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AN INVESTIGATION INTO INSTRUCTIONS IN CAMBRIDGE TESTS

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. RATIONALE

People learn English with many different purposes. They want to raise their chances of finding a proper job, they want to function more efficiently on the work floor, they want to get better acquainted with their neighbours in new living environment, and they want to read certain books, articles or magazines, etcetera. Each of these learners has specific language needs.To get the "passed ticket" for these purposes, learners have to pass the international examinations and one of the common international exams is IELTS. And on the road to achieve the target, learners have to make a great effort during the process of learning. Moreover, they have to apply the accumulated knowledge and regularly practice all kinds of international tests such as Cambridge Test.

There are many factors that affect the results of a test and personally, one of the main and important factors is to capture the test requirements and instructions. If candidates do not read them carefully, they will not know what you must do on the test. For example, on a short answer test or writing test, the directions will state if there are limitations on the length of our answer, if something specific needs to be included, etc. Without reading the directions carefully, they won't know exactly what is expected, and it could be the difference in the grade on the test reflecting what we know or, in some cases, failing the test.

As a language learner and a staff in the education sector, I do recognize that it is very necessary to study the issues related to testing. Thus, one of the main problems is to identify instructions and their using in terms of syntactic and semantic features. For the above

reasons, I choose to do a research on the topic: "*An investigation into instructions in Cambridge tests*"

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Aims

The aims of this study is to point out the pragmatic, syntactic and semantic features of instructions in Cambridge tests. Simultaneously, we want to find out the various types of speech acts used in instructions in the systems of Cambridge tests, so that the candidates can understand more about the requirements and instructions in all kind of Cambridge tests contributing to the results of exam.

1.2.2. Objectives

To achieve the aim mentioned above, this thesis will analyze the instructions in Cambridge tests to find out the distribute features in terms of syntactic and semantic.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is to answer the following questions:

1. What are the syntactic features of instructions in Cambridge tests?
2. What are the semantic features of instructions in Cambridge tests?
3. What are the pragmatic features and kinds of speech acts were used of instructions in Cambridge tests?

1.4. THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The thesis mainly focuses on studying pragmatic, syntactic and semantic features of instructions in Cambridge tests. And the analysis of data will be collected from in KET, PET, FCE, CAE, and CPE practice tests. Besides, I, the author, just focus on analyzing the pragmatic, syntactic and semantic features of instructions in reading, writing, and listening tests.

1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The thesis consists of 5 chapters as follows:

- **Chapter one**: "*Introduction*" includes the rationale, the aims and objectives, the research questions, the signification and the scope of the study.

- **Chapter two:** "*Literature Review and Theoretical Background*" deals with the reviews background on syntactic and semantic features, on speech act theory of Searle. And the review of previous studies has also been mentioned in this chapter.

- **Chapter three:** "*Research design and data analysis*" describes the intended process of study, which includes the method of the study and the steps that the study must follow in the process of collecting and analyzing.

- **Chapter four: "***Finding and Discussion*" presents the summary of data collected, their analysis and discussions on the linguistic features, showing the kind of speech acts in instruction of Cambridge tests.

- **Chapter five: "***Conclusion and Recommendation*" summaries the issue studied in the thesis, the implications and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES RELATED TO THE STUDY

There have been many researches on linguistic features of speech acts which contribute to background knowledge related to the thesis, linguistic features in instructions for testing.

Firstly, here are some previous studies directly relating to Testing and Evaluation:

Chen Desheng and Ashitha Varghese [5] introduce a journal "*Testing and Evaluation of Language skills*". In this journal, they emphasized that testing and evaluation took a major role in language teaching and learning. Also, they mentioned the reasons for testing and assessment, types of language tests, the ways of describing tests, etc. .

Le Thi Kim Dung [9] made an investigation in teacher's language in TOEFL iBT recordings and attempted to generalize the structural forms in teacher's language in lessons. The study found out various types of speech acts used in English lessons, the syntactic realization and the functions of these kinds of speech acts in English lesson discourse.

