birthday!"

Figure 3.45: Collocation Results for the conjunction "But" in the Placement Test Corpus

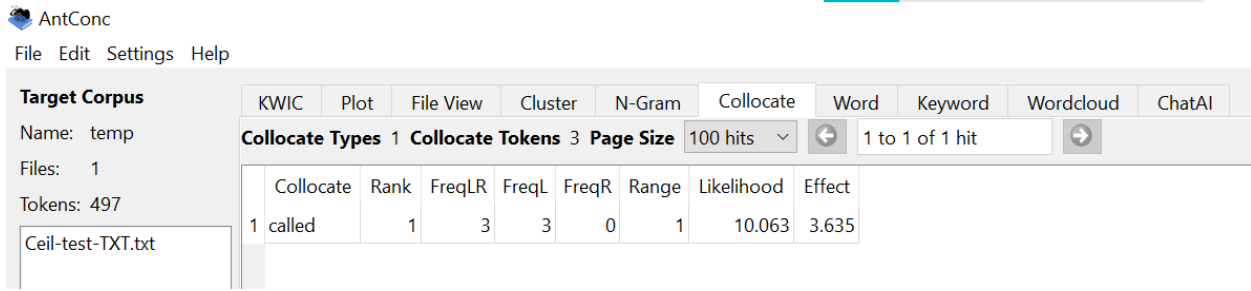
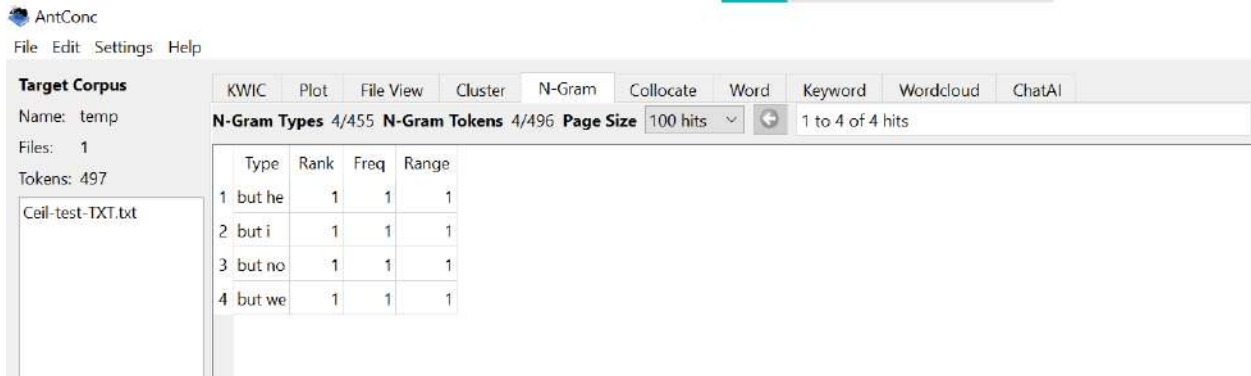


Figure 3.46: Common N-Gram Patterns for the conjunction "But" in the Placement Test Corpus



The conjunction **"but"** in the corpus serves as a contrastive marker, appearing four times in the concordance data, each time introducing a counterpoint to the preceding clause. The concordance lines demonstrate its role in signaling unexpected outcomes ("Steve called another friend, but he wasn't at home"), negating expectations ("No, but I saw his wife"), and presenting obstacles ("but no one was at home"). The n-gram analysis reveals that "but" consistently pairs with subject pronouns ("but he," "but I," "but we") or negation ("but no"), highlighting its syntactic function in contrasting subjects or states. The collocate analysis identifies "called" as a significant left collocate (appearing three times before "but"), suggesting a recurring pattern where attempts (e.g., calling friends) are followed by denials or failures. This aligns with "but" functioning to disrupt anticipated results, reinforcing its adversative role. The limited yet consistent usage with each n-gram occurring once indicates balanced distribution across different contexts, all adhering to its core function of introducing contrast. The data collectively underscores "but" as a pivotal device

for structuring oppositional relationships in discourse, with no deviations from standard grammatical usage observed in this corpus.

3) IF:

Figure 3.47: Concordance Lines for the conjunction "If" in the Placement Test Corpus

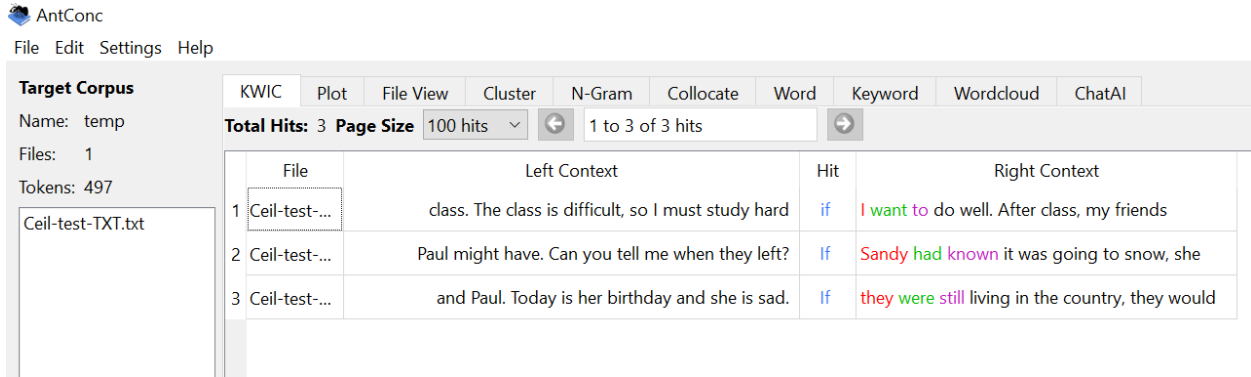
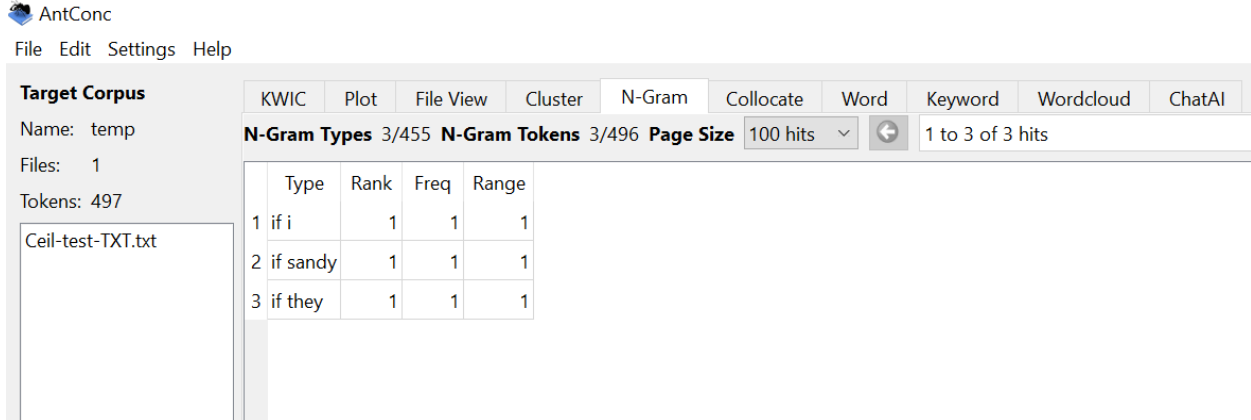


