

LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT AND ACTIVITIES FOR BETTER LEARNING

Abdillah

Abstract

Assesment menurut pemahaman tradisional merujuk pada pengawasan yang dilakukan pada siswa untuk mengetahui sejauh mana siswa dapat menguasai tujuan atau target dari suatu matapelajaran. Hal ini sangat berbeda dengan pengertian modern yang juga mencakup penggunaan asesment untuk memberikan informasi bagaimana guru melakukan proses pembelajaran, kegiatan yang dilakukan dan untuk perbaikan proses pembelajaran yang dilakukan melalui umpan balik. Sama halnya dengan assesmen yang dilakukan pada pengajaran bahasa yang dilakukan secara menyeluruh dan terintegrasi agar pembelajaran bahasa yang dilakukan menjadi lebih baik.

A. BACKGROUND

Assessment, in traditional teaching and learning in classroom, sometimes called "black box" (Black and William, 1998)¹. This term is famous in past few years in England to refers assessment just for monitoring students' performance against targets or objective of the subject. While in the modern assessment the function of the assessment not only to gain objectives of the subject but also includes using assessment to inform next steps of teaching and to improve teaching and learning process through feedback and turning assessment into a learning event.

In traditional meaning assessment, this is possibly still used in our class now, used to categorize among clever students and stupid students, how much students mastering the material and event pass or fail. This kind of assessment hardly ever use the results of assessment to give the feedback for teaching and learning process and how should students control their own learning and prepare their learning skills.

Even though traditional forms of assessment can provide valid measures of students' performance, such as content validity, construct validity and face validity, they often fail to provide the kind of information that the typical classroom teachers are interested in, namely what the students *can* do in their foreign language. Because of this, an *alternative* to the traditional forms of assessment has been proposed in recent years. This new form of assessment focuses more on measuring learner's ability to use language holistically in real-life situations and is typically carried out continuously over a period of time. In this way, a more accurate picture of students' language profile can be obtained.

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. This paper's intent is to discuss the meaning of assessment based on the modern research, language assessment, the implementation of assessment, and activities in language learning.

B. DISCUSSION

1. THE MEANING OF LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Sometimes teachers, including the writers, get confused with the meaning of *evaluation*, *assessment*, *measurement*, and *test*. *Evaluation* is the process of systematically assessing the design, implementation and impact of programs, policies or projects. Evaluation determines the efficacy of a program and how well it has been implemented. In addition, evaluation can produce data or results that can help promote a program and its services (Shane Hall)².

Evaluation is also to identify whether a planned program has achieved its goal or not, valuable or not, or efficient or not. In other words, evaluation concerns the value judgments.

Assessment according to Hanna (1993) in Adi Suryanto (2008)³ is the process of collecting, interpreting, and synthesizing information to aid in decision making. Assessment concerns with the application of various ways and instruments to get the information on how far students have achieved the pre-determined competence. So, assessment answers the question, 'How well is the achievement of someone?' The result of an assessment can be described qualitatively (statement by using words), or quantitatively (using numbers).

Measurement is limited quantitative descriptions of pupil behavior, that is the result of measurements are always expressed in numbers. In other hand measurement is an effort to get numeric description on how far a student has achieved the competence. Measurement concerns the determination of quantitative value (Nitko: 1983 in Adi Suryanto: 2008).⁴

While Test according to online dictionary is a series of questions or problems designed to test a specific skill or knowledge.⁵ Test is one of the assessment instruments designed and applied at a certain time and place, and with certain conditions.

