

# English (ELT) On Language Testing and Evaluation

BY

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## LANGUAGE TESTING AND EVALUATION

'Testing' the word sometimes frightens teachers as well as students. For teachers it is because it suggests statistics.

Teachers are of a feeling that they cannot make up tests that are fair and appropriate, particularly in a given span of time and slot. The word testing frightens students, partly because they are scared of an unknown test and also about being exposed of their iniciency if they fail.

Testing is nothing but trying to check the capability of student in different ways. It could be an oral test or a written test. It depends on the teacher what type of test goes well with the young learners. It is an unavoidable part of the curriculum. But the word test is taken in different context by different people. Testing is an unavoidable part of the curriculum. But it can be made interesting. This is a very taskful job because before the students get to know the way they would be tested they mentally prepare themselves in a negative manner. This has to be completely erased from their tender minds. They should be tested in such a manner that it keeps their interest in studies alive otherwise it leaves a bad impact on the tender minds of the young learners.

Tests in education should be purposefully related to what the schools are trying to accomplish. For this it is very important to carry the testing techniques beyond the desk, chalkboard, and classroom to the broader world of experience. The purpose of any test should be to measure variance in performances of various sorts. The language plays a crucial pivotal role the curriculum and the tests are largely dependent upon the language.

It the foremost duty of the concerned teacher to make the students feel at home. The most important reason for testing is to get information, motivation and reassurance from time to time and only tests can provide this. But at the same time, the testing that takes place may be often unnecessary, inappropriate misleading harmful in a various ways. This leads to undesirable results. This can be done in a better and a appropriate way by initially establishing 'WHY' a test is necessary before anything else is considered. Once this is

done selection of n appropriate procedure follows easily and naturally.

All tests are for a purpose. A test that is made up without a clear idea of what it is for, is no good. Test has no intrinsic value in themself. Tests are only worth having if they measure accurately what has to be measured and when. Here the mental ability of the student has to be measured, not the physical characteristics like the height and weight. There should be the comparison of the mental ability of one student with the other.

A test would need to be very comprehensive. It should be purposefully related to what the schools are trying to accomplish. For this to accomplish the teachers should to come out of the confined zone of chalkboard, class-room teaching to the border radius of experience. The tests and the curriculum for the learners should be set in such a manner it serves the interest of students. The purpose of the test should be to measure the variance in performance of various sort, it should be the purpose of curriculum designers as well.

In any case language plays a major role. This should be the most important fact while testing the young learners. The learner can be grade4d according to the language used in most cases.

Although the students often complain about having to take tests, they actually benefit from them in more ways than one. Firstly, test motivates the students to pay closer attention to the material especially in case of a quiz. Also it serves as an inducement for students to review their material and to sort out the rules. Preparation for test stimulates though about the material in quiz.

The test gives the young learners an opportunity to see how well they perform. The students may feel that they are very good in all the subjects. Unless the test is given the young learner doesn't come out of the zone of over confidence. Ideally, they learn something about their areas of strength and about the areas where they are weak and could work in those areas. These tests help the teachers as well. They can concentrate on the students who don't fair well in the tests and can bring about great change in the learners caliber. They can very well check for any discrepancies between expectations and actual performance. Only this way the teacher's analysis

on the student's performance by testing gives way to point out the weakness in the teaching, in learning or writing. It is easy to know if there is a problem in all the three. Then the teacher could immediately start working on the different areas individually or collectively.

### **IMPORTANCE OF TESTING:**

Testing is an important tool to measure the student's proficiency in any subject. It is an important part of every teaching and learning experience. Testing makes the students to realize the mistakes they commit and hence work on it.

First of all testing should be made to maintain the interest among the young learners. It has to create positive attitude towards the class. Periodic evaluation provides the students with the sense of accomplishment and would end the feeling of dissatisfaction. Tests of appropriate difficulty announced well in advance and covering skills scheduled to be evaluated, could also contribute to a positive tone.

Testing benefits the young learners in other ways as well. Testing helps the students master the language. They are helped, of course, when they study for exams and again when exams are written and discussed. Tests can foster learning too, by their diagnostic characteristics: They confirm what they wrote is correct or not and try to concentrate on the area which needs immediate attention. Naturally, a better awareness of course objectives and personal language needs could help the students to prioritise their aims and objectives. This stands absolutely true in the case of dictation.