Figure 3.48: Common N-Gram Patterns for the conjunction "If" in the Placement Test Corpus



The conjunction "if" appears three times in the concordance data, consistently introducing conditional clauses that express hypothetical or contingent situations. The concordance lines reveal its use in three distinct contexts: (1) a first-person condition ("if I want to do well"), (2) a past hypothetical ("If Sandy had known"), and (3) a counterfactual scenario ("If they were still living

in the country"). The n-gram analysis further breaks these down into "if I," "if Sandy," and "if they," each occurring once, demonstrating its role in framing conditions with varied subjects (personal, named, and plural). The absence of repeated n-grams suggests balanced usage across different grammatical subjects, with no dominant pattern. Notably, "if" adheres strictly to standard conditional structures, marking hypotheticality without deviation. The limited but consistent distribution underscores its function as a subordinator of contingency, with each instance contributing to logical or speculative coherence in the discourse.

4) SO:

Figure 3.49: Concordance Lines for the conjunction "So" in the Placement Test Corpus

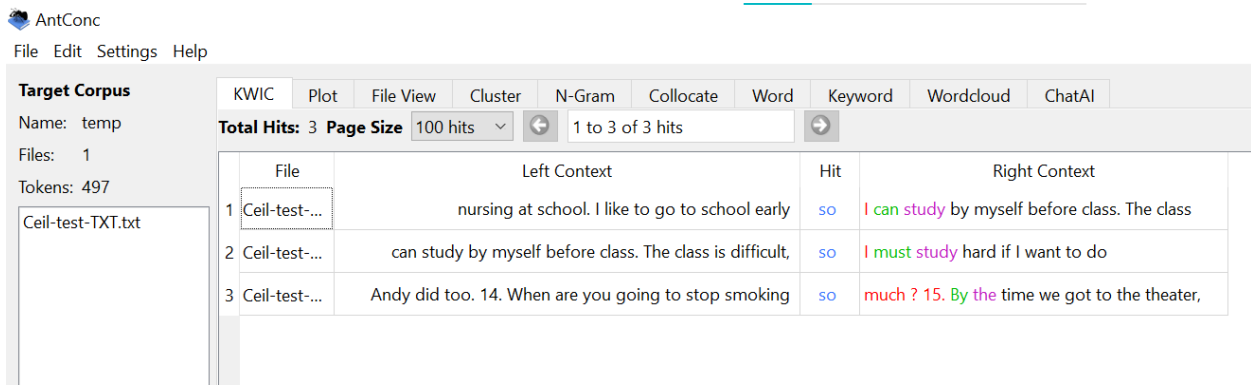
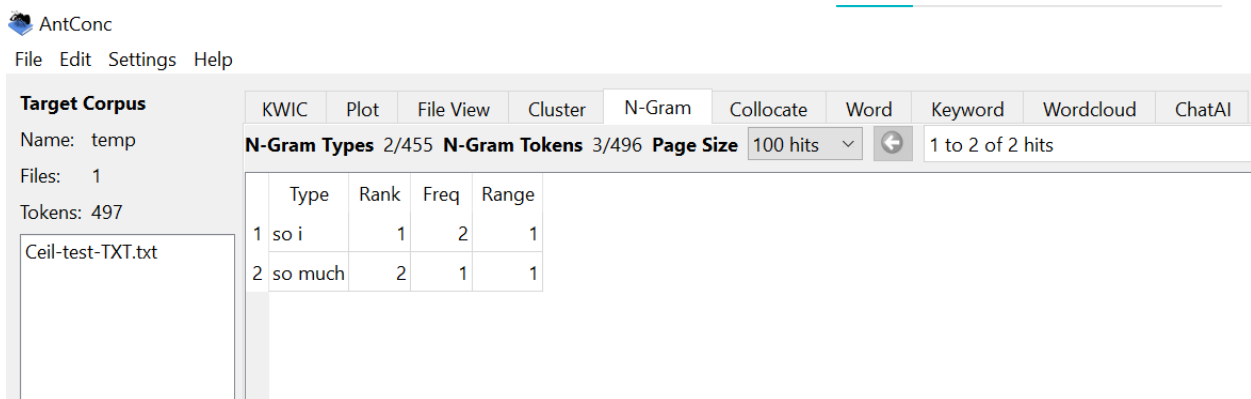


Figure 3.50: Common N-Gram Patterns for the conjunction "So" in the Placement Test Corpus



The conjunction "so" occurs three times in the concordance, primarily functioning as a coordinator of result or purpose. Two instances ("so I can study," "so I must study hard") introduce clauses expressing logical consequences, while the third ("so much") modifies an adjective, diverging slightly into adverbial usage. The n-gram data reflects this split, with "so I" appearing twice (indicating a recurring resultative link to the speaker's actions) and "so much" once (intensifying degree). The higher frequency of "so I" suggests a partial tendency toward first-person causal explanations, though the small sample size precludes broader generalizations. Syntactically, "so" operates conventionally, connecting clauses with clear cause-effect relationships or intensifying adjectival phrases. Its usage aligns with standard grammatical norms, though the corpus reveals no extended or complex constructions.