Language assessment is the way to measure student learning of languages. It is a gauge of what a student knows and/or can do and, more indirectly, of how well instruction is proceeding. Language assessment is part of a system for establishing what an economy, province, or state will establish as the framework for instruction. Language assessment should be based on Language Policies and Language Content Standards, which make clear what students will be expected to know and be able to do as a result of having participating in language learning experience. Language Performance Standards are important because they determine which areas and levels of performance by the students will be examined in order to assess their learning. The assessment may cover listening, speaking, reading, writing or cultural understanding. It may place equal weight on knowledge (understanding how the language works theoretically) and proficiency (ability to use the language practically), or may give greater weight to one or the other.⁶

Interest in the use of nontraditional forms of assessment in the classroom reflects the changing paradigm in education in general and in foreign language teaching in particular. Old paradigm in assessment tent to assess learners in mastering structure or grammar, teacher-centered, teaching language as separated skill of speaking, listening, reading and writing, product oriented by achieving the mastering target language, and doing test for these reasons. Old paradigm and new paradigm of assessment can be described as follows based on the explanation from Richards (2004) with modifications⁷:

Old Paradigm	New Paradigm
1. Focus on grammar	1. Focus on communication
2. Teacher-centered	2. Learner-centered
3. Separated skill	3. Integrated skills

4. Product Oriented	4. Process Oriented
5. Right answer, one solution	5. Open answers, multiple solutions
6. Tests for pass or fail	6. Tests that also teach

Based on the above explanation, it can be seen that new paradigm of language assessment focused on communication, learner centered, integrated skill, process oriented in teaching and learning process, open answers and multiply solutions and test that also teach and feed back as well. An alternative or authentic assessment is different from traditional testing in that it actually asks students to show what they can do. Students are evaluated on what they *integrate* and *produce* rather than on what they are able to recall and *reproduce*. The main goal of authentic assessment is to 'gather evidence about how students are approaching, processing, and completing real-life tasks in particular domain.

2. AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

In 1935, the distinguished educator Ralph Tyler proposed an "enlarged concept of student evaluation," encompassing other approaches besides tests and quizzes. He urged teachers to sample learning by collecting products of their efforts throughout the year. That practice has evolved into what is today termed "authentic assessment," which encompasses a range of approaches including portfolio assessment, journals and logs, products, videotapes of performances, and projects.

Authentic assessments have many potential benefits. Diane Hart, in her excellent introduction to *Authentic Assessment: A Handbook for Educators*, suggested the following benefits:

1. Students assume an active role in the assessment process. This shift in emphasis may result in reduced test anxiety and enhanced self-esteem.
2. Authentic assessment can be successfully used with students of varying cultural backgrounds, learning styles, and academic ability.
3. Tasks used in authentic assessment are more interesting and reflective of students' daily lives.
4. Ultimately, a more positive attitude toward school and learning may evolve.
5. Authentic assessment promotes a more student-centered approach to teaching.
6. Teachers assume a larger role in the assessment process than through traditional testing programs. This involvement is more likely to assure the evaluation process reflects course goals and objectives.

7. Authentic assessment provides valuable information to the teacher on student progress as well as the success of instruction.
8. Parents will more readily understand authentic assessments than the abstract percentiles, grade equivalents, and other measures of standardized tests.⁸

Authentic assessments are new to most students. They may be suspicious at first; years of conditioning with paper-pencil tests, searching for the single right answer, are not easily undone. Authentic assessments require a new way of perceiving learning and evaluation. The role of the teacher also changes. Specific assignments or tasks to be evaluated and the assessment criteria need to be clearly identified at the start. It may be best to begin on a small scale. Introduce authentic assessments in one area (for example, on homework assignments) and progress in small steps as students adapt.

3. THE TECHNIQUES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING ASSESSMENT

There are many techniques of English language learning assessment. These techniques are different from one technique to other techniques based on the language skills and level of difficulties and condition of the environment of the school as well.

1. Listening

Larry Alan Nadid⁹ says that listening is part of communication theory that expressing our wants, feelings, thoughts and opinions clearly and effectively is only half of the communication process needed for interpersonal effectiveness. The other half is listening and understanding what others communicate to us. When a person decides to communicate with another person, he/she does so to fulfill a need. The person wants something, feels discomfort, and/or has feelings or thoughts about something. In deciding to communicate, the person selects the method or code which he/she believes will effectively deliver the message to the other person. The code used to send the message can be either verbal or nonverbal. When the other person receives the coded message, they go through the process of decoding or interpreting it into understanding and meaning. Effective communication exists between two people when the receiver interprets and understands the sender's message in the same way the sender intended it.