Vo Nguyen Da Thao[21] has an attempt to study on syntactic and semantic features of instruction for use of household appliances in English and Vietnamese. She analyzes to find out how the structures have been used in English andVietnamese instruction for use, as well as provide a better understanding of two languages concerned with the function of syntactic forms used in instructional text. In her thesis, the similarities and differences between English and Vietnamese instruction for use in terms of syntactic and semantic features have also been presented.

Cao Thi My Hanh [4] makes an investigation into the typical speech acts of cooking instructions in English and Vietnamese. She attempts to discover some typical linguistic features and then find out the similarities and differences between English cooking instructions and Vietnamese ones in terms of their pragmatics, semantics and syntax.

Lastly, there have been many researches on linguistic features of speech acts which contribute to background knowledge related to

linguistic features in instructions for testing.

Austin [2] was the first author to introduce the idea of speech acts, analyzing the relationships between utterances and performance; he mentioned the concepts of performative language. Austin created a clear distinction between performatives and constatives.

2.2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1. Definition of Terms

a. Language Testing

Language testing is the practice and study of evaluating the proficiency of an individual in using a particular language effectively. (Priscilla Allen, University of Washington) [28]

b. Instructions

According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Instruction *"is advice and information about how to do or use something, often written in a small book or on the side of a container"*. It's also *"the teaching of a particular skill or subject"*.

According to Wikipedia:

Instruction is vital for education, as it is the transfer of learning from one person to another. Any time you are given directions or told how to do something you are receiving instruction. Instruction may be: "*the activities of educating or instructing; activities that impart knowledge or skill*", or "*the profession of a teacher*", or "*a message describing how something is to be done*", or "*a line of code written as part of a computer program*"

According to Oxford Dictionaries Online, instructions mean that "detailed information about how something should be done oroperated"

The Esdictionaries defines instruction as "a spoken or written statement of what must be done, especially delivered formally, with

official authority, or as an order".

2.2.2. Language of the Instruction for Testing

An effective instructional text should be Concise, Understandable and Explicit.

Concise: Instruction for use should be expressed as concisely as possible, while not compromising information content, again in order to encourage reading. Instructions have the social purpose of providing directions to the reader that are clear and unambiguous. These directions enable the reader to be directed toward achieving a specific outcome. The instructions need to be organized coherently and in a step by step chronological order.

Understandable: Instructions for testing is considered as a means of transfer the message from the authors to the readers. Therefore it has to convey the content that is easily understood by readers.

Explicit: Instructions are clear and detailed information on how to do something. Instruction for use has to be explicit because it is an unambiguous and direct approach to conveying that includes both instructional design and delivery procedures.

2.2.3. Syntactic Features of Instructions for Testing
a. Syntactic Terms

Syntactic features are the combination of words, in accordance with specific orders and conditioned rules, to express the ideas or content, and to make them enable to communicate flexibly. The major objectives of syntax are to study grammatical aspects of sentences; types of sentences and the ways structural relation of the sentences are constructed.

b. Declaratives

Declarative sentences are the most common type. The subject

in declarative word order comes before the verb. Declarative sentences are usedto convey information or to make statement.

For examples:

(2.4) He would stay long.

c. Imperatives

* Imperatives in English

The imperative is the only case in English in which the subject isomitted. However, we all understand that the missing subject of theimperative is the understood second person imperative, you.

For examples:

(2.7) She turned on TV, didn't she? Turn on TV, won't you?

d. Complex Sentence

A sentence contains a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses(introduced by if, when, although, etc.). These sentences are called complex.

A complex sentence is very different from a simple sentence orcompound sentence because it makes clear which ideas are most important.

For instance:

(2.15) Many people enjoyed the movie; however, William did not.

e. Conditional Sentence

According to Randolph Quirk [15] conditional clauses state the dependence of one circumstance or set of circumstances on another finite adverbials clauses of condition are introduced by the sub-coordinators if (positive condition) and unless (negative condition)

According to Wikipedia, conditional sentences are categorized into two fields:

- In grammar, conditional sentences are sentences discussing factual implications or hypothetical situations and their consequences.

- In syntactically, the condition is the subordinate clause, and the consequence is the main clause.

Conditional Sentences are also known as Conditional Clauses or If clauses.