5) BECAUSE:

Figure 3.51: Concordance Lines for the conjunction "Because" in the Placement Test Corpus

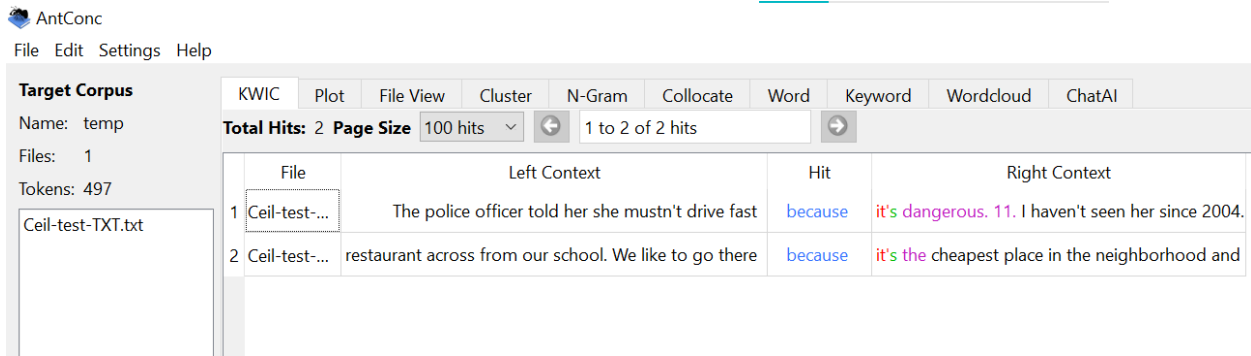
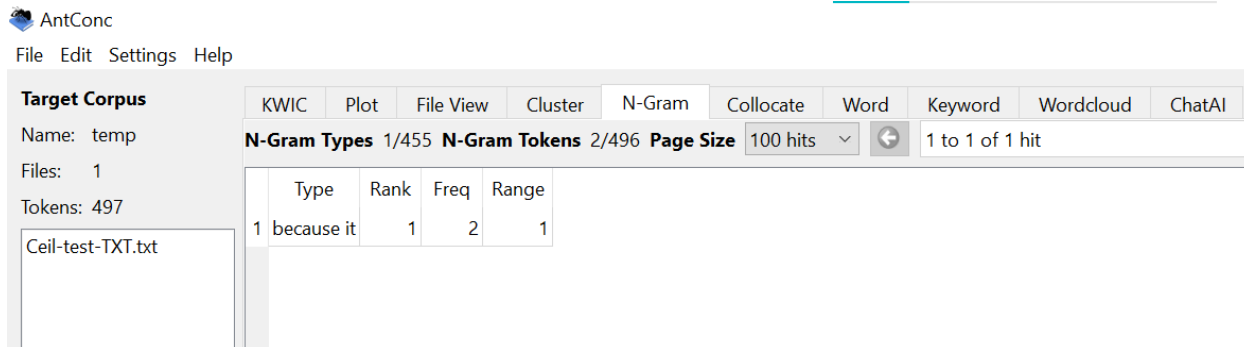


Figure 3.52: Common N-Gram Patterns for the conjunction "Because" in the Placement Test Corpus