Larry Alan Nadid also says that there are three basic listening modes: *first*, *Competitive* or *Combative Listening* happens when we are more interested in promoting our own point of view than in understanding or exploring someone else's view. We either listen for openings to take the floor, or for flaws or weak

points we can attack. As we pretend to pay attention we are impatiently waiting for an opening, or internally formulating our rebuttal and planning our devastating comeback that will destroy their argument and make us the victor. *Second*, In Passive or Attentive Listening we are genuinely interested in hearing and understanding the other person's point of view. We are attentive and passively listen. We assume that we heard and understand correctly, but stay passive and do not verify it. *Third*, Active or Reflective Listening is the single most useful and important listening skill. In active listening we are also genuinely interested in understanding what the other person is thinking, feeling, wanting or what the message means, and we are active in checking out our understanding before we respond with our own new message. We restate or paraphrase our understanding of their message and reflect it back to the sender for verification. This verification or feedback process is what distinguishes active listening and makes it effective.

The best ways to train our students listening skills is by using authentic material that are available and easy to access from internet. Some activities that can be done in the class for listening are as follows:

Hearing involves the accurate reception of sounds. To hear, students must focus your attention on the speaker, discriminate among sounds, and concentrate. Chapter 3 introduces the physiological aspects of hearing and the principles that govern attention. In addition to learning techniques that improve your concentration, students will also be introduced to the effects of listener apprehension and the importance of nonverbal attending behaviours.¹⁰

Understanding. The ability to understand what students hear, listening comprehension, improves with practice. A number of processes involved in comprehension are intrapersonal; that is, they take place inside your head. This section familiarizes students with the nature of human information processing and the concept of inner speech. Students learn guidelines to help you improve your understanding of message as students develop strategies to build their vocabulary, ask appropriate questions, and take efficient notes.

Remembering. There has been a great deal of research on memory. Remembering is essential if you intend to apply what students have heard in future situations. This chapter acquaints you with the three basic memory systems and the work that has been done in listening training and assessment with regard to the memory process. Students will learn key techniques for retaining and recalling information as well as the obstacles that inhibit memory. Creative approaches to problem-solving are also addressed.

Interpreting. When students interpret message they do two things. First, students take into accounts the total communication context so that students are better able to understand the meaning of what is said from the speaker's point of view. Their ability to empathize, or to see a situation from the other person's perspective, requires that you pay attention to emotional meaning and to the communicate context. Second, effective listeners let their partners know that they have been understood. This chapter, then, introduces students to topics related to nonverbal communication such as facial expression, body posture, eye behaviour, silence, and vocal cues so that students can develop greater sensitive to these important dimensions of the communication context.

Evaluating. Students listen from a unique point of view and are influenced by their perceptual filters- their past experiences, attitudes, personal values, and predispositions. It is therefore impossible not to evaluate, to some extent, everything hearing. Understanding the principles of logic and reasoning, and recognizing bias, stereotyping, propaganda, and other factors that may influence the conclusions they draw, is essential. Effective listeners, as they might suspect, deliberately reduce the influence of their own view- point until they have first understood the speaker's ideas. Objectively, in this sense, is prerequisite to making wise evaluations. This unit sensitises tem to language and propaganda, and provides guidelines for assessing speaker credibility.

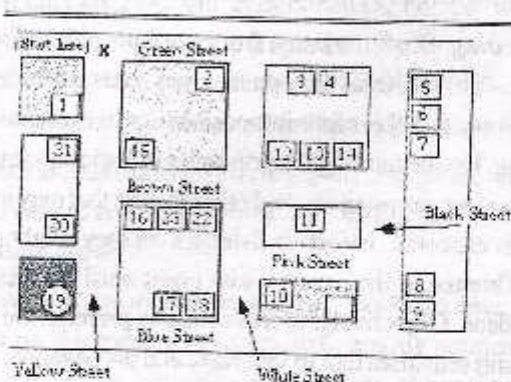
Responding. Students partner makes judgements regarding the quality of their listening based largely on the nature of their response. As students will learn, our approach to communication views each participant as both speaker and listener. The model incorporates their response as an integral part of the listening process. This approach suggests that effective listeners analyze the communication situation and purpose, and then choose an appropriate response from among alternatives. Once again, students can see the listening is prerequisite to formulating an appropriate response.

