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University of Macau

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

**A Comparability Study between the Joint Admission Examination and the Earlier
Admission Examination Papers in Macao: A Content Analysis**

Submitted by

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Abstract

In 2017, a new admission examination scheme titled “Joint Admission Examination for Macao Four Higher Education Institutions (JAE)” was implemented in Macao for four higher education institutions: University of Macau (UM), Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT), Macao Polytechnic Institute (MPI) and Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) (hereinafter referred to “the Four Institutions”). Only the Chinese, Portuguese, English and Mathematics subjects are jointly organized by the Four Institutions. In addition to the JAE 2017/2018, the English examination papers from the Four Institutions were examined. They are the UM examination 2015/2016, the IFT examination 2015/2016, the MPI examination 2016/2017 and the MUST examination 2016/2017.

Three specific analyses were conducted in this study. First, a task analysis of construct coverage, assessment criteria and task format were analyzed by the researcher and confirmed by another language expert. Second, five language experts who are qualified English teachers in Macao were invited to assess the five admission papers using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) with modifications. Further, a total of sixteen reading passages from the five papers were analyzed by a web tool called “Coh-Metrix Text Easability Assessor” (Coh-Metrix) to examine Narrativity, Syntactic Simplicity, Word Concreteness, Referential Cohesion, Deep Cohesion and Flesch Kincaid Grade Level.

Comparing the results from different perspectives, the overall construct coverage, assessment criteria and task formats of Language Use, task formats of Reading and Writing (with exception of the MPI examination) were comparable, and the JAE were relatively reasonable. However, in regard to the level of difficulty, the results of the CEFR suggested that of the five admission papers, the UM examination was the most difficult one, which was between B2 and C1, and its level of difficulty was similar to the B2 First (one of Cambridge English Qualifications¹¹); the reading and writing sections of the UM examination were the most challenging. The JAE (above B1), was the second-easiest paper among the five. Besides, in comparison with the FCE 2014 (now known as B2 First) (Solnyshkina, Harkova and Kiselnikov, 2014), the mean scores of the five language characteristics in terms of Narrativity, Syntactic Simplicity, Word Concreteness, Referential Cohesion and Deep Cohesion, as well as the Flesch Kincaid Grade Level of the IFT examination and the JAE were similar to the FCE 2014 the most.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis represents my own work and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree, diploma or other qualification.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ally Ho', is written over a horizontal line.

(Ally, Ho Oi Kuan)

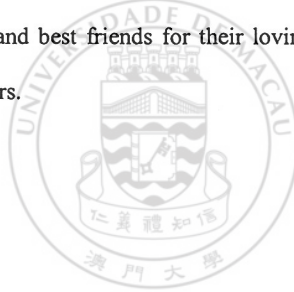
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