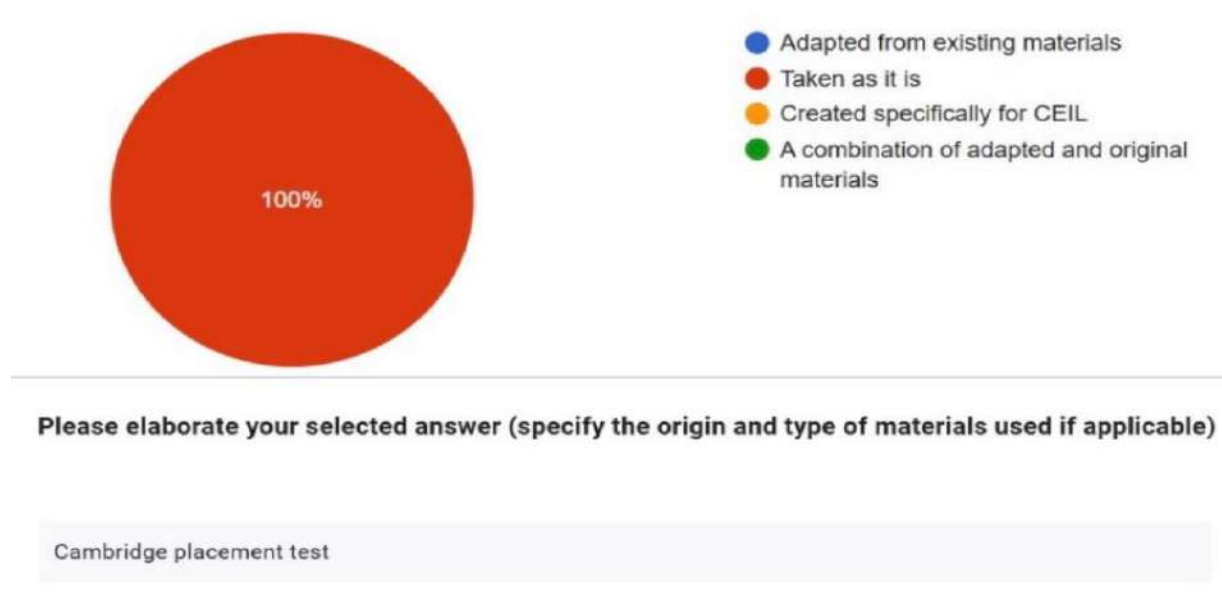


The conjunction **"because"** appears twice in the concordance, exclusively introducing clauses that provide reasons or explanations. Both instances ("because it's dangerous," "because it's the cheapest place") follow a repetitive structure, where "because" precedes the pronoun "it" to justify a preceding statement. The n-gram analysis confirms this pattern, with "because it" as the sole collocation, occurring twice. This uniformity highlights "because" restricted but focused role in the corpus: it functions solely as a subordinator of causation, linking outcomes to their explanations without variation in subject or complexity. The repetition of "it" suggests a preference for impersonal or situational explanations, though the limited data prevents deeper conclusions. Grammatically, "because" adheres strictly to its standard function, with no elliptical or truncated usages observed.

3.2.3. Questionnaire of the Teacher Who Proposed the English Placement Test

Q1: Were the CEIL placement test questions adapted from existing materials, or were they created specifically for CEIL?

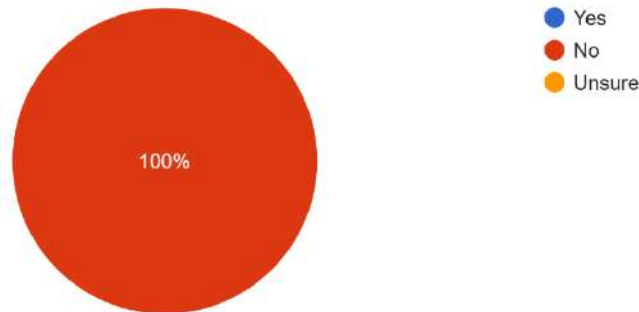
Figure 3.53: Origin of CEIL Placement Test Questions



The data shows that 100% of the test questions were "taken as is" from existing materials, specifically the Cambridge placement test, rather than being adapted or newly created for CEIL. This indicates a reliance on established, external assessment tools rather than locally tailored content.

Q2: Was the test originally designed to be linked to an oral proficiency test?

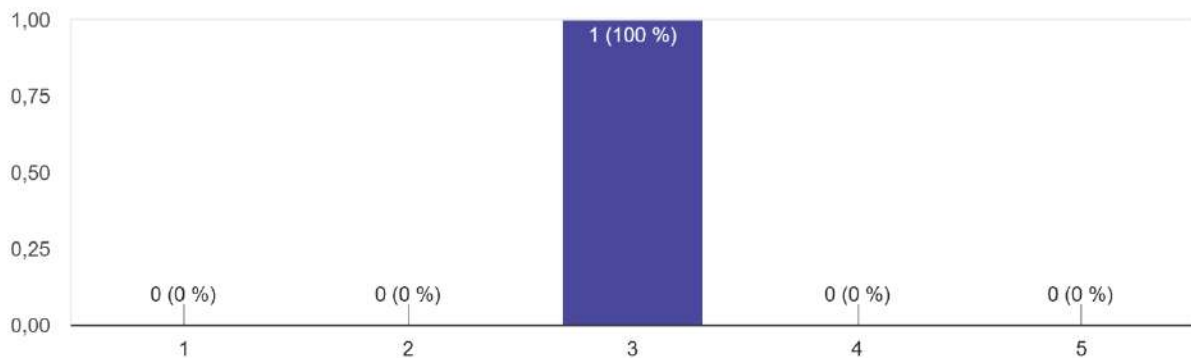
Figure 3.54: Link to Oral Proficiency Test



The response indicates that the CEIL placement test was not originally designed to be linked to an oral proficiency test, with 100% of the feedback from the teacher confirming this. This suggests the test assesses written or structural proficiency only, potentially omitting a key aspect of language ability.

Q3: On a scale of 1–5, how effectively do you believe the current CEIL placement test measures students' overall English proficiency?

Figure 3.55: Perceived Effectiveness in Measuring Overall Proficiency



On a scale of 1 to 5, the teacher rated the test's effectiveness as a 3 (100%), suggesting a moderate level of confidence in the test's ability to measure students' overall English proficiency. This neutral rating may reflect perceived limitations, possibly due to the test's lack of oral assessment or contextual adaptation.

Q4: To what extent was the CEIL test designed to align with international proficiency frameworks (e.g., CEFR) or tests like TOEFL/IELTS?

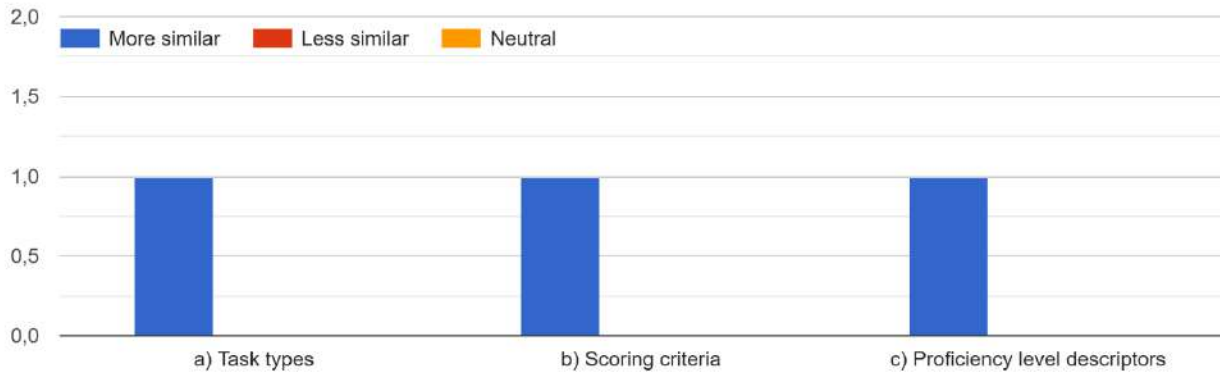
Figure 3.56: Alignment with International Proficiency Frameworks



The test is reported to be fully aligned (100%) with international frameworks such as CEFR and standardized tests like TOEFL/IELTS. This full alignment suggests the test's structure and content are consistent with widely recognized standards, supporting its external validity.