2.2.4. Semantic Features of Instructions

To understand the meaning of a word, we have to identify its semantic features (semantic properties). It is acceptable that the meaning of an expression can be viewed as a combination of features. Consider the word "hen" may be described as a set of the following semantic features [+animate], [+ bird], [+fowl], [fully grown] and [female]. These features can be used to define the meanings of a word. And the method used to identify these properties is called "componential method". Besides, the same semantics feature can occur in words of different parts of speech. In other words, words of different part of speech may share the same semantic feature. For example, "*mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparent, ant, etc*" are all [+kinship]. In sum, knowing all the possible semantic features of a word enables us to combine semantically compatible words together to form larger but meaningful linguistic units such as phrases, clauses and sentences.

2.2.5. Semantic Fields

Semantic filed is, therefore, a set of interrelated senses based on a conceptual field or spectrum. Words can be grouped either thematically or ideographically. Semantic filed (lexical field) is defined by Richards and Schmidt (2002) as "*the organization of related words and expressions into a system which show their relationship to one another*"

Based on the above opinions, the data collected in the thesis emphasize some semantic fields such as: means of testing knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, etc.

2.2.6. Speech Act Theory

a. Speech Act

Speech act theory attempts to explain how speakers use language to accomplish intended actions and how hearers infer intended meaning from what is said. It is concerned with communication – not communication in the narrow sense of transmission of information, but communication in a broader sense which includes the issues of apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise, request, etc.

On any occasion, the action performed by producing an utterance will consist of three related acts. That are a Locutionary act (performing the act of saying something), an Illocutionary act (performing an act in saying something), and Perlocutionary act (performing an act by saying something).

b. Classification of Speech Acts

* Autin's Speech Act Theory

Austin [2] distinguished five general classes of illocutionary force by using the simple test (with caution) of the first person singular present indicative active form, and going through the dictionary in a liberal spirit.

* Searle's Speech Act Theory:

b.1.Advising

b.2.Informing

2.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD TEST

ELT Guide [31] identifies that there should be 12 main characteristics of good test as mentioned above:

- *Valid*:

-*Reliable*:

- *Practical*:

- *Comprehensive:*

- *Relevant:*

- *Balanced:*

- *Appropriate in difficulty*:

-*Clear*:

- *Authentic*:

- *Appropriate for time*:

- *Objective:*

- *Economical*:

2.4. TYPES OF LANGUAGE TESTING

There are many different types of tests existing and each has a different purpose and style.

- *Diagnostic Tests*:

- *Placement Tests*:

- *Progress or Achievement Tests*:

- *Proficiency Tests:*

- *Internal Tests*:

- *External Tests*:

- *Objective Tests*:

- *Subjective Tests*:

- *Combination Tests:*

2.5. CHARACTERISTICS OF INSTRUCTIONS

According to Thorne [10], instruction texts have the following characteristics:

- They have a **practical purpose.**

- They are written texts **(mode),**

- The **tone**

- Instruction texts are **chronological**

- The **lexis and grammar** are often repetitive because the focus of an instruction text is always narrow

2.6. AN OVERVIEW OF CAMBRIDGE TEST

To analyze the instructions in Cambridge Test, it is needed to understand about its 'systems.

2.6.1. For Basic User

- Cambridge English Key and Key for Schools (KET and KET for Schools)

2.6.2. For Independence User

- Cambridge English Preliminary and Preliminary for Schools (PET and PET for Schools)
- Cambridge English First and First for Schools (FCE)

2.6.3. For Proficient User

- Cambridge English Advanced (CAE)
- Cambridge English Proficiency (CPE)

2.7. SUMMARY

This chapter is a review of the literature dealing with instructions, syntax, speech acts in terms of pragmatics theory. In this chapter, the definitions of Instructions and Language Teaching were presented, the overview of Cambrigde test was also mentioned. Besides, it also presented Language of the Instructions for Testing. The aspect of syntax was dealt with various sentence types in terms of syntactic terms. The aspect of semantic was deal with semantic terms and semantic fields. The aspect of pragmatics was presented in view of speech acts, and started with an interest in three functional elements of discourse, which were related to instructional texts: Advice, Informative and Warning. All these theories serve as a background of the study and would be further discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter aims to deal with the methods and procedures employed in the thesis. Firstly, we will describe the methods which support each other in analyzing investigating data and finding the results in the study. The next step will be to mention the procedures in which the problems relating to the study are gradually solved. Finally, techniques of data collection, data analysis are also presented in this chapter.

