

( ٣ )

كلية التربية

المادة: لغويات تطبيقية

الفرقة: الرابعة

القسم: لغة انجليزية

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المحاضرة الثالثة

# **Language Assessment**

# What is Language Assessment?

- ❑ In the context of language teaching and learning, “assessment” refers to the act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner’s knowledge of a language and ability to use it.
- ❑ Although some people consider “testing” and “assessment” to be synonymous, many use the latter term in a broader sense to include both formal measurement tools, which yield quantifiable scores, and other types of qualitative assessment, such as observation, journals and portfolios.
- ❑ What unifies the variety of tests and assessments is that they all involve the process of making inferences about learners’ language capacity on the basis of ‘observed performance’.
- ❑ Assessment practices vary according to the purpose for which assessment information is required.

□ There are a number of broad purposes for educational assessment:

- Assessment for curriculum [ providing diagnostic information and motivating learners].
- Assessment for communication [ information certification and selection].
- Assessment for accountability [ publicly demonstrating achievement of outcomes].

□ In language programs, one purpose-related distinction is between “proficiency assessment”, which is concerned with measuring a person’s general ability, typically for selection decisions, and “achievement assessment”, which focuses on determining what has been learned as part of a specific program of instruction, usually for assigning marks.

- ❑ **Assessment purpose** is closely tied to the “stakes” attached to testing, and it therefore governs the type of assessment tool that is used and the resources that are invested in its development.
- ❑ In **‘high-stakes’ situations** where the results of assessment may have a significant effect on test-taker’s lives [ for example, selection for university entry], the instrument should have been developed with great care by suitably qualified professionals and subjected to rigorous piloting and validation.
- ❑ In this and other **testing situations, many stakeholders are involved in language assessment**, either as those who construct and/or research tests and assessment tools [ for example, test development agencies, curriculum developers, teachers, university researchers], as test-takers [ students hoping to be certified for a job ] or as ‘consumers’ of assessment information [ for example, policy-makers, government officials, educational administrators, parents, employers and the media]

- ❑ There is an increased need for language testing researchers to explore and understand the ways in which test scores are used.
- ❑ It has been suggested that the process of test development needs to become more democratic and to involve a wide range of stakeholders so as to ensure fairness to all.
- ❑ The ideal of involvement needs to be balanced against the realities of implementation and technical concerns of validity and reliability, which language assessment experts are able to address.

# Test Methods

- ❑ Having defined **assessment** as “ the act of collecting information and making judgements” , we can define **test methods** as **the systematic procedures set out for collecting information and making judgements for a particular assessment event.**
- ❑ Language testers consider **test methods** as **a set of procedures** and describe them as **sets of characteristics** rather than by cover-all terms such as” multiple-choice”. Multiple-choice refers only to one characteristic of a test – **the manner by which the examinee responds** – but any given testing event is composed of a number of other factors which should be expected to affect performance.
- ❑ Ideally, the test performance would be free from any outside influence. However, test methods do affect test performance in various ways.

- ❑ Douglas theorizes how **test methods affect test performance**, suggesting a series of processes through which the test-taker perceives cues in the test method, interprets them and uses them to set goals for task completion.
- ❑ **Language capacity and test method are responsible for test performance**. Testing experts differ on how to interpret and deal with the fact of test method influence on performance; however, most agree that it is essential to identify those aspects of **test method** that may play a role.
- ❑ The most encompassing framework for describing **test methods** has been developed in **two stages**, first as “**test method facets**” and, more recently, “**test task characteristics**”.
- ❑ **Test task characteristics** are defined as:
  - **The test ‘setting’**, such as the physical specifications of the room and the participants.
  - **The testing ‘rubrics’**, including the instructions, test structure, allotted time, response evaluation and calculation of scores.



- The 'input' to the test-taker, such as test length and grammatical and topical characteristics of test questions.
- The 'output' expected from the learner, such as the length and grammatical and topical features of responses.
- The relationship between input and output, such as whether or not the answers to questions the examinee is asked depend on previous responses.
- These test task characteristics provide the analytic tools needed for both construction and analysis of language tests.

# Test Analysis

- ❑ Two types of analysis form the basis for much of the quantitative test analysis: “difficulty analysis” and “correlational analysis”.
- ❑ **Difficulty analysis** refers to the type of analysis in which the concern is to determine how difficult the items on the test are.
- ❑ **Correlational analysis** is a means of obtaining a statistical estimate of the strength of the relationship between two sets of test scores.
- ❑ Computationally, each of these analysis is straightforward.

## Assignment (1):

Put [ T ] in front of true sentences and [ F ] in front of false ones:

1. The test performance should be free from any outside influence. [.....]
2. Tests and assessments involve the process of making inferences about learners' language capacity on the basis of observed performance. [.....]
3. Language capacity and test method are responsible for test performance. [.....]

## Assignment ( 2 ):

### Give terms to the following definitions:

1. A means of obtaining a statistical estimate of the strength of the relationship between two sets of test scores.[.....]
2. The act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner's knowledge of a language and ability to use it. [.....]
3. It includes both formal measurement tools and other types of qualitative assessment, such as observation, journals and portfolios. [.....]
4. It is concerned with measuring a person's general ability. [.....]
5. It focuses on determining what has been learned as part of a specific program of instruction , usually for designing marks. [.....]

## Assignment ( 3 ):

1. What is language assessment?
2. What are test methods?

With My Best Wishes