Q5: How does the CEIL test compare to TOEFL/IELTS in terms of:

Figure 3.57: Similarity of CEIL Test to TOEFL/IELTS



The teacher rated the CEIL test as "more similar" to TOEFL/IELTS in all three aspects: task types, scoring criteria, and proficiency level descriptors. This suggests a strong perceived alignment with internationally recognized English proficiency tests, indicating the CEIL test's structure and assessment approach are consistent with global standards.

Q6: What specific strengths or weaknesses of the test contribute to your rating of its effectiveness?

strengths: meets international standards, is simple to correct, and allows for the easy differentiation of learners based on their levels.
weakness: has not been updated

The teacher highlights three key strengths, emphasizing the test's validity and practicality: devotion to international standards ensures content relevance and comparability; simplicity in correction suggests efficiency and reliability in scoring; and the test's ability to differentiate learners by level reflects its diagnostic utility. However, the noted weakness -lack of updates- raises

concerns about the test's current relevance and adaptability to evolving language assessment practices, which could impact its ongoing effectiveness.

Q7: Which aspects of the test (e.g., task types, scoring rubrics, skill coverage) reflect alignment or divergence from international standards?

it is a Cambridge test, designed by Cambridge professionals, so I believe it fully aligns with international standards

The teacher's response relies on the authoritative origin of the test (Cambridge) to assert full alignment with international standards. This reflects confidence in the test's design quality and standardization. However, the answer does not specify particular components such as task types or scoring rubrics, which would provide a more nuanced understanding of alignment or any potential divergences.

Q8: What advantages or limitations does the CEIL test have compared to TOEFL/IELTS?

the CEIL Placement test identifies the candidates' level of English, ranging from A1 (absolute beginner) to C2 (Expert user) according to Cambridge standards, which makes it reliable and effective

The teacher emphasizes the CEIL test's comprehensive proficiency range, mapped onto the CEFR scale (A1 to C2), as a key advantage, highlighting its reliability and effectiveness in placement. This suggests the test's strength lies in its ability to categorize learners accurately across all proficiency levels. Notably, no limitations are mentioned, which might indicate either a lack of perceived shortcomings or an omission that could be explored further.

Q9: What changes would you recommend to improve the CEIL test’s validity or alignment with global standards?

That test was administered as proposed by Cambridge; however, we didn't have much time to enrich it or adapt it to other international tests like IELTS.

This response acknowledges the original test’s fidelity to Cambridge’s design but points out a missed opportunity to adapt or enrich the test to incorporate features from other widely recognized tests such as IELTS. The mention of time constraints suggests practical limitations in test development, implying that the test’s validity and alignment could be enhanced by integrating diverse international assessment elements.

Q10: If there is any additional information regarding the test that you believe is valuable and might have been overlooked in this questionnaire, please feel free to share it.

I proposed that test many years ago, around 2013. It has not been changed or modified since then, so I believe it needs an update.

The teacher provides important contextual information regarding the test’s age and lack of revisions since its inception in 2013. This reinforces earlier concerns about the test’s currency and suggests that an update is necessary to maintain its validity and relevance in the evolving field of language assessment.

3.3. Discussion and Interpretation of Results

The corpus analysis of the CEIL placement test reveals that the test items exhibit a well-balanced vocabulary, combining high-frequency words with real-life language use, and demonstrate moderate lexical richness appropriate for A2-B1 learners. Additionally, the test

includes syntactic flexibility and higher-level grammatical constructions that cater to more advanced learners, suggesting that the test content is linguistically sound and capable of differentiating among various proficiency levels. However, it is important to note that the placement test primarily assesses grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills through multiple-choice questions, and possibly some aspects of writing, but it does not evaluate speaking and listening skills, which are essential components of overall language proficiency. Contrasting with the corpus findings, feedback from teachers presents a more critical view, with responses ranging from negative to moderate regarding the test's accuracy in measuring learners' language proficiency. This indicates practical concerns about the test's effectiveness in real classroom settings. Furthermore, the questionnaire completed by the test's proposer acknowledges that, although the test is aligned with international standards, being Cambridge-based, its efficiency in measuring overall language proficiency is only moderate. The proposer also admits that the test is outdated and requires refinement to better meet current testing needs. Taken together, these findings suggest that while the CEIL placement test is linguistically well-designed and theoretically appropriate, its practical efficiency and accuracy in measuring comprehensive language proficiency are limited. The absence of speaking and listening components further restricts its ability to provide a holistic assessment of learners' language skills. Therefore, the first hypothesis that the CEIL placement test is efficient and accurate in measuring language proficiency cannot be confirmed. Surprisingly, the findings of this research do not align with the results of the study by Outas and Belaoura (2021), which concluded that the CEIL placement test is reliable and valid in measuring what it is intended to measure. This discrepancy highlights the need for ongoing evaluation and possible contextual considerations affecting test performance and perceptions of its effectiveness.

The second hypothesis can be divided into two parts for clarity: first, the CEIL EFL teachers perceive the English placement test as effective in assessing learners' language abilities, and second, whether they identify specific areas for improvement. According to the data gathered from the two questionnaires, when asked to rate the test's efficiency and accuracy on a scale of 1 to 5, five teachers rated it as 3, three rated it as 2, and only two rated it as 4. The predominance of ratings at the moderate to low end indicates that teachers generally do not perceive the test as clearly effective in measuring learners' language proficiency. Therefore, the first part of the hypothesis is refuted. Regarding the second part, the teacher who proposed the test acknowledged that it is outdated and in need of updates and improvements. Similarly, the CEIL EFL teachers pointed out specific limitations, including the test's strong emphasis on grammar, its limited coverage of language skills beyond grammar and vocabulary, and the discrepancy between learners' passive knowledge and their active language use. These observations confirm that teachers do identify particular areas where the test could be improved. Thus, the second part of the hypothesis is confirmed. All in all, the results obtained from this study are not compatible with those of Outas and Belaoura (2021), who assumed that the CEIL placement test was perceived as valid by the participants of their study, including EFL teachers and B2 learners at CEIL. This discrepancy further underscores the need for ongoing evaluation and contextual consideration when assessing the test's effectiveness.

