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"Language assessment: reasons and principles"mavzusidagi

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Introduction

Today, learning and teaching foreign languages is widely developed in our country, because it is considered as an important means of communication among the people of different nations and languages. As many countries Uzbekistan is also open to the spread and development of English in order to improve country's social, economic and educational opportunities. According to several documents like National program of preparing cadres, all new specialists undergoing the higher educational system are required to know one or several foreign languages.

On December 10, 2012 the first President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov signed a decree "On measures to further improve foreign language learning system"[1]. It is noted that in the framework of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On education" and the National Programm for Training Cadres in the country, a comprehensive foreign languages' teaching system, aimed at creating harmoniously developed, highly educated, modern-thinking young generation, further integration of the country to the world community, has been created. The decree intensifies the importance of foreign languages in Uzbekistan.

According to it, starting from 2013/2014 school year foreign languages, mainly the English language, gradually throughout the country have been taught from the 1st year of schooling in the form of lesson-games and speaking games, continuing to learning the alphabet, reading and spelling in the second grade. Also it is envisaged that university modules, especially in technical and international areas, have been offered in English and other foreign languages at higher education institutions. Assessment is now considered important for assessors to check their tests results as well as knowledge. In addition, the developing of interest in the results of tests and examinations by governments, parents and candidates has led to a multi-million pound testing industry and simultaneously there is an increase in the numbers of scholars researching different aspects of testing and assessment.

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[1]www.uza.uz

Nowadays, language assessment focuses on evaluating a person's fluency in a language. Many schools and universities use this method to test students who are taking language courses. The government can also apply this system to determine which language a community can understand best, so that the government can communicate to them better. In a language assessment, oftentimes the person's understanding and appreciation of the culture connected to the specific language are also examined.

The aim of the final qualification paper:

-to learn the definition for the concept of assessment

-to analyze the importance of assessment in teaching and learning process

-to discuss the reasons and principles of language assessment

-to investigate challenges in language assessment

-to analyze opportunities in language assessment

The novelty of the final qualification paper:

as our research work, we choose to work on the identifying the importance of language assessment and its reasons as well as principles. This issue is considered as very important issue for teaching language efficiently. Because of the development of education system especially, teaching foreign languages, we consider that it is time using the principles of assessment in the system of our education.

The actuality of the final qualification paper:

language learning and teaching have made modern and essential shape with the help of language assessment and all foreign language teachers and linguists around the world are trying to use the principles of assessment effectively during their classes and researches. According to our consideration, to analyze the use of principles to teach foreign language classes are important issues which stand in front of scholars. Many research works were dedicated to this theme, various articles were written by world's linguists and scientists. Our work was created according to the results of experiments that were held by famous methodologists, English language teachers and students learning foreign languages.

The theoretical and practical value of the research work:

theoretically, this research paper can be useful for lecturing on methodology classes. Apart from this, students of bachelor degree doing their research and masters doing their dissertations may utilize it as it includes almost all theoretical bases about the issue. Practically, this work is helpful for majority of teachers for assessing learners by using principles of assessment.

The content of the research work:

the given final qualification paper consists of Introduction, two Chapters, Conclusion and Bibliography. The first Chapter deals with the importance of assessment in teaching and learning process whereas the second chapter reveals the current issues of language assessment. In the Conclusion directions for the future research will be suggested.

CHAPTER I. LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT: REASONS AND PRINCIPLES

1.1.Definition for the concept of assessment

Assessment is "…the process of gathering evidence to make inferences about…how students are progressing toward specific goals"[2]

Assessment is the procedure of forming in measurable terms, knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. All activities which used for learners can deal with the term assessment. It can focus on not only the individual learner but also on the group of learners. In education assessment is a process that shows the importance, size, or value of gained knowledge and speech skills. Assessment brings benefit to both the teachers and learners. By checking the process of teaching, learners' knowledge, skills and sub skills a teacher is able to find new, more effective ways, methods of teaching a foreign language.

Assessment assists the teacher to prove his ideas, methods on organizing teaching to foreign languages. It is beneficial for learners too. Feeling their success in learning a foreign language motivates the learners and inspires them for new activities. It should be stressed that learners have different motivation. Some of the pupils are eager to get good grades in all school subjects including a foreign language and the others learn foreign languages with the hope to find a good job in future. The characteristic feature of assessment in school education is that unlike the other school subjects in controlling teaching a foreign language the main attention is focused on assessing the degrees of oral speech skills and also reading and writing skills.

Assessment gives teachers the opportunity to develop learners' skills in their field of interest. By exploring learners' strengths and weaknesses, teachers can get an idea of what works best for learners and hence can strive towards perfecting their skills in the necessary field.

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[2] Black P. and D. Wiliam.Assessment and Classroom Learning.-CARFAX, 1998.-74 p. .

The measurement of student learning through assessment is important because it provides useful feedback to both instructors and students about the extent to which students are successfully meeting course learning objectives. In their book Understanding by Design, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe offer a framework for classroom instruction—what they call "Backward Design"—that emphasizes the critical role of assessment. For Wiggens and McTighe, assessment enables instructors to determine the metrics of measurement for student understanding of and proficiency in course learning objectives. They argue that assessment provides the evidence needed to document and validate that meaningful learning has occurred in the classroom.

Assessment is so vital in their pedagogical design that their approach "encourages teachers and curriculum planners to first 'think like an assessor' before designing specific units and lessons, and thus to consider up front how they will determine if students have attained the desired understandings." [3]

"Assessment" is a generic term for a set of processes that measure the outcomes of students' learning in terms of knowledge acquired, understanding developed and skills gained.

Assessment is the systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. Assessment involves the use of empirical data on student learning to refine programs and improve student learning.[4]

Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning[5]

Assessment is the systematic basis for making inferences about the learning

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[3] D.Wiggins. Assessment and principles. 2005.- 18 p.
[4] Allen. Assessing academic programs in higher education. 2004.- 78 p.
[5] Huba and Freed. Learner centered assessment on college campuses: shifting the focus from teaching to learning. 2000.-52 p.

and development of students. It is the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and using information to increase students' learning and development.[6]

Assessment is the systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development.[7]

Language assessment or language testing is a field of study under the umbrella of applied linguistics. Its main focus is the assessment of first, second or other language in the school, college, or university context; assessment of language use in the workplace; and assessment of language in the immigration, citizenship, and asylum contexts.

The assessment may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, an integration of two or more of these skills, or other constructs of language ability. Equal weight may be placed on knowledge (understanding how the language works theoretically) proficiency (ability to use the language practically), or greater weight may be given to one aspect or the other.

In education, the term assessment refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition or educational needs of students. While assessment are often equated with traditional tests especially the standardized tests developed by testing companies and administered to large populations of students educators use a diverse array of assessment tools and methods to measure everything from a four- year- old's readiness for kindergarden to a twelfth grade students' comprehension of advanced physics. Just as academic lessons have different functions, assessment are typically designed to measure specific elements of learning e.g. the level of knowledge a student already has about the concept or skill the teacher is planning to teach or the ability to comprehend and analyze

[6] Erwin. Assessing student learning and development: A guide to the principles, goals and methods of determining college outcomes.-1991.
[7] Palomba and Banta. Assessment essentials: planning, implementing and improving assessment in higher education.-1999.

different types of texts or readings.

Assessments are also used to identify individual student's weaknesses and strengths so that educators can provide specialized academic support, educational programming, or social services. In addition, assessments are developed by a wide array of groups and individuals, including teachers, district administrators, universities, private companies, state departments of education and groups that include a combination of these individuals and institutions.

While assessment can take a variety of forms in education, the following descriptions provide a representative overview of a few major forms of educational assessment. Assessments are used for a wide variety of purposes in schools and education systems: High stakes assessments are typically standardized tests used for the purposes of accountability i.e. any attempt by federal, state or local government agencies to ensure that students are enrolled in effective schools and being taught by effective teachers. In general, "high skates" means that important decisions about students, teachers, schools or districts are based on the scores students achieve on a high-stakes test and either punishments or accolades result from those scores.

