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La Universidad Católica de Loja

Vicerrectorado de Modalidad Abierta y a Distancia

Language Testing

Didactic guide



Language Testing

Didactic guide

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Autora:

Lisset Vanessa Toro Gallardo



Language Testing

Guía didáctica

Lisset Vanessa Toro Gallardo

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Ediloja Cía. Ltda.

Marcelino Champagnat s/n y París

edilojacialtda@ediloja.com.ec

www.ediloja.com.ec

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1. Information data

1.1 Subject presentation



1.2 UTPL generic competencies

- Critical and reflective thinking
- Commitment and social involvement
- Ethical behavior, organization and time planning

1.3 Professional profile competencies

To manage learning through the creation of environments, planning, the use of methodologies, assessment, and the incorporation of knowledge for teaching English as a foreign language in a practical and systematic way, promoting the development of critical, reflective, creative, and experiential thinking in relation to personal development and its context.

1.4 Issues addressed in the course

Limited systemic mastery of epistemology and pedagogy from philosophical and historical derivation.



2. Learning Methodology

According to Slavin (2018) constructivist strategies are called student-centered instruction because their emphasis on students as active learners. In this sense, Language Testing puts the students' interests first by focusing on student-centered learning which allow learners to discover by themselves; the teacher is a guide on the side that supports students' learning instead of lecturing or controlling activities (Slaving, 2018).

The learning activities, strategies and tools have been carefully selected in relation to the achievement of learning outcomes and the development of competencies that contribute to the professional exit profile of the program.

- The formative process is based on three types of activities:
- Teaching activities
- Application and Experimentation Activities
- Autonomous Activities

Teaching activities are carried out under the supervision and direct assistance of the teacher, using synchronous or asynchronous technological tools such as video collaboration, chat or forum for the development of collaborative work between the participants of a study group.

The application and experimentation activities are presented as a task that each student carries out throughout the course individually and presents it through a written work, collaborative work, and through discussions under the requirements established by the professor.

Autonomous work requires students to develop their capacity to generate and build learning in a self-regulated way, basically through research, reading, and reflection on the materials and resources provided.



3. Didactic guidelines by learning outcomes



First bimester

Learning outcome 1:

Designs different types of tests for different purposes.

Throughout the study of the content covered in Units 1 and 2, the resources, materials, and activities provided offer learners a comprehensive pathway to achieving the desired learning outcomes. These carefully designed tasks engage students in various opportunities to enhance their critical thinking skills through active questioning, problem-solving, and completing hands-on activities. By engaging with these tasks, learners not only deepen their understanding of the subject matter but also develop essential skills for analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information, which are crucial for their academic and professional growth.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 1

Unit 1. Language Assessment and Testing

Tosuncuoglu (2018) identifies several important reasons for assessing the foreign language teaching and learning process. One key reason is that assessment helps identify how many students have successfully met the learning objectives, pinpoint those experiencing difficulties, and determine

which teaching techniques are most effective. Additionally, assessment plays a crucial role in helping educators decide whether to continue with the foreign language teaching program. Taras (2005) also underscores the significance of assessment, noting that it is an essential aspect of teaching, as it enables educators to gauge students' levels of skills and knowledge, which can inform instructional decisions.

In this context, I encourage you to reflect on the methods your teachers used to assess your learning. Consider the following questions to help guide your thoughts: Did they rely on written tests? Were interactive activities part of the assessment process? Were you given opportunities to apply what you learned in real-world contexts? Did teachers provide feedback with specific suggestions for improvement? Were both group work and individual tasks incorporated into the classroom environment?

Now that you have reflected on key aspects of how you were assessed, I invite you to consider which activities most effectively supported your learning progress.

With this in mind, I suggest that you explore the differences between testing and assessment to deepen your understanding.

1.1 Differences Between Assessment and Testing

Some researchers have explored the distinctions between testing and assessment, with Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) noting that while these terms are often used interchangeably, they refer to different concepts. According to the authors, assessment is an ongoing, dynamic process that involves using a variety of methods to evaluate student learning. For instance, assessment occurs when teachers observe students' responses to questions, provide feedback, or assess their attempts to use new vocabulary or structures. This type of continuous evaluation is embedded in the learning process and aims to track students' progress over time.

In contrast, the authors argue that testing is a subset of assessment. A test, by definition, is a structured and formal procedure designed to evaluate students' knowledge or skills at a specific point in time, such as during a mid-term exam or a final test. Testing tends to focus on measurement and the evaluation of student responses, often with fixed formats such as multiple-choice questions, short answers, or essay writing.

Hughes (2008) further emphasizes that testing is generally a summative form of assessment. It is typically used at the end of a course, semester, or academic year to determine what knowledge and skills students have acquired. Summative tests serve as a final evaluation of student achievement, often providing an overall picture of their learning outcomes. However, while testing is crucial for measuring performance at particular points, it is just one part of the broader process of assessment.



So far, we have presented a summary of what testing and assessment is. Now, I invite you to read about [Differences Between Assessment & Testing](#). Once that you have read the article, I suggest that you take some notes as a strategy to better understand the topic.

You now have a clear understanding of the differences between testing and assessment, as well as their significance in the teaching and learning process. With this foundation in mind, we are now ready to move on to the next topic.

1.2 Types of Testing

In this unit, we have placed a strong emphasis on the role of testing and assessment within the classroom, particularly for qualification purposes and to provide feedback throughout the course. Understanding the various types of assessments is crucial in making informed decisions about which methods are most suitable for meeting our educational goals and addressing specific needs.

Harmer (2015) identifies four primary reasons for testing, which correspond to different categories of tests. The first category is **Placement Tests**, which aim to ensure students are assigned to the appropriate class based on their language proficiency level. The design of these tests is rooted in the course syllabus and materials that students will engage with at their assigned level. As Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) point out, the performance on placement tests should indicate that the assigned course material is appropriately challenging, neither too easy nor too difficult. These tests provide essential diagnostic information about students' abilities, ensuring they are placed in an environment that best supports their learning.

Furthermore, placement tests assess students' comprehension and production through a variety of response formats, such as written and oral responses, open-ended questions, and gap-filling exercises (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). While standardized proficiency tests are often utilized for their practicality, course-based assessments that serve diagnostic purposes are also commonly used as placement tests, offering valuable insights into students' abilities and guiding decisions about their class placements.

As we have discussed, the information derived from placement tests plays a crucial role in assigning students to classes at appropriate levels (Hughes, 2008). Now that we have explored the purpose and function of placement tests, we will turn our attention to the next category: diagnostic tests.

Brown & Lee (2015) define **diagnostic tests** as tools used to identify specific language challenges that students may face. For example, a diagnostic test focusing on pronunciation might highlight phonological features that are difficult for learners and should be addressed in the curriculum. Likewise, a writing diagnostic test might require students to produce a writing sample, allowing the instructor to identify areas such as rhetorical features that need further focus. The insights gained from diagnostic tests are invaluable in tailoring the teaching approach to meet students' individual needs.

Harmer (2015) argues that diagnostic tests reveal students' difficulties, gaps in knowledge, and skill deficiencies. By identifying these challenges early on, instructors can take immediate action to address them and provide targeted support. Similarly, Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) suggest that the purpose of diagnostic tests is to pinpoint aspects of language that require further development, ensuring that these areas are included in the course curriculum. The results of diagnostic tests offer a more detailed and nuanced understanding of students' language skills, which can guide instruction and help address specific learning gaps.

Hughes (2008) emphasizes that diagnostic tests provide critical evidence of students' strengths and weaknesses, enabling educators to direct them to appropriate resources, practice exercises, and examples to facilitate further learning. By identifying these gaps, teachers can adjust their teaching methods and materials to better meet the needs of their students.

At this point, it is important to reflect on the differences between placement and diagnostic tests. Consider the following questions to deepen your understanding:

- Can placement and diagnostic tests serve the same purpose? Why or why not?
- Placement tests are often used to identify gaps in students' knowledge. Do you agree with this characterization? Explain your reasoning

Note: please answer these questions in a class notebook or Word document.

Another significant test type is the **achievement test**, which is designed to assess students' language and skill progress relative to the course content. One key feature of achievement tests is that they are typically created by teachers, based on the content covered in the course and the types of items students are familiar with. Achievement tests should be administered periodically (e.g., every few weeks) to evaluate how well students are mastering the material (Harmer, 2015).

In contrast, Harmer cautions against the use of new materials when designing achievement tests, as this does not provide a valid measure of students' learning progress. Teachers should ensure that achievement tests reflect the content and objectives that students have studied, thus giving them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and weaknesses. Achievement tests are intended to provide constructive feedback and should be used to reinforce learning, not highlight failures. When conducted at the end of a term, unit, or course, achievement tests can also inform decisions about potential changes to future teaching programs, especially when students perform unexpectedly poorly in certain areas.

Proficiency tests, as explained by Brown & Abeywickrama (2019), are designed to assess overall language proficiency, rather than measuring specific course content or skills. These tests evaluate global language ability and provide a comprehensive view of a learner's competence. According to Hughes (2008), proficiency tests are not tied to any particular course or curriculum and are often used to assess learners' language ability regardless of the training they have received. The primary aim of proficiency tests is to determine how well a learner can use the language in real-world contexts.

Proficiency tests may vary depending on the required level of language proficiency. For example, some tests may focus on specific fields like arts or sciences, while others, such as the Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE) or the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE), are used to demonstrate proficiency in English across a wide range of abilities.

To fully understand the distinction between achievement and proficiency tests, it's important to consider the specific objectives of each and how they can be effectively used in the EFL classroom. With the information provided in the previous sections, you are now ready to address the following questions:



According to Harmer (2015), proficiency tests are used to provide a general picture of a student's knowledge and ability. Do you agree? Explain your reasons.

We apply achievement tests when students need to obtain some kind of certificate to be admitted to a university or get a job. Do you agree? Explain your reasons.



Recommended learning activities

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. Understanding the differences between assessment and testing is essential for designing appropriate assessments to serve various purposes. Now that you are more familiar with these distinctions, please outline the key differences, characteristics, and provide some examples of each.

Assessment:

Testing:

2. As you were completing this activity, you may have reflected on the activities or methods you have used to assess EFL learners. Now, it is time to consolidate your thoughts and apply your understanding in the following activity.



According to Brown & Abeywickrama (2019), assessment is an ongoing process that involves a variety of methodological techniques. Please reflect on the following questions:

- Think about any methodological techniques you have used, or that you would consider using, to assess learners. Are they effective to help students improve learning?
- In your own words, explain the benefits that both assessment and testing bring to the teaching and learning process.



3. In addition to the previous activities, the following video, "[Assessment not Testing](#)," will be valuable in reinforcing your understanding of the topic. It offers important insights into how assessment creates opportunities for customizing instruction to better meet students' needs.



4. Remember that assessment supports teachers in guiding students to take ownership of their learning, while testing typically provides scores that do not offer the same level of insight to help tailor instruction for individual learners. Additionally, analyze the information about Assessment, teaching practices and learning processes in the following article: [Student learning assessment, so what?](#)



5. After watching the video, create two lists: one for tasks that could be used as part of assessment and another for tasks that could be used as part of testing. Reflect on which tasks you believe are most beneficial in promoting student learning.



6. Write a brief paragraph explaining why you think assessment or testing should be applied in the EFL classroom. Consider how each contributes to the learning process and how they can support both teaching and student progress.



7. Now that you are familiar with the different types of testing and their purposes, it's time to read the article "[On the development and implementation of English language placement achievement and proficiency tests](#)." This article serves as an excellent resource to deepen your understanding of the topic. The insights provided, along with the information covered in the didactic guide, will help enhance your knowledge of the various types of tests.
8. Now, please complete the following table by outlining the purposes and characteristics of the different types of tests.

Types of Tests

Type of testing	Purpose	Characteristics
Placement test		
Diagnostic test		
Achievement test		
Proficiency test		

9. After studying the first two topics of Unit 1 and completing the activities designed to reinforce your understanding, I encourage you to reflect on what you have learned. Consider how this knowledge can enhance your teaching practice, specifically in selecting and applying the appropriate tools to assess students' learning effectively.

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.





Week 2

Unit 1. Language Assessment and Testing

1.3 Purposes of Assessment

In Week 1, we focused on understanding the different types of testing, and you may now be curious about the various purposes of assessment. This is a crucial aspect of the teaching and learning process, and several researchers have explored it in depth. For example, Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) explain that assessments can serve both formal and informal purposes, as well as formative and summative functions. These distinctions are important in determining how assessment can be used to support learning and guide instructional decisions.

To deepen your understanding of these purposes and how they relate to effective teaching practices, I invite you to explore the following material. It will help clarify the roles that assessments play at different stages of learning and provide insight into how they can be strategically applied in your teaching context.

There is a wide range of resources available that can help deepen your understanding of assessment. One such resource is the video shared about [informal classroom assessment](#), which offers clear explanations and practical examples of informal classroom assessment. This type of assessment plays a vital role in providing ongoing feedback and insights into student progress without the pressure of formal testing.

While watching the video, you may have started to notice the differences between formal and informal forms of assessment. To further clarify these distinctions, I recommend watching another video that offers a clear and detailed explanation of [formal and informal evaluation](#). As you watch, I encourage you to take notes, as this will help you better analyze and



understand the key differences. These notes will serve as a useful reference for reflecting on how each type of assessment can be applied in various teaching contexts

To summarize the key differences between formal and informal assessments, it is important to recognize that both are essential components of the educational evaluation process, each serving distinct and complementary purposes. Formal assessments are structured, standardized, and typically used to measure student performance against predefined criteria. These assessments are often summative in nature, such as final exams or standardized tests, providing measurable data that can be used for grading and comparing student performance. They are designed to assess specific content or skills, often in controlled conditions, and are valuable for evaluating overall achievement at the end of a course or unit.

In contrast, informal assessments are more flexible and spontaneous. They occur throughout the learning process, providing ongoing feedback to both students and teachers. Examples include classroom observations, discussions, and quick quizzes. Informal assessments focus on understanding student progress in real-time and are not usually linked to grades or specific standards. They allow teachers to adapt their instruction based on individual needs, offering immediate feedback that supports student growth.

While formal assessments provide concrete data for evaluating student achievement, informal assessments offer insight into the learning process and help guide instructional decisions. Both types are crucial for creating a comprehensive approach to student evaluation, combining objective measures with personalized, ongoing feedback.

There is a significant body of literature that explores the various purposes of assessment. For instance, the article "[Annex 1. A conversation analytic investigation into L2 classroom interaction and informal formative assessment](#)" by Dasking (2017) explores both informal formative assessment and classroom interaction, while also addressing formal assessment. In light of this, I encourage you to read and critically analyze the article "[Formative](#)

[Assessment as a Component of the Future English Teacher Training](#)." After reading, please generate some thoughtful questions related to the topic and use the information you've learned to provide well-supported answers

You already understand the differences between formal and informal assessments, and now it is time to analyze the concepts of **formative and summative assessment**. These two types of assessment serve distinct purposes in the educational process.

According to Hughes (2008), **formative assessment** is an ongoing process that allows teachers to monitor their students' progress throughout the learning journey. It plays a crucial role in determining the extent to which students have mastered the content they are expected to learn. The information gathered from formative assessments is invaluable, as it not only helps teachers adjust their instructional plans but also forms the foundation for providing timely and constructive feedback to students. Examples of formative assessment include informal tests, quizzes, class discussions, or even classroom observations. These tools give teachers the opportunity to assess students' understanding and make adjustments to their teaching strategies as necessary. Additionally, Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) suggest that formative assessment can involve providing comments, offering suggestions, or highlighting errors in students' work, all of which offer constructive feedback aimed at improving their language skills.

On the other hand, summative assessment is used to measure what students have achieved by the end of an instructional period. Unlike formative assessment, which focuses on the learning process, summative assessment evaluates students' overall achievement and is typically applied at the end of a term, semester, or academic year. According to Hughes (2008), summative assessments are formal evaluations that summarize students' learning outcomes. They provide a final measure of how well students have met the learning objectives of a course or program. Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) argue that summative assessments serve as a summary of the learning

process, reflecting how effectively students have accomplished the set goals. Common examples of summative assessments include mid-term exams, final exams, end-of-year tests, and general proficiency exams.

While formative assessments are ongoing and provide insights into students' progress to inform teaching decisions, summative assessments provide a final evaluation of students' overall learning achievements. Both types are crucial for creating a balanced approach to assessment, offering teachers the information they need to adjust their teaching methods while also measuring students' final accomplishments.

Now that you have a solid understanding of formative and summative assessments, I encourage you to explore the next topic to deepen your knowledge further.

1.4 Alternatives in Assessment

It is widely acknowledged that reading provides access to a wealth of knowledge, and there is a vast selection of academic resources that can help deepen our understanding of various topics. With this in mind, the first activity I recommend for studying this topic is to carefully analyze the article titled [EFL Primary School Teachers' Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills in Alternative Assessment](#). This study explores the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of female EFL primary school teachers in relation to alternative assessment. Although the research focuses on primary school educators, the insights into alternative assessment are highly relevant for understanding its significance and practical applications in the classroom.

The authors highlight various examples of alternative assessment, such as oral questioning, teacher observations, student self- and peer-assessment, role-plays, oral presentations, and portfolios. These approaches offer a flexible, more personalized way of evaluating student learning. To further enhance your understanding of alternative assessment, I also encourage you to watch the video [alternatives in assessment](#) that provides a clear illustration of these assessment methods in action.

Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) propose a range of alternative assessment methods that emphasize a more holistic and continuous approach to evaluating student progress. One such method is **portfolio assessment**, which involves students gathering samples of their work over time. This allows both students and teachers to track growth, reflect on strengths and areas for improvement, and see progress in a more comprehensive manner. Portfolios can include various types of work, such as essays, projects, and even drafts, providing a rich and dynamic view of student learning.

Self-assessment is another key alternative method, in which students assess their own learning by reflecting on their achievements, goals, and areas where they need improvement. This type of assessment promotes independence, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of one's learning process. It encourages students to take responsibility for their own progress, fostering a sense of ownership and self-regulation in their educational journey.

Once you have analyzed portfolios and self-assessment as alternative assessment methods, I highly recommend watching the following video to gain a deeper understanding of how [Student Portfolios and Self-Assessments can be effectively implemented in the EFL classroom.](#)

- **Journals** are also highlighted as an alternative assessment tool. By keeping a journal, students can regularly write about their learning experiences, thoughts, and challenges. This serves as both a personal record of their development and a way to express ideas and track learning over time. Journals are particularly useful for fostering self-reflection and for teachers to gain insights into how students are processing their learning.
- **Teacher observations** play a vital role in alternative assessment, as they offer real-time insights into student performance and engagement. Through observing students during class activities, discussions, and presentations, teachers can assess not only the outcomes of learning but also the process. Observations help teachers to measure how students are interacting with the material, working in groups, and applying their skills, providing immediate feedback and identifying areas where support may be needed.

- Finally, **conferences** between teachers and students are a valuable tool for alternative assessment. These one-on-one meetings offer personalized opportunities for feedback and discussion. Teachers can provide targeted advice, discuss student performance in detail, and set specific learning goals. Conferences also give students a chance to voice concerns, clarify misunderstandings, and gain guidance on how to improve. This method strengthens the teacher-student relationship and supports individualized learning.

These alternative assessment methods proposed by Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) focus on ongoing, personalized feedback, rather than solely on summative testing. They promote active student involvement in the assessment process, encourage self-reflection, and provide teachers with a deeper understanding of students' strengths and areas for improvement. These methods are crucial for fostering a more student-centered approach to learning and assessment.

1.5 Standards-based assessment and standardized tests

Standards or benchmarks play a crucial role in language assessment, as they provide teachers with clear guidelines on how to help learners achieve specific performance levels. Several countries, including China, England, and Japan, have adopted standards-based education, and this approach is also gaining traction in Europe and the United States. The use of standards in education is highly beneficial because they establish clear expectations for what students should know and accomplish at various stages of their learning journey.

This topic is both relevant and significant, and it warrants further exploration due to its impact on the teaching and learning process. To deepen your understanding of standards-based education, I encourage you to examine the provided material, as it offers valuable insights into the Common European Framework of Reference [the CEFR levels](#). The CEFR framework is instrumental in fostering more communicative foreign language classrooms for both teachers and students, creating a shared understanding of language proficiency.

In addition to the CEFR levels, the information from the Council of Europe includes links to other related topics, such as the Reference Level Descriptors, Common Reference Levels: Global Scale, Self-Assessment Grid, and Qualitative Aspects of Spoken Language Use. I suggest you study [the CEFR levels](#) to further enrich your knowledge and enhance your approach to language teaching and assessment.

As you may have noticed, this topic is highly significant and deserves careful attention. To deepen your understanding, there are several valuable resources available. For instance, I recommend watching the videos [Standards- Based Assessment for ESL Curriculum](#) and [Standardized Testing for Second Language Acquisition](#), as they offer in-depth information and clear, practical examples that will enhance your comprehension of the subject.



After studying the resources provided for this topic, I suggest to analyze The TOEFL and IELTS proficiency tests and research about their main characteristics.



Recommended learning activities

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. Read the article [Understanding formative and summative assessment for EFL teachers: Theoretical reflections on assessment for learning](#) in Unit 1, Section 1.3 will provide you with a clearer understanding of the differences between formative and summative assessments.
2. As you read the article, I recommend highlighting or underlining key points, as this will help reinforce your understanding and serve as an effective study strategy for better grasping the material.
3. Now that you have learned about the four purposes of assessment, it is time to reflect on their differences and the role they play in the teaching and learning process. I encourage you to write down your thoughts as

this is an effective strategy for consolidating your learning and reinforcing your understanding of the material.

4. The information you analyzed in the article [EFL Primary School Teachers' Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills in Alternative Assessment](#) and the video on [alternatives in assessment](#) will enhance your knowledge of the diverse assessment methods that can be incorporated into the EFL classroom.
5. Now, I invite you to use this information to create a concept map that organizes the key ideas you have studied. If you prefer, you can explore online tools such as MIRO, Lucidchart, or Canva to create your map digitally. Alternatively, you may choose to draw your concept map by hand using paper and pencil.
6. This time, I suggest using a KWL table to deepen your understanding of standards-based assessment. While this table is often used for reading activities, it can also be applied effectively to audiovisual materials in the classroom.
7. Before watching the video [Standards Based Assessment](#), brainstorm any ideas or prior knowledge you have on the topic and record them in the "K" column (What you know).

- a. In the "W" column (What you want to know), list any questions you have or aspects of the topic you would like to explore further.
- b. After watching the video, fill in the "L" column (What you learned) with the new information you've gained about standards-based assessment.

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

By using the KWL table, you can track your initial knowledge, identify areas of curiosity, and capture what you have learned to solidify your understanding of this topic.

8. After studying the content proposed for Unit 1, it is advisable to take the time to self-assess your understanding of the topics covered. This will allow you to reflect on what you have learned, identify areas where



you may need further clarification, and ensure that you have a solid grasp of the material before moving forward. Self-assessment is a valuable tool for reinforcing your learning and promoting deeper comprehension.



Self-assessment 1

1. _____ is a formal, systematic (usually paper-and-pencil) procedure used to gather information about student's achievement.
 - a. A test.
 - b. An assessment.
 - c. An ongoing process.

2. A variety of evidence-eliciting techniques and activities used to evaluate students' progress and growth on a daily basis is called:
 - a. Testing.
 - b. Assessment.
 - c. Evaluation.

3. The primary role of _____ test is to determine whether course objectives have been met -and appropriate knowledge and skills acquired- by the end of a given period of instruction.
 - a. A placement test.
 - b. An achievement test.
 - c. A proficiency test.

4. Formal assessments are _____.
 - a. Used to evaluate students in the process of forming their competencies and skills.
 - b. Exercises or procedures specifically designed to tap into a storehouse of skills or knowledge.



- c. Incidental unplanned comments and responses, along with coaching and impromptu feedback to the student.