The English placement test at CEIL Ain Temouchent differs from internationally recognized tests like TOEFL and IELTS primarily in its format and the range of language skills it assesses. Unlike TOEFL and IELTS, which comprehensively evaluate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, the CEIL test focuses mainly on grammar and vocabulary through multiple-choice questions, limiting its skill coverage. However, despite these differences, and as it was stated by

the teacher who proposed the test, the CEIL placement test shows clear similarities with international standards in terms of scoring criteria, task types, and proficiency level descriptors, as it is aligned with the CEFR framework and based on Cambridge testing principles. This alignment demonstrates that the test incorporates recognized assessment principles. Therefore, the hypothesis that the CEIL English placement test shows slight alignment in a few aspects with internationally recognized tests like TOEFL and IELTS is confirmed.

3.4. Recommendations and Suggestions

1. **Expand the Test to Cover All Four Language Skills:** One of the most critical improvements is to broaden the scope of the placement test to include listening and speaking skills alongside grammar, vocabulary, and reading. Currently, the test's focus on grammar and vocabulary through multiple-choice questions limits its ability to assess learners' comprehensive language proficiency. The inclusion of productive and receptive skills such as speaking and listening will provide a more complete and equitable assessment of learners' abilities, getting the test closer to internationally recognized tests such as TOEFL and IELTS.

2. **Update and Modernize Test Content and Format:** The test has been termed outdated by the test proposer. Periodic reviewing and updating of test items, formats, and topics should be carried out to report current language use and communicative contexts. Updating the test will enhance its worth and appeal, bringing it closer to the needs of learners nowadays and curricular requirements.

3. **Enhance Validity and Reliability by Systematic Test Development:** In order to enhance the accuracy and efficiency of the test, CEIL should follow strict test development processes, such as piloting new items, item analysis, and consultation with language testing experts. This will enable

the test to reliably measure the targeted language skills and yield consistent results for various learner groups.

4. Establish Continuous Feedback Mechanisms: Sustained improvement relies on constant input from major stakeholders. CEIL ought to have systematic feedback mechanisms in place with the involvement of teachers and learners to pick up emerging problems and areas of improvement. This will keep the test sensitive to the needs of users and effective in the long term.

3.5. Limitations of the Study:

The researcher encountered some limitations that should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings.

Firstly, time constraints were a prime concern. Due to limited time, the researcher was unable to conduct a face-to-face interview with the proposer of the test, an activity which would have generated richer qualitative data. The questionnaire was thus embraced as a second-best data collection methodology, potentially limiting the richness and depth of the data obtained from this key respondent.

Secondly, there was a limitation in sampling. The initial semi-structured survey was administered to 14 CEIL teachers of English, but only 9 teachers replied. This comparatively low response rate can impact the representative nature of the findings and has the potential to introduce response bias, since the opinions of the non-responding teachers are unidentified.

Lastly, the study's corpus-based approach. Although giving the advantage of specialist and focused analysis, it was constrained by the limited corpus size. The limited corpus size constrains the generalizability of the findings such that results have to be interpreted with caution and are not necessarily wholly applicable to other contexts or larger populations.

Despite these limitations, the research proves to be valuable in providing insights on the CEIL placement test and laying the ground for further, more in-depth studies.

3.6. Conclusion

Chapter Three has comprehensively presented and discussed the findings derived from the three research tools, two semi-structured questionnaires and corpus analysis. The results were orderly presented in the form of graphs and charts, providing a clear and detailed visual presentation of the data collected. The discussion was logically centered on the three guiding hypotheses, allowing for concentrated interpretation that linked empirical evidence to the research questions. Additionally, the chapter provided practical recommendations for CEIL administrators, test developers, and policymakers so that the findings can inform future practice and decision-making. Finally, the chapter identified the study's limitations, providing openness and context for the scope and generalizability of the results. Overall, this chapter succeeds in bridging data presentation and critical analysis in offering a well-founded basis for the study's final insights.

General Conclusion

This study set out to explore the understudied phenomenon of English proficiency testing within Algerian CEILs, with a particular focus on evaluating the efficiency and accuracy of the English placement test used at the Intensive Language Teaching Centre (CEIL) of Ain Temouchent University. By employing corpus analysis as an objective methodological tool alongside two semi-structured questionnaires and comparing the local CEIL test to internationally recognized proficiency exams such as TOEFL and IELTS, the research aimed to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving local test design, content, and assessment criteria.

The findings reveal that while the CEIL placement test is linguistically well-designed and theoretically sound, its practical effectiveness in comprehensively measuring learners' English proficiency is limited. Notably, the absence of speaking and listening components restricts the test's ability to offer a holistic assessment of language skills. Teachers' moderate to low ratings of the test's effectiveness further underscore these limitations, while they also identified specific areas for improvement. Importantly, the CEIL test aligns with international standards through its conformity to the CEFR framework and Cambridge testing principles, demonstrating that it incorporates recognized assessment criteria despite its shortcomings.

