

Second lecture

The characteristics of communicative

A- Language tests

It has been known that language is a means for communication and the main need of most learners is not for theoretical or analytical knowledge of the target language, but for an ability to function effectively through the target language in meaningful settings and contexts.

So, this approach to language testing considers language to be interactive, purposive, authentic, context..... and has to be assessed in terms of behavioral outcomes.

The main characteristics and the following:

- 1- Authenticity of texts and situations is an important aspect. This means that the texts must be exposed to text written by real authors for real purposes and appropriate for real situations unsimplified language (non doctored , genuine texts should be used as inputs .**
- 2- Communicative testing requires an integrated performance from the students involving communication under realistic linguistic, situational, cultural and effective constraints.**
- 3- It should involve information gap activities where texts have to process new information as they might do in real life situation.**
- 4- It has to rely on qualitative not quantitative modes of assessment.**
- 5- It has to be criterion-referenced based on a set of tasks to show whether or not or how well students can perform a set of specified.**

6- It has to be unpredictable, purposive and context.....

7- The commitment to making tests communicative entails a high degree of explicitness both at the test design stage where one is concerned with the required result and at the evaluation stage where one is estimating the required result.

8- It has to involve inter subjectivity where the task should involve the texts both as language receiver and producer.

It should be noted that the important role of context as a determinant of communicative language ability is stressed and an integrative approach to assessment as against a decontextulised approach is advocated. Language cannot be meaningful if it is devoid of context (linguistic, discoursal and sociocultural)

B- Norm-reference & criterion reference tests :

- Norm-referenced test :

Compares student's performance to other student in the same group. This type of test is often used to compare groups of students to all students in a particular school district, state or country. They are indispensable when the aim of testing is selection or grading results in public examination. So, the student's performance is compared in relation to other students (norm-group).

- Criterion-referenced test :

It is a mastery test designed to establish how many learners have achieved a certain standard, or whether an individual has performed a given task. It develops a set of specific learning objectives and scores. This type of test reflects the number of objectives a test-taker has successfully completed. So, it is used for guidance and diagnosis. The student's performance is compared to a pre-established criterion or set of objectives to make a mastery/non-mastery decision.