a). Short Listening Exercises

Easy	Medium
Animal Sounds	Bus Schedule *
Dates 1	Directions 3
Directions 1	Finding the Right Job
Families	Locations
	Numbers 2

Greetings and Introductions	Ordering at a Restaurant
Names 1	Person, Place, or Thing 1
Names 2	Person, Place, or Thing 2
Numbers 1	Pronunciation (h/v)
	Pronunciation (f/v)

Example: Instructions: Study the map before you begin. For each question, listen to the speaker giving directions to different places on the map by pressing the "PLAY" link, and then choose the correct answer.!!



b) Completing the sentences with the things mentioned from audio / video player

Complete the sentences!

(The students complete the sentences with the words in brackets which are mentioned from audio / video player)

1. Mention three to describe your sister
2. How long.....to your office
3. Where are.....? I am (country)
4. What color (favorite color)
5. The kind ofdo you like (fruits)

c) Answer question based on audio. First students will hear the audio and then the questions will follow. Listen carefully and answer the questions

1. How many days do James (Jim) and Joey work?
2. What time do they usually get up in the morning?

3. What do they do after breakfast?
4. When does Jim get to work?
5. Why does Joey get to work at 9:20 a.m.?
6. What does Joey do at 10:00 o'clock?
7. What does Jim do at 9:05 a.m.?
8. What time does he write business reports?
9. Where do they meet for lunch?

d) Dictation (4-6 sentences, for example: recount)

James and his wife, Joey are a happy couple. They have a daughter. Their daughter is very young. She is one year old. James and Joey work from Monday to Friday. They usually get up early in the morning. At 8:35 A.M, Joey makes breakfast.

e) Getting specific information from short oral text

The teacher asks the students to read the following incomplete sentences carefully

A: What's his ...?

B: Michele

A: Where do you ...?

B: Melbourne

A: How old is he?

B: ...

A: What's his favorite sport?

B: ...

A: Is he American?

B: No, ...

To be able to fill in the blank spaces, the students have to listen to the information read by the speaker

f) Completing missing word from speakers in monolog via internet.

2. SPEAKING

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. It, like the other skills, is more complicated than it seems at first and involves more than just pronouncing words. To measure speaking ability, the valid way is to ask the students to speak, not write. Therefore, to measure speaking ability the teacher has to make students speak or do oral activity. By speaking, the teacher can observe the students' ability to apply all components of speaking skill such as: the ability to express ideas by using vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation correctly and fluently). The following are sample of speaking tasks that the teacher might apply in classroom:

Interactive speaking situations include face-to-face conversations and telephone calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking, and in which we have a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from our conversation partner. Some speaking situations are partially interactive, such as when giving a speech to a live audience, where the convention is that the audience does not interrupt the speech. The speaker nevertheless can see the audience and judge from the expressions on their faces and body language whether or not he or she is being understood.

Here are some of the micro-skills involved in speaking. The speaker has to:

- pronounce the distinctive sounds of a language clearly enough so that people can distinguish them. This includes making tonal distinctions.
- use stress and rhythmic patterns, and intonation patterns of the language clearly enough so that people can understand what is said.
- use the correct forms of words. This may mean, for example, changes in the tense, case, or gender.
- put words together in correct word order.
- use vocabulary appropriately.
- use the register or language variety that is appropriate to the situation and the relationship to the conversation partner.
- make clear to the listener the main sentence constituents, such as subject, verb, object, by whatever means the language uses.
- make the main ideas stand out from supporting ideas or information.
- make the discourse hang together so that people can follow what you are saying.

The activities that can be done in the class as follows:

a). Asking questions

Kenneth Beare stated that many post beginner to lower intermediate students are quite capable of expressing their ideas reasonably well. However, they often run into problems when asking questions. This is due to a number of causes: i.e., teachers are the ones that usually ask questions, the inversion of the auxiliary verb and subject can be especially tricky for many students. This simple lesson focuses specifically on the question form and helping students gain skill while switching tenses in the question form.