3.1. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

3.1.1. Research Methods

In order to reach the goal of this thesis, I carried out the investigation based on the combination of methods of qualitative, quantitative methods. The study will describe and analyze the syntactic and semantic, pragmatic features of instructions in Cambridge test system.

3.1.2. Procedures

In order to carry out the research properly, the steps below are followed:

- Firstly, identifying the research topic to study by reviewing the previous studies thoroughly.

- Secondly, choosing the approach to the problem and the theoretical background.

- Thirdly, collecting instructions in all reading, writing and listening practice tests in Cambridge systems such as: KET, PET, FCE, CAE, and CPE. This corpus included 307 samples: 240 samples of reading and writing tests and 67 samples of listening tests.

- Fourthly, observing then concentrating on syntactic, pragmatic, and semantic features of instructions in each skills.

- Finally, suggesting some implications for understanding and using of instructions in testing for the learners and the testers as well as some other issues for further researches were suggested after the conclusion was briefly reviewed.

3.2. DATA COLLECTION

The first step in my investigation in this thesis was data collection. The data used in the study were collected from all reading, writing and listening practice tests in Cambridge systems such as: KET, PET, FCE, CAE, and CPE. This corpus included 307 samples: 240 samples of reading and writing tests and 67 samples of listening tests. All the samples collected were written texts.

3.3. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is considered as the most important to draw out the main syntactic, pragmatic and semantic features of instructions in language test.

The research was performed on the basis corpus of testing instructions in Cambridge tests.We just paid attention on three skills: listening, reading and writing and the corpus consists of 307 samples of data for three skill. 67 samples for listening test is provided in Appendix 1. 120 Reading sample tests is in Appendix 2. The rest Appendix 3 is for writing test.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. THE SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF INSTRUCTIONS IN CAMBRIDGE TESTS

Basing on analyzing 307 samples of instructions of listening, writing and reading tests in Cambridge, we can find out a variety of

following structures: imperative, declarative and more than a structure. It can be seen that the structures used in instructions are imperatives. They are the most typical with 443 cases occupying 64.4%.Next, the second position is declarative with 153 cases and 22.2%.Complex sentences come at the third with 51 cases accounting for 7.4%. Finally, conditional sentences have 22 cases and 3.2%.

4.1.1. Imperatives

Analyzing 307 samples from cited sources, there are 443 cases in imperative structures making up 64.4%.

Let us consider an example:

(4.1) Choose one of the following writing tasks.   [25, p.18]

a. Affirmative Imperative

(4.3) Complete the five conversations.   [23, p.8]

b. Negative imperative

(4.6) Do not need to include postal addresses.   [24, p.25]

4.1.2. Declaratives

a. Modal Declarative

Declarative clauses with the modals "must", "will" and "should" as in the examples below.

(4.8) You must answer this question.   [27, p.18]

b. Non-Modal Declarative

(4.11)You are going to read three extracts which are all concerned in some way with human behavior.   [26, p.8]

4.1.3. Complex Sentence

From the corpus, we identify 70 cases in complex sentence occupying 10.2%. In most types of texts, especially in testing instruction, we find sequences of complex compounds composed of clusters of instructions that exhibit a number of semantic contextual dependencies between each other.

4.1.4. Conditional Sentence

If clause+ Bare Infinitive (V+(NP))

Let us consider some examples:

(4.16) If it is correct, put a tick in the box under A for YES. If it is not correct, put a tick in the box under B for NO. [24, p.37]

Table 4.1. Summary of relative frequency (%) of the syntactic representation of testing instructions in Cambridge tests found in the Corpus

Structure	Testing Instructions in Cambridge test	
	Number	Frequency %
1. Imperatives	443	64.4%
2.Declaratives	153	22.2%
3.Complex	70	10.2%
4.Conditionals	22	3.2%
Total:	**688**	**100%**

4.2. THE SEMANTIC FEATURES OF INSTRUCTIONS IN CAMBRIDGE TESTS

In this section, I mainly concerned about implication in instructions in language testing. The survey showed that most instructions in testing we collected, the most remarkablesemantic features are implications for advices, informative and warning and so we focus on the three distinctive implications as mentioned.