Pre-assessments are administered before students begin a lesson, unit, course or academic program. Students are not necessarily expected to know most or even any of the material evaluated by pre-assessments they are generally used to establish a baseline against which educators measure learning progress over the duration of a program, course or instructional period or determine general academic readiness for a course, program, grade level or new academic program that student may be transferring into.

For educators assessing students' progress is as necessary as planning engaging activities or building lessons around core themes. Without assessment teachers have no way of knowing what types help their students need and assessing students can also gauge their progress through a course of study.

In order to plan curricula and design activities that will be useful and beneficial for ESL students, it is necessary first, to know what the students' goals

are for learning English and what their current linguistic capabilities are needs assessment fills in these blanks.

The types of assessment chosen should be related to learning outcomes and governed by decisions about its purpose, validity and relevance. In addition, as it is probably true to say that every assessment method will place some students at a disadvantage to some extent; a range of types of assessment is desirable to hopefully reduce the element of disadvantage suffered by any particular student. Formative and Summative assessment

This is the distinction between assessment which is mainly intended to help the student learn and assessment intended to identify how much has been learnt. Formative assessment is most useful part way through a course or module, and will involve giving the student feedback which they can use to improve their future performance. In practice, to varying degrees, most forms of assessment probably try to do both although the end of course exam where the only feedback received is a mark is almost totally summative.

The key to such information is the delivery (by the teacher) and internalization (by the student) of appropriate feedback on performance, with an eye toward the future continuation of learning. For all practical purposes, virtually all kinds of informal assessment are formative. They have as their primary focus the ongoing development of the learner's language.

Summative assessment aims to measure, or summarize, what a student has grasped, and typically occurs at the end of a course or unit of instruction. A summation of what a student has learned implies looking back and taking stock of how well that student has accomplished objectives, but does not necessarily point the way to future progress. Final exams in a course and general proficiency exams are examples of summative assessment. One of the problems with prevailing attitudes toward testing is the view that all tests (quizzes, periodic review tests, midterm exams, etc.) are summative.

1.2.Reasons and principles of language assessment

"Good teachers have a huge role and moral obligation in student learning".[8]

Assessment is an important part of education, as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Assessment affects decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs, curriculum, and, in some cases, funding. Assessment inspires us to ask these hard questions: "Are we teaching what we think we are teaching?" "Are students learning what they are supposed to be learning?" "Is there a way to teach the subject better, thereby promoting better learning?"

Today's students need to know not only the basic reading and arithmetic skills, but also skills that will allow them to face a world that is continually changing. They must be able to think critically, to analyze, and to make inferences. Changes in the skills base and knowledge our students need require new learning goals; these new learning goals change the relationship between assessment and instruction. Teachers need to take an active role in making decisions about the purpose of assessment and the content that is being assessed. There are essentially two reasons assessment of student learning is important:

Assessment is needed for improvement. Improvement, with its internal focus provides: opportunities for the academic community to engage in self-reflection of its learning goals, to determine the degree to which these goals correspond to student and societal needs, and to evaluate if students' activities, products, or performances coincide with the academic community's expectations.

Information to students about the knowledge, skills, and other attributes they can expect to possess after successfully completing coursework and academic programs. Ways for academic units to understand the dimensions of student learning when seeking to improve student achievement and the educational process.

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[8] Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B. & Wiliam D.-Assessment for learning: putting it into practice.-Maidenhead, Open University Press,2003. –196 p.

Assessment is needed for accountability. Accountability, with its external focus, provides: Evidence of student achievement to accreditation groups, state legislators, and other stakeholders in education

Assessment is a key part of today's educational system. Assessment serves as an individual evaluation system, and as a way to compare performance across a spectrum and across populations. However, with so many different kinds of assessments for so many different organizations available these days, it can sometimes be hard to keep the real purpose of assessing in view. So, what's really at the heart of all these assessments?

The purpose of assessment is to gather relevant information about student performance or progress, or to determine student interests to make judgments about their learning process. After receiving this information, teachers can reflect on each student's level of achievement, as well as on specific inclinations of the group, to customize their learning and teaching process.

Assessment can reinforce the efficacy of teaching and learning. It also encourages the understanding of teaching as a formative process that evolves over time with feedback and input from students. This creates good classroom rapport.[9] Student assessments are necessary because:

Throughout a lesson or unit, the teacher might want to check for understanding by using a formative assessment.

Students who are experiencing difficulties in learning may benefit from the administration of a diagnostic test, which will be able to detect learning issues such as reading comprehension problems, an inability to remember written or spoken words, hearing or speech difficulties, and problems with hand–eye coordination. Students generally complete a summative assessment after completing the study of a topic. The teacher can determine their level of achievement and provide them with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. For students who didn't master the topic or skill, teachers can use data from the assessment to create a plan for

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[9] Matthew Lynch. The real purpose of assessments in education.-1994. -65 p.

remediation.

Teachers may also want to use informal assessment techniques. Using self-assessment, students express what they think about their learning process and what they should work on. Using peer assessment, students get information from their classmates about what areas they should revise and what areas they're good at.

Learners are assessed for some other reasons: the first one is motivation, because of assessment learners are motivated to learn more and more. The second one is giving feedback it means that if the teachers give their feedback for the learner's actions and results, next time learners try not to do the mistakes they had done before. The next one is for grading learners, with the help of assessment teachers can distinguish them into groups. Creating learning opportunities is also one reason of assessment in that case assessment helps teachers to create learning atmosphere for learners.

Assessment also considered as a tool to measure how much knowledge a student has. This should not be the most important aim of the assessment. Consequently, through appropriate assessment we must determine how well we learned and taught. This is determined with the help of principles of assessment. The principles of good assessment include validity, reliability, practicality, authenticity and washback, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs

1. Validity. "Assessment should be valid. Validity ensures that assessment tasks and associated criteria effectively measure student attainment of the intended learning outcomes at the appropriate level. Validity is generally defined as the extent to which an assessment can be shown to produce scores and outcomes which are an accurate reflection of a test takers true level of ability, in other words validity in an assessment tool is the extent by which we can measure what the test is supposed to measure."[10]

To evaluate whether a test is valid or not, assessors must be able to identify how the test can be connected with the student. In order to know how valid a test

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[10] Heaton J.B. Principles of good practice.-University of Cambridge,- 2013.

is, it is needed to look at the relationship between test scores and the criterion. The criterion can be any measure of success for the behavior of interest.

Validity is the most complex criterion of an effective test and arguably the most important principle. A valid test of reading ability actually measures reading ability, not previous knowledge in a subject, not some other variable of questionable relevance. In other cases, we may be concerned with how well a test determines whether or not student have reached an established set of goals or level of competence. Statistical correlation with other related but an independent measure is another widely accepted form of evidence. Other concerns about a test's validity may focus on the consequences of a test, or even on the test-takers' perception of validity.

Validity refers to the extent to which a test or the questions on a test appear to measure a particular aspect by the students in any school or university. In other words, it looks like a reasonable test for whatever purpose it is being used. This common sense approach to validity is often important in convincing students to allow the use of a test in order to measure their knowledge.

Assessment will be explicitly designed to measure student achievement of the intended learning outcomes, and all intended learning outcomes will be summative assessed. The processes for the approval of new modules and programs, and for amending existing modules and programs, will ensure that assessment is an integral part of module and program design, and the ongoing validity of assessment will be considered through annual and periodic review.

The concept of face validity according to Heaton and Brown is that when a test item looks right to other testers, teachers, moderators, and test-takers. In addition, it appears to measure the knowledge or abilities it claims to measure. Heaton argues that if a test is examined by other people, some absurdities and ambiguities can be discovered". [11]

Face validity is important in maintaining test takers' motivation and

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[11] Bachman. L.F. Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing.- Oxford University Press, -1990.

performance. If a test does not have face validity, it may not be acceptable to students or teachers. If students do not take the test as valid, they will show adverse reaction. In other words, they will not perform in a way which truly reflects their abilities.