This study faced several limitations, including time constraints, a limited sample size of teacher respondents, and a relatively small corpus for analysis, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. To build on this work, future research should expand the corpus by collecting placement tests from multiple Intensive Language Teaching Centres across Algeria, incorporate learners as a key stakeholder group, and conduct more in-depth interviews with teachers to enrich the qualitative data.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the insufficient literature on English proficiency testing in Algerian CEILs, providing a critical, evidence-based evaluation of a placement test used locally in relation to international benchmarks. By highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement, this research offers valuable insights for policymakers, test designers, and educators aiming to enhance the validity and reliability of English language assessments in Algeria's higher education context. Ultimately, these findings can inform the development of more comprehensive and effective placement tests that better serve learners' needs and support improved language teaching outcomes.

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Appendix 01: AntConc Results from the Word List Tool

Type	Rank	Freq	Range
the	1	20	1
i	2	16	1
they	3	15	1
to	4	13	1
and	5	10	1
in	6	9	1
a	7	8	1
steve	7	8	1
have	9	7	1
is	9	7	1
are	11	6	1
her	11	6	1
jean	11	6	1
said	11	6	1

we	11	6	1
you	11	6	1
at	17	5	1
friends	17	5	1
he	17	5	1
t	17	5	1
their	17	5	1
but	22	4	1
go	22	4	1
had	22	4	1
it	22	4	1
last	22	4	1
my	22	4	1
night	22	4	1
school	22	4	1
she	22	4	1

that	22	4	1
very	22	4	1
was	22	4	1
when	22	4	1
apartment	35	3	1
birthday	35	3	1
by	35	3	1
called	35	3	1
class	35	3	1
country	35	3	1
home	35	3	1
if	35	3	1
linda	35	3	1
much	35	3	1
no	35	3	1
paul	35	3	1

s	35	3	1
so	35	3	1
study	35	3	1
work	35	3	1
would	35	3	1
as	52	2	1
because	52	2	1
before	52	2	1
book	52	2	1
can	52	2	1
city	52	2	1
day	52	2	1
did	52	2	1
do	52	2	1
for	52	2	1
going	52	2	1

gone	52	2	1
has	52	2	1
like	52	2	1
lived	52	2	1
living	52	2	1
moved	52	2	1
must	52	2	1
new	52	2	1
of	52	2	1
on	52	2	1
one	52	2	1
out	52	2	1
party	52	2	1
restaurant	52	2	1
saw	52	2	1
since	52	2	1

them	52	2	1
there	52	2	1
told	52	2	1
too	52	2	1
up	52	2	1
usually	52	2	1
went	52	2	1
where	52	2	1
across	87	1	1
after	87	1	1
all	87	1	1
although	87	1	1
always	87	1	1
an	87	1	1
anderson	87	1	1
andy	87	1	1

angry	87	1	1
another	87	1	1
answered	87	1	1
be	87	1	1
been	87	1	1
best	87	1	1
bob	87	1	1
boots	87	1	1
boss	87	1	1
bread	87	1	1
busy	87	1	1
call	87	1	1
car	87	1	1
card	87	1	1
carefully	87	1	1
cheapest	87	1	1

children	87	1	1
coffee	87	1	1
could	87	1	1
cup	87	1	1
dangerous	87	1	1
dialed	87	1	1
didn	87	1	1
difficult	87	1	1
does	87	1	1
don	87	1	1
door	87	1	1
drive	87	1	1
during	87	1	1
early	87	1	1
eat	87	1	1
either	87	1	1

enjoy	87	1	1
every	87	1	1
everybody	87	1	1
example	87	1	1
fast	87	1	1
feed	87	1	1
food	87	1	1
friend	87	1	1
from	87	1	1
gets	87	1	1
good	87	1	1
got	87	1	1
hamburger	87	1	1
hamburgers	87	1	1
happy	87	1	1
hard	87	1	1

haven	87	1	1
heard	87	1	1
here	87	1	1
hers	87	1	1
his	87	1	1
hope	87	1	1
house	87	1	1
how	87	1	1
hungry	87	1	1
instructions	87	1	1
into	87	1	1
jane	87	1	1
jerry	87	1	1
keep	87	1	1
kind	87	1	1
knock	87	1	1

know	87	1	1
known	87	1	1
left	87	1	1
likes	87	1	1
lori	87	1	1
m	87	1	1
manager	87	1	1
mark	87	1	1
me	87	1	1
might	87	1	1
missed	87	1	1
movie	87	1	1
mr	87	1	1
mustn	87	1	1
myself	87	1	1
name	87	1	1

need	87	1	1
neighborhood	87	1	1
not	87	1	1
number	87	1	1
nursing	87	1	1
officer	87	1	1
old	87	1	1
opened	87	1	1
order	87	1	1
other	87	1	1
our	87	1	1
over	87	1	1
place	87	1	1
please	87	1	1
police	87	1	1
read	87	1	1

received	87	1	1
recently	87	1	1
sad	87	1	1
sandy	87	1	1
sang	87	1	1
saturday	87	1	1
see	87	1	1
seen	87	1	1
sent	87	1	1
shout	87	1	1
smoking	87	1	1
snow	87	1	1
something	87	1	1
sometimes	87	1	1
song	87	1	1
started	87	1	1

stayed	87	1	1
still	87	1	1
stolen	87	1	1
stop	87	1	1
suddenly	87	1	1
sure	87	1	1
surprise	87	1	1
tell	87	1	1
theater	87	1	1
this	87	1	1
time	87	1	1
today	87	1	1
tomorrow	87	1	1
took	87	1	1
town	87	1	1
trying	87	1	1

two	87	1	1
want	87	1	1
wanted	87	1	1
wasn	87	1	1
week	87	1	1
weeks	87	1	1
well	87	1	1
were	87	1	1
who	87	1	1
wife	87	1	1
will	87	1	1
wish	87	1	1
worn	87	1	1
yesterday	87	1	1

**Appendix 02: The CEIL English Placement Test of Ain Temouchent
University**



Belhadj Bouchaib University. Ain Temouchent

CEIL

ESL PLACEMENT TEST

Name _____

Email Address _____

Profession/ Studies _____

Score _____

Part I. Please CIRCLE the correct answer.