5. Informal assessment _____.

- a. Is nonjudgmental and ultimate decisions about students' performance are not made. Here, performance is elicited without recording results.
- b. Constitutes a set of procedures constructed to give the teacher and student an appraisal of student achievement.
- c. Measures what a student has learned by looking back and taking stock of how well that student has accomplished objectives.



Self-assess your understanding by writing in the letter of the information on the right that matches the type of assessment or test on the left.

6	___ Informal assessment	a	Uses tasks that are meaningful, engaging, and authentic, they also call for integrated language skills.
7	___ Formative assessment	b	Focuses on the ongoing development of the learners' language.
8	___ Proficiency tests	c	Look to the future situation of language use without necessarily any reference to the previous process of teaching.
9	___ Diagnostic tests	c	Identify aspects of a language that students need to develop or that a course should include.
10	___ Performance-based assessment	d	Includes unplanned comments, responses, and impromptu feedback.

Answer key



Week 3

Unit 2. Using Classroom-Based Language Assessment

Bachman & Dambok (2017) share some questions that teachers generally ask before assessing students. These questions are:

- When and how often should I assess my students?
- What aspects of my students' language ability should I assess?
- What kinds of assessment tasks or items should I use and how many should I include in the assessment?
- How will I score my students' responses?
- How many points should the assessment be worth?
- How will I make sure that the results of my assessment are consistent and provide meaningful information about my students' language ability?

As we can see, teachers' concerns about classroom assessment relate to the issues they typically consider when evaluating students, as reflected in the preceding questions. Interestingly, the authors suggest that while these questions appear to address distinct aspects of assessment, they are, in fact, interconnected. In this regard, Bachman and Dambok (2017) highlight several considerations essential for addressing these questions effectively. For instance, when selecting assessment tasks, it is important to focus on the specific aspects of students' language abilities that you aim to evaluate. Similarly, determining when and how often to assess students requires consideration of how the information gathered will be utilized.

The authors argue that addressing these questions in isolation does not lead to an integrated approach to student assessment.

To address this, they propose a framework that emphasizes the beneficial consequences of assessment. This approach encourages reflection on the extent to which an assessment is suitable for enhancing teaching practices or supporting student learning. It also links the intended beneficial outcomes with



both *what* (areas of language ability) and *how* (types of assessment tasks) you assess. As a result, the information derived from these assessments serves to guide instructional activities and facilitate students' learning more effectively.

With this information in mind, it is time to begin the study of this unit.

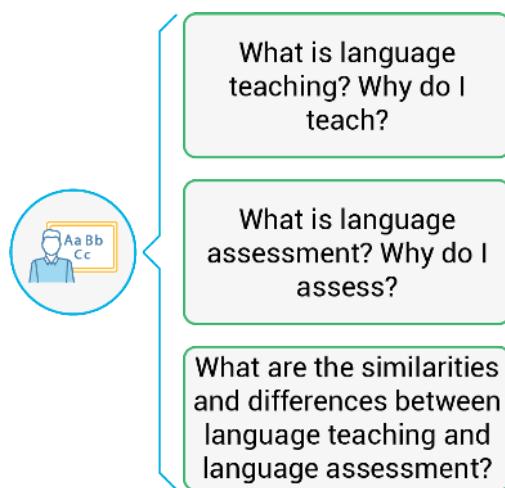
2.1 Language teaching and classroom-based language assessment

Bachman and Dambok (2017) propose three key questions to help educators understand how language assessment operates as an integral component of language teaching.

Let's take a closer look at the questions presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Language teaching vs *Language assessment*



Note. Adapted from *Language teaching and classroom-based language assessment* (p. 8), by Bachman, L., & Dambock, B., 2017, Oxford.

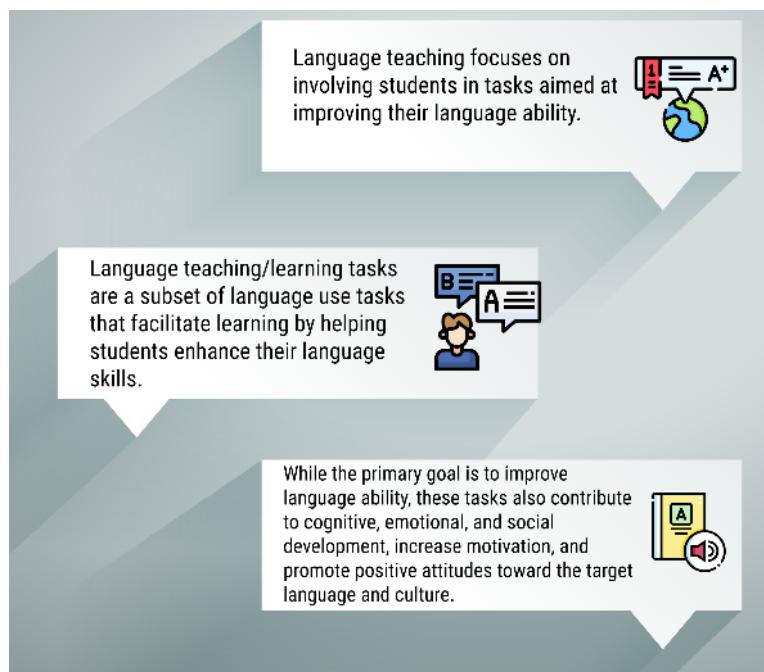
The previous figure shows the questions EFL teachers make to analyze the differences between teaching and assessment.

After examining the information presented in this figure, I encourage you to explore the topic of **Language Teaching** and **Classroom-Based Language Assessment**, focusing on their similarities and differences. This comparison will help deepen your understanding of how these practices complement each other in supporting language learning.

According to Bachman and Dambok (2017), in a language classroom, both teaching and assessment involve engaging students in tasks that require the use of language. These tasks, known as language use tasks, are activities designed to achieve specific goals or objectives. The authors highlight some key points on **language teaching** and learning tasks, for example,

Figure 2

The Importance of Tasks in Language Teaching and Learning



Note. Bachman and Dambok. 2017.

On the other hand, Bachman and Dambok (2017) suggest that in the classroom, **language assessment** involves presenting students with tasks requiring language use, with the primary aim of gathering information about

their language abilities—specifically, what they have learned and how well they can perform. These tasks, often called assessment tasks or items, collect samples of students' language performance.

The term **language assessment** can refer to:

1. A specific assessment: A collection of various tasks or items.
2. The general process: Collecting and analyzing language performance to evaluate students' abilities.

A **classroom-based language assessment** is designed or implemented by teachers within the classroom environment. Language testers often use terms like "assessment," "measurement," and "test" interchangeably, though some make distinctions between them.

Importantly, language assessment is viewed as a process. Administering an assessment is only the initial step in using the results to interpret students' abilities and make informed decisions. These decisions aim to achieve positive outcomes for students, teachers, schools, and other stakeholders.

Although **language teaching** and **assessment** have distinct purposes, they are closely interconnected and mutually informative. To illustrate the reciprocal relationship between language teaching and language assessment, let's analyze the information in the following table:

Table 1

Reciprocal relationship between language assessment and language teaching.

Assessment informs teaching:	Teaching informs assessment:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many students struggle with verb tenses during their speaking.• This feedback prompts the teacher to revisit and emphasize the use of verb tenses in future lessons.• The teacher incorporates more exercises and practice on this specific area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The teacher adapts the next assessment to focus more on the correct use of verb tenses in spoken contexts.• Ensures that the instruction aligns with what students are expected to demonstrate in their communication skills.

Note. This table shows the reciprocal relationship between language teaching and language assessment. Toro, L., 2024.

I recommend analyzing the following resources to deepen your understanding of classroom-based language assessment:

- [Teaching and Testing Are Interrelated. But to What Extent?](#) - This article explores the relationship between teaching and testing, offering valuable insights into their interdependence.
- [A Contrastive Analysis of Classroom-Based Language Assessments](#) - This resource serves as an excellent guide to understanding classroom-based assessment through a comparative perspective.
- [Bringing Classroom-Based Assessment into the EFL classroom](#) - This article highlights practical ways to incorporate classroom-based assessment into EFL teaching.

These resources will not only expand your knowledge of classroom-based assessment but also encourage reflection on how your understanding of language assessment has evolved through studying this topic.

While language teaching and language assessment serve distinct purposes, they are interconnected and inform each other. According to Bachman and Dambok (2017), language teaching influences classroom-based language assessment in two significant ways, in the definition of the assessment areas and in the designing of assessment tasks:

- 1. Defining Assessment Areas:** The aspects of language ability you choose to assess are guided by the content or learning objectives of the language instruction.

An example of **language ability** is **listening comprehension**—the ability to understand spoken language in various contexts. For instance, in a language class focusing on **ordering food at a restaurant**, a learning objective could be for students to understand how to follow a conversation between a server and a customer.

Assessment Areas

The assessment would include skills such as:

- **Recognizing key vocabulary** related to dining (e.g., "appetizer," "specials," "check").
- **Understanding specific details** (e.g., menu options, prices, or dietary preferences).
- **Inferring the purpose of a question or statement** (e.g., the server asking "Are you ready to order?" or confirming "Would you like anything else?").

- 2. Designing Assessment Tasks:** Assessment tasks are often modeled on the teaching and learning tasks used in the classroom.

Moreover, assessment informs teaching by providing valuable insights. The information gathered from assessments enables teachers to make targeted adjustments to their teaching methods and to identify content areas that require review or further emphasis.

With a solid understanding of the interplay between language teaching and assessment, you are now ready to move on to the next topic.

2.2 Decisions made on the basis of classroom-based assessments

In the previous topic, you explored the concept of language assessment. Now, we will focus on how the information gathered from assessments plays a crucial role in decision-making. According to Bachman and Damböck (2017), teachers make decisions continuously in the classroom. These include choices about materials, learning tasks, when to review content with the class, and when to progress to the next lesson. The authors also highlight that teachers may adjust materials or teaching strategies to better meet students' needs and provide constructive feedback. Furthermore, the information derived from assessments of students' language abilities is essential for making informed and effective decisions.

Bachman and Damböck (2017) claim that the decisions you make as a teacher based on classroom assessments can be categorized by their purpose, typically as either formative or summative.

Regarding **formative decisions**, they aim to enhance teaching and learning by prompting changes in instructional strategies, learning tasks, materials, or the syllabus. These decisions may involve providing students with feedback or making adjustments to better meet their needs. They can be made before, during, or after instruction. For example, after a unit test, you might analyze the results to identify areas where students need improvement and adapt your teaching approach accordingly.

Summative decisions, on the other hand, focus on evaluating students' progress for purposes such as advancement or certification. Advancement decisions ensure students are prepared to succeed at the next level of instruction, while certification decisions verify that students have achieved the required level of language proficiency. These decisions are typically made after teaching and learning processes are complete and might involve grouping students based on their performance or determining whether they pass or fail a course.

While both types of decisions can occur at different stages of the teaching process, the distinction lies in their purpose—formative decisions support ongoing improvement, while summative decisions evaluate and classify outcomes.



After examining formative and summative assessments, it is recommended to analyze the following video [How can assessment support learning? A Learning Oriented Approach](#) to help you learn how to make informed decisions.

Given this, the involvement of various stakeholders in the EFL classroom directly influences the types of decisions teachers make. Decisions regarding teaching strategies, materials, and assessment approaches must consider the needs and expectations of students, parents, administrators, and other stakeholders to ensure effective learning outcomes.

In the EFL classroom, stakeholders are individuals or groups who play a role in the teaching and learning process. Students are the primary beneficiaries, as their engagement and progress are essential to achieving language proficiency. Teachers are key stakeholders responsible for planning lessons, delivering instruction, and assessing student performance while providing feedback and support. Parents or guardians often contribute by encouraging learning at home and ensuring students have the necessary resources. School administrators oversee the curriculum, allocate resources, and support professional development for teachers. Policymakers influence EFL programs by setting educational standards and guidelines, while employers and industry representatives highlight the language skills needed in real-world contexts, shaping curriculum design. Additionally, educational material providers, such as publishers and app developers, supply the tools and resources that facilitate teaching and learning. Effective collaboration among these stakeholders ensures a comprehensive and successful EFL learning experience.

Decisions made in educational contexts can have varying levels of impact on stakeholders. High-stakes decisions, such as determining the qualifications students earn upon completing school, can significantly influence their future

opportunities, including admission to higher education or access to desired jobs. These decisions also affect teachers, schools, and families, making mistakes in such decisions costly and challenging to rectify.

In contrast, low-stakes decisions have minimal consequences for stakeholders. For instance, providing feedback on pronunciation improvement or adjusting teaching tasks based on a classroom quiz carries low risk and is easily reversible.

Between these extremes are medium-stakes decisions, which have moderate importance. Examples include placing students into appropriate levels within a language program or deciding if they are ready to advance in a course. Understanding the stakes involved helps educators approach decisions thoughtfully, recognizing their potential impact on students and other stakeholders.

2.3 Modes of classroom-based assessments

Bachman and Dambok (2017) present a framework that highlights two distinct modes of classroom-based assessment: implicit and explicit.

The implicit mode of assessment typically occurs within the flow of everyday classroom interaction. In this mode, a teacher may ask a question during a lesson, and a student responds. The teacher's subsequent actions may vary depending on the quality and accuracy of the answer. For instance, if the answer is incorrect or incomplete, the teacher might offer corrective feedback, provide an explanation for clarity, or engage other students in the discussion by asking them to contribute an answer. This dynamic mode allows for real-time formative assessment, as teachers gather informal feedback from students as they engage with the content, and decisions regarding the next steps in teaching are made instantly.

In contrast, the explicit mode of assessment is more structured and planned. In this mode, assessments are clearly communicated to students, often in advance, so they are aware of the purpose and expectations. For example, at

the start of a new unit, a teacher might inform the students that a test will be administered at the end of the lesson or unit. This transparency ensures that students understand the assessment's role in their learning process, and it gives them an opportunity to prepare accordingly. Explicit assessments are often summative in nature, such as quizzes, exams, or projects, and they are used to gather data that measures the extent of student learning or mastery of a particular topic or skill.

The distinction between implicit and explicit modes of classroom-based assessment provides valuable insight into how teachers assess student learning in various contexts. Implicit assessment is often more flexible and organic, taking place in everyday interactions and fostering ongoing feedback, while explicit assessment provides a clear structure for evaluating students' performance and progress. Both modes play complementary roles in the assessment process, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of student development and helping teachers adapt their instructional strategies to meet learners' needs.

By understanding these modes, educators can better integrate assessment into their teaching practices, ensuring that students are both supported and held accountable throughout their learning journey.

2.4 Using classroom-based language assessment

Bachman and Damböck (2017) emphasize that classroom-based assessments play a fundamental role in evaluating students' language abilities and guiding decision-making processes. To fully grasp classroom-based language assessment, it is essential to explore its foundational principles and practical applications. A deeper investigation into how these assessments are designed, implemented, and interpreted can illuminate their primary purpose: to support learning and inform teaching practices effectively.

The authors also highlight the cyclical relationship between **Assessment**, **Decisions**, and **Consequences** in classroom-based language assessment.

With respect to assessment, it involves gathering information about students' learning. The data collected could come from various sources such as tests, assignments, observations, or self-assessments. The aim is to understand students' abilities, progress, and areas for improvement.

As for decisions, the information obtained from assessments is used to make informed decisions. These decisions can be:

- **Formative:** Supporting ongoing learning through feedback, identifying gaps, and guiding instructional strategies.
- **Summative:** Evaluating students' performance at the end of a learning period for purposes like certification, grading, or advancement.

As a result of consequences, the decisions made lead to tangible outcomes, such as:

- **Improved teaching and learning:** Adjusting instructional practices to meet students' needs more effectively.
- **Advancement or certification:** Providing students with recognition for their achievements or determining their readiness for subsequent learning stages.

Building on this understanding, in language classrooms, assessments are conducted to gather information about students' performance, which serves as an indicator of their language ability. This information is used to make decisions that can improve teaching and learning outcomes. The process of **language assessment use** involves interpreting students' performance to understand their abilities and utilizing these interpretations to guide decisions. These decisions are intended to produce positive outcomes for various stakeholders, including students, educators, schools, and related institutions (Bachman and Damböck, 2017).

- The ultimate purpose of language assessment is to:
- Collect language samples from students that reflect their abilities.
- Use these samples to make informed decisions about their learning progress.

- Generate beneficial outcomes, such as improved instructional strategies, enhanced learning experiences, or appropriate certifications.

In classroom-based assessments, the goal is to ensure that decisions informed by assessment data lead to constructive and meaningful improvements that positively impact students and the broader educational context. This holistic approach emphasizes the alignment of assessment with learning objectives and beneficial consequences.

A classroom-based assessment implies the link of the four claims in the AUA,

Now it is time to apply your knowledge by completing the activity outlined below.



Recommended learning activity

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activity that have been proposed below:

Analyze the given scenarios and then answer the questions that follow.

- **Scenario 1:** A group of students consistently scores low on quizzes despite showing engagement during class discussions.
- **Scenario 2:** An instructor notices that students are struggling with a specific unit, and their final project lacks depth.

1. What factors contributed to the students' difficulties in learning?

Scenario 1:

Scenario 2:



- 2. How can you involve students in the assessment process to enhance their ownership of learning?**

Scenario 1:



Scenario 2:



- 3. What specific formative assessment strategies could be implemented to monitor student progress?**

Scenario 1:





Scenario 2:



4. How might you adapt your teaching methods based on the assessment results?

Scenario 1:



Scenario 2:



Now that we have covered the topics proposed for week 3, we can move forward to explore the materials and discussions planned for week 4.

Note. Please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 4

Unit 2. Using Classroom-Based Language Assessment

2.5 Connections in implementing classroom-based language assessment

According to Bachman and Damböck (2017), the process of assessment in language learning involves a series of interconnected steps that link students' performance on assessment tasks to broader educational outcomes. These steps ensure that assessments are not simply tools for measuring proficiency but are also integral to informing teaching strategies, supporting learning, and driving academic progress. By understanding how assessments move from evidence collection to meaningful decisions and consequences, teachers and students can fully appreciate their role in fostering educational growth.

The process begins with **students' performance on assessment tasks**. Students engage in specific tasks designed to measure their language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing, or listening activities. These tasks are carefully created to collect evidence of students' abilities and provide a starting point for the assessment process. Whether the tasks involve a written essay, a listening comprehension exercise, or a spoken presentation, they serve as the foundation for gathering information about what students know and can do in the target language.

Once the tasks are completed, the next step is the generation of **assessment records**. These records may include numerical scores, descriptive feedback, or a combination of both, depending on the type of assessment. Scores provide quantitative evidence of performance, while feedback offers a qualitative understanding of strengths and areas needing improvement. This step is crucial because it translates students' performance into concrete data that can be analyzed and interpreted.

The **interpretation of assessment records** follows as teachers analyze the data to form judgments about students' language proficiency. At this stage, teachers evaluate what the scores or descriptions reveal about students' abilities, including their strengths, weaknesses, and overall progress. These interpretations go beyond the numbers or descriptions themselves; they provide meaningful insights that help teachers understand students' current levels and their specific needs.

Based on these interpretations, teachers make **informed decisions** that aim to support students' learning and growth. These decisions may involve adjusting teaching strategies to address identified weaknesses, providing additional learning support, or determining whether students are ready to progress to the next level. For example, if a student demonstrates difficulty with listening comprehension, the teacher may incorporate more listening practice into future lessons. Such decisions ensure that the information gathered through assessment is used to benefit students directly.

The final stage in this process is the realization of **consequences**, which are the outcomes of the decisions made. These consequences can have a significant impact on students' learning experiences and overall academic growth. For instance, students may receive targeted feedback, additional practice opportunities, or recognition for their achievements. In some cases, learning plans or teaching strategies may be adapted to better align with students' needs, ensuring that they are on a clear path toward improvement and success.

At the core of this process is the concept of **assessment use**, represented in the upward arrow in the figure. This highlights the ultimate purpose of assessment: to inform teaching and learning decisions in a way that positively impacts educational outcomes. Assessments, therefore, are not merely about assigning grades or measuring performance; they are about using evidence to make meaningful decisions that help students achieve their goals.

As it can be seen, the assessment process in language learning is a dynamic and interconnected series of steps that begins with students' performance on tasks and culminates in decisions and consequences that shape their learning journey. By understanding how assessment records are collected, interpreted, and applied, teachers can ensure that assessments lead to positive outcomes. When used effectively, assessments become powerful tools for guiding instruction, supporting student growth, and achieving broader educational goals.

2.6 Consequences: Why do we need to assess our students?

Bachman and Dambock (2017) emphasize the importance of using assessment as a tool to bring about beneficial consequences for both teachers and learners. To achieve this, it is essential to clearly define the purpose of the assessment and identify the potential effects it may have on all stakeholders involved.

A thoughtful approach begins with asking critical questions that guide the assessment process. One of the most fundamental questions to consider is: *Why do I need to assess my students?* Understanding the purpose of the assessment helps clarify its role in the learning process, whether it is to monitor progress, diagnose areas of difficulty, provide feedback, or evaluate overall achievement.

Additionally, it is crucial to consider *what beneficial consequences the assessment aims to bring about*. For example, will it motivate students to engage more actively in their learning? Will it provide teachers with valuable insights to improve instructional strategies? These intended outcomes should align with the overall goals of the teaching and learning process.

Another key consideration is: *Who will be affected by these consequences?* The effects of assessment extend beyond individual students to include teachers, parents, and even the broader educational community. Recognizing the stakeholders involved ensures that the assessment design is inclusive and equitable.

It is important to reflect on *the intended quality of these consequences*. High-quality consequences should contribute to meaningful learning experiences, foster a supportive learning environment, and promote fairness and transparency in evaluating student performance. By setting clear intentions and designing assessments with these considerations in mind, educators can maximize the positive impact of their evaluations.

Intended consequences refer to the effects that the test developer or user aims to bring about for various stakeholders involved in the assessment process. These consequences arise as a direct result of the decisions made based on the assessment outcomes. According to Bachman and Dambock (2017), assessments should be designed not only to evaluate learners' abilities but also to foster meaningful, positive changes for all stakeholders, including students, teachers, and even the broader educational community.

When assessments are purposefully designed with clear goals in mind, they can lead to intended consequences that align with the overarching objectives of teaching and learning. For instance, they may inspire students to engage more deeply with the material, enable teachers to refine their instructional strategies, or support administrators in making informed decisions about curriculum development. However, achieving these outcomes requires careful consideration of the assessment's purpose, its alignment with instructional activities, and its fairness and inclusivity.

The intended consequences must also reflect a commitment to quality. This means ensuring that the outcomes promote fairness, enhance learning experiences, and build trust among stakeholders. For example, if an assessment is designed to provide formative feedback, its intended consequences might include improved student understanding of their progress and actionable insights for teachers to adapt their teaching methods.

Bachman and Dambock (2017) highlight the importance of identifying and describing the potential consequences of an assessment when planning, developing, and using it effectively. These consequences, both intended and unintended, can have a profound impact on various aspects of the educational process, particularly teaching and learning. One of the key concepts they discuss in this context is washback.

Washback refers to the influence that assessments have on the teaching and learning process. Specifically, it describes how the design, content, and focus of an assessment can affect not only what students learn but also how teachers approach their instruction. This phenomenon can be either positive or negative, depending on how assessments are structured and the degree to which they align with educational goals.

To deepen your understanding of how to promote positive washback, I highly recommend watching the video "[Promoting Positive Washback](#)" by Ethan Mansur. It provides valuable insights into strategies that can enhance the impact of assessment on learning.

When assessments are aligned with clear, meaningful learning objectives, washback can have a positive effect. For instance, if a language test emphasizes communication skills, teachers may focus more on interactive, communicative activities, which helps students develop real-world language abilities. This kind of alignment encourages a deeper, more holistic approach to teaching and learning, promoting skills that are relevant to the students' needs and future use of the language.