Brown states that "face validity will likely be high if learners encounter:

1. a well-constructed, expected format with familiar tasks,

2. a test that is clearly doable within the allotted time limit,

3. items that are clear and uncomplicated,

4. directions that are crystal clear,

tasks that relate to their course work (content validity) and a difficulty level that presents a reasonable challenge".[12]

To examine face validity, no statistical analysis is needed. Judgmental responses from experts, colleagues, or test takers may be involved. They can read thoroughly to the whole items or they can just see at glance the items. Then, they can relate to the ability that the test want to measure. If a speaking test appears in vocabulary items, it may not have face validity.

2. Reliability. Assessment should be reliable and consistent. There is a need for assessment to be reliable and this requires clear and consistent processes for the setting, marking, grading and moderation of assignments. Reliability is basically the good structure of the test that allows getting constant results from students regardless the number of times that the test is administrated.

The reliability of a test is an estimate of the consistency of its marks; a reliable test is one where, for example, a student will get the same mark if he or she takes the test, possibly with a different examiner. A test must be reliable, as a test cannot be valid unless it is reliable. However, the converse is not true: it is perfectly possible to have a reliable test which is not valid. For example, a multiple-choice test of grammatical structures may be wonderfully reliable, but it

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[12]Brown. H.D. Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices. 2004.

is not valid if teachers are not interested in the grammatical abilities of their students and if grammar is not taught in the related language course.

If a particular assessment were totally reliable, assessors acting independently using the same criteria and mark scheme would come to exactly the same judgment about a given piece of work. In the interests of quality assurance, standards and fairness, whilst recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible to achieve, when it comes to summative assessment it is a goal worth aiming for. Explicitness in terms of learning outcomes and assessment criteria is vitally important in attempting to achieve reliability. They should be explicit to the students when the task is set, and where there are multiple markers they should be discussed, and preferably used on some sample cases prior to be using used for real.

The reliability shows that assessment does not belong to one person or one situation. There are intra-judge and inter-judge reliability. The former one should answer the following question positively: "Does the same person make the same judgment about the same performance on two different occasions?" While the latter should respond to the question: "Do different judges make the same judgment about the same performance on the same occasion?". In order to guarantee these principles double marking can be a good solution.

A test should not be too long because can cause tiredness and it might affect students results. To ensure the level of consistency that is necessary for assessment to be reliable, all awards at the same academic level will be aligned with the relevant level descriptor. There will be clear and consistent policies and procedures for the marking of assessed work, and for the quality assurance of the assessment process. These processes will be supported by the external examiner system, with all external examiners being asked to report on the reliability of assessment.

A reliable test is consistent and dependable. The issue of reliability of a test may best be addressed by considering a number of factors that may contribute to the unreliability of a test. The most common learner-related issue in reliability is caused by temporary illness, fatigue, a bad day, anxiety, and other physical or

psychological factors, which may make an observed score deviate from one's true score. Sometimes, the nature of the test itself can cause measurement errors. If a test is too long, test- takers may become fatigued by the time they reach the later items and hastily respond incorrectly. Time test may discriminate against students who do not perform well on a test with a time limit. Poorly written test items may be a further source of test unreliability.

If a particular assessment were totally reliable, assessors acting independently using the same criteria and mark scheme would come to exactly the same judgment about a given piece of work. In the interests of quality assurance, standards and fairness, whilst recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible to achieve, when it comes to summative assessment it is a goal worth aiming for. Explicitness in terms of learning outcomes and assessment criteria is vitally important in attempting to achieve reliability. They should be explicit to the students when the task is set, and where there are multiple markers they should be discussed, and preferably used on some sample cases prior to be using used for real.

3. Practicality. "Validity and reliability are not enough to build a test. Instead, the test should be practical across time, cost, and energy. Dealing with time and energy, tests should be efficient in terms of making, doing, and evaluating. Then, the tests must be affordable. It is quite useless if a valid and reliable test cannot be done in remote areas because it requires an inexpensive computer to do it".[13] Practically refers to the fact that one test needs to be easy in the sense to show a specific time to do it, it should be accessible to the students and the score must reflect the level of achievement of the course objectives. Information about assessment should be explicit, accessible and transparent.

Clear, accurate, consistent and timely information on assessment tasks and procedures should be made available to students, staff and other external assessors

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[13] Longman. Heaton. J.B. Writing English Language Tests. –London,-1975.

or examiners. There is much evidence that human beings do not find it easy to transfer skills from one context to another, and there is in fact a debate as to whether transferability is in itself a separate skill which needs to be taught and learnt.

Whatever the outcome of that, the transfer of skills is certainly more likely to be successful when the contexts in which they are developed and used are similar. It is also true to say that academic assessment has traditionally been based on a fairly narrow range of tasks with arguably an emphasis on knowing rather than doing; it has therefore tended to develop a fairly narrow range of skills. For these two reasons, when devising an assessment task it is important that it both addresses the skills you want the student to develop and that as much as possible it puts them into a recognizable context with a sense of real purpose behind why the task would be undertaken and a sense of a real audience, beyond the tutor, for whom the task would be done.

This means that students should know the criteria of the assessment and what they are going to be assessed on in advance. Besides, the criteria should be understandable to everyone. In order to ensure transparency, we usually discuss the criteria for the essay they will write in the exam. Usually, we devote the lesson before the exam to preparing for it: the students will look through similar exam questions, discuss the criteria and ask questions about the exam. Moreover, with the help of peer evaluation good outcomes can be obtained. In fact, while assessing each other students understand assessment criteria better. It also helps to increase transparency of formal assessment.

Assessment will be explicit and transparent prior to undertaking any assessment task, students will be clearly informed of the purpose and requirements of the task and will be provided with the specific assessment criteria that will be used for marking it. Feedback to students will be related to the stated learning outcomes and specific assessment criteria.

An effective test is practical. It means that:

It is not excessively expensive,

It stays within appropriate time constraints,

It is relatively easy to administer, and

Has a scoring/evaluation procedure that is specific and time efficient.

The value and quality of a test sometimes hinge on such nitty-gritty, practical considerations. This principle refers to the time and cost constraints during the construction and administration of an assessment instrument. Meaning that the test should be economical to provide. The format of the test should be simple to understand. Moreover, solving a test should remain within suitable time. It is generally simple to administer. Its assessment procedure should be particular and time-efficient.

4. Authenticity proposes that the method used to assess should prevent students from plagiarism and cheating.

"Authenticity is a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills in other meaning the assessment must be developed according to the reality in a determinate environment of the students for example in speaking area we can structure an assessment about any call center because is something that is related directly with the students' environment in an specific area. A fourth major principle of language testing is authenticity. A concept that is a little slippery to define, especially within the art and science of evaluating and designing test. A test must be authentic.

Bachman and Palmer defined authenticity as the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the features of a target language. Several things must be considered in making an authentic test: language used in the test should be natural, the items are contextual, topics brought in the test should be meaningful and interesting for the learners, the items should be organized thematically, and the test must be based on the real-world".[14]

5. Washback. It is the extent to which tests influences to the students to do

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[14] Bachman. L.F. Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing.- Oxford: Oxford University Press, - 1990.

things based on specific aspects such as motivation, self-confidence, strategic thinking among others that are important in the mentality of learners for example: to keep in mind that they have to study for any test in order to achieve a good grade or score using their knowledge and to feel comfortable with the aspects before mentioned.

Any language test or piece of assessment must have positive washback (backwash), which means that the effect of the test on the teaching must be beneficial. This should be held in mind by the test constructors; it is only too easy to construct a test which leads, for example, to candidates learning material by heart or achieving high marks by simply applying test-taking skills rather than genuine language skills. This principle refers to the consequence of an assessment on teaching and learning within classrooms.

Washback can be positive and negative. Positive washback refers to the desired effects of a test, while negative washback refers to the negative consequences of a test. In order to have positive washback, instructional planning can be used. A facet of consequential validity, discussed above, is "the effect of testing on teaching and learning" [15], otherwise known among language testing specialists as washback. In large scale assessment, washback generally refers to the effect the test has on instruction in term of how student prepare for the test. A little bit of washback may also help student through a specification of the numerical scores on the various subsections of the test. A subsection on verb tenses, for example, that yields a relatively low score may serve the diagnostic purpose of showing the student an area of challenge.

