

ПЕДАГОГИКА ИЛИМДЕРИ
ПЕДАГОГИЧЕСКИЕ НАУКИ
PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES

Гусейнова Фарида Маши

**АНГЛИС ТИЛИНДЕ КӨНДҮМДӨРДҮ БААЛООГО
ЗАМАНБАП МАМИЛЕ**

Гусейнова Фарида Маши

**СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПОДХОДЫ В ОЦЕНКЕ НАВЫКОВ
АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА**

Huseynova Farida Mashi

**MODERN APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
SKILLS ASSESSMENT**

УДК: 372.881.111.1

Бул илимий макала жогорку окуу жайларда студенттердин англис тилин өздөштүрүү маселесине арналган. Негизги максат болуп окурмандарды студенттердин билимин баалоого көңүлдү буруу турат. Ушундан улам, изилдөөдө жогорку окуу жайлардын студенттерине англис тилин үйрөтүүнүн алгылыктуу жагдайларына таянуу керектигине басым жасалды. Изилдөөгө 24 студент жана 4 окутуучу катышып, алар менен маектешүү жана анкетирлөө жүргүзүлдү. Жыйынтыгында англис тилин үйрөтүү көндүмдөрү боюнча маектешүүгө катышкан студенттер менен окутуучулардын ойлору анализденди, анкеталардын жыйынтыгы талданды. Изилдөөнүн жүрүшүндө тагыраак маалыматтарды алуу максатында күндөлүктөр жана документалдык жазуулар колдонулду. Анализдер көрсөткөндөй, көндүмдөрү баалоодо студенттердин көз карашынан жана окутуучулардын көз карашынан баалоонун критерийлери жана практикадагы алдыңкы тажрыйбалар колдонулду. Жыйынтыгында тилди өздөштүрүү үчүн мугалимдерге да, студенттерге да баалоого заманбап мамиле кылуу зарылчылыгы бар экендиги аныкталды.

Негизги сөздөр: баалоо, тилдик көндүм, ыкмалар, критерий, тексттик тапшырма, маалыматтар, студенттер, окутуучу.

Данная научная работа посвящена изучению оценивание владения английским языком у студентов высших учебных заведений. Основная цель статьи – привлечь внимание читателей к развитию современного мышления студентов в отношении процесса оценивания. Таким образом, исследование предназначено для изучения более эффективных основанных на фактических данных последствий и некоторых преимуществ преподавания английского языка в высших учебных заведениях. В ходе исследования 24 студента и 4 преподавателя английского языка были привлечены к участию в интервью и анкетировании. В ходе исследования были проанализированы мнения учителей и студентов о процессе оценивания и некоторые результаты анкетирования относительно оценивания навыков владения английским языком. Во время исследования полевые дневники и документальные записи использовались для сбора информации для качественного описательного исследования. Анализ данных исследовательской работы устанавливает общее руководство по оцениванию языковых навыков учащихся с точки зрения выбора критериев оценки и передовой практики оценки. Современные подходы сосредоточены на установлении правил критериев

оценивания языковых навыков в процессе обучения, которыми руководствуются как преподаватели, так и студенты.

Ключевые слова: оценивание, языковые навыки, подходы, критерий, тестовое задание, данные, студенты, преподаватель.

The research paper explores the assessment of students' English language skills in higher education. The main aim of the article is to draw readers' attention to develop students' modern thinking on assessment process. Therefore, the study is to explore better evidence-based implications and some benefits of English language teaching in higher education. During the research 24 students and 4 English language teachers were involved in participating interviews and questionnaires. Research diaries and documentary notes were used to gather information for qualitative descriptive study. The study analyzed teachers and students' results of questionnaires and presented the current situation of the assessing English language skills in the university level. Data analysis of research paper shows that the general guideline of assessing students' language skills in terms of choosing assessment criteria and good evaluation practices are still challengeable. Therefore, modern approaches in the research focus on setting rules of criteria on evaluating language skills in learning procedure that guide both teachers and students.

Key words: assessment, language skills, approaches, criteria, test items, data, students, teacher.

1. The importance of assessment in the English language teaching.

It is recognized that assessment is the most important tool in achieving success with global thinking and skills. Language testing is known to evaluate students' English knowledge and skills through authentic or performance-based assessment in real-life settings on common standards. It is one of the priorities of language proficiency and the most unique tool for measuring learning process in terms of quantitative and qualitative results. Moreover, students' certain level of knowledge and language skills in English allows to measure learning outcomes accurately.