On the other hand, negative washback can occur when assessments focus narrowly on certain types of knowledge or skills that do not reflect the broader goals of language acquisition. For example, if a language assessment primarily tests grammar or vocabulary in isolation, teachers may prioritize teaching these areas over more practical or communicative aspects of the language. This can lead to a limited, test-driven curriculum that fails to prepare students for real-world language use and diminishes the overall learning experience.

Therefore, understanding the potential washback of an assessment is crucial for educators when designing and using tests. They must carefully consider the consequences of their assessment choices to ensure they promote meaningful, well-rounded learning outcomes. Bachman and Dambock (2017) suggest that to achieve positive washback, assessments should be designed to reflect the broader goals of the curriculum and support the development of a wide range of skills. This way, both teaching and learning can be positively influenced by the assessment process.

Washback plays a critical role in shaping the educational environment. By being mindful of the potential consequences of assessments, educators can harness washback to enhance the teaching and learning experience, ensuring that assessments not only measure student progress but also foster meaningful, long-term learning.

Another important aspect of assessment proposed by Bachman and Dambock (2017) is the decisions that arise from its outcomes, which are intended to lead to beneficial consequences for students, teachers, and the learning process as a whole. For example, one key decision could be to provide feedback to students. When assessment results are used to give constructive, specific, and actionable feedback, students can gain a clearer understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. This, in turn, enables them to focus their efforts more effectively, ultimately improving their language abilities. Feedback also helps build students' confidence by showing them the progress they have made and guiding them toward achievable next steps. Since feedback plays a crucial role in helping students enhance their learning, it is highly advisable to watch and carefully analyze the information presented in

the video "[Giving Feedback on Activities](#)." This video offers valuable insights into effective feedback strategies that can positively influence students' progress.

Another decision might involve making changes in instruction. For instance, if assessment results reveal that many students are struggling with a particular grammatical structure or skill, a teacher may choose to adjust their teaching strategies or allocate additional time to that area. This decision directly contributes to enhancing the quality of instruction, making it more targeted and responsive to the learners' needs. As a result, students benefit from more effective learning experiences and are better supported in their language development journey.

Both of these decisions—providing feedback and adapting instruction—illustrate how assessments can serve as tools for promoting beneficial consequences. They not only help students improve their language abilities but also empower teachers to refine their teaching practices. This symbiotic relationship fosters a more effective and dynamic learning environment where both teaching and learning processes are continuously optimized.

By making decisions that prioritize actionable outcomes, educators ensure that assessments are not just a means of measuring performance but also a powerful mechanism for driving growth, enhancing engagement, and supporting long-term success in language learning.



Recommended learning activities

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. After reviewing the information provided, take a moment to reflect on how classroom-based language assessment can be effectively implemented. Consider the following questions as you explore the connections and practical applications. "What is the primary purpose of

assessment in language learning, according to Bachman and Damböck (2017)?

- How do assessment tasks serve as the foundation for the assessment process?
- Why is the interpretation of assessment records critical in supporting students' learning?
- What decisions can teachers make based on the analysis of students' assessment records?
- How can the outcomes of the assessment process impact students' academic growth?



Now that you have a solid understanding of the connections involved in implementing classroom-based language assessment, you are ready to begin studying the consequences of assessment practices.

2. Dear students, after studying the topic Consequences, it is time to analyze a scenario involving assessment decisions and their consequences as a way to demonstrate your understanding of the relationship between decisions, intended consequences, and their impact on

Read the following scenario:

A teacher conducts a midterm language assessment and identifies that many students are struggling with listening comprehension skills. Based on this information, the teacher decides to:

- Provide detailed feedback to each student on their listening strengths and weaknesses.
- Incorporate more listening practice activities into the upcoming lessons.

Based on the scenario, answer the following questions:

- What are the intended consequences of the teacher's decision to provide feedback to students?

- How might incorporating additional listening practice activities benefit the students?
 - Who are the stakeholders affected by these decisions, and how are they impacted?
3. After answering the given questions, refer to the concepts discussed by Bachman and Dambock (2017). How does this scenario illustrate the importance of aligning assessment decisions with intended beneficial consequences?

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 5

Unit 2. Using Classroom-Based Language Assessment

2.7 Decisions: When do we need to assess our students?

According to Bachman and Damböck (2017), the primary purpose of assessment is to collect information that aids in making informed decisions. This means that assessments should be conducted whenever there is a need to decide on actions that impact teaching or learning outcomes.

In other words, assessment is not a standalone activity; it is integral to the teaching and learning process. Students should be assessed when decisions need to be made about their progress, areas of improvement, or readiness to move to the next stage. These decisions, known as *intended decisions*, involve specific actions by the test developer or user aimed at promoting beneficial outcomes for students, aligning with broader educational objectives.

For example, teachers can use assessment results to offer constructive feedback, helping students understand their strengths and areas needing improvement. After a speaking task, a teacher might highlight a student's effective use of vocabulary while pointing out areas for growth, such as pronunciation or fluency.

Additionally, assessment results can guide students to review specific learning objectives they have not yet mastered. This may involve targeted practice in areas such as grammar, listening comprehension, or writing. Encouraging students to apply these skills outside the classroom, such as through conversations, journaling, or engaging with media in the target language, reinforces their learning and promotes language use in real-life contexts.

By focusing on the intended decisions and their practical implications, assessment serves as a tool for continuous improvement, guiding both teachers and students toward achieving their learning goals.

Additionally, Bachman and Damböck (2017) highlight formative and summative decisions as two essential components of the educational process that guide instructional planning and assessment. While both aim to support student learning, they differ in their timing, purpose, and the role they play in shaping teaching strategies. Understanding these decisions helps educators determine how to effectively assess and improve both teaching and learning outcomes.

Formative decisions are aimed at improving both instruction and learning by continuously monitoring and adjusting teaching strategies. These decisions involve making changes in teaching methods, learning tasks, materials, or the syllabus to better suit students' needs. Formative decisions can be made before, during, or after the teaching and learning processes, providing flexibility to address emerging challenges or opportunities for improvement. Their primary goal is to enhance the learning experience by adapting instruction to meet the diverse needs of students.

On the other hand, summative decisions are focused on assessing whether students have benefited from instruction and are at the appropriate level of proficiency. These decisions typically involve classifying students into groups based on their achievements or performance. Summative decisions are made after the teaching and learning processes, serving as a final evaluation of student progress and instructional effectiveness. They provide a way to determine the overall success of the teaching approach and the extent to which learning objectives have been met.

After analyzing the information on decision-making, please review the following [Presentation 1. Decisions: When do we need to assess our students?](#) It provides a visual guide to support the concepts discussed.



Recommended learning activities

Dear student, it is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

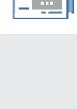
1. Read the following scenario and then answer the questions that follow as a way to assess your understanding of the proposed topic.

A language teacher has just administered a speaking task to assess students' communication skills. After evaluating the task results, the teacher notices that several students are struggling with fluency, while others excel at vocabulary usage but need to work on pronunciation. Based on these findings, the teacher must decide how to proceed. The teacher can either:

- Provide targeted feedback to each student, highlighting their strengths and areas for improvement.
- Plan future lessons to address fluency and pronunciation through focused activities.
- Summarize the results for a final assessment at the end of the course to determine overall proficiency.

2. Based on the scenario, answer the following questions in a written reflection to assess your understanding of the proposed topic:

Teacher's Assessment Strategies

Questions	Reflections
Formative Decisions: What formative decisions can the teacher make based on the assessment results? How can these decisions improve instruction and support students' learning progress?	
Summative Decisions: What summative decisions might the teacher make at the end of the course based on overall student performance? How do these decisions help assess student proficiency and guide future teaching?	
Connection to Intended Consequences: How do the teacher's decisions (formative and summative) align with the intended consequences of the assessment? How do these decisions help promote beneficial outcomes for students and guide instructional changes?	   

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 6

Unit 2. Using Classroom-Based Language Assessment

2.8 Interpretations: What and how should we assess

When considering what to assess in the context of language ability, it is important to focus on areas that are relevant to the goals of instruction and learning. According to Bachman and Damböck (2017), assessments should aim to capture the full range of language skills that are necessary for effective communication, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These areas

of language ability need to be clearly defined so that the assessment focuses on meaningful aspects of language use. For instance, a thorough understanding of the language skills to be assessed, including both receptive and productive abilities, ensures that assessments are comprehensive and aligned with the learning objectives.

The information gathered from students' performance should be relevant and sufficient to make informed decisions about their language ability. This means that the assessment tasks used should closely reflect the real-world language contexts students will face and be tailored to their specific proficiency levels. The authors stress the importance of selecting tasks that offer meaningful insights into the student's ability to use language effectively in different situations. Additionally, the choice of tasks should be based on existing validated resources, such as established language proficiency tests, research studies, or professional guidelines, which provide a reliable foundation for task development.

To ensure the interpretations of students' language ability are generalizable and impartial, assessments must be designed with fairness and consistency in mind. Generalizability refers to the ability to apply the results of an assessment to other contexts or tasks beyond the specific ones tested. Bachman and Damböck (2017) suggest that using a variety of tasks and contexts helps enhance the generalizability of assessment interpretations. On the other hand, impartiality requires that the assessment procedures do not favor any particular group of students and that they reflect a diverse range of abilities and backgrounds. Ensuring impartiality involves using clear and unbiased rubrics, avoiding cultural biases in task selection, and continuously reviewing and revising assessments to ensure fairness across different student groups.

The types of interpretations we provide in assessment processes are directly influenced by the kinds of decisions we aim to make. In other words, the interpretations must align with and support the specific decisions at hand. To ensure that interpretations serve their intended purpose, they must meet two critical criteria: relevance and sufficiency.

According to Bachman and Damböck (2017), relevance refers to the degree to which the interpretations provide the necessary information for the test user to make an informed decision. For example, if a test is being used to assess language proficiency for academic placement, the interpretations must focus on aspects of language ability that directly correlate with academic success. Irrelevant information, such as minor fluctuations in test performance not related to the decision at hand, can distract from the core objectives and undermine the decision-making process. Thus, the test results must be tailored to address the specific needs of the decision-maker.

Sufficiency, on the other hand, relates to the number of assessment tasks applied to make the interpretation. For the interpretation to be meaningful and reliable, the number of tasks must be sufficient to provide a well-rounded understanding of the student's abilities. For example, if a decision about a student's readiness for an advanced language course is being made, relying on just one or two tasks may not provide enough evidence to support an accurate interpretation. A broader range of tasks ensures that the interpretation reflects a more comprehensive view of the student's performance and reduces the risk of drawing conclusions based on limited or incomplete data (Bachman and Damböck, 2017).

Together, relevance and sufficiency ensure that the interpretations made from assessment data are both meaningful and reliable, allowing for decisions that are grounded in a full understanding of the student's language abilities.

2.9 Assessment Records: How can we record our students' assessment performance?

Now that we have explored the topic of **Interpretations**, we are ready to analyze the next topic: **Assessment Records**. An essential aspect of effective assessment is determining how to systematically and accurately record students' performance. Assessment records serve as a vital tool for documenting progress, providing meaningful feedback, and supporting informed decision-making regarding teaching and learning.

When discussing assessment records, Bachman and Damböck (2017) propose two central questions:

1. Can we effectively record our students' performance to ensure accuracy and fairness?
2. How can we use assessment records to inform teaching decisions and enhance learning outcomes?

To address these questions, it is important to consider specific factors related to grading and documenting student evaluations. The following table illustrates key issues to consider when developing and maintaining assessment records, emphasizing how these decisions impact the grading process and overall fairness:

Table 2
Issues in assessment records

Issue	Considerations
Clarity of Criteria	Ensure that the grading criteria are transparent, detailed, and shared with students before the assessment.
Consistency in Grading	Apply the same standards across all students to promote fairness and reliability in assessment results.
Type of Records	Decide whether records will include qualitative feedback, numerical scores, or both.
Feedback Integration	Use assessment records as a foundation for providing constructive and actionable feedback.
Accessibility	Ensure that assessment records are easily accessible to both teachers and students for review and reflection.

Note. Toro, V., 2025.

Assessment records not only provide a structured way to document and grade students' work but also serve as a basis for reflecting on teaching effectiveness and planning future instruction. For instance, by maintaining

clear and consistent records, educators can identify trends in student performance, pinpoint areas that require further attention, and adjust instructional strategies accordingly.

Additionally, these records offer students a clear picture of their progress over time, helping them understand their achievements and areas for improvement. This transparency fosters a sense of accountability and encourages students to take an active role in their learning journey.

As we move forward, it is important to recognize that effective assessment records are more than just a documentation tool—they are integral to the teaching and learning process. They ensure that assessments are meaningful, actionable, and aligned with educational goals.

To deepen your understanding of this topic, please review the table provided and reflect on how you can implement effective recording practices in your own assessment processes.

Table 3*How to implement effective recording practices.*

Aspect of Assessment Records	Key Questions to Reflect On	Practical Example
Clarity Criteria	Are the grading criteria clearly defined and communicated to students before the assessment?	Before a writing task, provide students with a rubric that outlines criteria such as structure, grammar, and vocabulary use.
Consistency in Grading	Are the same standards applied across all students to ensure fairness?	Use the same rubric and evaluation benchmarks for all students, ensuring uniform application of criteria.
Type of Records	What type of record will be kept —qualitative feedback, numerical scores, or both?	Record both numerical scores (e.g., 85/100) and qualitative feedback (e.g., "Excellent organization but work on sentence fluency").
Feedback Integration	How will the records be used to provide constructive feedback for students?	After an oral presentation, provide individual feedback that highlights strengths and suggests areas for improvement based on the records.
Accessibility	Can students access their records to track their progress and reflect on their learning?	Share assessment records with students through a learning management system, allowing them to review and seek clarification if needed.

Note. Toro, V., 2025.



Recommended learning activities

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. After analyzing the topic of interpretations, please watch the video titled [Closing the Loop: How to Use Assessment Results to Improve Learning](#)

Pay close attention to the strategies discussed for effectively utilizing assessment data and consider their impact on both teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

2. After watching the video, please answer the following questions:

- Why is it important to observe and interpret evidence of performance before making decisions about someone's knowledge or abilities?
- How does interpreting evidence help in determining what an individual knows and can do? Can you think of examples from your own experiences?
- What decisions can teachers make after assessing their students, and how can these decisions impact learning outcomes?

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

3. To evaluate the learning acquired on this topic, I invite you to develop the self-assessment presented below.



Self-assessment 2

Self-assess your understanding by writing in the letter of the information on the right that matches the words on the left

-
- 1 A language use task a

		is aimed at improving students' language learning, enhance learners' cognitive, emotional, and social development.
2	___ Language teaching	b Is a language use task that is aimed at collecting samples of students' language performance
3	___ A language teaching/learning task	c is a type of language assessment developed by one or more teachers in the classroom.
4	___ A language assessment task	d is an activity that involves students in the use of language to achieve a particular goal.
5	___ A language assessment	e is a process in which students engage in language use tasks to improve their language ability.
6	___ A classroom-based language assessment	f is the collection of individual language assessment tasks or items
7	___ Formative decisions	g are used to classify students into groups that show students who advance or do not advance. These decisions are made after the process of teaching and learning
8	___ Summative decisions	h among other aspects, they are used to make changes in teaching and learning tasks, in the teaching materials, or in the teaching syllabus.
9	___ Implicit mode of classroom-based assessment	i is a separate activity from teaching and used for summative decisions most of the time. In this mode, teacher and the students know it is an assessment.
10	___ Explicit mode of classroom-based assessment	j is the type of assessment in which students are not aware that assessment is taking place. It is instantaneous, continuous and cyclical, a part of classroom teaching. It is used for formative decisions.

Answer key

Learning outcome 2:

Applies the five principles of the language evaluation.

In Unit 3, learners will engage in the analysis of a language test or another form of assessment to determine whether the five key principles of language assessment were effectively applied in its design. Through the study of the materials presented in this unit and the completion of the accompanying activities, learners will have valuable opportunities to achieve the intended learning outcomes and deepen their understanding of sound assessment practices.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 7

Unit 3. Principles of Language Assessment

3.1 The five principles of language assessment

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) outline five essential principles of language assessment: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback. These principles apply not only to formal tests but also to a broad range of assessment types used in various educational contexts.

The authors emphasize that for any language assessment to be considered effective, appropriate, and useful, it is crucial to evaluate whether it adheres to these principles.

To determine the quality of an assessment, Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) suggest answering a series of guiding questions. First, it is important to consider if the test can be administered within the appropriate administrative

constraints, which addresses the **practicality** of the assessment. Then, it is necessary to assess whether the test is dependable, focusing on its **reliability** and whether it consistently produces accurate results across different contexts and groups. Another key consideration is whether the test accurately measures what it intends to measure, which relates to its **validity**. The **authenticity** of the test is also critical, and this is determined by examining if the language in the test reflects real-world language use. Lastly, it is essential to evaluate if the test provides information that is useful for the learner, which speaks to the concept of **washback**, ensuring that the test results offer feedback that positively influences students' learning and development.

By answering these questions, educators can evaluate whether an assessment aligns with the five principles of language assessment and provides meaningful, effective feedback for both learners and instructors.

Concerning practicality, Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) highlight that this principle refers to the logistical and administrative aspects of creating, administering, and scoring any assessment. Practicality involves considering factors such as cost, the time required for constructing and administering the test, ease of scoring, and the simplicity of interpreting and reporting results. These considerations are essential for ensuring that an assessment can be implemented effectively in the classroom. To deepen your understanding of this principle, I recommend reviewing the following video on [Practicality](#). Once you have a solid grasp of this concept, we will move on to the second principle.

A test is considered reliable when it consistently produces dependable results. A reliable test yields similar outcomes when administered to the same student on different occasions. Additionally, it maintains consistent conditions across multiple administrations, offers clear instructions for scoring, ensures uniform rubrics for evaluation, and enables scorers to apply these rubrics consistently. Furthermore, the test should feature tasks that are straightforward and unambiguous to the test-taker.

The third principle is validity, which the authors define as the degree to which the inferences drawn from assessment results are appropriate, meaningful, and useful for the assessment's intended purpose. A valid test should meet several criteria: it must measure precisely what it is intended to measure, avoid measuring irrelevant factors, rely on empirical evidence based on test-taker performance, sample a representative set of tasks, and offer valuable insights into the learner's abilities. Moreover, a valid test is grounded in a well-supported theoretical rationale. With a better understanding of reliability and validity,

Now that you have gained a deeper understanding of these principles, I encourage you to further explore the concepts of [Reliability and Validity](#). Analyzing additional resources will enhance your comprehension of how these principles ensure effective and meaningful assessments, contributing to a more robust evaluation process.

An authentic test, as discussed by Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), goes beyond just logistical concerns and focuses on the thematic organization of test items. For instance, it may present questions through a storyline or a sequence of events that align with real-world scenarios. This makes the assessment more relevant and engaging for learners. To expand your knowledge further on this topic, I suggest reading the article ["The Investigation of the Effects of Authentic Assessment Approach on Prospective Teachers' Problem-Solving Skills."](#)

The last principle of language assessment is washback, which is defined by Hughes (2008) as the impact that testing has on both teaching and learning. Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) argue that tests with beneficial washback can positively influence what and how teachers teach, as well as what and how learners learn. They suggest that assessments which foster positive washback provide opportunities for adequate preparation, offer feedback that promotes learners' language development, and are more formative in nature than summative. Such tests create conditions that enable learners to perform at their best. The positive effects of washback can enhance the learning experience by aligning the assessment process with instructional goals and

helping learners focus on meaningful language use. Now that you have a deeper understanding of washback, I invite you to continue exploring this topic. Watch the video "[Teaching to the test: Can washback be positive?](#)" and analyze the benefits of washback for both teachers and learners.



Before completing the study of this unit, I invite you to watch the following video that provides reliable and important information about the five [principles of language assessment](#).



Recommended learning activities

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. Analyze the following scenarios and determine whether they align with the principles of language assessment (practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback).

• **Scenario 1:** An EFL teacher administers a vocabulary test twice to the same group of students within a two-week period. The test results vary significantly, even though the test conditions were consistent.

-

• **Scenario 2:** A high school teacher designs a speaking test requiring students to deliver a 10-minute presentation using visual aids. However, the school has only one projector, and each student has just five minutes of allocated class time. The teacher needs to evaluate 30 students within a week.

-

- **Scenario 3:** An online language course includes a listening test where students must listen to a recorded conversation about booking a hotel room and answer questions. The recording uses natural language, pauses, and background noise to simulate real-world conditions.
-



- **Scenario 4:** In an EFL classroom, the teacher regularly integrates role-playing activities where students practice real-life scenarios, such as ordering food at a restaurant or asking for directions. After each activity, the teacher provides constructive feedback, highlighting students' strengths and areas for improvement. Over time, students become more confident in their speaking abilities and start using English more often outside the classroom, such as when interacting with tourists.
-



- **Scenario 5:** An EFL teacher wants to assess students' ability to use the past tense in conversation. The test consists of a written task where students fill in blanks with the correct past-tense verbs. The results are used to make inferences about their ability to communicate in spoken English.
-

Note: please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

2. After engaging with the content and activities related to the five principles of language assessment, it is now time to reflect on and evaluate your understanding of the topics covered in Unit 3. This self-

assessment will help consolidate your learning and identify areas that may require further review or practice.



Self-assessment 3

Self-assess your understanding by choosing the correct response.

1. If a test is easy to construct, administer, score, and interpret, we speak about its:
 - a. Reliability.
 - b. Practicality.
 - c. Validity.

2. If a test is consistent and yields similar results when administered to different student groups, we say that it has a high degree of:
 - a. Practicality.
 - b. Reliability.
 - c. Authenticity.

3. If a test measures what it proposes to measure and offers meaningful information about a student's ability, so this test is:
 - a. Authentic.
 - b. Reliable.
 - c. Valid.

4. If a test contains natural language, meaningful and relevant topics and contextualized items that replicate real-world tasks, we say that this test is:
 - a. Reliable.
 - b. Authentic.
 - c. Valid.



5. A test that provides beneficial washback: _____

1. Positively influences what and how learners learn.
2. Offers tasks that replicate real-world tasks.
3. Measures exactly what it proposed to measure.



6. A valid test of reading ability: _____

- a. Measures previous knowledge of a subject.
- b. Actually, measures ability on this skill.
- c. Provides clear directions for administration.



7. Which of the following options is a good example of a practical test?

- a. A test that offers learners the opportunity to complete it within the set time frame is a practical test.
- b. A test that uses good scoring rubrics is a practical test.
- c. A test that applies tasks that closely approximate real-world tasks is a practical test.



Self-assess your understanding by writing in the letter of the information on the right that matches the words on the left.

8 Reliability a Tasks are likely to be enacted in the real world.

9 Authenticity b Students receive written feedback that include comments that contribute to students' formative development.

10 Washback c All students receive the same quality of input whether written or auditory.

Answer key

Learning outcomes 1 and 2:

- Designs different types of tests for different purposes.
- Applies the five principles of the language evaluation

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 8

Final midterm activities

Week 8 is dedicated to helping students thoroughly prepare for their first bimester exam. This week serves as a crucial opportunity to review and consolidate all the content covered so far, ensuring a solid understanding of key concepts and principles. During this preparation period, students will engage in targeted review activities, such as revisiting essential topics, practicing sample questions, and participating in interactive discussions to clarify any doubts.

Additionally, students are encouraged to reflect on their learning strategies and identify areas where they feel most confident as well as topics that may need further attention. This preparation process is not just about revising content but also about building confidence and honing the skills necessary for effective performance on the exam. By the end of the week, students should feel equipped and motivated to demonstrate their progress and understanding in the first bimester exam.





Second bimester



Learning outcome 3:

Designs different types of items to evaluate English skills.