4.2.1. Semantic Fields in Instructions in Cambridge Test

Semantic filed is, therefore, a set of interrelated senses based on a conceptual field or spectrum. Words can be grouped either thematically or ideographically. Semantic filed (lexical field) is defined by Richards and Schmidt [16] as "the organization of related words and expressions into a system which show their relationship to one another"

a. Reading and Listening

Basing on analyzing the data collected and summing the common verbs using in reading and listening tests, we can withdraw that there are some common tasks focusing on multiple - choice task, gap- filling and matching.

Here are the common verbs used in reading and listening task as mentioned above.

Table 4.3. Summary of relative frequency (%) of common verbs using in reading and listening instructions in Cambridge tests found in the Corpus

No	Verb	Testing Instructions in Cambridge test	
		Number	**Frequency %**
1.	Choose	145	67.8%
2.	Complete	37	17.3%
3.	Fill	9	4.2%
4.	Match	18	8.4%
5.	Put a tick (tick)	5	2.3%
Total:		214	100%

b. Writing

In the process of analyzing the instructions of writing tests, we found that topics for writing tasks are multifarious. They are: Article, Competition entry, Email, Essay, Letter, Note, Post card, Proposal, Reference, Report, Review, Story. Among these, writing a letter occupies the largest percentage 22.2%, writing a competition entry and reference make the same percentage 2.8 %. The rest topics are divided into nearly equal percentage for each. Furthermore, depending on the level of difficulty of task, the requirements of words limited is different. For example, with writing tests in CPE, it must be 300-350 words for an essay and just 120-180 words for an essay in FCE tests.

c. Here is the table for summary of topics using in

instructions of writing tests.

Table 4.4. Summary of relative frequency (%) of topics using in
writing instructions in Cambridge tests found in the Corpus

No	Topic	Testing Instructions in Cambridge test	
		Number	Frequency %
1.	Article	7	9.7
2.	Competition entry	2	2.8
3.	Email	3	4.2
4.	Essay	6	8.3
5.	Letter	16	22.2
6.	Note	7	9.7
7.	Post card	4	5.6
8.	Proposal	5	6.9
9.	Reference	2	2.8
10.	Report	7	9.7
11.	Review	6	8.3
12.	Story	7	9.7
Total		**72**	**100%**

4.2.2. Semantic Features of Instructions in Cambridge Tests

a. Advising

As mentioned above, one of main characteristics of instructions is practical purpose. The instructors tell the reader how to do something, fill in an application form, or whatever. So, we can see that most of instructions in language testing are advices.

This meaning is realized in 438 cases occupying 63.7 %. The structure with this meaning can be seen in imperative structures of instruction for testing.

(4.18) Do not need to include postal addresses.   [26,p.14]

b. Informing

In this function of informative, its meaning is the writer providing the readers or the candidates with information. From 307 samples of instructions in Cambridge tests with informative meaning,

we can be realized 153 cases occupying 22.2%. Indeed, declarative sentences are used to convey information or to make statements. Declarative sentences are by far the most common type. In grammar, the kind of this sentence that makes a statement or "declares" something. With this meaning, the structure can be realized in declarative structures combined with modals.

> *(4.21) You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.*   [26, p.35]

c. Warning

According to Paris and Scott [14], the purpose of instructional text is to get the reader to understand the instructions "efficiently and correctly". This meaning is realized in 97 cases (14.1%). Warning meaning can be realized in imperative and conditional structures of testing instruction.