Finally, washback also in plies that students have ready access to you to discuss the feedback and evaluation you have given. While you almost certainly have known teachers with whom you wouldn't dare argue about grade, an interactive, cooperative, collaborative classroom nevertheless can promote an atmosphere of dialogue between student and teacher regarding evaluative judgments. For learning to continue, students need to have a chance to feedback on

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[15] Huges. Assessment of Student Achievement. -2003.-109 p.

your feedback, to seek clarification of any issues that are fuzzy, and to set new and appropriate goals for themselves for the days and weeks ahead.

Washback enhances a number of basic principles of language acquisition: intrinsic motivation, autonomy, self-confidence, language ego, and interlanguage, strategic investment and etc. A little bit of washback may help students through the specification of numerical scores on the various subsection of the test, a subsection on verb tenses, for example, that yields a relatively low score may serve the diagnostic purpose of the showing the students an area of challenge.

1.3. The importance of assessment in teaching and learning process.

There is an importance of assessment in teaching and learning process. Assessment plays a major role in how students learn, their motivation to learn, and how teachers teach.

Assessment is used for various purposes.

- Assessment for learning: where assessment helps teachers gain insight into what students understand in order to plan and guide instruction, and provide helpful feedback to students.

- Assessment as learning: where students develop an awareness of how they learn and use that awareness to adjust and advance their learning, taking an increased responsibility for their learning.

- Assessment of learning: where assessment informs students, teachers and parents, as well as the broader educational community, of achievement at a certain point in time in order to celebrate success, plan interventions and support continued progress.

Assessment is embedded in the learning process. It is tightly interconnected with curriculum and instruction. As teachers and students work towards the achievement of curriculum outcomes, assessment plays a constant role in informing instruction, guiding the student's next steps, and checking progress and achievement. Teachers use many different processes and strategies for classroom assessment, and adapt them to suit the assessment purpose and needs of individual students.

Research and experience show that student learning is best supported when Instruction and assessment are based on clear learning goals;

Instruction and assessment are differentiated according to student learning needs;

Students are involved in the learning process (they understand the learning goal and the criteria for quality work, receive and use descriptive feedback, and take steps to adjust their performance);

Assessment information is used to make decisions that support further learning;

Parents are well informed about their child's learning, and work with the school to help plan and provide support;

Students, families, and the general public have confidence in the system;

Assessment has an impact on every sphere of academics.

There are specific effects of it:

Student Learning – Assessment is a significant component of learning because it helps the students learn and explore the very best of their abilities. If students can analyze their performance in the class, understand their strengths and weaknesses, then they can quickly determine whether or not they can understand the course material. It positively motivates them inspiring them to achieve the goals that they have set for themselves and achieve perfection in their field. Knowing their performance in the courses leads to a form of self-evaluation which might then enable them to work even harder thereby considerably improving the quality and the level of their performance.

Teaching – Just as assessment help the students, it helps the teachers as well. Frequently assessing their performance as a teacher helps them determine whether their teaching has been effective in creating an impact on the students or not. Assessment also allows the teachers to understand the performance of their students. It helps them in ensuring that the students are learning that which they are supposed to. Assessment enables the teacher in helping the students to reach the course's objectives.

The measurement of student learning through assessment is important because it provides useful feedback to both instructors and students about the extent to which students are successfully meeting course learning objectives. Assessment enables instructors to determine the metrics of measurement for student understanding of and proficiency in course learning objectives. Assessment provides the evidence needed to document and validate that meaningful learning has occurred in the classroom. Assessment is so vital in their pedagogical design that their approach "encourages teachers and curriculum planners to first 'think like an assessor' before designing specific units and lessons, and thus to consider

up front how they will determine if students have attained the desired understandings."

Assessments are also designed in a variety of ways for different purposes:

Standardized assessments are designed, administered, and scored in a standard, or consistent, manner. They often use a multiple-choice format, though some include open-ended, short-answer questions. Historically, standardized tests featured rows of ovals that students filled in with a number-two pencil, but increasingly the tests are computer-based. Standardized tests can be administered to large student populations of the same age or grade level in a state, region, or country, and results can be compared across individuals and groups of students. Standards-referenced or standards-based assessments are designed to measure how well students have mastered the specific knowledge and skills described in local, state, or national learning standards. Standardized tests and high-stakes tests may or may not be based on specific learning standards, and individual schools and teachers may develop their own standards-referenced or standards-based assessments.

Common assessments are used in a school or district to ensure that all teachers are evaluating student performance in a more consistent, reliable, and effective manner. Common assessments are used to encourage greater consistency in teaching and assessment among teachers who are responsible for teaching the same content, e.g. within a grade level, department, or content area. They allow educators to compare performance results across multiple classrooms, courses, schools, and/or learning experiences (which is not possible when educators teach different material and individually develop their own distinct assessments). Common assessments share the same format and are administered in consistent ways—e.g., teachers give students the same instructions and the same amount of time to complete the assessment, or they use the same scoring guides to interpret results. Common assessments may be "formative" or "summative.".

Performance assessments typically require students to complete a complex task, such as a writing assignment, science experiment, speech, presentation,

performance, or long-term project, for example. Educators will often use collaboratively developed common assessments, scoring guides, rubrics, and other methods to evaluate whether the work produced by students shows that they have learned what they were expected to learn. Performance assessments may also be called "authentic assessments," since they are considered by some educators to be more accurate and meaningful evaluations of learning achievement than traditional tests. For more detailed discussions, see authentic learning, demonstration of learning, and exhibition.

Portfolio-based assessments are collections of academic work—for example, assignments, lab results, writing samples, speeches, student-created films, or art projects—that are compiled by students and assessed by teachers in consistent ways. Portfolio-based assessments are often used to evaluate a "body of knowledge"—i.e., the acquisition of diverse knowledge and skills over a period of time. Portfolio materials can be collected in physical or digital formats, and they are often evaluated to determine whether students have met required learning standards.

The purpose of an assessment generally drives the way it is designed, and there are many ways in which assessments can be used. A standardized assessment can be a high-stakes assessment, for example, but so can other forms of assessment that are not standardized tests. A portfolio of student work can be a used as both a "formative" and "summative" form of assessment. Teacher-created assessments, which may also be created by teams of teachers, are commonly used in a single course or grade level in a school, and these assessments are almost never "high-stakes." Screening assessments may be produced by universities that have conducted research on a specific area of child development, such as the skills and attributes that a student should have when entering kindergarten to increase the likelihood that he or she will be successful, or the pattern of behaviors, strengths, and challenges that suggest a child has a particular learning disability. In short, assessments are usually created for highly specialized purposes.

As schools become increasingly equipped with computers, tablets, and

wireless internet access, a growing proportion of the assessments now administered in schools are either computer-based or online assessments—though paper-based tests and assessments are still common and widely used in schools.

New technologies and software applications are also changing the nature and use of assessments in innumerable ways, given that digital-assessment systems typically offer an array of features that traditional paper-based tests and assignments cannot. For example, online-assessment systems may allow students to log in and take assessments during out-of-class time or they may make performance results available to students and teachers immediately after an assessment has been completed (historically, it might have taken hours, days, or weeks for teachers to review, score, and grade all assessments for a class). In addition, digital and online assessments typically inher evaluation and compensation: In recent years, a growing number of elected officials, policy makers, and education reformers have argued that the best way to improve educational results is to ensure that students have effective teachers, and that one way to ensure effective teaching is to evaluate and compensate educators, at least in part, based on the test scores their students achieve.

By basing a teacher's income and job security on assessment results, the reasoning goes, administrators can identify and reward high-performing teachers or take steps to either help low-performing teachers improve or remove them from schools. Growing political pressure, coupled with the promise of federal grants, prompted many states to begin using student test results in teacher evaluations. This controversial and highly contentious reform strategy generally requires fairly complicated statistical techniques—known as value-added measures or growth measures—to determine how much of a positive or negative effect individual teachers have on the academic achievement of their students, based primarily on student assessment results.