Here the teacher's reads out notes and ask the students to write it fast to check how good they are at writing. Here the learners can check how he/she is in writing the notes could check the areas where he/she is weak and try to rectify them – Tests helps the students to learn the language perfectly making them to study hard.

The importance of conducting the test should be realised by the students. The teachers play a major role here teacher could set realistic goals for test and general and for specific items in particular well-made tests of English can help students in at least two ways. First of all, such test can help create positive attitudes towards your class. Students would be motivated and would have that sense of accomplishment.

In early 1970s students in the intensive ESL program were being taught from an unstructured conversation based test. Here students were not satisfied stating that they were "not learning anything". Very soon, periodic evaluation

provided them with the sense of accomplishment that ended their dissatisfaction. Tests of appropriate difficulty announced well in advance and covering skills scheduled to be evaluated, can also contribute to a positive tone by demonstrating your spirit of fair play and consistency with course objectives.

A second way that English tests can benefit students is by helping them master the language. They are helped, of course, when they study for exams and again when exams are written and discussed. When various tests are given, learning would be enhanced and also the awareness would be emphasized. Tests can poster learning, too by their diagnostic characteristics. In short, properly made tests can help[ create positive attitude towards instruction by giving students a sense of accomplishment and a feeling that the teacher's evaluation of them matches what he has taught them. Proper testing also help student learn the language by requiring them to study hard, emphasizing course objectives and showing them where to improve and how to improve. One logical step would be for a student to concentrate on the meaning of trouble some words, especially in a spoken context learning to spell the words correctly or recognize them in a printed context would become a second priority long testing symposium pub Oxford University.

Tests conducted would help students a sense of accomplishment and a feeling that the teacher's evaluation of them matches and with what was taught good English tests can also help students learn the language by requiring them to study hard emphasizing course objectives, and showing them where the students need to improve. Good tests can sustain or entrance class morale and aid learning.

### **RECENT HISTORICAL TRENDS IN TESTING:**

Program on press language  
New Directions in language testing  
Y.P.Lee Techniques in testing Harold S.Madsen  
Oxford University press. There are kinds of testing. By conducting these different tests the actual caliber of the student can be evaluated. Performance testing: This test by its very nature tends to involve testing a task holistically. The level of performance is decided in this test. The following is a brief description of the other test as well.

Another interesting way of testing the young learners is to give them a situation. The teacher should tell them just half the situation and ask the students to complete it that is give the situation an appropriate ending. This tends the students to

bring out their creativity by giving different ending to the situation. Every learner would come up with different ending to the given situation. This also enhances their creativity and also improves the level of their thinking. Such activity based tests are the need of the hour. This helps the teacher to understand the psychology of the students perfectly. This test also gives the teachers a platform to ascertain or to prepare the next few years' course design.

#### **INDIVIDUAL TESTING:**

Oral –repetition could be most useful for students who cannot read or write English, because they can simply listen to what the teacher says to them and then repeat it. The teacher should read out loud a passage slightly above their reading level.

This reading should be taped. At the outset the students should be asked to what they have heard just to ensure that the learner tries to read the passage with comprehension. The teacher could then play back the recording and could chart errors of omission and correct the pronunciation. This kind of testing helps the teacher to correct an error in reading. Oral repetition is one of the easiest of all exams to prepare.

#### **MOD LANGUAGE TESTING**

In the beginning students should be expected to develop primarily the skills of listening and speaking.

As much as possible, the time given over to classroom testing should provide a rewarding experience. The test should furnish an opportunity for the students to show how well they can handle

specific elements of the target language; gone are the days when the teacher designed a test to point out the student's ignorance.

Tests should be distiguently announced in advance to permit the students to prepare adequately. In the entire learning process it would be best if the learner's performance is immediately checked and errors pointed out by analyzing the mistakes made on a given test, the teacher could easily determine where to concentrate and how best to assist the students and it also helps the teacher to discover whether the class objectives are being met.

Through frequent testing the teacher could determine which aspects in the lesson is difficult for the students. There could be various other ways of testing the young learner. They could be given a series of pictures in which a man sits on a recently painted bench and asked to narrate story or create some other story according the given picture. This surely enhances the creative ability of the learners. Pictures of the objects which are genially used in day-to day works could be drawn and the students could be asked to write the name of the object against it.

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