Intensive auxiliary review followed by student gap question exercises. The outline are:

- Focus on auxiliary verb usage by making a number of statements in tenses the students are familiar with. Ask students to identify the auxiliary verb in each case.
- Ask a student or students to explain the underlying scheme of the object question form (i.e., ? word Auxiliary Subject Verb). Have students give a number of examples in different tenses.
- Split students up into pairs. Distribute worksheet and ask students to ask an appropriate questions for the given answer taking turns.
- Follow-up check of questions either by circulating through the student pairs or as a group.
- Ask students to each take the second exercise (one for Student A the other for Student B) and complete the gaps by asking their partner for the missing information.
- Solidify question forms by quickly playing a verb inversion game using the various tenses (i.e., Teacher: I live in the city. Student: Where do you live? etc.)

Exercise 1: Ask an appropriate question for the response

- A steak, please.
- Oh, I stayed at home and watched tv.
- She is reading a book at the moment.
- We are going to visit France.
- I usually get up at 7 o'clock.
- No, he is single.
- For about 2 years.
- I was washing up when he arrived.

Exercise 2: Ask questions to fill the gaps with the missing information

Student A

Frank was born in _____ (where?) in 1977. He went to school in Buenos Aires for _____ (how long?) before moving to Denver. He misses _____ (what?), but he enjoys studying and living in Denver. In fact, he _____ (what?) in Denver for over 4 years. Currently, he _____ (what?) at the University of Colorado where he is going to receive his Bachelor of Science next _____ (when?). After he receives his degree, he is going to return to Buenos Aires to marry _____ (who?) and begin a career in research. Alice _____ (what?) at the University in Buenos Aires and is also going to receive _____ (what?) next May. They met in _____ (where?) in 1995 while they were hiking together in the _____ (where?). They have been engaged for _____ (how long?).

Student B

Frank was born in Buenos Aires in _____ (when?). He went to school in _____ (where?) for 12 years before moving to _____ (where?). He misses living in Buenos Aires, but he enjoys _____ (what?) in Denver. In fact, he has lived in Denver for _____ (how long?). Currently, he is studying at the _____ (where?) where he is going to receive his _____ (what?) next June. After he receives his degree, he is going to return to _____ (where?) to marry his fiance Alice and begin a career in _____ (what?). Alice studies Art History at the _____ (where?) and is also going to receive a degree in Art History next _____ (when?). They met in Peru in _____ (when?) while they _____ (what?) together in the Andes. They have been engaged for three years.

b) students to spell and pronounce the words correctly

There are various ways we can do to make students perform their ability to spell, for example by answering questions: Can you spell your name please? The teacher can also ask students to do simple questions and answers in pairs on how to spell words or phrases in the list that is only owned by the person who questions. By this activity, the teacher can measure two skills at once: the ability of the person who asks questions in pronouncing the words and the ability of the person who answers in spelling the words mentioned by questioner.

c) Doing simple dialogues and simple questions and answers

To do this, the teacher can use various stimuli, for example by using pictures, situation, maps, etc. The activity can be done through 'simulation or role play' or by using 'models' of dialogue provided by the teacher.

Asking to meet

"Are you available on the 17th?"

"Can we meet on the 16th?"

"How does the 3rd sound to you?"

"Are you free next week?"

"Would Friday suit you?"

"Is next Tuesday convenient for you?"

"What about sometime next week?"

Agreeing on a date

"Yes, Thursday is fine."

"Thursday suits me."

"Thursday would be perfect."

Suggesting a different date

"I'm afraid I can't on the 3rd. What about the 6th?"

"I'm sorry, I won't be able to make it on Monday. Could we meet on Tuesday instead?"

"Ah, Wednesday is going to be a little difficult. I'd much prefer Friday, if that's alright with you."

"I really don't think I can on the 17th. Can we meet up on the 19th?"

Setting a time

"What sort of time would suit you?"

"Is 3pm a good time for you?"

"If possible, I'd like to meet in the morning."

"How does 2pm sound to you?"