> (4.23) *Write your answer in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.*   [27, p.86]

Table 4.5. Summary of relative frequency (%) of the semantic representation of testing instructions in Cambridge tests found in the Corpus

Type of meaning	Testing Instructions in Cambridge test	
	Number	Frequency %
1. Advice	438	63.7%
2. Informative	153	22.2%
3. Warning	97	14.1%
Total	**688**	**100%**

4.3. PRAGMATIC FEATURES AND COMMON TYPE OF SPEECH ACTS USED IN INSTRUCTIONS IN CAMBRIDGE TESTS

According to Yule [22], one general classification system lists five types of general functions performed by speech acts: declarations,

representatives, expressives, directives, and commissives.

4.3.1. Directives

Let's consider these example below:

(4.23)   *Write your letter of application. You do not need to include postal addresses.*   [24,p.52]

4.3.2. Representatives

Occupying about 153 cases (25.7%), representatives is the second type of speech acts using in testing instructions. It can be expressed by many types of sentences; declarative sentence is the major means to express representatives. It can be said that using representatives in testing instructions play a very important role. It helps the readers, the candidates predicting the task they have to obey. When using representatives in testing instructions, we recognize that the writers want to focus on perform: assertions and predication.

a. Assertions AboutThe Words Limited

(4.24)   *You must use between three and six words, including the word given.*   [27, p.59]

b. Prediction About The Time

(4.37) *You will hear conversation twice.*   [23,p.27]

c. Prediction About The Content

(4.38) *You will hear two people who used to be famous television presenters in Britain, Frank and Wendy, talking about their careers and why they decided to give them up.*   [25, p.27]

In summary, there are two main and common type of speech acts used in instructions in language testing. They are: Representatives and Directives. Each type has each own function. Directives are employed with high frequency because they perform the function of advising and warning instruction. Representatives perform the functions of assertions and predication.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this thesis, we can conclude that it is necessary to make an investigation into instructions in Cambridge tests. It is said that instruction words are very important, but they are often overlooked and misunderstood by students during exams and tests. It is important to know what is expected when we encounter words on an exam. Valuable points can be earned or lost, depending on our understanding of instructional words. The investigation gives a great contribution to raising the awareness of instructors in designing the instructions and also gives an overview about the instructions in Cambridge tests.

Here are the short summary about the foregoing chapters that we have already mentioned.

Firstly, the rationale of the study is explicitly introduced in Chapter 1. This is also where the research questions and the scope of the study are found as an overall introduction to the research.

The thesis then continues with a presentation of basic and necessary literature review which present the theoretical background for the thesis. Simultaneously, this chapter covers some concepts related to testing instructions. The classification of linguistic features is also mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter 3 is designed to describe the methods and procedure of the thesis.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research where syntactic, semantic, pragmatics features and type of speech acts using in testing instructions bring to focus. Generally, all the research questions have been solved by means of theoretical background.

5.1. CONCLUSION

This paper conducted as a quantitative and qualitative study

has given a pertinent facts about the linguistic features in terms of syntactic, semantic, pragmatic features and type of speech acts using in instructions in Cambridge tests. From the findings of 307 sample data analysis, I have come to these conclusions.

Syntactically, it was found that sentences types used in instructions for testing in four forms of sentences classified in terms of syntactic classes including declarations, imperatives, complex sentences and conditional sentences. Among these four forms of sentences, imperative is the highest percentage; occupying 64.4%. Through the data collected, we can see that the instructors usually use the imperatives to give an advice or a command to the readers. It can be said that an imperative sentence gives a direct command. By using imperative, the content of instructions is clear enough for the readers to easily perceive and to understand. Using the imperative ones meets the characteristics of instructional texts. Thus, an effective instructional text should be concise, understandable and explicit. By this way, the candidates can know directly the requirement, they will know exactly what is expected. And that are all the reasons why imperative is the highest percentage in testing instructions. Declarative sentences are used to state a fact, to describe any action or speech that makes a statement. In testing instructions, the instructors provide the readers, the candidate with the needed information. This form of sentence occupies 153 cases with 22.2%.The third type is complex sentences with 10.2%. The last one is conditionals sentences with 3.2%.