In Units 4 and 5, learners will explore key concepts that are crucial to developing effective assessment tasks. Through hands-on activities designed to enhance their critical thinking skills, students will have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge and examples to create their own assessments. This practical approach provides numerous opportunities for them to meet the learning outcomes set for these units.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 9

Unit 4. Applying Classroom-Based Language Assessments

Bachman and Dambok (2017) outline procedures for creating an assessment task template that aligns assessment tasks with the Assessment Use Argument (AUA). Assessment tasks are pivotal in the process of evaluating learners, as they provide concrete evidence of students' abilities and knowledge. To ensure that assessment tasks effectively contribute to the teaching and learning process, it is essential to design them carefully, with a structured approach. A well-crafted template can significantly enhance the quality and impact of assessments.

In Unit 4, we will focus on the process of selecting, describing, and modifying a Target Language Use (TLU) task, a critical component in developing relevant assessments. Additionally, we will explore methods for recording and scoring students' performance, ensuring that evaluations are consistent and reliable. Finally, we will assess the modified task and the assessment task template against key assessment qualities, such as validity, reliability, and fairness, to ensure that they meet the intended learning goals and contribute effectively to the educational process.

4.1 Developing Assessment Task Templates



Note. Adapted from *Brainstorming Analysis Planning Sharing Meeting Concept [Illustration]*, by Rawpixel, 2020, Shutterstock, CC BY 2.0

Have you heard of assessment tasks and assessment task templates? These are essential concepts in the field of assessment that help us understand how to effectively evaluate learners' abilities. Before we dive into Unit 4, I encourage you to take a moment to brainstorm your thoughts and ideas about these concepts. What do you think assessment tasks are, and how do you imagine assessment task templates might be used? Reflect on any experiences you have had with assessments and how they were designed.

Once you have written down your ideas, you'll have the opportunity to compare them with the key concepts and strategies that we'll explore this week. This comparison will allow you to deepen your understanding of assessment tasks and templates, and how they play a crucial role in creating fair, reliable, and effective evaluations of student performance. Through this process, you will also be able to better grasp how these concepts contribute to the broader framework of assessment and learning.

Use the table below to better understand assessment tasks and assessment task templates.

Assessment tasks vs. Assessment task templates

Assessment tasks	Assessment task templates
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Note. Copy the table in a notebook or in a Word document.

After brainstorming ideas about the main topic for this week, it is time to explore the perspectives of Bachman and Dambok (2017) on assessment tasks and assessment task templates. According to the authors, these elements are essential components of effective assessment design. Below, we will examine key insights from their work regarding each topic:

Regarding **Assessment Tasks**, they are tools used to gather evidence of learners' knowledge and skills. These tasks are not just exercises; they are designed to measure specific aspects of a learner's abilities, such as their understanding of a particular concept, their ability to apply knowledge in real-world contexts, or their proficiency in a target language. The quality of an assessment task depends on its alignment with the learning objectives, its validity (whether it truly measures what it is intended to measure), and its fairness (ensuring that it is appropriate and accessible to all learners). In essence, assessment tasks serve as a means to gather data that informs decisions about teaching and learning.

Concerning **Assessment Task Templates**, having a structured assessment task template is crucial for developing consistent, valid, and reliable assessment tasks. A template provides a systematic framework for designing tasks that align with assessment purposes and learning outcomes. It typically includes components such as task instructions, scoring criteria, and performance benchmarks. The template helps ensure that the assessment tasks are developed with clear guidelines, making them easier to evaluate and standardize. This is particularly important when creating tasks for large groups or when comparing the results of different assessments. A well-designed template can also ensure that the tasks maintain high quality and support the broader goals of the assessment process, such as improving learning, teaching, and feedback.

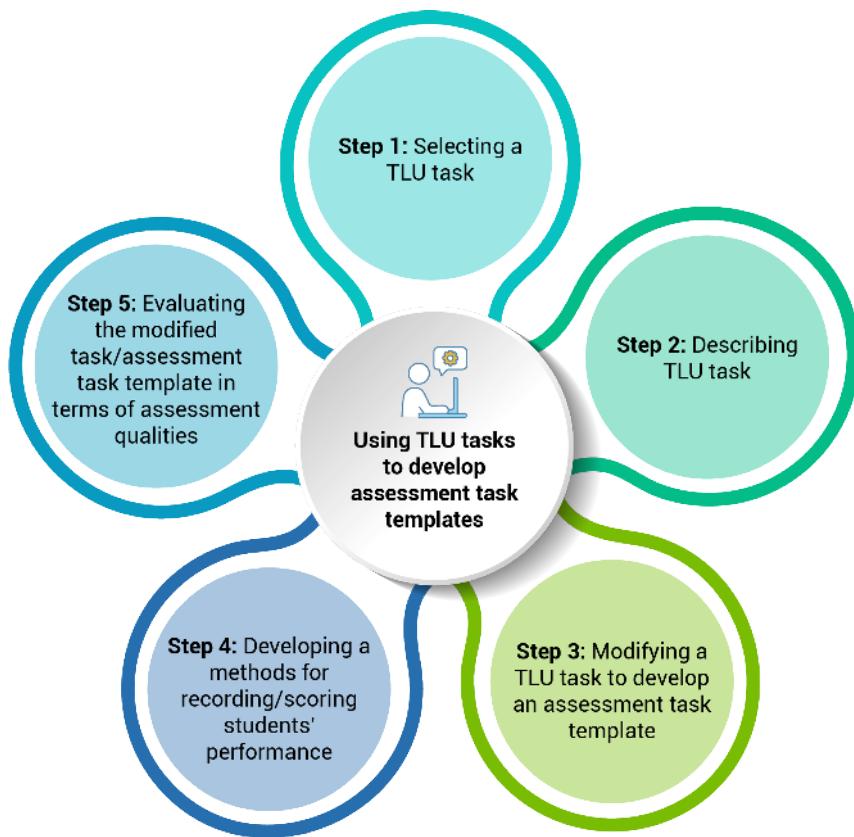
Together, these two elements—assessment tasks and templates—are essential for creating assessments that are not only effective in measuring learner outcomes but also equitable and conducive to fostering an optimal learning environment.

Building on this topic, the authors outline a series of steps for developing assessment task templates, which are visually represented in the following graph.



Figure 3

Target Language Use tasks



Note. Adapted from *Using TLU tasks to develop assessment task templates* (p. 90), by Bachman, L., & Damböck, B., 2017, Oxford.

Bachman and Damböck (2017) propose a structured approach to developing assessment task templates, beginning with the selection of a Target Language Use (TLU) task. This involves identifying real-world language use scenarios that reflect the contexts in which learners will apply their skills, ensuring the assessment's relevance and authenticity. Once a suitable TLU task is identified, it is described in detail, including its purpose, the setting, the participants involved, and the language skills required. This comprehensive understanding helps create an assessment that mirrors actual language use effectively.

The next step involves modifying the TLU task to transform it into an assessment task that is both practical and aligned with the learning objectives. This may require simplifying certain aspects of the task or focusing on specific language skills to make it manageable for the classroom setting. Following this, methods for recording and scoring student performance are developed. Clear criteria and procedures are established, such as rubrics or scoring guides, to ensure that performance is evaluated consistently and objectively.

Finally, the modified task and the overall assessment task template are evaluated against key assessment qualities, including validity, reliability, and fairness. This step ensures that the assessment measures what it is intended to measure, produces consistent results, and is equitable for all learners. By following these steps, educators can create assessment tasks that are authentic, practical, and aligned with educational goals, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of language assessments.



Recommended learning activities

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. **Analyze step 1:** Select a target language use task and then create your own TLU task.
 - a. **Short descriptive label for TLU task:** Describing animals orally in groups in the language classroom.
 - b. **Areas of language ability the TLU task engages:** Using accurate grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in speaking.
2. **Create a TLU task based on this learning objective:** "By the end of this unit, students will be able to write well-organized paragraphs using appropriate topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding

statements, while correctly applying the past simple tense to describe events and experiences.”

a. Short descriptive label for TLU task:



b. Areas of language ability the TLU task engages:



Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

Now that you have a clear understanding of the steps involved in developing assessment task templates, you are well-prepared to advance to the next topic: creating language assessment tasks. This progression will allow you to apply the foundational knowledge you have gained and begin designing tasks that align with your specific learning objectives and assessment goals.



Unit 4. Applying Classroom-Based Language Assessments

4.2 Creating Language Assessment Tasks

Now that we have explored the concept of language assessment task templates, we are ready to look into the process of creating effective language assessment tasks. To begin, I encourage you to watch this short video, which provides a clear explanation of what an [assessment task](#) is. As you watch, pay close attention to how tasks are designed and consider the importance of identifying key elements, such as task requirements and objectives. After watching, take some time to reflect on the significance of selecting appropriate keywords and expanding on the task to make it more comprehensive and aligned with the assessment's purpose.

Building on this topic, Bachman and Damböck (2017) emphasize that a well-rounded language assessment consists of multiple assessment tasks rather than relying on a single task. This is because a single task often lacks the capacity to produce consistent scores and meaningful, generalizable interpretations of a learner's performance. Furthermore, performance on a single task may not sufficiently represent the range of skills or knowledge encompassed in the Target Language Use (TLU) domain. By including multiple tasks, an assessment can more effectively sample the various demands of the TLU domain, ensuring a fairer, more reliable, and valid evaluation of learners' abilities. This approach underscores the importance of designing diverse, purposeful tasks that collectively provide a holistic picture of language proficiency.

1. Create One Task Using the Assessment Task Template

Assessment task templates serve as essential guides for designing multiple language assessment tasks. Begin by developing a model assessment task that adheres to the assessment task template. This model



task should clearly define the target language use (TLU) context, the ability being assessed, and the methods for recording and scoring student performance. Ensure that the task aligns with the intended learning objectives and incorporates clear instructions, appropriate content, and scoring criteria. This initial task will act as a foundation and reference for developing additional tasks while maintaining consistency in assessment quality



2. Create Additional Tasks by Modifying Certain Aspects

Once the initial task is created, additional assessment tasks can be designed by making controlled modifications. To maintain the integrity and comparability of the assessment, the following elements should remain consistent:

- **Definition of the ability to be assessed:** Ensure that all tasks are designed to measure the same language ability (e.g., reading comprehension, speaking fluency, etc.) to preserve the focus of the assessment.
- **Attributes of the students:** Keep factors such as age, proficiency level, and learning background consistent to ensure that the tasks are appropriate for the intended audience.

However, you can introduce variation by modifying one or more of the task characteristics (TCs), such as:

- Changing the input format (e.g., switching from a written text to an audio recording for listening tasks).
- Adjusting the task prompt (e.g., rephrasing a question or scenario to explore a different context within the same TLU domain).
- Altering the response requirements (e.g., changing from multiple-choice answers to open-ended responses).

These modifications enable you to design a range of tasks that provide a more comprehensive assessment of the learners' abilities while maintaining alignment with the original template. By varying the TCs strategically, you can ensure that the tasks sample diverse aspects of the TLU domain, thereby increasing the reliability and validity of the assessment.



Recommended learning activity

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activity that have been proposed below:

Now that you have gained a clearer understanding of assessment tasks and their design, take a moment to reflect on the following questions to deepen your comprehension and connect the concepts to practice:

1. What is an assessment task type, and how does it differ from a specific assessment task?
2. What key insights have you gained about creating a model assessment task?
3. To what extent does a model assessment task serve as a foundation for designing multiple, effective assessment tasks that align with the target language use (TLU) domain?

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

Reflecting on these questions will help you consolidate your knowledge and consider how the principles you have learned can be applied to real-world assessment scenarios.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 11

Unit 4. Applying Classroom-Based Language Assessments

4.3 Test specifications to guide assessment development

Another crucial aspect of assessment is the development of an assessment blueprint, also known as assessment specifications. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), test specifications serve as a detailed outline of what a test will entail, providing a clear picture of its structure and content. The

authors describe these specifications as a blueprint that includes several key elements, such as the specific skills and abilities that the test aims to assess, as well as a comprehensive description of the content areas covered.

Additionally, the blueprint outlines the types of tasks or items that will be used in the test, including methods like multiple-choice questions, cloze tests, or written essays. The tasks themselves, such as reading a short passage or completing a writing assignment, should align with the skills being assessed. It is also essential to specify the procedures for scoring the test, ensuring that the evaluation process is consistent and transparent. Furthermore, the blueprint should clarify how the test results will be reported to students, ensuring transparency and helping students understand their performance.

To gain a deeper understanding of what an assessment blueprint entails, I encourage you to watch the following video on [test blueprints](#). The information provided will help clarify the key components and importance of an assessment blueprint in ensuring effective and fair assessment practices.

To better understand the key concepts behind effective test design, I encourage you to read and analyze the article "[Test Specifications](#)". It outlines important aspects of creating clear, focused assessments that ensure students' skills are accurately measured. By exploring this article, you'll gain insight into how test specifications guide the development of reliable and fair assessments, which is essential for both teaching and evaluation. Take time to reflect on the ways these principles can be applied to your own work in assessment.

Now that you have a clearer understanding of test specifications, take a moment to review the following example. This will provide you with practical insight into how to create your own specifications for assessments. By examining this example, you will see how various components, such as the prompt, response, and task design, work together to guide the development of a well-structured and effective test. Analyzing this will help you apply these principles in your own assessment practices.

Test Specification Example

1. General Description (GD)



- **Purpose of the Test:** This test aims to evaluate students' ability to write well-organized paragraphs, apply the past simple tense correctly, and demonstrate their speaking and vocabulary proficiency. The assessment will focus on their ability to structure a paragraph using topic sentences, supporting details, and conclusions, while accurately describing events and experiences in the past simple tense.
- **Target Audience:** Intermediate-level English learners (B1-B2).
- **Test Format:** The test will consist of four sections: writing, grammar, vocabulary, and speaking. It includes multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and performance tasks for speaking and writing.

2. Prompt Attribute (PA)

Stimulus or Input:

- **Writing Task:** A brief scenario will be provided where students describe a memorable event (e.g., "Write a paragraph describing a vacation you took last year").
- **Speaking Task:** A situation where students describe an event or experience from their past (e.g., "Talk about a time when you traveled to a new place and what you did there").
- **Grammar and Vocabulary:** Multiple-choice items related to past simple tense usage, such as completing sentences about past events, and vocabulary questions focused on past-related terms.

Presentation Format or expected response:

Writing and grammar tasks will be presented on paper or online.

Speaking tasks will be presented as audio prompts, and students will record their responses.

Instructions:

- For writing: "Write a well-organized paragraph of 150-200 words describing a past event."
- For speaking: "Respond to the prompt by talking for 45 seconds to 1 minute describing a past event."
- For grammar and vocabulary: "Select the correct option to complete the sentence or identify the correct use of vocabulary."

3. Response Attribute (RA)

- **Type of Response:**
- **Writing Task:** Constructed response; students will write a paragraph.
- **Speaking Task:** Constructed response; students will record their spoken answer.
- **Grammar and Vocabulary Tasks:** Selected response; students will choose the correct form of the verb or vocabulary word.

Level of Detail:

- **Writing responses** should include a clear topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding statement.
- **Speaking responses** should be detailed, clear, and structured, with appropriate use of the past simple tense.
- **Grammar and vocabulary responses** will require students to correctly complete sentences with appropriate verb forms and vocabulary.

Response Format:

- **Writing:** Written paragraph (150-200 words).
- **Speaking:** Oral response via recorded answer (45 seconds to 1 minute).
- **Grammar and Vocabulary:** Multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank questions.

4. Sample Item (SI)



- **Example Task 1 (Writing):**

Prompt: "Write a paragraph about a memorable holiday or trip you took last year. Be sure to include a clear topic sentence, at least two supporting details, and a conclusion." *Response:* A well-organized paragraph with the past simple tense used correctly to describe the event.

- **Example Task 2 (Speaking):**

Prompt: "Describe your last trip to a city or country you visited. What did you do there, and what was the best part of your experience?" *Response:* A 45-second to 1-minute spoken response that uses the past simple tense to describe the experience.

- **Example Task 3 (Grammar and Vocabulary):**

Prompt: "Complete the sentence: 'Last summer, I ___ (go) to the beach with my family."

- a. gone
- b. went
- c. go

Correct Answer: b) went

5. Specification Supplement (SS)

Additional Information:

Writing Task: Students are encouraged to use transition words (e.g., first, then, finally) and focus on maintaining past tense consistency throughout the paragraph. A scoring rubric will be used to score students' responses.

Speaking Task: Responses will be graded on fluency, pronunciation, and the ability to clearly explain a past experience. A scoring rubric will be used to score students' responses.

Grammar and Vocabulary: The grammar section will focus on the correct use of regular and irregular past simple verbs. The vocabulary section will assess the ability to use words related to events, places, and experiences.



Constraints or Considerations:



The writing section will be timed (20 minutes).



The speaking section will be recorded and submitted within 10 minutes.



Grammar and vocabulary will be a timed section (10 minutes).



Upon analyzing the example, it becomes evident that test specifications are a critical component of effective assessment design, serving as a blueprint that ensures alignment between the test's purpose, content, and format.



4.4 Administrative procedures and instructions

Administrative procedures and instructions are critical components of assessment because they ensure that students clearly understand the expectations for completing tasks, how their responses will be evaluated, and what the assessment process entails. According to Bachman & Dambok (2017), clear administrative procedures enhance the reliability and fairness of assessments by providing structure and transparency. These procedures typically include instructions on test timing, response formats, how responses will be scored, and any technical or logistical aspects involved. Clear guidelines help minimize confusion and allow students to focus on demonstrating their skills.

Do you have ideas on what administrative procedures should include? Reflect on aspects such as test environment, materials needed, timing, and instructions for each section. You can jot down your thoughts in your class notebook or a Word document for further consideration.

Bachman and Dambock (2017) argue that when creating an assessment for your students, it is essential to follow clear procedures to ensure that the results accurately reflect their language abilities. These procedures help guarantee that your interpretation of their performance is fair and unbiased. It is important to avoid using content that could cause discomfort or anxiety, as well as tasks that may unintentionally favor certain students over others. Inconsistencies may arise if students are treated differently during the assessment process. To ensure fairness, it is crucial to outline specific procedures for administering the assessment.

For assessments with limited content and stakes, the procedures can be relatively simple. However, for more complex, high-stakes assessments, which may involve multiple sections or cover broader material, the procedures will need to be more detailed. Regardless of the assessment's scope or significance, clearly specifying the administration process beforehand is vital to maintaining fairness and consistency.

The authors also emphasize the importance of well-defined administrative procedures to ensure the fairness and consistency of an assessment. These procedures help create a controlled environment where students' performance is reliably measured, and the results can be interpreted impartially. The following activities should be included when specifying administrative procedures:

- 1. Preparing the Test Setting:** This involves organizing the physical or digital environment to eliminate distractions, ensure accessibility, and provide the necessary resources (e.g., test papers, technology, and writing tools).
- 2. Providing an Encouraging Testing Environment:** A calm, positive atmosphere is essential for students to perform their best. This can include managing test anxiety, offering reassurance, and creating a supportive mood to help students focus.
- 3. Communicating the Instructions Clearly:** Clear, concise instructions are vital to ensure that all students understand what is expected of them. This includes explaining how to complete the tasks, how their responses will be assessed, and any specific timing rules.

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activity that has been proposed below:



Recommended learning activity



To evaluate the learning acquired on this topic, I invite you to develop the self-assessment presented below.



Self-assessment 4



Self-assess your understanding by writing in the letter of the information on the right that matches the words on the left

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | ___ Task characteristics TCs | a | consists of the circumstances under which the assessment takes place. |
| 2 | ___ The setting | b | is the material included in the task that students are expected to process and respond. |
| 3 | ___ The input | c | is the expected response from students. It can be verbal or non-verbal. |
| 4 | ___ The expected response | d | help to create different assessment tasks |
| 5 | ___ Assessment task templates | e | are aspects of language use tasks that help describe the task with more precision than just giving it a label. |
| 6 | ___ A blueprint | f | is created by changing some TCs of the same assessment task template. |
| 7 | ___ Administrative procedures | g | is created following the specifications in an assessment task template. |
| 8 | ___ Instructions | h | guarantee that the students' performance on the assessment will provide information about their language ability. |
| 9 | ___ An assessment task type | i | help students understand the assessment procedure, the test tasks included in the test, how they are expected to respond and how their responses will be scored. |

10 ___ A model assessment task j is a guide that specifies the content and format of an assessment.

[Answer key](#)

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 12

Unit 5. Assessing Language Skills

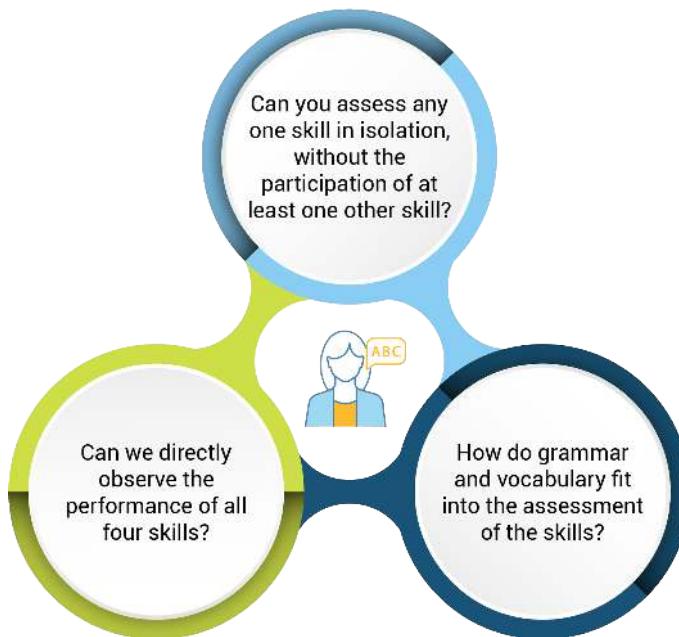
5.1 Assessing Listening

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), understanding the integration of skills requires an examination of three foundational concepts. To facilitate this understanding, the authors propose the following guiding questions:



Figure 4

Integration of language skills



Note. Adapted from *Assessing Listening* (p. 129), by Brown, D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019), Pearson.

Regarding the integration of skills in language assessment, Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) argue that the exclusive use of a single skill is rarely observed in authentic language performance. Instead, the majority of linguistic activities require the integration of at least two skills. For instance, speaking and listening are simultaneously engaged during conversations, while reading is often essential for completing writing tasks. The authors emphasize that activities such as solving problems or analyzing texts involve the parallel processing of multiple skills. Furthermore, in the classroom, a significant portion of instructional time is devoted to skill integration through activities such as discussions, questioning, group work, and interactive responses.

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) emphasize that grammar and vocabulary tests inherently engage multiple skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, or writing. For example, prompts in vocabulary quizzes or grammar tests must

typically be presented either audibly or visually (through listening or reading), while responses are often required in written or oral form. This multidimensional nature underscores the integrated aspect of skill assessment, even when focusing on specific linguistic components like grammar or vocabulary.