Changing the arrangement

"You know we were going to meet next Friday? Well, I'm very sorry, but something urgent has come up."

"I'm afraid that I'm not going to be able to meet you after all. Can we fix another time?"

"Something has just cropped up and I won't be able to meet you this afternoon. Can we make another time?"

3. READING

Reading is one of receptive skills which is very significant nowadays. Expanded knowledge and information demand someone to improve his/her reading. It is not just a visual activity, nor a simple matter of decoding to sound. But there are two sources of information are essential for reading, visual information and non visual information (Smith, 1978:10). These sources are very helpful for the students to comprehend a text in reading.

There are some strategies in reading that must be had by the students. For example: surveying a text, underlining key concepts/ideas, listing related details, and making useful set of notes for quick reference. Surveying a text is to know how the text of reading by look at the cover, headings, pictures, and even questions about the ideas of the text. Underlining key concept/ideas and listing related details will help the students to know the content of the text in general and details. And making some notes while they are reading, they can make the students easier to comprehend the text of reading itself.

Furthermore, Lamb and Johnson (2003) say about other strategies, skimming and scanning, which can be used by the students in reading comprehension. Skimming is used to quickly identify the main ideas of the text. The readers might read the title, subtitles, subheading, the first and the last paragraph, summarizes, and illustrations. This technique is useful when seeking specific information from the text. While scanning is a technique the readers often use when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. They use it for searching key words or ideas. In scanning, it involves moving eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words or phrases. It also can use to look for the author's use of organizers such as numbers, letters, and steps. By using both of them, they can help the students to find out specific information and left unimportant ideas in the text. Besides, Addison (2003) gives addition to some strategies that must be paid attention by the students in reading comprehension. They are non-verbal signals, structure of texts, structure of paragraph, punctuation, author's viewpoint, determining the meaning of words, and summarizing.

Reading as well as listening belongs to receptive skill, that is the skill to understand messages. In listening, the activity is to understand oral messages, while in reading the activity is to understand written messages. Therefore, the techniques used in listening are also applicable in reading. Some sample tasks are:

1. Getting information through objective test

2. Getting information through essay test
3. Reading assessment to understand rhetoric steps in certain genres
4. Story or text retelling:

Students retell main ideas or selected details of text experienced through reading

Reading aloud

One of the indicators in the current curriculum is reading aloud (story telling). The students are asked to read written passages with correct pronunciation and correct intonation. From this activity, the teacher can also know whether the students understand the meaning of the words they are reading.

Before the students read the passage, the teacher should prepare the observation format consisting of components such as: fluency, intonation, word stress, and correct pronunciation.

4. WRITING

Writing is a means of communicating ideas and information. The responsibility lies on the teacher's shoulders to enhance their students' abilities to express themselves effectively. In order for students to communicate well they need to have to expand their cognitive academic language proficiency level (CALP). CALP contains the genres of power that leads to success. It is important for students to learn how to think critically and creatively. It is the teacher's responsibility to initiate this thought process. Writing improves a person's ability to think concisely and clearly. Students learn to organize their ideas in a cohesive and flowing manner. Writing is an essential part of the developing child.

The ability to write can be gained through tasks and needs much time. Writing is regarded as the process which goes on continuously consisting of: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. The teacher provides sample kinds of writing (such as: short messages, narrative texts, recount texts, descriptive texts, etc). The teacher discusses these texts with the students, the students try to produce their own texts, improves them, edits them, until they produce their best writing (text).

The exercises of writing can be organized in such a way that the students will concentrate on only one thing (e.g. organization, grammar, vocabulary choice, etc.) at a time. For each type of mistake, we first repeat the information presented in detail in Paragraph Development and The Essay, and then provide a writing exercise about it. For each type, the students first sees the original

writing. Then, they corrects the writing by typing in the text box provided, and then sees the teacher-corrected version. The teacher-corrected version is only a suggestion. There may be many ways to correct a mistake. The examples given here are all original beginner level papers.

Activities in writing exercises can be done as follows:

1. Organization Of The Paragraph 2. Vocabulary Choice

- Unity
- Coherence
- Faulty Start
- Lack of Topic Sentence
- Development of ideas

Unity: It means that all the sentences refer to the main idea, or the topic of the paragraph.

