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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING TESTS IN ASSESSMENT

Abstract: This article discusses the issues of test items for students to determine their learning outcomes. Learning outcomes of students are the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that students receive from the learning experience. The purpose of training of students is to determine what students know and can do, and to assess until the end of the learning experience. The single most important aspect of assessment is that the assessments match the intended outcomes of the class. To do this, there is a number of tests used in the students training. The development of test use has a very long history, since there was always a need for usage and practical learning of a foreign language. In the article, the author mentioned the most widely used test types in English language teaching.

Keywords: assessment, learning outcomes, learning objective, the test task, critical thinking, assessment practice, empirical investigations, curriculum.

Tests are usually used in an assessment intended to measure a test-taker's knowledge, skill, and aptitude. A test may be administered verbally, on paper, on a computer. Tests vary in style, rigor and requirements. For example, in a closed book test, a test taker is often required to rely upon memory to respond to specific items, whereas in an open book test, a test taker may use one or more supplementary tools such as a reference book or calculator when responding to an item. Learning outcomes of students are the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that students receive from the learning experience. The purpose of training of students is to determine what students know and can do and to assess till the end of the learning experience. The single most important aspect of assessment is that the assessments match the intended outcomes of the class. To do this, there are a number of tests used in the students training.

Several tests exist that assess student-learning outcomes. Here are the most common national tests. By specifying the intended uses for language tests, language teachers should be able to make well-motivated and purposeful selections of language testing instruments and procedures. However, regardless of how carefully we select and use language-testing tools, we can never predict exactly what the outcomes of the assessment process will be. To keep our language assessment practice purposeful, we, therefore, need to evaluate the extent to which our language testing tools are actually helping to accomplish the jobs of language assessment in our classrooms and programs. The in-depth evaluation of test use may involve a number of approaches and methods, including empirical investigations and observations. Did the testing tools provide the appropriate amount and type of information to support these interpretations? Were test-based decisions accurate and test-based actions appropriate? Were the intended classroom, curriculum, and program purposes fulfilled by using the language test? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what were the actual positive and negative consequences of using the language test? Based on the answers to these questions, we may decide that language testing tools are appropriate for our language assessment need. Thus, to choose and use the language testing alternatives most appropriate for their language education contexts, language teachers need to keep in mind the purposeful nature of language assessment.

Student learning outcomes are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students gain from a learning experience.

Student learning objectives define what students know, are able to do, and value by the end of a learning experience.

What is the difference between student learning outcomes and objectives?

•Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are program-level statements describing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students gain from the program.

They are more overarching and often encompass multiple courses.

•Learning Objectives are course-level statements describing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that students gain from a course.

They are more detailed and course content-specific.

Where does one find learning objectives?

The basis for the minimum learning objectives a course should address can be found in the course content summaries. Textbooks often provide learning objectives for each chapter.

Learning Objectives should be SMART:

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Attainable;
- Results-oriented;
- Time-bound.

Refer to Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives as a resource to help ensure that the learning objectives are observable and measurable. In other words, what must the students do to demonstrate that they have achieved a learning objective?

Bloom's taxonomy (or hierarchy) identifies three learning domains:

- Cognitive (knowing);
- Affective(feeling);
- Psychomotor(doing).

Choosing Appropriate Testing FormatsTypes of Testing Items Limited-Choice: Students choose from alternatives provided:

- True/False;
- Multiple Choice;
- Matching.

Open-Ended: Students formulate their own answers:

- Fill-in-the-blank/Completion;
- Short Answers;
- Essays;
- Problem solving. Performance test items

Limited-Choice: Students choose from alternatives provided:

- True/False;
- Multiple Choice;
- Matching.
- Open-Ended: Students formulate their own answers:
- Fill-in-the-blank/Completion;
- Short Answers;
- Essays;
- Problem solving.

Choosing Appropriate Type of Test Item.Certain types of exam items (limited-choice vs. open-ended) are better suited than others for measuring different types of learning objectives. The verb in the learning objective can often limit the type of item that can be used.

Table 1 - Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives	Most suitable test item
The student will be able to Name the parts of the human skeletal system	Limited-choice
The student will be able to identify common characteristics of various genres of literature.	Limited-choice
The student will explain the processes and outcomes of communication and miscommunication within groups, teams, and leadership.	Open-ended
The student will describe the differences between translating, transliterating, and interpreting.	Open-ended
The student will demonstrate appropriate laboratory safety skills	Open-ended

Table 2 Choosing Appropriate Types of Activities

Learning Objectives	Most Suitable Test Item	Type of Activity
The student will be able to name the parts of the human skeletal system	Limited-choice	Fill in the blanks
The student will be able to identify common characteristics of various genres of literature.	Limited-choice	Matching
The student will explain the processes and outcomes of communication and miscommunication within groups, teams, and leadership	Open-ended	Essay
The student will describe the differences between translating, transliterating, and interpreting	Open-ended	Short answers
The student will demonstrate appropriate laboratory safety skills	Open-ended	Performance

Several tests exist that assess student learning outcomes. Here are the most common national tests.

1. Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)
2. Critical Thinking Assessment Test (CAT)
3. Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)
4. ETS Proficiency Profile: Formally known as Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP)
5. Work Keys

The Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) is a nationally-normed assessment program from ACT which measures outcomes of the general education programs at the end of the first 2 years of college.

Critical Thinking Assessment Test

The CAT Instrument is a unique tool designed to assess and promote the improvement of critical thinking and real-world problem solving skills. The instrument is the product of extensive development, testing, and refinement with a broad range of institutions, faculty, and students

Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is a test of reasoning and communication skills at the institutional level to determine how the institution as a whole contributes to student development. It focuses on the value-added of attending the institution through assessing performance tasks and analytic writing tasks covering critical thinking, analytic reasoning, written communication, and problem solving. Additional information on the Council for Aid to Education website includes institutional reports, FAQs, test measures, across the country.