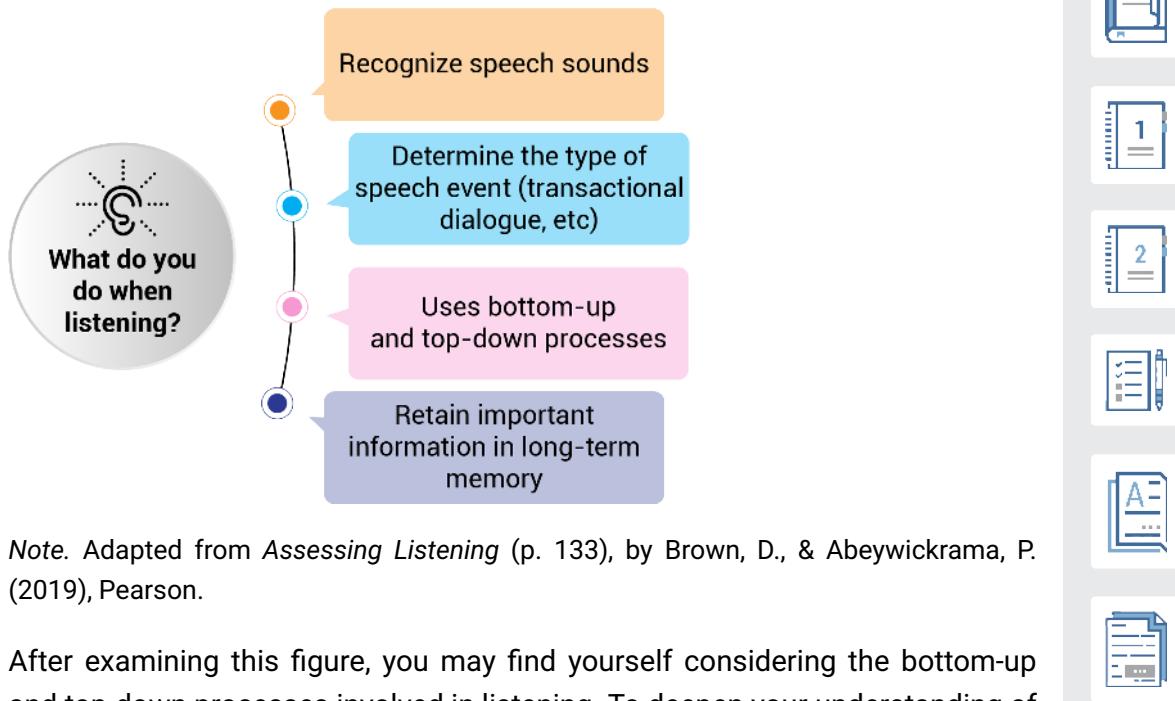
Moreover, when evaluating the performance of the four core language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—it is essential to consider the interrelated relationship between performance and observation. Language users rely on their underlying linguistic competence to execute tasks in these skills. However, while competence refers to internal knowledge of the language, performance represents what is explicitly observable. Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) claim that performance may not always accurately reflect a learner's competence due to various external factors, such as insufficient rest, illness, emotional distractions, test anxiety, or memory lapses. These factors can hinder a learner's ability to demonstrate their true linguistic capability. Consequently, relying on a single instance of performance is not advisable. Instead, assessments should incorporate multiple measures or triangulate data from different tasks and contexts to obtain a more reliable evaluation of competence.

Furthermore, listening is as important as the other three language skills, although it is often treated implicitly as a subset of speaking. Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) highlight the necessity of understanding the processes involved in listening to evaluate it effectively. Listening is not a passive activity but rather a complex cognitive process involving decoding, understanding, and interpreting auditory input. Therefore, analyzing the stages of this process can help both educators and learners better understand how auditory information is processed during listening tasks. The following diagram provides a clear representation of the listening process and offers insights into how these stages can inform the assessment of listening skills.

This interconnected perspective on grammar, vocabulary, and skill integration emphasizes the complexity of language assessment and the importance of using a comprehensive approach to evaluate learners effectively.

Figure 5

Process of listening



Note. Adapted from *Assessing Listening* (p. 133), by Brown, D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019), Pearson.

After examining this figure, you may find yourself considering the bottom-up and top-down processes involved in listening. To deepen your understanding of these processes, take some time to explore the information provided in the following videos:

- [Bottom-up processing](#)
- [Top-down processing](#)

Based on the information provided in the video, bottom-up processing emphasizes the detailed features of a listening text, including sounds, individual words, word groups, phonemes, morphemes, collocations, language chunks, sentences, and the text as a whole. In other words, it focuses on language knowledge, such as sounds, grammar, and vocabulary, by building meaning from smaller units to understand the overall message. This process requires careful decoding of linguistic elements and relies heavily on the listener's ability to recognize and process these components accurately.

In contrast, top-down processing centers on understanding the broader context by drawing on prior knowledge and experiences. This approach involves interpreting the topic, recognizing familiar words, and identifying the genre, all of which are closely tied to the listener's background knowledge. Rather than focusing solely on linguistic features, top-down processing allows listeners to predict and infer meaning, filling in gaps when explicit details may be unclear. Together, these two processes work in tandem to enable comprehensive listening comprehension.

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), listening comprehension involves the performance of both micro- and macro-skills, each playing a critical role in processing and understanding spoken language.

Micro skills focus on the finer, more detailed aspects of listening. These include the ability to discriminate among the distinctive sounds of English, such as individual phonemes and intonation patterns, and to retain chunks of language of varying lengths in short-term memory for further processing. Additionally, micro skills involve recognizing reduced forms of words (e.g., contractions and elisions) and understanding variations in stress and rhythm that convey meaning.

On the other hand, macro skills address the broader, more interpretive aspects of listening comprehension. These skills involve higher-level cognitive processes, such as predicting outcomes based on events and ideas described in the input and inferring links and connections between events. Listeners use macro skills to deduce causes and effects and identify relationships, such as distinguishing between the main idea and supporting details, recognizing new versus given information, and understanding generalizations and exemplifications. Furthermore, macro skills extend beyond linguistic cues to include non-verbal communication, such as interpreting facial expressions, gestures, body language, and other non-verbal signals to decipher meaning.

In addition, effective listening requires the ability to detect key words, infer the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, and use strategies like signaling comprehension or appealing for clarification when needed. Together, these

micro- and macro-skills form a comprehensive framework that enables listeners to process, analyze, and respond to spoken language effectively in diverse communicative contexts.

So far, we have explored several key aspects related to the assessment of students' language skills. Building on this foundation, it is essential to highlight that there are four distinct types of listening. To gain a deeper understanding of each type, along with their defining characteristics and the tasks commonly used for assessing listening, I recommend reviewing the information presented in the following [Presentation 2. Assessing listening](#).

Now that you have studied the information in this guide and reviewed the presentation, you are prepared to identify and select appropriate tasks for assessing listening based on its different types.

5.2 Assessing Speaking

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) propose five categories of speaking performance: imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive. Each category represents a different way in which language is produced, and these categories help to define the varying demands of speaking tasks. The following infographic on Basic types of speaking outlines these categories and their key characteristics, which provide a clear framework for understanding the diversity of speaking activities.

Basic types of speaking

In addition to these basic categories, the authors offer a taxonomy of speaking skills, divided into micro- and macro skills, which can serve as the foundation for assessing speaking performance. Micro skills focus on the production of smaller linguistic units and elements, such as phonemes (individual sounds), morphemes (smallest units of meaning), words, collocations (common word pairings), and phrasal units. These skills are fundamental for accurate and precise speech production and are often the focus of lower-level speaking tasks where learners are required to demonstrate proficiency in smaller chunks of language.

On the other hand, macro skills involve broader aspects of speaking performance. These skills address the speaker's ability to manage larger elements of communication, including fluency (the smoothness and ease of speech), discourse (the organization and structure of spoken language), function (the purpose or intent behind the speech act), style (the level of formality and appropriateness), cohesion (the logical flow of ideas), and non-verbal communication (such as body language, facial expressions, and gestures). Additionally, macro skills encompass strategic options, which refer to the use of communication strategies to handle challenges such as gaps in knowledge or understanding during conversation. These skills are typically emphasized in more advanced speaking tasks that require learners to engage in complex, real-world communication.

Together, these micro- and macro skills provide a comprehensive framework for assessing speaking performance, enabling educators to design tasks that address both the technical and communicative aspects of language use. Understanding these categories and skills allows students to better identify areas for improvement and set specific goals for their speaking development.

Table 4
Micro- and macro skills of speaking

Micro skills	Macro skills
Produce reduced forms of words and phrases.	Convey facial features, kinesics, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language.
Produce fluent speech at different rates of delivery.	Appropriately accomplish communicative functions according to situations, participants, and goals.
Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms.	Develop and use a battery of speaking strategies, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, providing a context for interpreting the meaning of words, appealing for help, and accurately assessing how well your interlocutor is understanding you.

Note. The information in Table 4 shows the objectives of speaking, which are divided into micro skills and macro skills. Toro, L., 2024.

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) outline various tasks for assessing speaking that are designed to evaluate different aspects of language proficiency. These tasks fall under the categories of imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive speaking, each focusing on distinct elements of language production and communication.

Concerning Imitative Speaking Tasks, these tasks focus on the speaker's ability to produce accurate forms of language at the level of sounds, words, and phrases. These tasks require the learner to replicate specific linguistic elements without necessarily understanding their broader context. For example, a typical imitative task might involve a **pronunciation drill**, where learners repeat individual sounds, words, or short phrases. This task helps assess the accuracy of phoneme production, stress patterns, and intonation. Another example is a **shadowing activity**, where learners listen to a spoken text and immediately repeat it, mirroring the speaker's pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation.

Regarding Intensive Speaking Tasks, they involve producing short stretches of speech with a focus on specific language elements, such as grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. These tasks are more controlled than imitative tasks and are designed to assess the learner's ability to produce accurate language in short, structured forms. An example of an intensive speaking task is a **sentence completion exercise**, where learners are given incomplete sentences and asked to finish them using correct grammar and vocabulary. Another example is a **dialogue completion task**, in which learners fill in the gaps of a conversation, demonstrating their ability to produce language accurately and appropriately within a given context.

In Responsive Speaking Tasks, learners are assessed their ability to react or respond appropriately to spoken input. These tasks typically require learners to answer questions, respond to requests, or engage in short exchanges. Examples of responsive tasks include **question-and-answer exercises**, where the learner responds to direct questions based on a prompt or prior listening, and **role-plays**, where learners simulate real-life scenarios and respond to questions or challenges posed by a conversation partner. These tasks assess the learner's ability to produce language quickly and contextually, relying on their knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures.

In Interactive Speaking Tasks, tasks are more complex and require learners to engage in longer, more spontaneous conversations with others. These tasks assess a learner's ability to negotiate meaning, clarify information, and maintain communication in a dynamic, real-world context. Examples include **pair or group discussions**, where learners collaborate to solve problems, debate a topic, or share opinions. Another example is a **problem-solving task**, where learners work together to find solutions to a hypothetical scenario, such as planning a trip or discussing a controversial issue. These tasks assess fluency, turn-taking, and the ability to use language strategically in social interaction.

Extensive Speaking Tasks assess the learner's ability to produce longer, more coherent speech in contexts that require in-depth explanation, argumentation, or storytelling. These tasks often mirror real-life situations where the speaker

must organize and present ideas in a structured manner. Examples of extensive speaking tasks include **oral presentations**, where learners prepare and deliver a talk on a specific topic, and **storytelling**, where learners narrate a story or recount an experience. These tasks assess not only the fluency and coherence of speech but also the ability to use appropriate discourse markers, organize ideas logically, and engage an audience effectively.

Incorporating these various tasks into language assessment allows educators to evaluate learners on different dimensions of speaking, from the accuracy of individual sounds to the complexity of extended discourse. By using a variety of task types, teachers can ensure that their assessments are comprehensive and reflective of the comprehensive nature of speaking.

Now that we have analyzed the types of speaking as well as the micro- and macro skills involved, it is time to watch an insightful video that will deepen your understanding of the topic of [Assessing Speaking](#). Additionally, I recommend watching the video "[Speaking activities and assessment](#)" as it provides valuable information on a range of speaking activities and key insights into effective assessment practices.

To continue exploring the topic of Assessing Speaking, I encourage you to review the [Presentation 3. Assessing Speaking](#). In this presentation, you will find a range of tasks proposed by Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) that are designed to assess each type of speaking performance.

After reviewing the tasks for assessing speaking, it is time to apply what you **have** learned. Therefore, I invite you to engage in the following activities to put your knowledge into practice.



Recommended learning activity

It is time to apply your knowledge through the activity that has been proposed below:

Scenario for analysis: The Study Abroad Experience

1. Context:

You are teaching a group of students preparing to study abroad. They will need to interact in various real-life situations, such as introducing themselves to classmates, asking for directions, and participating in casual conversations. The focus is on helping them build confidence and fluency in speaking.

2. Reflective Questions:

- What type of speaking task would best simulate these real-life interactions?
- How can the task provide opportunities to assess both individual contributions and interaction skills?

3. Design 1 task for assessing speaking

a. Define Learning Objectives:

- Identify the specific speaking skills you want to assess (e.g., fluency, pronunciation, coherence, interaction, communication).
- Align the task with the broader course or lesson objectives.

b. Analyze the Context and Learner Needs:

- Consider the students' proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, and learning environments.
- Ensure the task is age-appropriate and relevant to students' real-life or academic needs.

c. Select the Task Type:

- Choose a task that reflects authentic communication (e.g., role-play, discussion, presentation).
- Ensure the task matches the objectives.

Note: please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 13

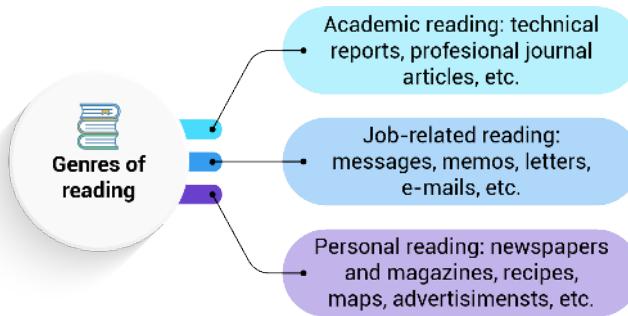
Unit 5. Assessing Language Skills

5.3 Assessing Reading

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) identify three genres of reading that are integral to assessing reading ability. The following figure illustrates these reading genres along with corresponding examples.

Figure 6

Genres of reading



Note. Adapted from *Assessing Reading* (p. 197), by Brown, D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019), Pearson.

The information presented in this figure helps us identify and select the most appropriate materials for assessment tasks based on our students' needs. For example, if we aim to assess students on academic-related issues, academic reading materials would be most suitable. In this case, professional journal articles, research papers, or textbooks can be considered effective sources for assessing academic reading skills.

Building on this, it is equally important to examine the micro skills, macro skills, and strategies for reading, as these elements provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and evaluating reading comprehension. Micro skills focus on the detailed aspects of reading, such as recognizing vocabulary, understanding sentence structure, and identifying specific information. Macro skills, on the other hand, address higher-level processes such as interpreting the main ideas, making inferences, and synthesizing information across texts. Strategies for reading, meanwhile, involve the techniques and approaches readers use to enhance comprehension, such as skimming, scanning, and making predictions.

To further explore these concepts, I invite you to analyze the following table, which outlines the micro skills, macro skills, and reading strategies in more detail.



Table 5*Micro skills, Macro skills, and Strategies for Reading*

Microskills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain chunks of language of different lengths in short-term memory. • Recognize a core of words and interpret word order patterns and their significance. • Recognize that a particular meaning can be expressed in different grammatical forms.
Macroskills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize the communicative functions of written texts, according to form and purpose. • From described events, ideas, etc. infer links and connections between events, deduce causes and effects, and detect such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, etc. • Distinguish between literal and implied meanings.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lexical analysis (prefixes, roots, suffixes, etc.,) to determine meaning. • Identify your purpose in reading a text. • Scan the text for specific information (names, dates, key words).

Note. Table 5 contains examples of the micro skills, macro skills and strategies for reading. Toro, L., 2025.

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) outline four basic types of reading, each characterized by distinct processes and tasks that assess different aspects of reading comprehension. These types are perceptive, selective, interactive, and extensive reading. Below is a breakdown of each type, its characteristics, and examples of tasks that can be used to assess reading in these categories.

Perceptive reading tasks focus on the recognition of linguistic features such as letters, words, punctuation, and symbols. These tasks are fundamental for learners who are still developing their ability to decode written language. Perceptive reading involves bottom-up processing, where the reader starts with smaller language units, such as individual sounds or letters, and builds up to larger meanings.

Some tasks for assessing perceptive reading include word recognition exercises, matching words to images, and identifying punctuation or capitalization in a passage. These tasks test learners' ability to recognize written forms at the micro-level.

In **selective reading** tasks learners are required to engage with brief texts, such as sentences, short paragraphs, or simple charts and graphs. In this type of reading, learners must focus on specific details and respond briefly to questions or prompts. Both bottom-up and top-down processing may be used as readers first recognize individual elements and then integrate these with their background knowledge to make sense of the text.

For assessing selective reading, we can consider true/false or multiple-choice questions based on short passages, completing sentences with the correct words from the text, or answering questions about specific details, such as names, dates, or places mentioned.

Interactive reading tasks involve descriptions, excerpts from longer texts, directions, or even recipes. The goal of interactive reading is to engage learners in identifying relevant features of a text, such as lexical, symbolic, grammatical, and discourse elements. In this type of reading, learners interact with the text, often drawing on both bottom-up and top-down processing to understand the content and structure.

This type of reading uses matching descriptions with appropriate actions, filling in gaps in a set of directions or a recipe, or interpreting and responding to a diagram or graph based on a written passage to assess learners.

In extensive reading tasks learners are assessed their global understanding of a text. The purpose is to gauge their ability to understand the main ideas and overall meaning of a longer, more complex text. This type of reading typically involves top-down processing, as learners rely on their background knowledge and reading strategies to comprehend and synthesize information from a broader context.

Some tasks for assessing extensive reading include summarizing a chapter or an article, discussing the main themes of a book, or answering open-ended questions that require the learner to analyze and interpret a longer piece of writing.

By incorporating a range of tasks that reflect these different types of reading, teachers can assess students' comprehension at multiple levels. These tasks enable the evaluation of both the fine details of language (as in perceptive reading) and the ability to understand and analyze larger, more complex texts (as in extensive reading).

Once you have explored the genres of reading, the micro- and macro-skills, the strategies involved, and the basic types of reading, I encourage you to review the following [Presentation 4. Assessing Reading](#).

After studying the provided resources, it would be beneficial for you to search for additional tasks that can be used to assess reading comprehension. I also recommend reflecting on tasks you may have previously implemented with your students, particularly if you have had the opportunity to work as an EFL teacher. Consider their effectiveness in the assessment process and think critically about how these tasks align with the reading types you have just studied.

5.4 Assessing Writing

This week, we will explore the wide range of tasks that can be used to assess writing. However, before exploring specific tasks, it is essential to first analyze the various genres of writing that are available. These genres serve as a key reference for selecting appropriate materials based on the genre required for assessment. (Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) propose the following list of writing genres, which are integral to the specifications for assessing writing ability. To explore more of this topic, I invite you to read the Presentation 5. Assessing Writing.

Table 6
Genres of writing

Academic writing	Job-related writing	Personal writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Papers and general subject reports• Essays, compositions• Short-answer test responses• Theses, dissertation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Messages• Letters/e-mails• Reports• Advertisements• Announcements• Manuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letters, e-mail, greeting cards, invitations• Messages, notes• Shopping lists, remainders• Medical reports

Note. Table 6 presents a variety of texts that are part of the three genres of writing.
Toro, L., 2025.

Now that we have examined the genres of writing, we can move on to the list of micro- and macro-skills of writing. These skills play a crucial role in shaping the ultimate criteria for effective assessment procedures. As with listening, speaking, and reading, distinguishing between the micro- and macro-skills of writing helps us develop a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The micro-skills of writing focus on producing smaller, detailed components of written language, such as letters, words, punctuation, and syntactic structures. In contrast, the macro-skills involve larger elements of composition, including organizing ideas, developing arguments, achieving cohesion and coherence, and adapting the writing to its intended audience and purpose.

Having already studied the micro- and macro-skills of other language skills, you are now better prepared to analyze and apply these concepts to writing. This foundational knowledge not only enhances our ability to understand the writing process but also aids in designing appropriate assessment tasks. The following table presents the micro- and macro-skills of writing for your review and reflection.

Table 7*Micro- and macro skills of writing*

Microskills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.• Produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order.
Macroskills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to form and purpose.• Distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing

Note. Table shows examples of the micro skills and macro skills of writing. Toro, L., 2025.

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), these skills serve as valuable guidelines for selecting the appropriate types of writing tasks needed for assessment. The distinction between micro- and macro-skills is crucial in aligning assessment tasks with the specific goals of a writing activity.

Micro skills focus on the foundational elements of writing, such as producing legible and accurate letters, words, phrases, and syntactic units. These skills are particularly relevant when assessing imitative and intensive types of writing, where the emphasis is on accuracy, form, and control over basic language components. For example, tasks like copying a sentence, filling in the blanks, or constructing grammatically correct sentences benefit from the application of micro skills.

Macro skills, on the other hand, address the broader, more complex aspects of writing, such as organizing ideas logically, developing arguments, achieving coherence, and tailoring content to the intended audience and purpose. These skills are essential for responsive and extensive types of writing, where the focus is on meaningful communication, critical thinking, and creativity. For instance, writing an essay, a report, or a persuasive letter requires the mastery of macro skills to ensure clarity, cohesion, and effective communication.

By understanding the relationship between these skills and the types of writing, educators can design assessments that align with their objectives, ensuring that students are evaluated on the appropriate aspects of their writing proficiency.

The key to create an assessment task, among other important aspects, is to understand the basic types of writing. In the following infographic, we have the opportunity to analyze these types and their characteristics

Basic types of writing

After reviewing the information in the infographic on the basic types of writing, you might find yourself considering the key differences between these four types of writing. Indeed, as you reflect on this, it becomes clear that learners develop writing skills progressively, moving from mastering foundational elements to achieving purposeful, effective communication. This progression often includes demonstrating syntactic and lexical variety, adapting writing to specific contexts, and achieving clarity and coherence.

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) propose a variety of writing tasks that are useful for different types of writing, each designed to assess specific skills and competencies. These tasks are categorized into four main types: imitative, intensive, responsive and extensive writing tasks, addressing different levels of writing proficiency and serving distinct purposes in the assessment process.

Imitative writing focuses on foundational skills, emphasizing the mechanics of writing such as forming letters, words, and punctuation accurately. Tasks in this category include writing letters, words, and punctuation, where students replicate written text with accuracy in letter formation, proper spacing, and punctuation use. Spelling tasks and phoneme-grapheme correspondence further assess students' ability to recognize and produce correct spellings and match sounds with their written forms. These tasks are ideal for beginners or learners still developing their basic writing skills.

Examples:

- **Copying**

Copy the words below exactly as they appear.

1. **Word:** cat

Your Turn: _____

2. **Word:** sun

Your Turn: _____

3. **Word:** dog

Your Turn: _____

4. **Word:** ball

Your Turn: _____

5. **Word:** tree

Your Turn: _____

- **Listening cloze selection task: A Day at the Park**

(Audio Script)

This morning, I went to the park with my family. The sun was (1) _____, and the weather was perfect. We played a game of (2) _____ and had a picnic under a big tree. My brother saw a cute (3) _____ and gave it a treat. Later, we walked by the (4) _____ and saw some ducks swimming. It was a great day!

Dog

Shinning

Lake

Soccer



Intensive writing tasks go beyond the basics, emphasizing accuracy and control over grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. Examples include dictation and dicto-comp, where students transcribe or reconstruct passages after listening. Grammatical transformation tasks challenge learners to modify sentences based on rules like tense changes or voice shifts. Picture-cued tasks prompt students to describe or narrate using visual inputs, while vocabulary assessment tasks evaluate the use of appropriate words in sentences or paragraphs. Ordering tasks require arranging jumbled sentences or paragraphs into logical sequences, and short-answer or sentence-completion tasks involve responding to prompts or completing sentences meaningfully. These tasks are designed to refine linguistic control and suit intermediate learners.

Examples:

- Picture-cued sentence writing



Note. Adapted from Family having fun with a soccer ball [Image], by Pexels, 2020, Pexels. Retrieved from [Pexels](#). CC BY 4.0.

Describe what the family is doing in the picture.

Write a sentence about one of the children in the picture.

Describe the weather based on the image.