Instructional improvement: Assessment results are often used as a mechanism for improving instructional quality and student achievement. Because assessments are designed to measure the acquisition of specific knowledge or skills, the design

of an assessment can determine or influence what gets taught in the classroom ("teaching to the test" is a common, and often derogatory, phrase used to describe this general phenomenon). Formative assessments, for example, give teachers in-process feedback on student learning, which can help them make instructional adjustments during the teaching process, instead of having to wait until the end of a unit or course to find out how well students are learning the material. Other forms of assessment, such as standards-based assessments or common assessments, encourage educators to teach similar material and evaluate student performance in more consistent, reliable, or comparable ways.

Learning-needs identification: Educators use a wide range of assessments and assessment methods to identify specific student learning needs, diagnose learning disabilities (such as autism, dyslexia, or nonverbal learning disabilities), evaluate language ability, or determine eligibility for specialized educational services. In recent years, the early identification of specialized learning needs and disabilities, and the proactive provision of educational support services to students, has been a major focus of numerous educational reform strategies.

2.2. Challenges in language assessment.

When faced with large numbers of students the main assessment challenge is finding efficient ways in which to assess them and provide them with feedback to support effective learning.

We know there are challenges assessing all students in all classrooms, but there are specific challenges associated with assessing ELLs for their mastery of content and their language development. Let's begin by taking a look at assessment challenges in general for all students and in all classrooms.

One of the first challenges of assessment is the time allocated for assessment preparation. In some cases, assessments are teacher generated or teacher created. In others, assessments are given to the teacher by the school, the district, or the state. So it is important to reflect on the amount of time available for creating assessments that are valid and effectively assess all students' achievement.

The second challenge of assessment is the validity of the test and scores. This has to do with the type of assessment created, the way in which the assessment is scored and the use of the specific scores as it impacts the individuals involved.

The third challenge found in all types of assessment is evaluator bias in relation to test creation, grading and its merit within a classroom and overall purpose.

The next challenge seen in all types of assessment is materials available for assessment. They are parallels to the content being taught and learned. Is this a paper or pencil test? Or is it a test or assessment using technology? Are there some sorts of books or reading selections available? The assessment must be reflective of the learning and the teaching methods used in the class.

The next challenge we see in assessment is the evaluation of previous knowledge and progression of knowledge. This is definitely a challenge in a schools, because, sometimes there is a lack of continuity of learning from one grade to the next. So assessment of knowledge and content we assumed the student

learned in a previous grade must be done carefully.

The next assessment challenge for all students is the evaluation of skills and process. In other words the evaluation of how actual skills or content is learned and also the process by which the student reached that level of mastery.

And finally there is a challenge related to evaluating peer or group work, especially when we rely on it so heavily with ELLs in our classroom.

Let's take a look now at some of the unique challenges for assessing ELLs in the content classroom.

The first is in identifying the purpose of assessment. For our ELL students we need to clearly identify whether the purpose of the assessment is on content, on language, or on both. It can be very difficult to isolate language in the content within an assessment. So content teachers must clearly identify which aspects of both to assess.

Another unique challenge for assessing ELLs in the content classroom is the validity of accommodations made. What kind of impact does the reduced use of language have on a test or the assessment itself, and then on the score of the assessment? We want to make sure it's fair to both ELLs and the other students in the class. We also want to be careful to not over accommodate our ELLs. Again, we want to create reliable assessments in which the language will not impede content performance, and the accommodations will not impede assessment and score integrity.

The next unique challenge for assessing ELLs in the content classroom, relates to the unique background and characteristics of ELLs.

And finally keep in mind the specific challenges associated with standardized testing and ELL's access to appropriate testing scenarios.

When we think about assessing ELLs in the content classroom there are two areas of complexity, and the two ways that language can impact assessment.

First the ELL may understand the content but can not articulate their knowledge due to their language ability

Second, the ELL may not fully comprehend the content, or comprehend it inaccurately, which can then be difficult to access.

There are the main challenges of assessments:

One of the concerns is about how much time educators have to dedicate to coming up with evaluation strategies to stimulate and guide competence development, rather than just assigning a final grade. ICT can help us to follow up the learning process, but relatively few teachers are introducing new tools to manage and enhance assessment methodologies. Sometimes the problem is more related to how time consuming the process is rather than a lack of knowledge of how to manage the tools.

It is also important to add that it is difficult to move past the long tradition of assessment strategies based more on exams and tests that measure part of the competences developed and sometimes the least relevant part of the competences developed and sometimes the least relevant part. Assessing the process calls for commitment from both sides, teachers and students. Higher-level cognitive and effective skills cannot readily be assessed using traditional assessment strategies and more authentic assessments are being proposed.[16]

In fact, most of the existing assessment experiments do not consider the adoption of user centered approaches. Assessment has attracted increasing interest due to an awareness among the educational community of the need to adequately assess skills, competences and abilities.

And feedback, one of the most important key issues related to assessment, is not optional; it should be compulsory for all teachers to provide students with relevant information during the learning process, monitoring, guiding and giving continuous support as a formative activity.

The greatest challenge, however, is to encourage students to use that feedback to transform their learning, i.e.,feed forward. "With feed forward, ideas for improvement come from the very person being asked to change, increasing the

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[16] Black P. and D. Wiliam. Assessment and Classroom Learning. Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice, -1998.- 74 p.

odds that change will occur." [17]

One of the most difficult challenges of assessments is how to implement them. In this case, the assessment design should explicitly mention the value of peer feedback; building trust and capacity in self and peer assessment can be addressed by defining the objectives using precise criteria and providing student examples, as well as tools like rubrics, scales and explanatory automatic answers to support learners." [18]

When we meet these challenges there are given the following steps for designing assessments:

1. Instructional design. Integrating the assessment into the entire learning process as part of the course design. It is important to measure how people learn and not just what they have learnt. It is ongoing process that should be assessed continuously and instructional design can help teachers choose the right do it. At the same time, instructional design can help teachers choose the right assessment methods, strategies and technologies to enhance learning.

2. Variety of methods. Use different assessment methods and activities to measure different processes and outcomes, coming from different learning styles, such as: multiple-choice questions, portfolio assessment, concept maps, online role plays, scenario based activities, judged mathematical expression, discussions, etc.

3. Technologies enhance assessment. use ICT to follow up the learning process: build tools to monitor and support, to assess a large number of students; design scales and rubrics to be used as self assessment; peer review and teacher evaluation. Select technologies that support alternative assessment strategies and allow evidence of higher level learning to be collected.

4. Evidence based learning. Use evidence based learning strategies as an assessment approach. Using portfolios, scenario based activities, role playing and simulations can provide evidence of learning.

5. Feedback and feed forward. Learners need substantial, regular and

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[17] Natriello G. The Impact of Evaluation Process on Students. -1987.-155-175 p.
[18] Crooks T.J. The Impact of Classroom Evaluation Practices on Students. Review of Educational Research.-1988.

meaningful feedback and assessment strategies offer a systematic format for providing this. The feedback can be personalized and provided by different actors. Feedback should be used to improve learning and not given as a final activity, informing the students about a final mark; by promoting dialogical feedback and feed forward, assessment will make more sense than ever: it will encourage learners to modify, compliment and improve their learning. In fact, self regulated learning should be applied if we want sustainable assessment, especially for a large number of students.

New challenges for the field have also arisen from the increasing worldwide demand for individuals with high levels of language ability. These demands are twofold: huge and growing numbers of students worldwide whose native language is not the language of instruction and who may need to learn the majority or "official" language of a country in order to become fully functioning members of the society; and globalization and the increasing demands for employees who can function in multilingual work settings.

Along with these growing demands for high-level users of languages has come an increasing demand for accountability in language teaching. Governments, from nations to states to school districts to local schools, are increasingly requiring that educational institutions and teachers be held accountable for the levels of language ability attained by learners, given the resources—human as well as time, space, and money—that have been expended. Similarly, corporations and businesses are increasingly expecting educational institutions—schools, colleges, and universities—to produce potential employees whose language ability is sufficient for them to function in a multilingual workplace. These demands for accountability reinforce schools' and teachers' normal interest in providing instruction that is more effective and appropriate for enhancing their students' learning.