Semantically, basing on the data collected, we conducted to analyze the semantic field and semantic features of instructions in Cambridge tests. We identified the semantic field basing on the task related to language skills. With reading and listening tests, basing on

analyzing the common verbs using in instructions, we withdrew that the verb "choose" and verb phrase "put a tick" appeared with 67.8%. So the common tasks in listening and reading test focused on multiple- choice. Next is gap - filling task with 21.5%. The rest was for matching task with 8.4%. To writing tests, basing on the instructions, we identified that the topic used in writing tests were multifarious. They were: Article, Competition entry, Email, Essay, Letter, Note, Post card, Proposal, Reference, Report, Review, Story. Among these, writing a letter occupied the largest percentage 22.2%. The rests were divided into other topics. Besides, depending on the level of difficulty of task, the requirements of words limited is different. With the semantic features, the survey showed that three most the most remarkable semantic features are implications for advices, informative and warning. Among the three distinctive implications, advising occupied 63.7 %. This meaning of advising could be seen in imperative structures. Next was informing with 22.2% and the rest is warning with 14.1%.

Pragmatically, the functions of instructions used in Cambridge tests could be characterized of the use of different types of speech acts including representatives and directives. Among two types of speech acts, directives are employed with high frequency with 74.3% because they perform the function of advising and warning instruction. Representatives perform the functions of assertions and predication with 25.7%.

5.2. IMPLICATION

As far as we know, language of instructions for use plays a very important role in the tests but they are often overlooked and misunderstood by students during exams and tests. It is important to know what is expected when we encounter words on an exam. Valuable points can be earned or lost, depending on our understanding

of instructional words.

With the findings of linguistics features, it is our hope that the thesis will be of much benefit not only for candidates but also for teachers and translators of English. Especially, from this result, the Vietnamese instructors can be aware of the way to design the instructions for language testing effectively and to be right with standard tests.

Through this researcher, we would like to have some suggestions for instructors, the candidates and the teachers.

Firstly, to the instructors, in instructing the requirements of English language tests, we need to know how texts work so you can design the instructions for language tests concisely, understandably and explicitly so that the readers as well as the candidates can understand easily, correctly and in the most effective way.

Secondly, to the candidates, you should be more aware of the importance of reading instructions carefully. This contributes much the total result of test. With the findings of this study, you can see that the various task used in the test. So it is necessary to get acquainted with the familiar tasks. To writing test, you should pay attention to the format of some common topics such as writing a letter, a proposal, etc. With reading and listening tests, it is necessary to be familiar with the multiple- choice task. Remember that never leave an answer blank. There is nothing wrong with skipping over a tough question to give yourself some extra time to think it over just as long as you remember to go back to the question later. One more thing is that you also pay attentions to the words and time limited for each tasks. These all are very important suggestions which can be withdrawn from the testing instructions. Lastly, the result of the study will supply the standard frame that helps Vietnamese teachers design the instructions in the right structures and effective content that is leading to the standard tests.

5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There is no doubt that this research reveals certain shortcomings or limitations on account of time restriction as well as the shortage of reference materials related to the field under investigation. Indeed, in Cambridge test system, there have KET, PET, FCE, CAE, CPE, BEC practice tests. In this thesis, we have just conducted to investigate only 256 samples from KET, PET, FCE, CAE, CPE practice tests. In addition, we have analyzed the written instructions in reading, writing and listening tests and have not examined oral tasks. Besides, due to the limited time, knowledge and references, the study can only examine some certain aspects of linguistic features including sentences types in terms of syntactic classes; some certain aspects of semantic features and functions of instructions in terms of pragmatics, so it has not reached the expected depth as it should.

Lastly, the result of the study will supply the standard frame that helps Vietnamese teachers design the instructions in the right structures and effective   content that is leading to the standard tests.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTHER RESEARCH

At this stage, it can be said that the investigation into instructions in Cambridge test is just on the way to be completed. The author does her best to point out the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of instructions in in this paper because of the limitation of time, the lack of reference and materials as well. In order to help the readers as well as candidates gain their knowledge and awareness about the importance of instructions in Cambridge tests, the following points should be paid much attention for further researches:

- Discourse Analysis of Instructors in Cambridge Tests

- An Investigations into Instructions in Online Cambridge Tests