THE CRITIQUE AND ANALYSIS BASED ON THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

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Abstract: *This discusses the role of assessment in language learning. Assessment is an integral part of learning languages in order to check students` comprehension and acquisition. There are 5 five main principles of assessment. This given test is analyzed according to these five principles. It can help to check the appropriateness of the testing to the main principles.*

Keywords: *assessment, critique, reliability, practicality, validity, authenticity, washback, feedback, summative, and formative summative.*

Assessment is an important and inseparable part of the teaching process in any educational setting. There are some reasons such as assessing knowledge, diagnosing what students have already acquired, or knowing the needs to teach or learn in the future. In these cases, assessment can be both summative and formative according to the requirements of the educational site. Formerly, all assessments had been focused on grammar and vocabulary than other integrated skills at school. Therefore, students had difficulty in acquiring other English proficiency skills after graduating the school. Moreover, these kinds of tests could not provide real evidence of students` knowledge. Currently, all institutions are paying attention to improving students` integrated skills, which are necessary for their both social and economic prestige. Considering these requirements, more tests focused on speaking, writing, reading, and listening are being conducted in the chosen educational setting. Particularly, they are more concentrating on improving their listening and reading in this term. Regarding that, I decided to choose a test based on checking reading comprehension for their control work.

The test for reading was developed in their curriculum and approved by their teaching staff to check students` acquisition of reading during the term. This test includes 6 multiple-choice and 7 gap filling related vocabulary exercises divided into two parts. In multiple-choice task, students are required to select the appropriate responses for the given questions. On the other hand, students need to fill in the empty blanks by using new words given in the reading text. When this test was conducted for a group consisting of 15 students in one class, some students had difficulty in comprehending task and doing it. As my participant is eager to learn English and has a good knowledge on the subject, he could manage to do the best. However, other students who have some problems with vocabulary and understanding the reading text were lacking in this task. When it was discussed, the participant mentioned that he felt uneasy while writing the answers in some cases, but he could manage it by guessing some answers.

Considering all aspects of the test, this test needs to be revised according to Brown`s 5 important principles of assessment. According to that, every method of testing should be based on 5 principles such as, practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity and washback.

If the test covers all the criteria, there will be faced with any problem for learners to do and teachers to assess.

According to Mousavi (2009), "Practical test should consider both time and cost to construct and administer and needs to be easy of scoring and reporting the results. Although this test meets the needs of practicality in terms of easy to score and interpreting the results, it is still lacking in time limit. The time given was not enough to manage the task, as the participant complained about this.

Reliability is another important principle of assessment, emphasizing on the notion that if the test is implemented in several times in a class, it should give similar results. Moreover, it should possess a clear rubric to assess the students` abilities considering the factors such as the student, the scoring, the test administration, and the test itself (Bachman 1990). This was the first time that they have been assessed by reading test so far. For that reason, they became anxious that they had no clear instruction for this test. As this task was easier for some learners and difficult for others, it did not match the requirements of rater reliability.

In terms of validity, Samuel Messick (1989) stated "Validity is an integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to support the appropriateness of actions based on text scores." In the reading test tasks, test may be focused on not checking reading comprehension but, other background knowledge of a subject. Considering that, the test chosen by school authority was not valid as it consisted of vocabulary exercises in most parts. Moreover, the test was not contextualized, it means that it was not related to topic, which they acquired then. The topic was very new for them by making them more difficult.

When it comes to authenticity, Bachman and Palmer mentioned that "Authenticity is the correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task for the features of a target language task". This test is not authentic, as the tasks should be selected from real-world sources that students encounter.

Washback is another point in assessing. It should give both negative and positive feedback for the students to comprehend their mistakes. However, this task should not provide any washback for the students.

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