At the same time, it is a challengeable process to identify the levels of students' learning in an ongoing process according to the learning outcomes. Bachman, L.

F., & Palmer, A. S. Brown, H.D. & Abeywickrama, P. (2010) notes that testing, as a group of structured elements and an assessment tool measures a student's performance in English and is related to its meaningful implementation as a specific area of knowledge and skills [2;3;4]. The research study proposed the following research question:

"How does assessment impact students' English language skills?"

The present study aims to contribute and expand English language teachers' assessment literacy in teaching English. According to Alderson, Galluzzo, G. R., Mussawy, S.A.J. (2009) noted that teachers have low level assessment skills identifying students' levels and setting criteria in assessment process. Current situation of evaluating students' language skill is always crucial and challengeable. However, teachers, as the main factor of learning process, particularly involve assessment practices in all time. Assessment gives the broad sense means any methods used in the teaching process, to understand the level of students' knowledge and skills [3;7;8]. In higher education, English is required to have a broader content than the general education curriculum according to the requirements of labor market.

Effective listening, fluent speaking, reading comprehension, academic writing and critical thinking skills are characterized as adequate language skills in global market. Furthermore, the objectives of teaching English are to monitor the daily activities of students, modern approaches in teaching English are aimed at improving and strengthening students' language skills [4; 9;10]. Coombe., C. Folse. K & Nublely, N., Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (2005) introduced the modern requirements of the English language methodology as using new teaching materials, managing time effectively, the creating of appropriate language environment on assessment and testing procedures impact on students' better learning.

According to the shift paradigm into the student-centered classroom, it is important to implement assessment process to determine students' strong and weak sides in the English language learning [5;6]. Crooks T., Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W., Poehner, M. E & Lantolf, J.P. (2001) stated that assessment provides information both teachers' and students about their results and instructional feedback on students' progress in an ongoing process.

Ongoing assessment gives an opportunity on students' daily dynamic growth of four language skills and students' progress in each level. Moreover, assessment for learning is an ongoing process that arises out of the interaction between teaching and learning [6;11;12].

1.1. Evaluating language skills.

English Language proficiency is one of the 21-st century skills in today's world. Alderson, J. Charles.,

Alan Beretta, Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. stated that in order to be a fluent speaker in English, language learners must have a high level of speaking, writing, reading, vocabulary and grammar knowledge and skills. However, each language learner has strengths and weaknesses in learning English, though they should be different on the same level. Regarding this, every relevant aspect should be taken into account in the ongoing assessment of language skills. Development of listening and speaking skills is very important in acquiring the English language. As an integral and part of daily lives of interaction, listening and speaking are considered interrelated to get better cognitive, social-cultural and pragmatic skills. [1;2]

Firstly, the study presents some research on the assessment of listening skills as the root of academic language skill. The assessing of listening abilities is one of the least understood and least developed, yet the most areas of daily language testing and assessment. Listening tasks should intensive, responsive, selective and extensive that to be measured all scores: *compare individual sounds or words in listening, distinguish grammatical meaning, identify the main idea and comprehend all details* [5;6]. The responsive and extensive assessment tasks in listening are effective in an ongoing assessment: *question and answer, open-ended responses, authentic listening tasks, information transfer, dictation, communicative-stimulus-responsive* are the best task types for measuring listening skills [1;2;3].

Secondly, it must be highlighted that speaking as a productive skill can be observed daily to determine students' accuracy and fluency using vocabulary in context. Everybody starts speaking in the English language by only listening to the new words, texts, scripts, stories, news and information. In most cases, the gaps in assessing speaking are observed by choosing vocabulary, grammatical structure, or discourse as criteria. Students make involuntary stops and repetitions, demonstrate shyness or grammar errors in speaking. The teacher must take speaking criteria as *pronunciation, vocabulary use, accuracy, fluency, grammar, or communication* of the responses to score all skills [6;8;9].

Secondly, students must understand the prompt to be able to respond appropriate through speaking regarding macro-skills or micro-skills in assessing process. They need to build up short dialogues, pair conversation to improve their accuracy. Therefore, speaking tasks should be open-ended that test-taker can emphasize all skills, as well as fluency, understanding questions, accuracy regarding of grammatical categories.