- Ordering tasks

I / every / English / evening / study



This / very / beautiful / is / painting



school / they / bus / day / go / by / every / to



good / finished / essay / his / he



an / meeting / we / at / today / important / are



Responsive and extensive writing tasks assess the ability to produce meaningful, connected, and purpose-driven written communication. Paraphrasing tasks involve rewriting sentences or passages in the learner's own words, demonstrating comprehension and reformulation skills. Guided question-and-answer tasks help construct coherent paragraphs through targeted prompts. Paragraph construction tasks focus on organization, coherence, and logical idea development. Strategic options encourage learners to plan, organize, and edit writing for specific purposes, while standardized tests of responsive writing include essay writing, letter composition, or other extended responses. These tasks are intended for advanced learners and evaluate their ability to express ideas effectively, engage in critical thinking, and adapt writing to various contexts.

By incorporating these tasks into assessment practices, educators can evaluate learners' writing abilities comprehensively, from foundational skills to advanced communication. Each type of task plays an essential role in supporting writing development and provides valuable insights into learners' strengths and areas needing improvement.

After reviewing the information on writing assessment tasks, please check the summary in the following PowerPoint presentation: [Presentation 5. Assessing Writing..](#)



Recommended learning activities

Dear student, after analyzing the different types of tasks for assessing reading and writing, it is time to apply what you have learned in practice.

Integrating Reading and Writing

1. Look for a short reading passage (around 150-200 words) related to a topic that is engaging and relevant to EFL learners, such as:

- A description of a popular holiday or celebration in an English-speaking country.
- A simple story about a typical day in the life of a person from a different culture.
- A basic introduction to a famous landmark or tourist destination in an English-speaking country.
- A description of a common tradition or custom in the EFL learner's country, presented in English.

2. Create related tasks to assess reading and writing skills:

- **Reading comprehension questions** (e.g., multiple-choice or short-answer questions) that assess key aspects of the passage such as main idea, details, inferences, and vocabulary.

- **Writing task** that asks students to write a brief response (e.g., summarizing the passage, writing an opinion about it, or answering a reflective question related to the reading).

Before designing the task, please reflect on the following:

- How will you ensure that the reading and writing tasks align with the learning objectives?

3. Once the task is designed, please reflect on:

- The challenges you might face when assessing students' performance.
- Ways to modify the tasks for students at different proficiency levels.

Note: please complete the activities in a class notebook or Word document.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas



Week 14

Unit 5. Assessing Language Skills

5.5 Assessing Grammar and Vocabulary

The teaching and assessment of grammar are fundamental because grammar lies at the core of effective language use. Historically, language teaching emphasized grammatical rules and structures without giving sufficient attention to the communicative purpose of language. The Grammar Translation Method, for instance, was primarily concerned with learning the structure of a language through rote memorization and translation exercises. However, contemporary approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), have shifted the focus toward meaningful communication, recognizing that grammar plays a crucial role in facilitating real-world

communication. In CLT, grammar is integrated into authentic contexts and tasks, allowing learners to understand its functional use in communication, rather than simply mastering its rules.

Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) identify three main types of assessment tasks for evaluating grammar: selected response, limited production, and extended production tasks. Each of these types of tasks offers unique ways to measure students' grammatical proficiency. Under this classification, we can distinguish a variety of tasks that range from multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank exercises to more complex tasks, such as sentence transformation or writing longer passages. These tasks not only assess grammatical accuracy but also provide insights into learners' ability to apply grammar in communicative settings.

Table 8
Basic types of grammar tasks

Selected Response	Limited Production	Extended Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• multiple-choice tasks• discrimination task• noticing tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gap-filling tasks• short-answer tasks• dialogue-completion tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• information gap tasks• role-play or simulation tasks

Note. Adapted from *Assessing Grammar* (p. 263), by Brown, D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019), Pearson.

As you may notice, some of these tasks may already be familiar to you, as we have previously explored them in earlier weeks. For instance, multiple-choice tasks are a common form of assessment in which test-takers are presented with a question or statement and asked to choose the correct response from a set of options. These tasks are widely used for their efficiency in assessing learners' knowledge and understanding of specific content, such as grammar rules or vocabulary.

Another example is discrimination tasks, which require test-takers to carefully attend to specific input—whether linguistic or non-linguistic—and then respond by selecting between or among contrasting options. These tasks assess the learner's ability to distinguish between different forms, sounds, meanings, or ideas, and are useful in evaluating more nuanced aspects of language comprehension and production. Whether focusing on distinguishing between similar vocabulary words or understanding subtle differences in sentence structures, discrimination tasks play an essential role in testing learners' ability to perceive and respond to language patterns.

In addition to these, there are other task types that we have reviewed, each serving a unique purpose in assessing grammar and language comprehension. These tasks help us measure not just the accuracy of learners' responses but also their ability to apply their knowledge in various contexts.

Examples:

- **Multiple-choice tasks.**

Instructions: Choose the correct form of the verb to complete the sentence.

Question: By the time we arrive, the meeting _____.

- A. will have started
- B. starts
- C. started
- D. has started

- **Gap-filling tasks**

Instructions: Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

Paragraph:

Every morning, Sarah _____ (wake) up at 6:00 a.m. She _____ (have) a quick breakfast and then _____



(leave) for work. Her colleagues _____ (arrive) at the office around 9:00 a.m. Sarah _____ (enjoy) working with them because they _____ (work) well together.

These examples of grammar assessment tasks serve to illustrate how to effectively design tasks that evaluate grammatical knowledge and usage.

Moving onto vocabulary, in terms of vocabulary assessment, as suggested by Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), there are several types of tasks that can be utilized to evaluate vocabulary knowledge effectively. These tasks can be designed to assess various aspects of vocabulary, such as word meaning, word form, collocation, and context. When creating tasks for assessing vocabulary, it is important to consider how each task can measure not only the recognition of words but also the ability to use them appropriately in different contexts.

To help guide the task creation process, review the information provided in the table below, which outlines the basic types of vocabulary tasks. These tasks range from more traditional formats, such as matching and gap-filling exercises, to more dynamic ones, like context-based usage and sentence formation tasks, which assess both recognition and productive use of vocabulary.

Table 9
Basic types of vocabulary tasks

Receptive Vocabulary	Productive Vocabulary
----------------------	-----------------------

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• vocabulary in a one-sentence context: high-frequency words• vocabulary in a one-sentence context: low-frequency words• vocabulary matching exercises | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fill-in-the-blank• selective deletion• cloze |
|--|--|

Note. The information in Table 9 shows examples of the basic types of vocabulary tasks. Toro, L., 2025

Comparing **Receptive Vocabulary** and **Productive Vocabulary** tasks, the former refers to the words that learners can understand when they encounter them in reading or listening, but may not necessarily be able to produce in speaking or writing. The tasks listed for receptive vocabulary focus on comprehension and recognition of words in context.

- **Vocabulary in a one-sentence context: high-frequency words:** This task assesses students' ability to recognize and understand commonly used words in a given sentence. These words are typically frequent in everyday language, and the task checks whether students can identify their meanings when they are used in context.
- **Vocabulary in a one-sentence context: low-frequency words:** Similar to the above task, but focusing on less common words. It examines how well learners understand words that are not used as frequently in everyday speech, helping to assess a more specialized or advanced vocabulary.
- **Vocabulary matching exercises:** In this task, learners are asked to match words with their meanings, definitions, or synonyms. This task helps assess the learner's ability to recognize vocabulary and understand its meaning in various contexts.
- **Selective deletion cloze:** A type of task where students fill in the blanks in a passage with the appropriate vocabulary words. This task assesses whether students can understand how specific words fit into a context and test their comprehension skills.

In contrast, **productive vocabulary** refers to the words that learners can use correctly in speaking or writing. Tasks aimed at assessing productive vocabulary focus on the ability to produce and use words actively.

- **Fill-in-the-blank:** In this task, learners are required to produce the correct word to complete a sentence or passage. This tests their ability to recall and use vocabulary appropriately in context, assessing productive use.
- **Selective deletion cloze:** While this task is listed under both receptive and productive categories, it's also valuable for productive vocabulary. In the productive context, learners are expected to generate appropriate

vocabulary words to fill in the blanks, showing their ability to actively use language in meaningful ways.

Examples:

Vocabulary matching exercises: Match the words in Column A with their correct definitions in Column B by writing the corresponding number next to the letter.

Vocabulary matching exercises.

A	B
1. Ambitious	_____ a. Eager and excited about something.
2. Fragile	_____ b. Able to be trusted or depended on.
3. Generous	_____ c. Someone who is willing to share or give freely.
4. Enthusiastic	_____ d. Easily broken or damaged.
5. Reliable	_____ e. Having a strong desire to achieve success.

Fill-in the blank: Complete the sentences below by filling in the blanks with the correct word from the word bank.

1. Sarah is always _____ about starting new projects; her energy motivates everyone around her.
2. This vase is very old and _____, so handle it with care.
3. John is known for being _____; he often shares his time and resources with those in need.
4. An _____ person sets high goals and works hard to achieve them.
5. The weather forecast is usually _____; we can trust it to plan our trip.

Word bank:

1. reliable

2. enthusiastic
3. generous
4. ambitious
5. fragile



It is time to apply your knowledge through the activity that have been proposed below:



Recommended learning activity



Self-assessing your knowledge of tasks for assessing language skills is an effective strategy to deepen your understanding and stay aligned with your learning goals. To support this process, it is advisable to complete Self-Assessment 5.



Self-assessment 5



Self-assess your understanding by choosing the correct response.

1. As a Responsive listening technique, a teacher may ask students to:
 - a. Write a brief summary.
 - b. Provide short answers to short questions.
 - c. Write some comprehension questions based on the listening.
2. Grammar assessment tasks should:
 - a. Test student's creativity and thinking ability.
 - b. Reflect real-life uses of grammar in context.
 - c. Be presented in a test with a more numerous number of items.
3. As an Extensive Listening activity, a teacher may ask students to:
 - a. Answer the comprehension questions based on the listening.
 - b. Pay attention to the use of grammar structures.
 - c. Make a list of all unknown words from the listening.

4. Oral presentations, picture-cued storytelling, retelling a story represent _____ speaking assessment:

- a. Intensive.
- b. Extensive.
- c. Narrative.



5. Responding to a question, giving directions or instructions, paraphrasing represent:

- a. Directed-response tasks.
- b. Extensive speaking tasks.
- c. Responsive speaking.



6. As an interactive speaking task, a teacher may use:

- a. Interviews or discussions.
- b. Storytelling or translations.
- c. Description of something or reading aloud.



7. Within the Extensive Reading tasks, a teacher may ask the students to:

- a. Find all phrasal verbs used in a text.
- b. Write a short summary of each paragraph of reading.
- c. Find and circle/underline all irregular verbs.



8. Writing letters, e-mails, messages, reminders, greeting cards, filling financial documents represent _____ writing:

- a. Personal.
- b. Job-related.
- c. Academic.



9. Assessment tasks that consist of copying letters, words, filling the blanks with words, form completion tasks, represent _____ writing:

- a. Responsive.
- b. Interactive.

- c. Imitative.
10. Analyze the following example and decide to which category of speaking performance it belongs. *The task includes interaction and tests comprehension but at the limited level of short conversations, standard greetings, small talks, requests, and comments.*
- a. Intensive.
 - b. Responsive.
 - c. Interactive.

Answer key



Learning outcome 4:

Designs rubrics for assessment.

Unit 6 provides learners with the tools to analyze and determine the most appropriate methods for scoring and evaluation. The resources included in this unit offer ample opportunities for reflection on the importance of scoring methods and evaluation in achieving effective learning outcomes. This approach ensures that learners can develop a deeper understanding of these strategies and their role in supporting successful assessment practices.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 15

Unit 6. Scoring and Grading Tests and Assignments

6.1 Scoring methods

According to Bachman and Dambock (2017), a scoring method outlines the approach a teacher will use to determine a student's score based on their performance. This includes the criteria for assessing the accuracy or quality of the responses, the score that will be given, and the steps to be followed in the scoring process.

The authors claim that when developing a scoring method, it is helpful to categorize students' expected responses into three types: selected responses, limited production responses, and extended production responses.

- **Selected responses** require students to choose one or more answers from several options, as seen in tasks like multiple-choice or matching exercises.

- **Limited production responses** involve answers that range from a single word or phrase to a full sentence or short utterance, typically found in short-answer or completion tasks.
- **Extended production responses** consist of longer replies, such as a paragraph or essay in writing, or a conversation or speech in speaking, typically assessed in essay exams or oral interviews.



Now that you have a clearer understanding of the types of responses students can provide, you are ready to explore the different scoring methods that can be applied.

Language tests use various types of tasks, which means there are also multiple scoring methods. These methods can generally be categorized into two types: one where the score reflects the number of tasks or items completed correctly, and another where the score is based on different levels on one or more rating scales assessing language proficiency (Bachman & Dambock, 2017).

For **selected response tasks**, such as multiple-choice or matching exercises, the authors recommend using a **scoring key** as the method for scoring. A scoring key is a predefined guide that indicates the correct answers for each item in the task. This method is effective because it allows for quick, objective scoring, ensuring consistency in how responses are evaluated. The key typically includes the correct answers and may also specify partial credit for certain responses, depending on the task's structure.

Example:

Consider a multiple-choice question in a language test:

Question:

Which of the following sentences is correct?

- a. She go to the store every day.
- b. She goes to the store every day.

- c. She going to the store every day.
- d. She gone to the store every day.

Scoring Key:

Correct answer: b) She goes to the store every day.

In this example, the scoring key indicates that option "b" is the correct answer. The scorer would mark this as correct, and any other response would be considered incorrect.

This method ensures that scoring is straightforward and consistent, which is particularly useful for large-scale assessments.

For **limited production responses**, such as short-answer questions or fill-in-the-blank tasks, a **scoring key** is also used, but it functions slightly differently from that in selected response tasks. In this case, the scoring key provides guidelines for evaluating students' answers based on specific criteria, such as correctness, completeness, or appropriateness of the response.

While a scoring key for selected response tasks provides a single correct answer, the scoring key for limited production responses may allow for some variation, as students might express their answers in different ways. This method of scoring requires evaluators to check if the student's response aligns with the expected content and level of language proficiency.

Example:

Question:

Fill in the blank with the correct form of the verb:

She _____ to the market every weekend.



Scoring Key:
Correct answer: goes

In this example, the scoring key specifies the expected response ("goes"). However, if a student writes "go" (incorrect tense) or "going" (incorrect form), they would be marked as incorrect.

Additionally, for more complex responses, the scoring key might include variations, such as acceptable synonyms or alternative phrasing that still conveys the same meaning.

Example with more variation:

Question:

What do you usually do in your free time?

Scoring Key:

Acceptable answers:

- "I read books."
- "I like to read."
- "I enjoy reading."

In this case, the scoring key provides multiple correct ways to express the same idea. Scorers would evaluate the students' answers based on their appropriateness and relevance, allowing for some flexibility in how the response is phrased.

This approach is useful for tasks where the range of possible correct answers is broader, allowing teachers to assess not only factual accuracy but also the ability to communicate effectively in the target language.

For **extended production responses**, the most commonly used scoring method is a **scoring rubric**. This method evaluates students' performance on longer and more complex tasks, such as writing essays, composing paragraphs, or



participating in oral interviews. A scoring rubric provides detailed criteria that describe various levels of performance across different aspects of the task, allowing for a more comprehensive assessment.

Key Features of a Scoring Rubric:

- 1. Criteria:** Clearly defined categories that outline the specific aspects of the response being evaluated (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, coherence, content).
- 2. Performance Levels:** Descriptions of varying degrees of quality for each criterion, often on a scale (e.g., Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor).
- 3. Descriptors:** Specific details for each performance level to guide scoring and ensure consistency.

Example of a Scoring Rubric for an Essay:

Table 10

Task: Write an essay discussing the pros and cons of social media.

Criterion	Excellent (5 points)	Good (4 points)	Fair (3 points)	Poor (2 points)
Content	Ideas are clear, relevant, and well-developed.	Ideas are clear but lack depth or detail.	Ideas are somewhat unclear or incomplete.	Ideas are irrelevant or off-topic.
Organization	Logically organized with strong transitions.	Organized but transitions are weak.	Somewhat organized, transitions are minimal.	Disorganized, difficult to follow.
Grammar Accuracy	& Few or no grammatical errors.	Some minor grammatical errors.	Noticeable errors that affect meaning.	Frequent errors that hinder understanding.
Vocabulary	Uses varied and precise vocabulary.	Uses appropriate but basic vocabulary.	Limited range vocabulary.	Repetitive or incorrect vocabulary.

Note. Table 10 illustrates an example of a Scoring Rubric for an Essay. Toro, L., 2025.

Scoring rubrics are particularly suitable for extended production tasks because they:

- Allow for a detailed evaluation of multiple dimensions of a response.
- Promote consistency in scoring.
- Provide students with clear feedback on strengths and areas for improvement.

Rubrics also ensure transparency in the assessment process, as both teachers and students can understand the expectations and scoring criteria beforehand.

To summarize this topic, I strongly recommend reviewing and analyzing the information presented in [Presentation 6. Scoring methods](#).

To gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the different types of scoring rubrics, I highly recommend carefully reviewing the information provided in the following section. This section will introduce you to the main types of rubrics, including their structure, purpose, and practical applications in assessing various language tasks.

6.2 Scoring rubrics and evaluation

A scoring rubric is a valuable tool for assessing students' performance on open-ended responses. According to Brown & Abeywickrama (2019), a scoring rubric serves as a guide that utilizes a range of criteria to evaluate students' work, providing a clear and consistent method for assessment. Unlike a scoring key, which is typically used in tasks like multiple-choice or matching exercises, a scoring rubric is more suitable for open-ended responses due to the variability in students' answers. The flexibility of rubrics allows for a more nuanced evaluation of students' ideas, reasoning, and expression. To further explore how scoring rubrics work and see practical examples.

I invite you to watch the following videos:



- [Introduction to rubrics](#)
- [Creating rubrics](#)
- [7 steps for creating rubrics](#)

The information presented in the videos has provided you with a solid understanding of scoring rubrics and their important role in assessing open-ended responses. With this foundation in mind, it is highly recommended that you explore the insights offered by the Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning on how to effectively [create and use rubrics](#). Their guidelines offer valuable recommendations for designing rubrics that are clear, fair, and aligned with learning objectives, ensuring that both teachers and students have a

shared understanding of assessment criteria. By reviewing these suggestions, you can enhance your ability to develop rubrics that foster meaningful feedback and improve the quality of student performance assessment.

After watching the videos and reviewing the article, please summarize the main ideas of each type of rubric you have studied.

Holistic rubrics:

Analytic rubrics:

Note. Please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

A global rating scale, often called a holistic scale, evaluates a student's overall performance by assigning a single score or rating that reflects the general quality or level of ability demonstrated (Bachman and Dambock, 2017). Unlike analytic rubrics, which break down performance into specific components like grammar, vocabulary, or organization, a global scale provides a comprehensive assessment without dividing the task into individual criteria.

Holistic rubrics are useful when the focus is on the overall impression of a performance, such as fluency in speaking or coherence in writing. It is also an efficient approach for large-scale assessments where detailed feedback is less critical, and the primary goal is to classify or rank students.

For example, consider a speaking task where students are asked to deliver a two-minute oral presentation on a familiar topic, such as "My Favorite Hobby." Using a global scale, the evaluator assigns a single score based on the overall quality of the presentation. A score of 5 might indicate that the presentation is clear, fluent, and well-organized, with minimal errors that do not affect meaning. A score of 4 would suggest that the presentation is mostly clear and

organized, with minor errors that do not hinder understanding. A score of 3 might represent a somewhat clear presentation, but with frequent pauses or errors that slightly affect comprehension. A score of 2 could indicate a lack of clarity and organization, with significant errors impacting understanding, while a score of 1 would reflect a presentation that is difficult to follow, with frequent errors and little evidence of preparation.

To better understand this example, please analyze the following Holistic rubric:

Table 11

Task: Deliver a 2-minute oral presentation on a familiar topic (e.g., "My Favorite Hobby").

Score	Description
5	The presentation is clear, fluent, and well-organized, with minimal errors that do not affect meaning.
4	The presentation is mostly clear and organized, with some minor errors that do not hinder understanding.
3	The presentation is somewhat clear, but frequent pauses or errors may slightly affect comprehension.
2	The presentation lacks clarity and organization, with significant errors that impact understanding.
1	The presentation is difficult to follow, with frequent errors and little evidence of preparation.

Note. Table 11 illustrates an example of a Holistic Rubric. Toro, L., 2025.

In this example, the global rating scale (Holistic rubric) provides a straightforward and efficient way to assess the presentation's overall quality. Teachers or raters consider the general impression of the student's performance and assign a score that best matches the description.

Regarding analytic rubrics, they assess a student's performance by breaking it down into specific components or criteria, such as grammar, vocabulary, organization, and fluency. Each criterion is scored separately, providing a

detailed evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of the performance. Unlike a global scale, an analytic rubric offers more precise feedback, which can help learners identify areas for improvement. This method is particularly effective for formative assessments, where detailed feedback is crucial for learning, and for tasks where specific aspects of performance need to be emphasized.

For example, imagine a speaking task where students are asked to deliver a 2-minute oral presentation on "My Favorite Hobby." An analytic rubric for this task could include the following criteria:



Table 12
Analytic Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (10 points)	Good (7 points)	Needs Improvement (5 points)	Unsatisfactory (2 points)
Content	Clear and thorough explanation with relevant details.	Clear explanation with some details.	Limited explanation, missing key details.	Unclear or incomplete explanation.
Organization	Well-organized, with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.	Organized with some minor issues.	Basic organization, but lacks clear structure.	Disorganized or no clear structure.
Pronunciation	Clear and easy to understand throughout.	Mostly clear, but with occasional mispronunciations.	Some mispronunciations, affecting understanding.	Difficult to understand due to pronunciation errors.
Fluency	Speaks smoothly without hesitation.	Occasional pauses or hesitation.	Noticeable pauses or hesitation.	Frequent pauses or hesitations.
Engagement	Maintains strong eye contact and uses gestures effectively.	Some eye contact and gestures.	Minimal eye contact or gestures.	No eye contact or gestures.

Note. Toro, V., 2025.



Now that you have gained a deeper understanding of this topic, I encourage you to reflect on the type of rubric that would be most suitable for assessing productive skills, such as speaking and writing. Would you choose a holistic or an analytic rubric? Please provide a clear explanation for your choice.



Recommended learning activity



It is time to apply your knowledge through the activities that have been proposed below:

1. Create a rubric for assessing writing skills.

- **Learning objective:** By the end of this unit, students will be able to describe the lifestyles, personality traits, preferences, and interests of inspirational people.
- **Assessment task:** Choose an inspirational person you admire. Write a short paragraph (6–8 sentences) describing their lifestyles, personality traits, preferences, and interests.

Instruction:

- a. Based on the learning objective and on the assessment task, use Chat GPT to write a prompt to create a writing rubric.
- b. Once the writing rubric is ready, review it carefully and complete the last activity.
- c. Finally, review the rubric carefully to determine whether it is appropriate for assessing the writing task or if modifications are needed. Provide clear reasons to support your analysis.

Note: please complete the activity in a class notebook or Word document.

2. To evaluate the learning acquired on this topic, I invite you to develop the self-assessment presented below.



Self-assessment 6

Self-assess your understanding by choosing the correct response.

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> A scoring method | a | require students to choose one or more responses from a variety of options. For example, multiple choice or matching tasks. |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Selected response tasks | b | guides the teacher to arrive at a score according to the students' performances. It includes the criteria for evaluating the correctness or quality of responses. |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited production response tasks | c | Require longer oral or written responses given in two sentences or longer stretches of discourse; for example, written paragraphs, essays, oral interviews, among others. |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Extended production response tasks | d | Require students to provide short answers in oral or written way. Responses may vary from a single word or words to a single sentence or utterance. Completion tasks are also included in this type of tasks. |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> A scoring key | e | are used to score limited production and extended production tasks by specifying different levels on the ability to be assessed and descriptor for each level. |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> A rating scale | f | rates general quality or general level of ability of students' performance. It provides a single rating for students' assessment performance. |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> A global rating scale | g | is used to rate students' performance considering multiple components that are rated on a separate scale. |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> An analytic rating scale | h | is used for scoring selected responses and indicates the correct responses and how many points are assigned for each correct response. |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> A multiple-choice task | i | require scoring rubrics for assessing students' performance. |
| 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing and speaking tasks | j | requires a scoring key for assessing correct responses. |

[Answer key](#)

Learning outcomes 3 and 4:

- Designs different types of items to evaluate English skills
- Designs rubrics for assessment.