Growing numbers of "young language learners" in schools pose challenges for classroom language assessment as well as for high stakes accountability assessment. For classroom language assessment, the challenge is how to apply the

knowledge we have acquired to develop assessments that will serve the purposes of learning and instruction; and to provide training in language assessment for classroom language teachers. For accountability assessments, the challenge is how to apply the knowledge we have, as language testers, to inform the kinds of assessments that are made of students' achievement not only in the language of instruction, but also in other areas, such as math and science, where the language of the assessment may not be the native language of the test takers.

2.2.Opportunities in language assessment

Assessment for learning, also called formative assessment, is central to The Inquiry Project and provides the means to identify and chart the development of students' ideas and understandings as well as to identify obstacles they encounter in their learning.

As an integral part of the curriculum, assessment provides ongoing information about students' learning and helps to inform next steps in the learning. Assessment also informs the research, contributes to refining the curriculum, and serves as a focus for professional development.

Students' progress in both science content and the inquiry process are assessed. Learning experiences themselves provide opportunities for assessment. The aim is to identify opportunities and provide criteria that help teachers and children themselves take stock of the learning as part of the curriculum. Assessments involve students as partners in their intellectual development by creating a clear vision of what is to be learned, sharing criteria used to judge progress, and providing ways for students to monitor, and reflect on changes in their understanding.

Much of the assessment undertaken during a unit of work will be designed to provide assessment data to inform the teaching and learning process. Using assessment information to promote learning and improve teaching involves teachers in developing and sharing intended outcomes with their students, noticing what learning is happening, recognizing how the learning is going, and responding by providing feedback that takes students further in their learning.

Sharing intended outcomes allows students to:

- be clear about what they are learning
- have an understanding of what their work might look like
- be confident about taking the first step in their learning
- actively contribute to creating criteria that indicate how they will know when they have achieved the outcome

Using peer assessment and self-assessment helps students to develop lifelong learning skills. If students are to become responsible for their learning, teachers need to ensure that the students actively contribute to creating criteria that indicate how they will know when they have achieved their goal. These criteria can be agreed on by the whole class or by individuals. By involving students in this way, teachers encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning, synthesizing the learning intention and the task.

Peer assessment is effective when the assessment criteria are very clear and when the students have the confidence and skills to evaluate their peers' work and to communicate sensitively. Learning experiences related to giving and receiving feedback. The achievement standards provide an assessment framework for many units of work at senior levels in health education, physical education, and home economics.

Where the intended learning outcomes of the unit of work relate to an achievement standard, the success criteria developed will be closely related to the achievement criteria of the achievement standard.

Many of the activities in Making Meaning: Making a Difference have natural checkpoints that can be used to determine each student's level of progress and achievement. Most students working at levels 6–8 of Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum will be assessed using the unit or achievement standards from the health education, physical education, or home economics matrices[19]

In Making Meaning, links have been made between the learning activities and the achievement standards that they may contribute to. While the activities themselves do not constitute assessments, they are examples of the learning experiences students need in order to prepare for assessment against the achievement standards. The integrity and uniqueness of each discipline and of each

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[19] www.ncea.govt.nz.

of the key areas of learning they draw from become well defined at these senior school levels of learning. Students need to develop a comprehensive understanding of how their chosen learning program helps them to meet the requirements of the achievement or unit standards.

Teachers developing programs of study to prepare their students for assessment against achievement standards from more than one matrix for example, a combination of health education, physical education, and home economics standards need to plan carefully to meet the learning needs of students in subsequent years. For example, students studying for the New Zealand Scholarship qualification will need access to a comprehensive program covering the outcomes described in level 3 achievement standards or their equivalent for their chosen subject.

In addition, teachers will need to plan collaboratively across the three disciplines to ensure that their students have access to a wide range of learning and assessment opportunities.

Students shouldn't be assessed for a standard until the teacher is confident that achievement of the standard is within their reach or until the final deadline for assessment, if there is one.

The need for further assessment can be minimized when teachers:
ensure students understand the standard and the test, brief or assignment
discuss exemplars of successful work in different contexts with students
give students adequate practice opportunities
give students extensive feed forward and feedback
assess students when they are ready.

Some assessments build over a period of time up to final submission. For example, a teacher will provide feedback over a period of time in the case of a performance task, a writing assessment or portfolio of a year's work. In general, feedback comment on progress and feed forward suggestions for next steps should become less specific the closer the student is to the submission date, in order to avoid the teacher effectively doing the assessment for the student.

A further assessment opportunity occurs when a new, quality-assured assessment is provided for students after their first opportunity and after further learning has taken place.

A maximum of one further opportunity for assessment means none or one. It does not mean one must be offered. It is the school's decision whether a further opportunity will be offered for any standard. If it is not manageable to offer a further opportunity, then students should be advised from the outset that there is only one opportunity to be assessed against that standard.

If a further opportunity for assessment is offered to any student, it must be made available to all students entered for that standard, including those who did not complete the original assessment for a reason acceptable under the School's policy on missed and late assessment. This is regardless of their performance on the first opportunity. Therefore, further assessment opportunities need to be carefully planned

Any further opportunity conditions must be consistent with those for the first opportunity.

Resubmission. A resubmission can be offered when the student could achieve a grade if they correct errors or omissions in their work in a short period of time.

Resubmission:

-should be limited to specific aspects of the assessment and no more than one resubmission should be provided

-must take place before the teacher gives any feedback to the whole class or any student on the work done. If more teaching has occurred after the first assessment opportunity, resubmission is not possible.

-should be closely supervised to manage authenticity

-should be offered only where a teacher judges that a mistake has been made by the student, which the student should be capable of discovering and correcting themselves. For example, the student may have handed in the assessment, but may not have made a particular calculation correctly. In such cases, the teacher may consider it appropriate to allow a student to resubmit a specific part of the

assessment. The amount of information a teacher provides to a student in identifying the error is important in this context. In the case above, the teacher might say "your method is fine but there is a problem with your calculations…." The teacher would not, however, say "there is a problem with your use of brackets in this calculation."

2.3. Practical analysis and results of the surveys

Assessment is a topic concerned with district interim tests to everyday classroom pop-quizzes. To grapple with what is the overuse of testing; practitioners must have a clear view of testing as a means of assessment. Generally speaking, assessment denotes a method of following students' progress through active participation of the learner himself. Assessment is one of the crucial components of the instruction. People within the educational community, i.e. policymakers, educators, students, parents, administrators, have different ideas regarding the implementation of assessment strategies[20].

While some believe traditional assessment methods are more effective, others think that alternative assessment tools are superior. Critics, however, have raised serious concerns about the usefulness of various kinds of tests as the primary measure of student achievement. Both have their pros and cons. Adherents of process-oriented curricula consider traditional techniques such as multiple choice tests, true-false statements, fill in the gaps and matching exercises inappropriate for the foreign language classroom curricula. More specifically, they point out the lack of rich, descriptive information about both the product and process of learning in conventional testing methods.

True-false tests present two choices one of which is true. They are simple indicators of what is understood and offer students a 50% chance of getting the answer correct. As for the matching exercises, the main advantage is that they are compact in terms of space and eliminate, to some extent, the guessing factor. The main disadvantage is that they mainly measure passive vocabulary knowledge but no other complex language skills. Like matching exercises, multiple choice tests present a lesser amount of guessing. These tests are proved especially useful for measuring a wide variety of learning points. However, they are criticized since they are quite dissimilar to real-life language usage. Bailey also criticizes traditional assessment in that they are inauthentic and indirect.

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[20]Dietel, R. J., Herman, J. L., & Knuth, R. A. What does research say about assessment?- NCREL, Oak Brook,-1991

As Genesee and Hamayan argue, these tests prove to be useful for gathering information regarding students' achievements under specified conditions, but they fail to provide information about students' motivations, their interests and their learning strategies. Moreover, negative criticism has been leveled at the washback effects of the high-stake standardized tests at the curriculum, educational and psychological level. [21] The most widely used traditional assessment tools are multiple-choice tests, true/false tests, short answers, and essays.

According to Hamayan, alternative assessment signifies authentic procedures and techniques within the instructional domain which can be integrated into daily classroom activities. Smith refers to alternative assessment as continuous techniques occurring inside or outside the classroom at different points in time when the subjects are asked to represent their knowledge in different ways. Kohonen uses the term alternative and authentic assessment interchangeably to refer to the evaluations made which reflect students' learning and achievement as well as their motivations and attitudes. These evaluations are claimed to finally result in an improved instruction.