Work Keys is a job skills assessment system developed by ACT. It includes a job analysis to identify required skills needed to be successful at work and then assess the current skill levels of individuals in order to determine gaps. It assesses 10 foundational workplace skills, which are listed in their FAQ section of the website.

The single most important aspect of assessment is that the assessments match the intended outcomes of the class.

Students determine what you value and what the field values by what you grade, not by what you say.

The purpose of the test:

Just as we need to specify what information testing instruments and procedures should give us, we also need to make explicit exactly what purposes we have for using tests. Once we have administered

language tests, we use the resulting information to inform various decisions and actions, that is, to accomplish the jobs of assessment. It will prove helpful to give further consideration to just how we intend to use language assessment; that is, how we intend to use language tests to contribute to our overall classroom and program goals and our curricular objectives. What kinds of language testing tools will reflect the values underlying our program? Does our intended use of language tests contribute to accomplishing the curricular objectives in a manner that is consonant with our values and with the values of our students? How does language assessment in general fit into the big picture that we want our language program to portray? Answers to these questions should help us develop a better understanding of the overall purpose of using language tests within our language education contexts. Given the explicit specification of exactly why we are engaging in assessment in the first place, we will be much better able to select and use language tests appropriate to our purposes.

By specifying the intended uses for language tests, language teachers should be able to make well-motivated and purposeful selections of language testing instruments and procedures. However, regardless of how carefully we select and use language-testing tools, we can never predict exactly what the outcomes of the assessment process will be. To keep our language assessment practice purposeful, we, therefore, need to evaluate the extent to which our language testing tools are actually helping to accomplish the jobs of language assessment in our classrooms and programs. The in-depth evaluation of test use may involve a number of approaches and methods, including empirical investigations and observations (Mesick 1989; Shepard 1997). Fundamentally, to evaluate how well our language testing tools are functioning, we need to reflect on the extent to which our use of language tests helps us to make the decisions and take the actions concerning the jobs of language assessment. Thorough specifications of intended test use will provide a valuable resource. In evaluating the outcomes of language test use, teachers should first reflect on the specifications of intended use, then decide the following: Were all of the actual test users identified? What range of interpretations did the test users actually make based on information provided by the language test? Did the testing tools provide the appropriate amount and type of information to support these interpretations? Were test-based decisions accurate and test-based action appropriate? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what were the actual positive and negative consequences of using the language test? Based on the answers to these questions, we may decide that language-testing tools are appropriate for our language assessment need. Alternatively, we may decide that test instruments and procedures need to be slightly revised, thoroughly overhauled, or thrown out.

In summary, purposeful language assessment involves the cyclical process of focusing on the jobs to be accomplished by language assessment. Specifying the intended uses of language tests in accomplishing these jobs, selecting the appropriate language testing tools and designating how they are to be used, and evaluating the extent to which the jobs of language assessment are being accomplished with the help of language tests. Thus, to choose and use the language e testing alternatives most appropriate for their language education contexts, language teachers need to keep in mind the purposeful nature of language assessment.

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БІЛІМДІ БАҒАЛАУДАҒЫ ТЕСТ ПАЙДАЛАНУДЫҢ ТИІМДІЛІГІ

Аннотация. Бұл мақалада оқушылардың оқу нәтижелерін анықтауға арналған тест тапсырмаларының мәселелері қарастырылады. Студенттердің оқу нәтижесі дегеніміз оқушылардың оқу тәжірибесінен алатын білімдері, дағдылары, көзқарастары мен құндылықтары болып табылады. Оқытудың мақсаты білім алушылардың білімін және біліктілігін анықтау және оны оқу жылының соңына дейін бағалау. Бағалау үміт күткен нәтиже бағасына сәйкес келуі өте маңызды. Бұл үшін білім беру процесінде әртүрлі тест тапсырмалары бар. Тілге арналған тесттердің мақсатын көрсете отырып, тіл оқытушысы жоғары дәлелді және нысаналы тест тапсырмалары мен тілдің ретін дұрыс тандай алу керек. Шет тілін оқытуда және оны іс жүзінде пайдалануда тесттерді қолданудың рөлі өте маңызды, сондықтан оның дамуының өте ұзақ тарихы бар. Мақалада автор ағылшын тілін оқытуда кеңінен қолданылатын тест түрлерін атап көрсетеді.

Түйін сөздер: бағалау, оқытудың нәтижесі, оқыту мақсаты, тест тапсырмасы, сыни ойлау, бағалау тәжірибесі, эмпирикалық зерттеулер, оқу жоспары.

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ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТЬ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЯ ТЕСТОВ В ОЦЕНКЕ ЗНАНИЙ

Аннотация. В этой статье обсуждаются вопросы тестирования предметов для студентов, чтобы определить их результаты обучения. Результаты обучения студентов - это знания, навыки, отношения и ценности, которые студенты получают от учебного опыта. Цель обучения студентов - определить, что студенты знают и могут делать, и оценивать это до конца учебного опыта. Единственным важным аспектом оценки является то, что оценки соответствуют ожидаемым результатам класса. Для этого существует ряд тестов, используемых в обучении студентов. Разработка тестового использования имеет очень долгую историю, поскольку всегда существовала необходимость использования и практического изучения иностранного языка. В статье автор упомянул наиболее широко используемые типы тестов в преподавании английского языка.

Ключевые слова: оценивание, результат учебной деятельности, цель обучения, тестовое задание, критическое мышление, практика оценивания, эмпирические исследования, учебная программа.