Demonstrating micro – skills in speaking, students must produce *sounds for making words, phrases and sentences, utilizing stress, intonation and rhythm cor-*

rectly, demonstrating fluent speech and expressing meaning in context through grammar.

Regarding to assessing students' macro-skills they must apply different communicative functions and pragmatic skills, such as *turn-taking, body language, jesting and indicate relationships between information and events* in a speech [4;5;7].

In addition to, teachers need to have effective practice in assessing reading skills. Brown, H.D. & Abeywickrama, P. (2010) states that *reading comprehension* is an expected level of developing good language skills. The best way of assessing reading skills is to identify students' bottom up and bottom down skills that improves their academic language level. They recommended to choose bottom-up reading skills that help students' comprehension through *decoding, choosing word level, vocabulary and grammar* [2;3;5].

Bottom down reading help students' comprehension using background knowledge on text genre or schemata. These skills must be assessed in three ways: types of reading, types of meaning and types of comprehension. Teachers must assess different types of reading such as, skimming, scanning, or intensive reading [2; 5;6]. According to assessing the meaning of reading topic students should demonstrate grammar, syntax, informational, discourse and pragmatic skills. Assessing types of comprehension teachers must choose tasks or tests on *word recognition, identification, text analysis, interpretation, inference, synthesis, or evaluation* [7;8;9].

After all, assessing writing aims to identify students' bottom down skills after listening, speaking, and

reading. Here include important micro- skills, such as writing letters and words, correct word order according to correct grammar. For example, using cohesive devices of paragraphs or putting connectors or conjunctions correctly are important in academic writing.

Assessing macro-skills in writing process needs to define form of writing and the rhetorical conventions. For example, essay writing requires expressing relationship among ideas successfully, emphasizing facts and opinions between ideas.

Teacher must choose criteria as *content, organization and structure of the writing, cohesiveness, logical organization and clarity, using vocabulary, grammar, spelling, punctuation, format and style* while assessing writing skills. These criteria should be given using holistic and analytic rubric with descriptions and levels.

Therefore, assessing language skills should be oriented to promote students' comprehending, thinking and communication skills. However, evaluating language skills, selected tests must compliance the principles of reliability, validity and fairness measurements. In this case, assessment tools should reflect all abilities to be measured successfully. Moreover, teachers should improve students' background knowledge on *test structure, format, context, writing items, and timing*.

The above-mentioned research work also explores the types of tests on four language skills and the rules of their application. According to Buck (2001), teachers should identify three approaches in assessment: *discrete point, integrative, and communicative approaches*.

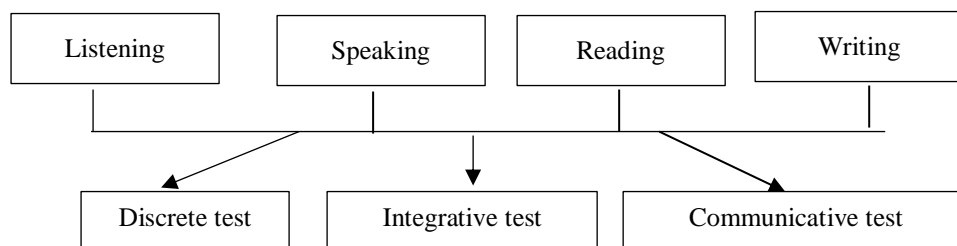


Figure 1. Assessing language skills on types of test.

Discrete tests were introduced by Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (2005), as an audio-lingual approach as the best tool in assessing listening and reading. This test leads a discrete-item approach in language learning (Figure 1). Discrete tests measure students' linguistic knowledge using constructed components parts. Discrete tests are focused on learning phonology, morphology, lexicon, and syntax. This type of tests helps students to achieve a reliability principle in assessment [6;7;9].

Integrative tests identify more than one skill or items. Consequently, the assessment of language ability realized students' knowledge and skills in many areas of language requirements. For example, cloze tests and comprehension questions, role play, dictation are types of integrative tests. O'Malley, J Michael., Vogt, K. & Tsagari, D. (2014) offered writing dictation students develop listening and writing skills defining specific language items [10;11].

English language is the main tool for communication and *communicative test* which requires the students to complete an authentic task. Communicative assessment task reflects learner's real-life experiences in the outside world. The test items include interviews, jigsaw listening, responsive listening, information transfer, etc. Teachers can choose various test items, such as telling a narrative or expressing ideas, defending an opinion, discussing factors that enhance comparing and contrasting things through which advanced oral skills for description is needed [9;11;12].