Alderson and Banerjee regard alternative assessment formative in function with beneficial washback effects. Typically, in traditional selected-response assessments students do not generate any language. As thus these tests are most often used to measure receptive skills. They offer a number of advantages as they are quick to administer and score. Moreover, scoring is relatively objective. However, they are disadvantageous in that high quality tests are difficult to construct and these tests fail to check the students' productive language skills. Traditional assessment has laid an emphasis on tests which are conceived as showing the students' educational abilities. Research has pointed out the failure of traditional tests to capture the multi-dimensional aspects of what students have already learned (Mathies, 2000).

There has been a shift of emphasis towards authentic assessment with a

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[21]Hamayan, E. V. Approaches to Alternative Assessment. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics. 1995.-212p.

focus on a need for the so-called holistic approaches to make judgments on students' performances in the educational environment. Having a criterion-based standard is another factor which distinguishes the two types of assessment. Unlike traditional assessment which compares students' performances against one another, criterion referenced assessment compares the students' performances against set standards [22] . Authentic assessment moves far beyond rote learning and memorization and involves students to carry out tasks which in one way or another involve them in some sort of problem-solving activities.

Authentic assessment puts forward a variant number of engaging tasks for the students in situations which are real world or simulation of real world situations. As Wiggins (1990) claims, authentic assessment avails students with a wide range of skills and illuminates whether they have gained the ability to construct valid answers to the tasks presented. Moreover, he asserts that this kind of assessment sets a standardized criterion for scoring the tasks at hand by being highly reliable. Campbell (2000) defines 'authentic assessment' in terms of critical thinking and applied knowledge with validity as a fundamental criterion.

Ewing (1998) regards authentic assessment as a meaningful learning experience with the genuine involvement of the students to carry out a project. He moves a number of limitations concerning traditional assessment among which are a) the inflexibility to reduce content and, b) establishing what is already taught. Authentic assessment, in his view, paves the way for a direct measurement of students' achievement on tasks through flexible methods. Authenticity is to bridge the gap between artificiality and de-contextualization on the one hand and realism on the other[23]. New modes of assessment are inclined towards the authentic side of the assessment continuum in order to prepare the students for the dynamic tasks of the real society (Bound, 1995).

Authentic assessment is mainly realized in terms of the opposition between

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[22]Tanner, D. E. Authentic assessment: A solution, or part of the problem? -High School Journal.-1995.-24-29p.
[23]Segers, M., Dochy, F. &Cascallar, E.The era of assessment engineering: Changing perspectives on teaching and learning and the role of new model of assessment. 2001.-12p.

productions versus reproduction. It doesn't value assessment as an end but rather as a means to achievement which is meaningful to the learner. In other words, authentic assessment loses meaning without its due diligence to the learning process.

Authentic assessment tools come in many different forms such as: a) portfolios, b) group work, c) role plays, d) reflective journals and e) concept maps. Authentic assessment avails a measure of academic growth which is gauged over time to capture the depth of student learning[24]. Since alternative assessment is ongoing in nature, it can signify the learners' language proficiency and mirror the developmental processes in the educational environment over time. Thus it becomes possible to focus both on the process and product of learning[25].

Other than what is just mentioned, Genesee and Upshur (1996) stress the importance of this kind of assessment to avail information on factors such as students' learning strategies and styles, their behavior and their reactions to the course which finally affects student achievement.

A number of concerns are raised about certain features of alternative assessment.

Firstly, it is argued that this kind of assessment is more time-consuming and costly for teachers to have a thoughtful analysis of the tests to provide accurate feedback to the learners.

Second, teachers must be skillful enough to be able to implement different methods of alternative assessment successfully.

Third, learners also require a great deal of guidelines and supervisions which is not realized if they are accustomed to traditional assessment practices.

Forth, this kind of assessment is open to criticism in terms of psychometric qualities of validity, reliability and practicality.

Above all, practitioners have doubts about the possibility of the true

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[24] Morris, R. V.Drama and authentic assessment in a social studies classroom.Social Studies, 2001.-41-44p.
[25]Hamayan, E. V. Approaches to Alternative Assessment. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics,1995.-22p.

application of this kind of assessment to larges scale classes.

Supporters of alternative assessment, on the other hand, challenge the mentioned claims on philosophical grounds. As Huerta-Macias asserts, alternative assessment gains validity and reliability by the virtue of its close assimilation to the learning and teaching process. According to him, a measure gains trustworthiness if it consists of credibility ad auditability.

Alternative assessment is indeed valid based on the direct nature of assessment. Consistency is provided support by the auditability of the procedure by the triangulation of the decisions made with varied sources of data among which teachers, students, parents and administrators can be mentioned. Reliability is also reassured as it avoids norming, cultural and linguistic biases inherent in traditional testing methods. Anyhow, Ewing is among those who treat the notion of authentic assessment with caution in that he doesn't consider it appropriate in all cases as it may become unrealistic through impractical tasks. As thus, these limitations appeal him to refrain from thoroughly accepting or discarding one method in the favor of another.

The purpose of the survey is to communicate with the findings of the research. The objectives of the research were to identify the most important principles and reasons of language assessment. And the aim of the survey is to observe the assessment criteria of some modules taught in English majors of BSU. We used the observation method for this survey and we observed some assessment criteria of modules.

As the theme of our research work is "Language assessment reasons and principles" we decided to observe assessment specifications of some modules which are used for teaching foreign languages according to the given steps above.

After analyzing three steps namely continuous assessment which aims at providing meaningful feedback to facilitate students' learning and improve teachers' teaching and is considered process oriented assessment, then mid-term assessment that is taken at the end of each unit or the chapter, lastly, the final assessment which is considered summative assessment as it is carried out at the

end of the term primarily to grade students and secondary to present achievement feedback, it can be concluded that nowadays the alternative ways of assessing are implemented to a great degree compared to traditional ways of assessment. For example first assessment specification which we observed was one of the modules of "Integrated skills of language teaching" that was lesson planning which is described below. The assessment specification which we observed was for continuous assessment which aims at providing meaningful feedback to facilitate students' learning and the students should find a lesson plan as well as they should write a critical report on it. While writing critical report students should answer to some questions related to lesson planning.

Criteria for continuous assessment I 10 points

Planning teaching
For this task you will have to:
find and download **a ready-made lesson plan** from Internet. You can use the following websites: write an evaluative essay (not less than 600 words) addressing the following issues:
1. What kind of learners do you think this lesson plan is suitable for (e.g. age, level, gender, needs, cultural background, L1 etc.)?
2. What skills and language areas does the lesson plan address?
3. Are the set aims and objectives realistic to achieve?
4. What framework is chosen for sequencing the lesson?
5. Are the activities logically sequenced and contribute to achieving the lesson aims?
_ Attach the evaluated lesson plan (specifying the source) to your writing.

Task response	3
Ability to critically analyze the materials in the light of the relevant theories and approaches and suppost them with examples	4
Coherence and cohesion	3
Total:	10 points

This type of assessment form helps students to be provided with the opportunities to use their own opinions to perform the given tasks. It is considered as alternative assessment because the teacher Teacher used questions connected with the previous lessons, at that point she used the washback, one principle of assessment. Because the teacher wanted to identify the gained knowledge of the students. Moreover, we can say the questions are practical, because they are clear to understand and save time to answer. At this point another principle of assessment: practicality can be seen. As well as while making questions they paid

attention if it is connected to real situation or not. As the task was writing a critical report on the lesson plan they read and can write the report easily on the lesson plan.

The next subject which we observed was Material design and evaluation module. It was a midterm assessment that is taken at the end of each unit or the chapter, lastly. For this assessment students should develop a unit including students' part and teachers' notes for university/college/school learners of English at an appropriate level.

Material design and Evaluation

Lesson plan. Teacher's part/Student's part

1. Designing Material
Based on what you have learned in Materials Design and Evaluation course, you should develop a unit including Students' part and Teacher's notes for university/college/school learners of English at an appropriate level.