Example *They _____ over there.*

- a. *am*
- b. *is*
- c. *are*

1. Mark ____ at 6:00 every day.

- a. get up
- b. gets up
- c. is getting up

2. You always ____ when you are angry.

- a. shouted
- b. shouting
- c. shout

3. When my children are hungry, I feed ____ .

- a. they
- b. them
- c. their

4. ____ Jane work on Saturday?

- a. Do
- b. Was
- c. Does

5. Did you see Bob last night? No, but I ____ his wife.

- a. seed
- b. saw
- c. see

6. I ____ here tomorrow.

- a. will be
- b. am be
- c. be

7. How ____ bread do we need?

- a. much
- b. many
- c. few

8. Is that book ____ ?

- a. my
- b. hers
- c. your

9. Please read the instructions ____.

- a. careful
- b. carefully
- c. more careful

10. The police officer told her she ____ drive fast because it's dangerous.

- a. mustn't
- b. doesn't have to
- c. has to

11. I ____ her since 2004.

- a. didn't see
- b. don't seen
- c. haven't seen

12. Where has he _____ ?
- a. gone
 - b. went
 - c. go
13. Jerry went to the party, and Andy _____.
- a. did either
 - b. did neither
 - c. did too
14. When are you going to stop _____ so much?
- a. to smoke
 - b. smoke
 - c. smoking
15. By the time we got to the theater, the movie _____.
- a. had started
 - b. started
 - c. has started
16. Mr. Anderson's car was _____ last night.
- a. steal
 - b. stole
 - c. stolen
17. I'm not sure who took the book. Paul _____.
- a. may
 - b. might have
 - c. could
18. Can you tell me when _____ ?
- a. did they leave
 - b. did they left
 - c. they left

19. If Sandy had known it was going to snow, she _____ her boots.

- a. would have worn
- b. would wear
- c. will wear

20. He sang that song last week, _____ ?

- a. does he
- b. did he
- c. didn't he

Part II. Please read the story and CIRCLE the correct answer.

Example the 21. in 22. work
My name is Lori. I work during an day and go at school at night. I works
a working

23. Her 24. her
as a manager. My boss is very kind. Everybody likes them very much. I study
His them his

25. go 24. herself
nursing at school. I like to go to school early so I can study by himself before
to going myself

27. must 28. will
class. The class is difficult, so I might study hard if I wanted to do well.
can want

29. any 30. went
After class, the friends and I usually go out for something to eat. Last night we go
my gone

31. across to 32. the cheapest
to a restaurant across our school. We like to go there because it's too cheap
across from cheaper

33. was 34. cup of coffee
place in the neighborhood and the food good very good. I usually order a cup coffee
is a cup of coffee

35. have
and a hamburger. This restaurant has the best hamburgers in town!
had

Steve and Jean recently moved to an apartment in the city. They have lived in

36. for 37. had
their new apartment since two weeks. Before that they have lived in a house in
during were

the country. Since they moved into their new apartment, they 38. have been
are
were very busy.

Although they enjoy 39. live
to live
living in the city, they sometimes wish they 40. stay
stayed
had stayed in the

country. Yesterday, Jean received a birthday card. It was 41. sent
sending
send by her friends Linda and Paul.

Today is her birthday and she is sad. If they were still living in the country,

42. have
will have
would have they 43. will miss
missed
miss a party. Jean told Steve that she missed their old friends.

44. call them up.
call up them.
them call up. Steve said he would 45. are
be
were "I hope they are home," said Jean as Steve di-

aled the number. "No one answered," Steve said. "They must 45. have gone
be go
gone out." Steve

called another friend, but he wasn't at home 47. neither.
too.
either. "Keep on 48. to try,
trying,
try, Jean said.

Steve called all of their friends, but no one was at home. "I don't know where 49. they are,
are they,
they be,

said Steve. Suddenly they heard a knock. Jean opened the door and saw Paul, Linda,

and their other friends. "We 50. could
can
must have called, but we wanted to surprise you," said

Linda. "Happy Birthday!"

ملخص

تتطرق هذه الدراسة إلى اختبار تحديد المستوى للغة الإنجليزية في مركز التعليم المكثف للغات بجامعة عين تموشنت. وباستخدام تحليل النصوص واستبيانات من المدرّسين ومصمم الاختبار، تقيّم الدراسة الميزات اللغوية للاختبار ومدى توافقه مع كفاءة المتعلمين والمعايير الدولية. يتماشى الاختبار مع مبادئ الإطار المرجعي الأوروبي المشترك للغات ومبادئ كامبردج ولكنه يفتقر إلى أقسام المحادثة والاستماع ويركز كثيراً على القواعد اللغوية. ويرى الأساتذة أنه قديم وغير شامل، ويلاحظون وجود فجوات بين المهارات المكتسبة والمهارات النشطة. تُظهر المقارنات مع اختباري اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية والنظام الدولي لاختبار اللغة الإنجليزية اختلافات في الشكل ولكن معايير التقييم متشابهة. و تقترح الدراسة توسيع نطاق الاختبار ليشمل جميع المهارات اللغوية الأربع، وتحديث محتواه وشكله، وتحسين صلاحيته من خلال الآراء والتقييمات المستمرة

Résumé

Cette étude examine le test de placement en anglais au Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues de l'université d'Ain Temouchent. À l'aide d'une analyse de corpus et de questionnaires remplis par les enseignants et le concepteur du test, elle évalue les spécificités linguistiques du test et son alignement sur les compétences de l'apprenant et les normes internationales. Le test s'aligne sur le CECR et les principes de Cambridge, mais il manque de sections d'expression orale et d'écoute et se concentre trop sur la grammaire. Les enseignants le trouvent dépassé et incomplet, notant des lacunes entre les compétences passives et actives. Les comparaisons avec le TOEFL et l'IELTS montrent des différences de format mais des critères de notation similaires. L'étude recommande d'étendre le test aux quatre compétences linguistiques, d'actualiser son contenu et son format et d'améliorer sa validité grâce à un retour d'information permanent.