TESTING AND ASSESSMENT IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Testing is the process of seeing how a test taker match up to a standard or standards; the abilities, knowledge or skills, targeted by the test, are known, and the levels are known; there is a set of clear, transparent testing guidelines to follow to see how a test taker fit in with others taking the same test, or against a set of given criteria. Assessment refers to the systematic process of evaluating and measuring collected data and information on students' language knowledge, understanding, and ability in order to improve their language learning and development. Assessment is also the process of measuring an individual's performance on a given task in order to make inferences about his/her abilities. It can take different forms including tests, quizzes, interviews, written samples, observations, and so on [1].

Testing and assessment techniques are widely used in European practice of language education. In European countries, national services to monitor the quality of education are created; systematic researches in the field of pedagogical assessment are under way. For example, the purpose of European Association for Language Testing and Assessment (EALTA) is to promote the understanding of theoretical principles of language testing and assessment and the improvement and sharing of testing and assessment practices throughout Europe; the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE) unites language test providers who work together to promote the fair and accurate assessment of linguistic ability across Europe and beyond – ALTE organizes courses and conferences [2] on aspects of language assessment and operates a quality auditing system of European language examinations.

According to [3], a major paradigm shift has occurred in testing in the past few decades and that is to ask language teachers to include both tests (given at a single point in time) and assessments (continuous, ongoing evaluation) in language programs.

This activity should be based on testing and assessment literacy which requires essential knowledge in constructing and implementing reliable test items in terms of the principles of test design, test specifications, reliability, validity, and standardization. Test development process includes specifying the purpose of the test, developing frameworks describing the knowledge and skills to be tested, building test specifications, creating potential test items and scoring rubrics, etc. [1].

References:

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