Relevance of an input material (e.g. a reading text, video extract etc.) to the activities, and level/ language instructions	5
Evidence of encouraging critical thinking in tasks/ Variety of language skills that enable the learners to gain the mastery of the content/topic	5
Quality and clarity of rationale, including definition of a target group, level etc./ Clear cross-referencing to student's material	5
Clear explanation of the activities from Student's part/ Appropriate and clear instructions to the teacher	5
Total:	20 points

From the criteria it is known that washback and practicality are used efficiently. Because it was for checking gained knowledge of the students. Its practicality is that the task is clear for the students. Besides, the task is valid, the validity of the task is that it checks the how the students design the material not the writing skills or other skills.

Another assessment criteria that we observed was Classroom investigation module.

Criteria for continuous assessment 10 points

Classroom investigation
Prepare **a structured interview form or a questionnaire** based on the problem you plan to research. Indicate who they will be conducted with and why.

Clarity, Simplicity	3 points
Relevance to the problem	4 points
Friendliness to the questionnaire taker (no embarrassing questions)	3 points
Total	**10 points**

According to the criteria of the next task students should make a questionnaire or interview form choosing one optional problem. While preparing either of them they should choose a global topic that anyone can answer; besides they should avoid of giving impolite or embarrassing questions. This can be considered an alternative assessment tool as it displays students' efforts and progress in a given subject area. This task involves students to carry out tasks which in one way or another involve them in some sort of problem-solving activities because after taking an interview they should analyze the data and come to one conclusion. Authentic assessment puts forward a variant number of engaging tasks for the students in situations which are real world or simulation of real world situations. It was a continuous assessment. According to the criteria the practicality was used for the task because students should pay attention to the clarity and simplicity while making questions. Dealing with time and energy, task is efficient in terms of making, doing, and evaluating. Then, the task is affordable for the students.

Another module which we observed was Language testing and assessment and it was continuous assessment which aims at providing meaningful feedback to facilitate students' learning and improve teachers' teaching and is considered process oriented assessment. According to the criteria students should analyze test from previous language courses and write analytical report. The criteria shows that it is alternative assessment because alternative assessment as continuous techniques occurring inside or outside the classroom at different points in time when the subjects are asked to represent their knowledge in different ways. For this task students represent their knowledge by writing a critical report.

Criteria for continuous assessment 10 points

Language Testing and Assessment

Students analyze language tests from previous language courses (Year 1, Year 2) and write **analytical report** (max 350-550 words). The language test analysis should cover at least two of the following aspects: focus, instructions, face validity, construct validity, reliability, practicality, test methods.

Task fulfillment	3 points
Awareness of principles for analysing the given aspects	4 points
Awareness of basics of test development	3 points
Total	10 points

From the criteria we can know that practicality, one principle of assessment is used because the limitation of words is given as well as the aspects which students should use in their report is mentioned clearly. As the teacher wants to check background knowledge of students we can say washback, another principle is also used in the task. The criteria shows that validity is used because teacher is going to check students' knowledge of writing analytical report, not other skills are checked for assessment.

The next assessment criteria for the module Lesson planning. For this assessment students should write a reflection on micro teaching.

Criteria for reflection on micro teaching(70) points

1. Task response (keeping to word limit, giving reasonable answers, providing examples)
2. Organization (demonstrating appropriate organization of ideas)
3. Quality of reflection (evidence of critical thinking, self-evaluation)

Consider the following criteria while preparing and delivering your micro teaching lesson. Your work will be evaluated based on this criteria.

Look for evidence of some or all of the following statements.	
1. Relationship between planning and teaching • Evidence of achieving lesson objectives • Making changes from the original plan due to circumstances • Making smooth transitions between activities • Demonstrating appropriate time management	Total score: 25% Gained score:
2. Classroom language and management • Demonstrating appropriate teacher presence (voice, body	Total score: 25%

language and movement)
    • Varying interaction patterns according to the context
    • Using appropriate questioning and elicitation techniques
    • Making effective use of teaching aids
    • Clear instructions
	Gained score:

3. Materials development
    • Evidence of authenticity and cultural appropriacy
    • Catering for the level of students
    • Demonstrating adequate design (eye catching, appropriate layout)
	Total score:25%
	
	Gained score:

4. Teaching language skills for communication
    • Evidence of skills integration (more than one)
    • Providing sufficient practice of language skills
    • Encouraging use of authentic English
	Total Score:25%
	
	Gained score:

This type of assessment form helps students to be provided with the opportunities to use their own opinions to perform the given tasks. They should prepare a micro teaching based on the criteria of the task. This task provides the students with the opportunity to implement their knowledge on this subject in practice. It is also stressed that this kind of assessment grants the students enough time to generate rather than choose a response.

No doubt, this kind of assessment is a collaborative approach which allows the interaction of students and teachers in the learning process. This collaboration in turn enhances students' self-esteem, sense of efficacy and intrinsic learning motivation. The learners become active participants in the process of learning by realizing their strength and weaknesses and in setting realistic learning goals. There are two major concepts that describe performance assessment: "1. Performance: A student's active generation of a response that is observable either directly or indirectly via a permanent product, 2. Authentic: The nature of the task and context in which the assessment occurs is relevant and represents "real world" problems or issues". Authentic assessment aims to relate the instruction to the real-world experience of the learners. The task needs to be meaningful in order to be authentic. Winking also points out the role of authenticity and states that alternative assessments require higher order thinking skills so that students can solve real-life related problems. As we see that authenticity, a principle of assessment is used.

Conclusion

Assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, determines whether the goals of education are being met or not. Students do not fully learn what their teachers teach. If they learned what they were taught, there would be no need for assessment. That is because regardless of the way teachers design and implement instruction, what students learn cannot be estimated with any amount of certainty. Assessment therefore is to bridge the gap between learning and teaching. Any student taking any form of learning would be, in one form or another, subject to assessment. Moreover, a well-designed test can act as an engine which finally derives active student learning.

Language assessment is a field of study under the umbrella of applied linguistics. Its main focus is the assessment of first, second or other language in the school, college, or university context; assessment of language use in the workplace; and assessment of language in the immigration, citizenship, and asylum contexts.

The purpose of assessment is to gather relevant information about student performance or progress, or to determine student interests to make judgments about their learning process. After receiving this information, teachers can reflect on each student's level of achievement, as well as on specific inclinations of the group, to customize their learning and teaching process.

Assessment also considered as a tool to measure how much knowledge a student has. This should not be the most important aim of the assessment. Consequently, through appropriate assessment we must determine how well we learned and taught. This is determined with the help of principles of assessment. The principles of good assessment include validity, reliability, practicality, authenticity and washback.

Assessment plays a major role in how students learn, their motivation to learn, and how teachers teach. Assessment is used for various purposes. Assessment for learning: where assessment helps teachers gain insight into what students understand in order to plan and guide instruction, and provide helpful

feedback to students. Assessment as learning: where students develop an awareness of how they learn and use that awareness to adjust and advance their learning, taking an increased responsibility for their learning. Assessment of learning: where assessment informs students, teachers and parents, as well as the broader educational community, of achievement at a certain point in time in order to celebrate success, plan interventions and support continued progress.

Students' progress in both science content and the inquiry process are assessed. Learning experiences themselves provide opportunities for assessment. The aim is to identify opportunities and provide criteria that help teachers and children themselves take stock of the learning as part of the curriculum. Assessments involve students as partners in their intellectual development by creating a clear vision of what is to be learned, sharing criteria used to judge progress, and providing ways for students to monitor, and reflect on changes in their understanding.

Research and experience show that student learning is best supported when Instruction and assessment are based on clear learning goals; instruction and assessment are differentiated according to student learning needs; students are involved in the learning process (they understand the learning goal and the criteria for quality work, receive and use descriptive feedback, and take steps to adjust their performance); assessment information is used to make decisions that support further learning; parents are well informed about their child's learning, and work with the school to help plan and provide support;

In conclusion we can say using principle of assessment for assessing students is more effective than the traditional assessment. Because using principles of assessment gives teachers the opportunity to develop learners' skills in their field of interest. By exploring learners' strengths and weaknesses, teachers can get an idea of what works best for learners and hence can strive towards perfecting their skills in the necessary field.

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