Contenidos, recursos y actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas

Recuerde revisar de manera paralela los contenidos con las actividades de aprendizaje recomendadas y actividades de aprendizaje evaluadas.



Week 16

Final midterm activities

In Week 16, it is strongly recommended that you take the time to thoroughly review the content covered from Week 9 to Week 15. This review will allow you to consolidate your understanding of key concepts and ensure you are fully prepared for the final stages of the course. Pay particular attention to the self-assessments provided for Units 4, 5, and 6, as these are valuable tools for reflecting on your progress and identifying areas for further improvement. Additionally, be sure to revisit the recommended learning activities, as well as both graded and non-graded tasks. These activities were intentionally designed to offer you meaningful opportunities for learning, practice, and reflection, contributing significantly to your overall understanding of the course material.

Beyond reviewing content, it is important to incorporate effective learning strategies and self-study techniques into your preparation. Active learning methods, such as summarizing key concepts in your own words, practicing recall through self-quizzing, and discussing topics with peers, can deepen your understanding. Additionally, consider setting specific goals for your study sessions, breaking down larger topics into manageable sections, and applying time management techniques to make your study time more efficient.



Do not forget to use resources beyond your course materials, such as online videos, articles, or discussion forums, which can offer fresh perspectives and reinforce your knowledge. Lastly, ensure that you are prioritizing rest and taking breaks, as these are essential for maintaining focus and maximizing retention. By combining these strategies with the review of previous content, you will be in a strong position to enhance your learning and succeed in the final phase of the course.





4. Self-assessments

Self-assessment 1

Question	Answer	Feedback
1	a	A test is a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain. It is part of formal assessment and takes place at the end of the teaching and learning process.
2	b	Assessment is appraising or estimating the level or magnitude of some attribute of a person. Assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a wide range of methodological techniques.
3	b	An achievement test is limited to particular material addressed in a curriculum within a specific time frame and is offered after a course has focused on the objectives in question.
4	b	Formal assessments are systematic, planned sampling techniques constructed to give teacher and students an appraisal of student achievement.
5	a	Informal assessment is a kind of authentic and alternative assessment that helps teachers to track the ongoing process of their students, while formal and summative assessments are preplanned sampling techniques to provide an appraisal of students' achievement.
6	e	Informal assessment is a kind of authentic and alternative assessment that helps teachers to track the ongoing process of their students, while formal and summative assessments are preplanned sampling techniques to provide an appraisal of students' achievement.
7	c	Formative assessment evaluates students in the process of forming their competencies and skills with the goal of helping them to continue that growth process.
8	d	A proficiency test is not limited to any one course, curriculum, or single skill in the language; rather, it tests overall ability.
9	b	A diagnostic test diagnoses aspects of a language that a student needs to develop or that a course should include.
10	a	Performance-based assessment involves oral production, written production, open-ended responses, integrated performance (across skills areas), group performance, and other interactive tasks.

Self assessment



Self-assessment 2

Question	Answer	Feedback
1	d	Is an activity that requires individuals to use language to achieve a particular goal or objective.
2	e	Language teaching is the process of engaging students in language use tasks for the purpose of improving their language ability.
3	a	A language teaching/learning task is a language use task in which teachers and students engage for the purpose of improving students' language ability.
4	b	A language use task is a task whose purpose is to collect samples of students' language performance. (Note that language testers often use the term "item" with essentially the same meaning as what we call an assessment task.)
5	f	A language assessment is used in two ways. In the singular ("a language assessment"), it refers to a collection of many different individual language assessment tasks or items. As a general term ("language assessment"), it refers to the process of collecting samples of students' language performance.
6	c	A classroom-based language assessment is a language assessment that is developed and/or used by one or more teachers in the classroom.
7	h	Are decisions that lead to activities that are intended to improve instruction and learning. They can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve making changes in teaching and learning tasks, in the teaching materials, or in the teaching syllabus • involve providing feedback to students • involve placing students into different levels to facilitate instruction and learning • be made before, during or after the processes of teaching and learning.
8	g	Are decisions that are aimed at two purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancement: making sure that students who advance to the next level or course are prepared to benefit from instruction at the next level, and that students who do not advance will benefit from receiving additional instruction at the same level. • Certification: making sure that students who are certified to be at a certain level of language ability have actually achieved the appropriate level of language ability specified in the certification. Summative decisions: involve classifying students into groups; these groups may consist of, for example, students who advance or do not advance or students who are certified and those who are not.

Question Answer Feedback

- 9 j The implicit mode of assessment is: • instantaneous • continuous and cyclical • a part of classroom teaching • used mostly for formative decisions, but can also be used for summative decisions. In this mode, students are largely unaware that assessment is taking place. (This mode of assessment is sometimes referred to as "dynamic assessment" or "informal assessment.")
-
- 10 i The explicit mode of assessment is: continuous and cyclical as a separate activity from teaching, used mostly for summative decisions, but can also be used for formative decisions. In this mode, both the teacher and the students know this activity is an assessment. (This mode of assessment is sometimes referred to as "formal assessment.")
-

Self assessment



Self-assessment 3

Question	Answer	Feedback
1	b	Practicality refers to the administrative issues involved in making, giving, and scoring an assessment instrument.
2	b	A reliable test is consistent and dependable. It means that a test that is administered on different occasions to the same student should yield similar results.
3	c	Validity is the extent to which inferences made from assessment results are appropriate, meaningful, and useful in terms of the purpose of the assessment.
4	b	Authenticity is defined as the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test to the features of a target language task.
5	a	Washback is defined as the effect of testing on teaching and learning. To offer beneficial washback, we need to make sure that the assessment positively influences what and how teachers teach and what and how learners learn.
6	b	Validity is the extent to which inferences made from assessment results are appropriate, meaningful, and useful in terms of the purpose of the assessment.
7	a	Practicality refers to the administrative issues involved in making, giving, and scoring an assessment instrument.
8	c	A reliable test is consistent and dependable. It means that a test that is administered on different occasions to the same student should yield similar results.
9	a	Authenticity is defined as the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test to the features of a target language task.
10	b	Washback is defined as the effect of testing on teaching and learning. To offer beneficial washback, we need to make sure that the assessment positively influences what and how teachers teach and what and how learners learn.

Self assessment

Self-assessment 4

Question	Answer	Feedback
1	e	<p>Task characteristics are aspects or features of language use tasks that provide a way to describe the task with more precision than simply giving it a label. Tasks that are very similar will share many TCs; tasks that are very different may share few, if any, TCs. We can use three sets of TCs to systematically describe TLU tasks and assessment tasks: these TCs will make it possible for us to compare TLU and assessment tasks, in order to help us assure that our interpretations generalize to the TLU domain. The three sets of TCs are: the setting, the input, and the expected response.</p>
2	a	<p>The setting of a task consists of the circumstances under which the assessment takes place. The characteristics of the setting include: a. the physical circumstances (e.g., arrangement of the classroom, how students are seated, equipment/materials) b. the participants who will engage in the task (e.g., teacher and students, pairs or groups of students) c. the time of the task (which part of the class period, and the amount of time the task requires).</p>
3	b	<p>The input is any material contained in the task itself which students are expected to process and to which they are expected to respond. The characteristics of the input include: 1. Form 2. Language 3. Topical content.</p>
4	c	<p>The expected response is the language or non-language performance we want to elicit from the students. The reason we call this “expected response” is that students do not always respond in the way we want them to. The characteristics of the expected response include: 1. Form 2. Language 3. Topical content.</p>
5	d	<p>An assessment task template provides the basis for creating different assessment tasks that have many activities and procedures and TCs in common. It consists of: 1) a set of activities and procedures to be followed in administering the assessment, 2) a set of TCs, and 3) a recording method. Assessment tasks that are created from the same template will be consistent in their TCs and recording method.</p>
6	j	<p>A blueprint is a detailed plan that specifies the content and format of an assessment, and the procedures and instructions for administering an assessment. A blueprint includes the following components: 1. Assessment specification 2. Procedures and instructions for the whole assessment 3. Assessment task template.</p>
7	h	<p>Administrative procedures are important within assessment because they allow students to be aware of the kind of assessment they will take so their performance will provide the information the teacher looks for.</p>



Question Answer Feedback

- 8 i Instructions are an important part of assessment; they will include the following information: • the purpose for which the test results will be used • the areas of language ability that will be tested • a description of the procedures and tasks • a description of the way students' responses will be scored.
- 9 f This is defined by the activities and procedures, task characteristics (TCs), and a scoring method in an assessment task template. Multiple assessment tasks that are created by changing some of the TCs of the same assessment task template belong to the same assessment task type.
- 10 g A model assessment task is an assessment task that is created following the specifications in an assessment task template. This assessment task then serves as a basis for creating additional assessment tasks. To create additional tasks, we need to do this: a. keeping the definition of the ability to be assessed the same b. keeping the attributes of the students (e.g., age, ability level, etc.) the same c. changing one or more of the TCs.

Self assessment



Self-assessment 5

Question	Answer	Feedback
1	b	In responsive listening, lower-end listening tasks are used through a question and answer format.
2	b	Assessing grammar in context is important because to assess the knowledge of language forms, students and candidates need to be asked to use these forms in oral or written way and, of course, they need to be able to understand these forms by reading or listening to the input.
3	a	In extensive listening tasks, students or candidates are asked to complete tasks that require them to move from smaller to larger stretches of language.
4	b	In extensive speaking, students or candidates participate in complex stretches of discourse, monologues, and minimal verbal interaction is required.
5	c	In responsive speaking, interaction and test comprehension is limited to short conversations, standard greetings, and small talk, simple requests, and comments.
6	a	In interactive speaking, interaction is long and complex; for example, when students or candidates participate in interviews or discussions.
7	b	The purpose of extensive reading tasks is to tap into a learner's global understanding of a text.
8	a	Tasks that involve students or candidates in personal writing should involve topics that are familiar to them; for example, when writing letters, messages, greeting cards, among others.
9	c	At this category, the learner must attain skills in the fundamental, basic tasks of writing letters, words, punctuation, and very brief sentences.
10	b	In responsive speaking, interaction and test comprehension is limited to short conversations, standard greetings, and small talk, simple requests, and comments.

Self assessment



Self-assessment 6

Question	Answer	Feedback
1	b	A scoring method specifies how the teacher will arrive at a score on the basis of students' performances. It consists of the criteria for evaluating the correctness or quality of the students' responses, the score to be reported, and the procedures to be followed in arriving at a score.
2	a	Selected response tasks are the type of tasks that require students to select the response from a variety of options; for example, multiple-choice tasks, gap-filling, T/F among others.
3	d	In limited production response tasks, students are involved in tasks in which they provide short oral or written answers. Their responses may include single words, single sentences or utterances.
4	c	In extended production response tasks, students are involved in tasks that require longer oral or written responses. Students write two sentences or longer stretches of discourse; for example, written paragraphs, essays, oral interviews, among others.
5	h	A scoring key specifies the correct responses to assessment tasks and how many points each correct response counts.
6	e	A rating scale (sometimes called a "scoring rubric") specifies different levels on the ability to be assessed and provides descriptors for each of these levels. There are two different kinds of rating scales: global rating scales and analytic rating scales.
7	f	A global rating scale (sometimes called a "holistic" scale) is a rating scale in which the students' performance is rated in terms of its general quality or level of ability. A global scale provides a single rating or score for a student's assessment performance.
8	g	An analytic rating scale is a rating scale in which the students' performance is rated in terms of multiple components, each of which is rated on a separate scale. An analytic scale provides a "profile" of several different ratings or scores for a student's assessment performance.
9	j	Requires a scoring key for assessing correct responses.
10	i	Require scoring rubrics for assessing students' performance.

Self assessment



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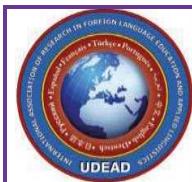
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6. Annexes

Annex 1. A conversation analytic investigation into L2 classroom interaction and informal formative assessment.



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A conversation analytic investigation into L2 classroom interaction and informal formative assessment

Nilüfer Can Daşkın¹

Hacettepe University, Ankara

Abstract

With the reconceptualization of Formative Assessment (FA) as a much more complicated, a locally situated and a dynamic process, it is now acknowledged that FA does not only involve formal practices but also informal ones which occur in and through interaction. This study adopts the term “informal formative assessment” (Ruiz-Primo, 2011) to refer to any of those FA practices emerging in and through language classroom interaction. Although the informal dimension to FA has been discussed in theory, how informal FA emerges in practice in naturally-occurring classroom interaction has not been explored adequately. While classroom interaction research neglects the relevance of their findings to FA practices, classroom-based assessment research is heavily concerned with formal FA disregarding the place of interaction in assessment practices. Aiming to bring the two kind of research together, this article, in a single case analysis, proposes Conversation Analysis (CA) for illustrating how FA informally emerges as an interactional practice in an L2 classroom. Sample data is presented from a corpus of video-recordings of an EFL class (55 classroom hours) in a preparatory school at a Turkish state university.

Keywords: informal formative assessment, classroom interaction, conversation analysis

¹ Email: can_nilufer@yahoo.com

Informal Formative Assessment and Classroom Interaction

Formative Assessment (FA) commonly defined as “assessment-for-learning” has many aspects not yet discovered. Compared to the other aspects of testing and assessment, FA has been neglected even though the interface between teaching and assessment has long been recognized (Hatipoğlu, 2010, 2013, 2015b, 2016; Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000). This is clear in the lack of consensus on the definition of FA. Black and Wiliam (1998b) have presented a definition that is most commonly referred to: “All those activities undertaken by teachers - and by their students in assessing themselves - that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities” (p.140). They later restated their definition as

Practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p.9)

Another common definition is provided by the Assessment Reform Group as “Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there” (ARG, 2002). However, in order to clarify the ambiguities and misunderstandings deriving from the definitions, an international conference on assessment for learning in Dunedin in 2009 draws on the discussion at two earlier conferences and critically examine the prevailing definitions by summing up the available ideas in a new definition to better highlight the central focus on student learning: “Assessment for Learning is part of everyday practice by students, teachers and peers that seeks, reflects upon and responds to information from dialogue, demonstration and observation in ways that enhance ongoing learning” (Klenowski, 2009, p.264).

The revisited definition of FA at the conference (Klenowski, 2009) is more comprehensive and distinct than others in bringing out five aspects of FA or assessment for learning. One is that it uses the term “everyday practice” to emphasize the interactive and dialogic nature of teaching and learning. The second aspect is that the definition lists “students” first followed by teachers and peers as they are the ultimate goal of FA which should assist them in their learning although it is the teachers who carry out the practices for FA. The other aspect is that it employs the terms “seeks, reflects upon and responds to” to underline the active nature of FA which involves not only the process of obtaining evidence of student understanding but also interpreting and acting upon this evidence. Black and Wiliam (1998a) also emphasize that for assessment to be formative and more specifically, for feedback to exist, the information about the gap between students’ current level of performance and desired level is used to close or modify the gap by making instructional adjustments. Otherwise, the information about students’ present learning state on its own cannot function as truly feedback as the original meaning of “feedback” also suggests that the information generated is used to affect future performance (Wiliam, 2011). Therefore, there are two dimensions to FA at the most basic level- one is the means through which information

is generated about students' learning state in relation to the desired goal and the other is the means through which the information is used to make decisions that would enhance ongoing learning. In the adjustments of the learning processes, FA occurs in "moments of contingency" (Black & Wiliam, 2009, p.12). These moments of contingency may require further intervention which should involve "an incursion into the representation and thought processes of the pupil to accelerate a breakthrough in understanding a new point of view or the shaping of a notion which can immediately become operative" (Perrenoud, 1998, p.97).

The other two aspects that the definition underlines are that it clearly states the various sources of evidence (i.e. information from dialogue, demonstration and observation) to show that these sources can be non-verbal as well as verbal behaviours and thus, can take place during both planned and unplanned events throughout the ongoing instructional activity and that the information provided by these sources are used to "enhance ongoing learning" by offering students the necessary help not by simply advising them to do better but by actively engaging students in a remedial work even if this work does not guarantee a complete solution (Klenowski, 2009).

Considering the FA practices in language classrooms in particular, the aspects of assessment for learning highlighted in the definition reflect those elements of formative language assessment reconsidered after the "social turn" in second language acquisition (Block, 2003; Firth & Wagner, 1997). Formative language assessment has been reconceptualised in theory as it is now recognized that unlike standardised formal assessment, formative language assessment (1) is locally situated and dynamic, (2) is co-constructed in classroom interaction and hence, is not only about language tests and paper-and-pencil procedures, (3) involves not only individual learning outcome or performance but also collective performance, (4) is integrated with teaching, (5) spontaneously and informally achieved, (6) is not simply about giving feedback in feedback/evaluation move of the IRF/E exchanges (Initiation-Response- Feedback/Evaluation) (Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) since not all evaluation moves can function truly as formative, and (7) places equal emphasis both on teachers and students as agent and decision-makers (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2009; Leung & Mohan, 2004; McNamara, 2001; Sherris, 2011; Whitehead, 2007). Similarly, Rea-Dickins and Gardner (2000) also state that

The teacher's knowledge as a result of class-based assessment is not documented in any written (e.g., curriculum) document or formal way (e.g., minutes of meetings) but appears, nonetheless, to be highly significant in the teacher's decision-making process about language development, attainment and ability of individual pupils ... (p. 231)

The revisited definition by the international conference (Klenowski, 2009) and the reconceptualization of FA in language classrooms underline the importance of interaction in and through which FA practices emerge. It is now recognized that "classroom assessment is socially constructed through interaction and as such the quality of the assessment is dependent on the interaction per se" (Anton, 2015, p.74). That is, FA is as much an informal process as a formal one and it is the study of those informal processes that are neglected. Because of the emphasis on formal FA, teachers consider FA practices as something extra and unrealistic and feel a burden on themselves (Black & Wiliam, 1998a) but if they reconsider what they already

do in the classroom, they will figure out that they are continuously and spontaneously assessing their learners. With regard to this, Ruiz-Primo (2011) asserts that “much of what teachers and students do in the classroom can be described as potential assessments that can provide evidence about the students’ level of understanding” (p.15). As well as assessments and tests formally applied for formative purposes, everyday instructional activities enacted in and through classroom interaction can also serve the purpose of FA.

A number of terms have been used to make a distinction between formal and planned FA and informal and spontaneous FA practices. Ellis (2003) comes up with incidental FA in relation to planned FA which involves direct testing of language knowledge and describes it as being “implemented through the instructional conversations that arise between teachers and students during normal classroom pedagogical activity” (Ellis, 2003, p. 314). Sherris (2011, p.59) uses the term “spontaneous formative language assessment” to explain those practices of FA that take place spontaneously through interaction in language classrooms. Finally, Ruiz-Primo (2011) employs the expression “informal formative assessment” to reframe much of classroom interaction as “assessment conversations, or dialogic interactions or exchanges, which continuously happen in the classroom” and describes it as an “unceremonious type of formative assessment” (p.15). For the purposes of this study, the term “informal formative assessment” is adopted to refer to any of those FA practices emerging in language classroom interaction. This term is preferred over incidental and spontaneous FA since it more clearly emphasizes FA practices occurring in and through interaction while spontaneous or incidental FA is ambiguous in that it can also be carried out in formal ways. For example, a teacher can spontaneously decide to ask students to answer some questions in the form of a quiz or test. Therefore, informal FA better encompasses those practices that are carried out not only spontaneously but also through unconventional means (i.e. everyday classroom interaction).

Unlike formal FA, informal FA involves the teacher interpreting evidence about students’ understanding and acting in response to this evidence quickly, spontaneously and flexibly. It is rather more frequent as it is an important part of classroom interaction and does not require the use of formally designed assessment instrument or task. For this reason, informal FA practices are usually not recorded formally. Besides, Ruiz-Primo (2011) reframes instructional dialogues which take place to verify and clarify student understanding as “assessment conversations” and describes these conversations as “dialogues that embed assessment into an activity already occurring in the classroom” (p.17). In other words, they are integrated into everyday classroom practice. Assessment conversations display students’ understanding or learning state so that teachers can recognize and act on it by shaping the instructional activities in order to enhance learning. However, in spite of the revisited definition of FA and its reconceptualization in theory which emphasize the informal dimension to FA embedded in classroom interaction, how in practice FA emerges informally in naturally-occurring classroom interaction has not been investigated adequately.

Considering informal FA in L2 classrooms in particular, it is quite neglected relative to formal FA practices. On the one hand, the literature is heavily based on the discussion of standardized testing and assessment whether administered for formative purposes or not (Black & William, 1998b; Fulcher, 2012) and such discussion is not applicable to classroom practices. Where the functions and importance of FA is discussed, it is done so in relation to

progress or achievement tests and standardized formal testing (Anton, 2015; Fulcher, 2012; Leung & Mohan, 2004; Rea-Dickins & Gardner, 2000) although an informal dimension to classroom-based FA largely exists. Many language testing courses and textbooks do not go beyond the such commonly emphasized topics as test construction, analysis of tests, measuring the four skills, validity, item analysis etc. (Brown & Bailey, 2008). Fulcher (2012) also points out the inadequacy of many testing textbooks for presenting the techniques in large-scale standardized testing as the needs of classroom teachers. While there has been an interest in measurement issues such as validity and reliability in classroom-based assessment to critically examine the relation of classroom-based assessment to the demands of standardized assessment (e.g. Cohen, 1994; Brown & Hudson, 1998; Gipps, 1994; Teasdale & Leung, 2000), not much has been revealed regarding the formative aspects of the actual classroom practices. As Leung and Mohan (2004) put forward “special features of the formative and for-learning perspective are likely to be lost if it is assimilated into a standardized assessment paradigm” and thus “there is a need to examine in depth the formative teacher for-learning assessment issues in their own right if we are to understand how the formative aspects are actually accomplished in classroom interaction” (p.337). As for the research methodology adopted in the study of FA, many studies on FA are experimental and thus, quantitative not revealing the complexity of classroom interaction in relation to assessment and learning. In their review article, Black and William (1998a) reveal that most of the studies investigate the effect of FA practices on learning in an experimental design and show significant learning gains. Ruiz-Primo (2011) in her review show that where qualitative studies are conducted on FA, many involve observation rather than the micro-analytic investigation of classroom interaction and hence, calls for sequential analysis.

As well as the skills and knowledge required of teachers to prepare and administer tests, teachers also need to develop the interactional competence necessary for classroom-based FA practices. Therefore, interactional competence needed for effective classroom-based assessment practices should be discussed as part of assessment literacy which involves the range of skills and knowledge that stakeholders need in order to deal with the new world of assessment (Stiggins, 1991). However, studies on FA and assessment literacy do not discuss the interactional competence required for effective classroom-based assessment practices. In order to define assessment literacy more broadly, the studies have used surveys whether in the form of closed or constructed response items and quantitative treatment (Fulcher, 2012; Hasselgreen, Carlsen & Helness, 2004; Plake & Impara, 1993) but have not included the analyses of the actual classroom interaction with regard to assessment practices. In addition to asking teachers about their perceptions or practices regarding classroom-based assessment, there is a need to analyse what they exactly do in the actual classroom interaction for assessment practices about which they may or may not be aware of. Besides, it is found that teachers had more problems with classroom-based assessment than with formal evaluation and that they needed training on classroom-based assessment (Hatipoğlu, 2010, 2015a, 2015b, 2017). However, before training teachers, what those classroom-based assessment practices involve need to be described extensively so that teacher educators know what to present to teachers.