Methodology. Research study implemented an experiment enrolled 24 students and 4 teachers in the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University. Data were collected through interviews, questionnaires, field notes, and a

review of curriculum documents. All instruments revealed certain domains of teachers' literacy participating in experiment. During interviews teachers expressed their challenges in setting criteria or choosing scoring rubrics in measuring language skills.

Interview to teachers: The purpose of interviews was to collect teachers' experiences on assessment conception, rubrics, setting language criteria and using assessment tools based on measuring language levels. Interview questions are selected according to the course level and syllabus of English language teaching.

Students' assessment survey: The experiment conducted survey analysis among the students using digital tools determining their attitude to the English learning assessment process.

Table 1

Assessment survey for students

	Scoring criteria	poor	average	good	high
1.	<i>I am confident my language level</i>	15	4	5	-
2.	<i>I can write my dictation while listening</i>	12	6	4	2
3.	<i>I can make dialogues with my partner</i>	11	5	6	2
4.	<i>Grammar helps me to speak accurately</i>	3	6	11	4
5.	<i>I can read and construct ideas after reading</i>	11	7	4	2
6.	<i>I can write short essays following rules</i>	12	6	4	2

The survey results on assessment process in different fields, as well as choosing appropriate answers on identifying language levels, types of language skills, task and test types in the learning process. Survey analysis showed that students have low information or knowledge in assessing language skills. Results show that more students are poor to identify their language levels, and writing dictation while listening, making dialogues in pairs, using grammar structures in building utterances while speaking, construct their own ideas after reading and write short essays as demonstrating bottom down skills. They prefer using more discrete tests than integrative and communicative tests.

Findings: The research findings realized that students still remain passive learners though they involved activities in the auditorium. Teachers have low experience choosing test types or task determination. Thus, they are not satisfied with assessment processes while learning English language. Final findings showed that after applying modern approaches in assessing language skills they achieved more progress in listening – speaking so

doing dictation, information transformers, jigsaw listening and role playing using short grammar structures. Regarding to reading and writing assessment they needed training to prepare tests on describing macro and micro- skills in assessment process. At the end, teachers could get some checklists or assessment worksheets on various rubrics for assessing language skills. Certain criteria of each language field presented to the teachers given on papers.

Conclusion. The conclusion of the present study revealed that assessment of English language is one of the priorities in modern methodology. Today students of higher education must demonstrate effective language skills, effective listening, speaking, good reading comprehension and bottom down skills in writing to get adequate language skills. Students' language skills are more important to identify their English language competences. Moreover, the cognitive, socio-cultural aspects of assessment should be considered in English language assessments. The principles of assessment and the development of language in transformation should be

reflected in the students' competence. Teachers have some issues in assessing students' performances and preparing classroom tasks on assessing language levels. Teachers need to need to distinguish test items as well as discrete, integrative and communicative tests preparing syllabus and setting the criteria in details to develop language skills.

References:

1. Alderson, J. Charles., and Alan Beretta. Evaluating second language education. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print.
2. Bachman, L.F., & Palmer, A.S. (2010). Language assessment in practice: Developing language assessments and justifying their use in the real world. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
3. Brown, H.D. & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices, 2nd Ed. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, Inc. White Plains, NY: Longman.
4. Brown, H.D. (2004), Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices
5. Coombe., C. Folse. K & Nubley, N (2007) A practical guide to assessing English language learners. - Assessing Listening
6. Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (2005). Second language listening, theory and practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
7. Galluzzo, G. R. (2005). Performance assessment and renewing teacher education. Clearing House, 78(4), 142-45.
8. Mussawy, S.A.J. (2009). Assessment Practices: Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of Classroom Assessment (Unpublished Master's Thesis). School of Education, University of Massachusetts.
9. O'Malley, J Michael (1987). The effects of training in the use of learning strategies on learning English as a second language. In Anita Wenden & Joan Rubin (eds) 133-143.
10. Palomba, C.A., & Banta, T.W. (1999). Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
11. Poehner, M.E & Lantolf, J.P. (2010). Vygotsky's teaching-assessment dialectic and L2 education: The case for dynamic assessment. Mind, Culture, and Activity, 17, 312-330.
12. Vogt, K. & Tsagari, D. (2014) 'Assessment literacy of foreign language teachers: Findings of a European study'. Language Assessment Quarterly. 11(4), 374-402.