On the other hand, there are those studies that investigate L2 classroom interaction but do not discuss their findings in terms of FA. Investigation of classroom interaction has received great attention and has been carried out from various perspectives. While the early studies of classroom interaction focused on the observation and description of interaction using coding schemes, the later research involved interactionist (e.g. the study of negotiation of meaning, corrective feedback in second language acquisition), sociolinguistic, sociocultural and conversation analytic orientation to the study of classroom interaction. However, although most of these studies are relevant for classroom-based assessment processes and can reveal important aspects of those processes, they have not been concerned with assessment (Anton, 2015). In fact, the relevance of their findings is inevitable since “assessment is an integral part of every aspect of teaching and learning and this is particularly evident in the analysis of classroom interaction” (Anton, 2015, p.76).

As a result, considering the gap between classroom interaction and classroom-based assessment research, this article, through a single case analysis, proposes Conversation Analysis (CA) as a methodology for illustrating how FA informally emerges as an interactional practice in the moment-by-moment unfolding of classroom interaction. Different from the studies in the field, this study uses CA as a methodology which involves a micro-analytic investigation of naturally occurring data from an emic perspective revealing details that otherwise might go unnoticed.

Conversation Analysis

This study proposes CA as a research methodology to empirically investigate informal FA practices occurring in and through classroom interaction. Unlike interaction and discourse analysis which usually involve the use of coding systems and observer's or researcher's interpretation of events rather than that of participants (i.e. etic perspective), CA does not impose any predetermined categories and by its nature, it is based on the principle that social contexts are not static but are dynamically created by the participants through their use of language and by the sequential organization of interaction (Walsh, 2011).

Conversation Analysis (CA) is defined as “the study of recorded, naturally occurring talk-in-interaction” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p.12) and draws on the following principles (Seedhouse, 2004): (1) interaction is structurally and systematically organized, (2) contributions to interactions are “context-shaped and context-renewing”, that is “any one contribution is both shaped by and shapes the context in which it occurs, which means that any understanding of turns-at-talk can only take place by reference to the sequential environment in which they occur” (Walsh & Li, 2013, p.5), (3) analysis is bottom-up and data driven, i.e. the data “speak for themselves” (Walsh, 2002, p.7) with no theoretical assumptions and preconceived categories in mind (i.e. emic perspective), (4) the details in talk are important to capture a full view of the interaction requiring a detailed micro-analysis of naturally occurring data from an emic perspective. CA argues that participants use “methods” such as turn-taking, sequence organisation, repair, and preference organisation to display their understanding of each other's utterances (i.e. to display mutual understanding/intersubjectivity) (Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010). Both the participants and the

analysts have access to the same resources. In other words, the analysts gain access to the participants' display of understanding to each other by reference to the interactional organisations just like the participants display their understanding and orient to each other's utterances also by reference to such organisations. This brings us to one of the most important principles of CA that is developing an emic perspective in analysis (Seedhouse, 2005). As Sert (2015) points out

emic perspective in analysing social interaction requires that only participants' orientations to each other's utterances should be used to make claims on social phenomena, rather than their given identities (e.g. teacher, French, Muslim etc.), the researcher's assumptions, or *a priori* etic (i.e. exogenous, external) theories. (p.10)

Overall, CA offers "fitting lens" through which a detailed scrutiny of actual conduct can be achieved (Waring, 2011).

After the social turn in language acquisition, CA has had an important place in SLA literature in the late 1990s and hence, has come to be known as CA-SLA (Kasper & Wagner, 2011; Markee & Kasper, 2004) which aims to show "how learning is constructed by the use of interactional resources and to explicate the progress of their learning and their socially distributed cognition or intersubjectivity" (Seedhouse, 2005). Although the central goal of FA is to enhance learning, studies of FA rarely define "learning". This study uses the term "learning" in the sense CA-SLA employs it. Foreign/second language (L2) learning from a CA perspective builds on the view of language as a resource for interaction and cognition as socially distributed and situated. From a CA-SLA perspective, language learning is not viewed as a cognitive, individual phenomenon but is defined as "a change in a socially-displayed cognitive state" (Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010, p.127). It is embedded, situated and co-constructed in the turn-by-turn unfolding of social interaction and at least part of it is embodied in interaction suggesting that part of this learning as a social process is analysable and observable through such elements as repair, hesitation, repetition, turn-taking and sequential organization as well as non-verbal behaviour (e.g. gaze, gesture, body orientation and the manipulation of objects) (Pekarek Doehler, 2010; Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010). The researcher in CA-SLA tries to bring evidence for learners' understanding with reference to such interactional organisation and in this way aims to reveal the common interactional practices through which these understandings are co-constructed and thus, to demonstrate the "micro-moments of language learning" (Sert, 2015, p.33). Therefore, L2 learning is "a sociocognitive process that is embedded in the context of locally accomplished social practices" and involves not only the internalisation of linguistic knowledge but also "the continuous adaptation of linguistic and other semiotic resources in response to locally emergent communicative needs" (Pekarek Doehler, 2010, p.106).

CA-SLA does not deny that learning takes place in the mind of individuals and that it is biologically determined but it argues that learning cannot be independent of social interactional dimensions and is co-constructed and emergent in the micro-details of social interaction (Pekarek Doehler, 2010). Because CA-SLA does not aim to bring evidence for what is happening in the brain regarding language learning, many studies in this field refrain from using the word "learning" alone and rather use the terms "learning behaviour" (Markee,

2008) and “learning state” (Seedhouse & Walsh, 2010) to refer to the behavioural and social dimensions of learning. In this study as well, rather than using the word “learning”, “learning behaviours” which refer to the interactional process and procedure of learning and “learning state” which refers to the learning of language items or patterns as a product are preferred.

Review of Literature

It has already been noted that there is a gap between classroom interaction research and classroom-based assessment research. While the former does not discuss the relevance of their findings to FA practises, the latter does not empirically illustrate the informal FA practises occurring in and through real classroom interaction. From an interactionist point of view, there are studies in mainstream SLA investigating teacher feedback, recasts and negotiation of meaning usually under experimental conditions but they do not reframe them as formative assessment (e.g. Mackey, 2012; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Oliver, 1998). As for those studies investigating naturally occurring classroom interaction, many have been interested in using conversation analysis for the micro analytic investigation of the relation between interaction and learning (e.g. Koshik, 2002; Markee, 2004; Sert, 2011, 2013; Waring, 2008). Some of these studies reveal patterns for Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC) (Can-Daşkın, 2015a; Sert, 2015; Walsh, 2002, 2006, 2011, 2012; Walsh & Li, 2013) defined as “teachers’ and learners’ ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning” (Walsh, 2011, p.158). Although CIC studies have uncovered some components of interactional competence needed for successful L2 instruction, they have not been concerned with the interactional competence required for classroom-interaction based assessment practices or with the implications of their findings for such practices. In other words, the ways teachers informally assess learners in and through interaction for formative purposes have not been examined and discussed as part of CIC.

Only a few of the studies analyse naturally occurring classroom interaction from the perspective of interaction hypothesis or systemic functional linguistics and highlight the importance of interaction for classroom-based formative assessment (Leung & Mohan, 2004; Sherris, 2011). From the perspective of interaction hypothesis, Sherris (2011) shows how such communicative strategies as recasts and clarification requests reflect and constitute spontaneous formative assessment. From the perspective of systemic functional linguistics, Leung & Mohan (2004) show how formative teacher for learning assessment focus on students’ decision-making, student processes and interaction. However, there has been no conversation analytic study on the practices of informal FA. Therefore, as well as planned or systematically designed formal assessment or tests which have long been an issue in literature on FA (e.g. Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Weir, 1993), there is a need to reveal patterns for informal FA in actual classroom interaction.

Sample Analysis

In this study, sample data is presented from a corpus of video-recordings of an EFL class (55 classroom hours) in a preparatory school at a state university. The corpus is

established for a larger project that set out to investigate teacher-student interactional practices but the unmotivated examination of the data has revealed the relevance of some of the extracts to informal FA practices. So, the selected extract is transcribed using the transcription system adopted from Gail Jefferson (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008) (See Appendix) and Conversation Analysis (CA) is used as the data analysis method.

The class that was recorded was at an intermediate level of English and consisted of 32 students (7 males, 25 females). The students were taking the course to develop their English language skills and knowledge so that they could move to their own departments. The teacher had a teaching experience for more than six years and held an MA degree in the field of English language teaching. After the students and the teacher gave their consent for the data collection, the class was recorded using three cameras and four audio recorders accompanied by the researcher's non-participant observation for seven weeks.

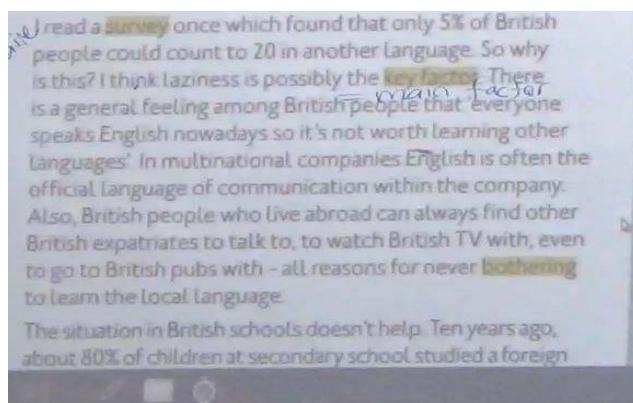
In the analysis of the following extract, the sequential analysis is presented first followed by the discussion of the analysis in relation to informal FA practices. In the analysed extract, the teacher goes over the highlighted words in a text given in the coursebook by asking students to guess their meaning from the context. They are up to the word "bothering" as highlighted in the text and the teacher presents it in relation to its another meaning they worked on earlier.

Extract: bother

- 1 T1: şimdî biz çok hızlı geçtik bothering'i
 2 biz daha önce rob ve jenny arasındaki diyaloglardan
 3 hatırlarsak
 now, we didn't spend much time on "bothering"
 if you remember from the dialogues between
 1#rob and jenny earlier
 4 T1: [şu kalibi gördük
 we worked on this fixed expression
 5 EM: [ºrahatsız olmak°
 to be bothered
 6 MD: i'm sorry to bother you= #1
 7 T1: =sorry to: (.) bother you demişti rob.
 said rob
 #1 (lines 4-7) T1 writes "sorry to bother you" on the board as she articulates it
 8 → telefon görüşmesinde hangi anlamdaydı o?
 what did it mean in the phone call?
 +makes a phone call hand gesture

9 (1.1)
10 MS: rahatsız etmek
to bother
11 T1: rahatsız ettiğim için üzgünüm diyo rahatsız etmek
12 anlamındaydı=
*it says i'm sorry to bother you it had the meaning
"to bother"*
13 T1: =burada anlamı farklı
it has a different meaning here

+points at "bothering" on the board- "bothering" is highlighted in the text in their coursebook
and the text is projected on the board



((T1 answers HU's question about the number of the page in
their coursebook that they are working on))

14 (4.0)
15 T1: burada uğraşmak (.) çabalamak anlamı var
it has the meaning "to try" "to deal" here
16 trying gibi.
like
+writes "trying" under the word "bothering" on the board
17 ne diyo (.)^{2#}all reasons bunlar neyin nedenleriymis
*what does it say "all reasons" they are the reasons
for what*

- 18 for never bothering to learn the local language^{#2}
 #2 (lines 22-23) T1 points at the relevant words in the sentence projected on the board as she
 reads it out
- 19 [genelde öğrenmemenin=
 usually for not learning
- 20 ıB: [genelde öğrenmeme
 usually for not learning
- 21 T1: =öğrenmeye uğrasmamanın bütün nedenleri diyor.
- 22 böyle bir çaba böyle bir zahmete girmiyorlar.
 it says all reasons for never bothering to learn.
 they do not make such an effort.

The extract begins with the teacher's remark that "bothering" is an expression they studied earlier as it was used in a dialogue between Rob and Jenny. In Turkish, she explicitly reminds students of this dialogue and mentions that they could not spend much time on the expression "bother" when they were working on the dialogue (lines 1-3). In this way, she implies that it is not an expression about which the students have no idea at all and that it is now time to study it more thoroughly. Here, she openly employs Reference to a Past Learning Event (RPLE) (Can Daşkin, 2015b) which is an interactional resource employed by the teacher who spontaneously diverges from the main focus of the activity to language items and topics presented in a past learning event usually to check on students' past knowledge and/or to deal with trouble sources in students' learning states in and through classroom interaction. RPLE in lines 1-3 is marked by the Turkish expressions "hatırlarsak" (if you remember) and "daha önce" (earlier) and the past tense particle (-tik attached to "geç") and the first person plural "biz". In line 4, she continues with her action of RPLE as she shows that the students encountered the word "bother" in a past learning event as part of the fixed expression "sorry to bother you" and starts writing the fixed expression on the board (#1). Overlapping with the teacher's talk in line 4 and her action of writing on the board, EM with a soft tone of voice provides a partly inaccurate Turkish translation of the expression in line 5 although she is not asked to do so (*rahatsız olmak*). The translation expresses the meaning of the passive form of the fixed expression (i.e. to be bothered) rather than the meaning of "to bother somebody" and thus, to some degree displays lack of understanding of the target expression. However, her turn is not oriented to by the teacher who most probably could not hear her talk. Before the teacher completes writing the expression on the board, MD in line 6 offers the complete fixed expression (*i'm sorry to bother you*) and demonstrates his knowledge of the expression. Latching MD's turn, the teacher, simultaneous with her action of writing on the board, articulates the whole expression and adds that it is what Rob said in the dialogue. In her same turn in line 8, she, in Turkish, asks students about the meaning of "bother" as used as part of the fixed expression in the phone call in the dialogue. By resorting to RPLE in line 8, she takes the opportunity to check whether the students can recall the meaning of the expression previously encountered. At the onset of her question, she makes a phone call hand

gesture to illustrate the meaning of her question and to emphasize that she is asking about the meaning of the expression that is used in the context of a phone call. After 1.1 seconds of silence, MS delivers the Turkish meaning of “bother” (*rahatsız etmek*). By providing the Turkish meaning, MS aligns with the teacher’s turn in line 8 in which the teacher also posed the question in Turkish. The teacher in the follow-up turn accepts MS’s response by producing the translation of the whole expression first (*rahatsız ettiğim için üzgünüm*) and then in her next TCU, she repeats the Turkish expression MS provided for the word “bother” (lines 11-12). As well as repeating, she also marks that the Turkish expression “rahatsız etmek” is what “bother” meant in the particular dialogue studied in a past learning event and thus, by using past tense, she once again employs RPLE.

In line 13, the teacher continues with her turn and diverts the attention from the past learning event to the new context through the Turkish indexical “burada” (here) which initiates the transition to the new context in relation to students’ past learning experience. She turns to the text projected on the board and as she points at the highlighted word “bothering”, she specifies that the word has a different meaning in this particular new context. After HU’s question about the page number that the teacher refers to in the coursebook and the teacher’s dealing with this procedural trouble followed by 4 seconds of silence, the teacher gets back to the explanation she initiated in line 13 and completes it in lines 15-22. In line 15, she provides the Turkish words which correspond to the meaning of “bothering” used in the new context. In the next line, she offers the English synonym “trying” for “bothering” to make sure that the students understand the use of “bothering” in a new context in relation to what they are familiar with. Simultaneous with her articulation of “trying”, she also writes it under the word “bothering” on the board. In her next TCU in line 17, the teacher this time progresses to the meaning of “bothering” at sentence level. That is, she now focuses on the sentence in which “bothering” is used and the kind of meaning the word “bothering” gives to the sentence. In doing so, she reads out the first part of the sentence (all reasons) and translates it into Turkish (*bunlar neyin nedenleriymiş*) and then reads out the rest of the sentence in line 18 (for never bothering to learn the local language) as she points at the relevant words in the sentence projected on the board (#2). In her next TCU, she starts delivering the Turkish translation of the part of the sentence she has just read out and the part that includes the word “bothering” (lines 21-22). In line 20, IB in overlapping turns with the teacher also starts providing the translation but then lets the teacher complete it.

The analysed extract demonstrates how informal FA is carried out in a specific instructional setting. Although the aim of the activity is to guess the meaning of the highlighted words (i.e. in this case the meaning of “to bother”) given in a text, the teacher does not initiate with the main activity but puts it on hold and instead initiates the sequence through RPLE to set the ground for the main activity. After presenting the fixed expression “sorry to bother you” and reminding the students of the context in which the expression was studied and which, thus, constitutes a past learning event, the teacher in line 8 asks students about the meaning of the expression. In this way, she checks whether the students can remember the meaning of the expression presented in a past learning event. One aspect of informal FA is evident in line 8- that is obtaining information about students’ learning state in and through interaction by spontaneously diverging from the main focus of the activity so that

necessary measures can be taken before the main activity. MS's response in line 10 on behalf of the whole class shows positive evidence of their learning state as the teacher also confirms it in the subsequent turn. If the students' responses revealed gap in their knowledge and hence, required treatment, then the teacher would most probably initiate repair by making instructional adjustments but here building on students' past knowledge of "bother", she proceeds with the main activity by presenting a new use of the same expression (i.e. to bother to do something). It is only after she elicits a correct response regarding the meaning of "sorry to bother you" studied earlier that she proceeds with the present activity and marks that the word "bother" emerging in the new activity is not the one they encountered before. In fact, EM's partially inaccurate response in line 5 and with only MS responding, many students remaining silent to the teacher's question of RPLE in line 8 do display some kind of trouble in understanding the meaning of the previously studied expression "sorry to bother you". However, as the nature of "multilogue" in such an instructional setting entails (Schwab, 2011), the teacher's bringing up this expression has reference to not only those who directly participate in the interaction but also all the others and thus, may have enhanced the learning state of many students though this cannot be directly claimed based on the interactional data available.

With respect to the revisited definition of FA discussed above, the question of RPLE in line 8 spontaneously emerges as preliminary to the main activity and thus, as embedded in an everyday classroom practice in order to seek evidence of students' knowledge of a previously studied expression that is important for the transition to the new learning context in which a new use of the same expression is presented. In this way, the teacher can use the evidence obtained to decide whether there is any repairable or trouble source in students' learning state since the presence of a repairable may indicate trouble with the transition to the main activity. It can be said that the teacher's action in line 8 acts as a precautionary measure and may prevent the occurrence of a trouble both with the previously taught item and with its relevant form in the new learning event and the connection between the two uses of the same expression. By having access to students' understanding of an earlier expression, the teacher tries to enhance the understanding of a different use of the same expression by prompting students to distinguish between the two uses of the expression. In this way, her action of assessing learners' past knowledge is formative as it is this past knowledge that the teacher builds on in the main activity which is initiated and presented in comparison with or in relation to a past learning experience proving that FA does not always have a retrospective function as it does not necessarily deal with incorrect learner responses and learning difficulties but uses correct responses to shape the subsequent instructional activity. Unlike the conventional understanding of FA, it is not simply about saying right or wrong for the students' responses and making corrections. Lastly, different from formal FA which requires the use of specially designed assessment instruments at pre-specified times, the practice of informal FA as evident in the analysed extract is embedded into an everyday instructional activity which involves guessing the meaning of highlighted words in a given text and emerges in and through interaction quickly and spontaneously by means of which the flow of the activity is shaped.

Conclusion

This study highlights the place of interaction in informal FA practices in an L2 classroom and calls for conversation analytic studies to empirically reveal the complexity of interaction lying behind such practices by analysing naturally occurring classroom data and eventually to encourage a connection between classroom interaction research and classroom-based assessment research. That is, this study calls for classroom-based assessment and assessment literacy studies to better reveal the role of interaction and interactional competence and the classroom-interaction studies to reframe or discuss their analysis in the light of assessment practices. For this reason, this study has illustrated the connection between interaction and FA in an L2 classroom through a single case analysis and has partly discussed the interactional competence needed for such classroom-based assessment practices as informal FA. The analysis has shown that the interactional competence required for informal FA is an integral part of teacher Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC) (Walsh, 2002). The teacher assessing learners' past knowledge in and through interaction to seek evidence of their learning state and then using this evidence to make decisions about moving on with the actual instructional activity and thus, to lay the ground for the new learning context displays how she uses interaction as a tool to assess, as a result of which to assist learning. While CIC discusses the role of interaction in creating learning opportunities, it should also extend to discussing the place of interaction in assessment practices which, in turn, can generate learning opportunities.

The analysis in this study has shown that for a teacher who is supposed to be concerned with students' learning, informal FA emerges spontaneously in and through interaction and hence, FA practices are not something extra. In fact, the analysis proves that such practices occur even in traditional L2 classrooms which are teacher-fronted and grammar oriented. Rather than simply saying right or wrong for students' responses, the teacher in the analysis uses students' responses to make the transition to a new learning context and enhances the quality of feedback. By assessing learners' past knowledge, the teacher creates an opportunity for pupils to express their knowledge and understanding which initiates an interaction through which FA shapes learning. Such a practice also allows the students to reflect on their own learning and encourages them to make a distinction between their past learning experience of a language item (i.e. to bother somebody) and their present learning experience of a different use of the same item (i.e. to bother to do something). As a result, this study proves that interaction "empowers teachers with assessment tools that are more meaningful to the classroom context and provides a different dimension of learning not easily captured by traditional means of assessment" (Anton, 2015, p.86).

This study has important implications for teacher education which should help teacher trainees gain an understanding of the relationship between interaction and assessment so that they can better understand the context and enhance learning. The data and its analysis in this study can also be used to help teacher trainees gain insight into informal FA practices emerging in and through classroom interaction and the interactional competence needed for such practices. As for further research, conversation analytic studies that track learning behaviour as a result of assessment practices by analysing longitudinal data are required and

thus, considered to better reveal the extent to which informal FA practices do enhance learning.

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Appendix. Transcription Conventions

Adapted from Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008)

- (1.8) Numbers enclosed in parentheses indicate a pause. The number represents the number of seconds of duration of the pause, to one decimal place. A pause of less than 0.2 seconds is marked by (.)
- [] Brackets around portions of utterances show that those portions overlap with a portion of another speaker's utterance.
- = An equal sign is used to show that there is no time lapse between the portions connected by the equal signs. This is used where a second speaker begins their utterance just at the moment when the first speaker finishes.
- :: A colon after a vowel or a word is used to show that the sound is extended. The number of colons shows the length of the extension.
- (hm, hh) These are onomatopoeic representations of the audible exhalation of air)
- .hh This indicates an audible inhalation of air, for example, as a gasp. The more h's, the longer the in-breath.
- ? A question mark indicates that there is slightly rising intonation.
- . A period indicates that there is slightly falling intonation.
- , A comma indicates a continuation of tone.
- A dash indicates an abrupt cut off, where the speaker stopped speaking suddenly.
- ↑ ↓ Up or down arrows are used to indicate that there is sharply rising or falling intonation. The arrow is placed just before the syllable in which the change in intonation occurs.
- Under Underlines indicate speaker emphasis on the underlined portion of the word.
- CAPS Capital letters indicate that the speaker spoke the capitalized portion of the utterance at a higher volume than the speaker's normal volume.
- ° This indicates an utterance that is much softer than the normal speech of the speaker. This symbol will appear at the beginning and at the end of the utterance in question.
- > <, <> 'Greater than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they surround was noticeably faster, or slower than the surrounding talk.
- (would) When a word appears in parentheses, it indicates that the transcriber has guessed as to what was said, because it was indecipherable on the tape. If the transcriber was unable to guess what was said, nothing appears within the parentheses.
- fC'monf Sterling signs are used to indicate a smiley or jokey voice.

- + marks the onset of a non-verbal action (e.g. shift of gaze, pointing)
- italics* English translation

Another Convention by Balaman (2016):

- 1#...#1 The onset and offset point of the non-verbal activity accompanying the talk