Exercise 1: The original student paper:

I live in a flat with my family. We have two bedrooms and a living room. We have a garden and we have some flowers there. In weekdays I arrive home at five o'clock and I have lunch. Then I do my homework and go to bed. I had a computer but now it doesn't work. I have a brother and a sister and I think I am very lucky to live with them. Sometimes our relatives visit us. Our flat becomes very crowded sometimes but I like it.

In a unified paragraph, we expect all the sentences to be about the main idea of the paragraph. The main idea in this paragraph is "the description of your house". If we examine the paragraph, we see that some sentences do not describe the house, such as:

In weekdays I arrive home at five o'clock and I have lunch.

Then I do my homework and go to bed.

I had a computer but now it doesn't work.

Coherence: It means that the sentences should be organized in a logical manner and should follow a definite plan of development.

Exercise 2:

The original student paper:

I live in a house in Izmit. It isn't old or modern. It's a normal Turkish house. We can say it is near the sea. It takes about 10 minutes to go to the sea side on

foot. We have one bedroom, one living room. We also have two other rooms, too. We use them as a dining room. Naturally, we have a kitchen, a bathroom, and a toilet. I live with my parents. And our house has a little garden; my parents spend their time there to grow vegetables and fruit.

First, let's see the order of the ideas:

1. Where the house is
2. Type of the house
3. The location
4. The rooms in the house
5. The fact that he lives with his parents
6. The garden

The paragraph is well organized until he says he lives with his parents. It looks like this idea interrupted his description of the house. It should be put somewhere else in the paragraph.

Faulty Start:

Here are some ways to bore your readers to death when starting a paragraph/an essay:

You can start with:

1. a nonsense sentence:

e.g. I want to talk about X.

2. a cliché:

e.g. X plays a great role in our lives.

X is a very important issue in today's world.

Exercise 3: Here is an example:

I want to talk about friendship. Friends can change your life. So, you must know who is a real friend. Firstly, your friend must understand you and of course, you must understand her, too. I think, another important point in a friendship is confidence. You mustn't tell lies to each other. In addition, you must say everything about yourself. I think these are important for a friendship. If you have a friend like this, you don't break up with her because a real friend is not found easily.

How do we understand that "I want to talk about friendship." is a nonsense sentence? If we leave the nonsense sentence out, the content and mean-

ing of the paragraph does not change.

Lack of Topic Sentence: Topic sentence is the main idea, your attitude, your evaluation of something.

Having no topic sentence is bad both for the writer and the reader. First, the reader has to read the entire paragraph to get to the point. Here, the example is one paragraph long. What if the example was a paper of 2-3 pages? This is one side. Lack of a topic sentence also causes the writer to drift away from the topic. He loses control over the writing. He may write 3 sentences about one controlling idea and 1 for the other which causes an imbalance within the writing.

Development of the ideas: It means that every idea discussed in the paragraph should be adequately explained and supported through evidence and examples.

We generally believe that people would easily understand us when we write. Unfortunately, our use of language may not be perfect and our ideas may be different. If we want our ideas to be understood, we need to explain them and give specific examples of each. Listing our ideas is never enough.

Vocabulary choice:

Many reasons play a role in our vocabulary mistakes. There are some English words and expressions that are confused throughout the world where English is used. There even are dictionaries of common language errors. For example, effect/affect, advise/advice.

Exercise 4: Let's read the original student paragraph below and then discuss the issue:

Friends play a great role in our lives. They effect our lives negatifyly or positifyly. We should choose them very carefully. First, we can look at his behaviors. If it is OK, no problem but if it is not, we can't become a "Kanka". After that, we can look at his activities. It is very important to do something together. We must beware of people who has bad habits such as smoking, bad speaking, etc. Some people don't think so but I think finally we should look at his phsical aparians because if you have diffirent phsical apariansc than him, you can't be relaxable. For example if you are taller than him, this generally does unrelaxable to him. As a consequently, it is very important to choose a friend according to your especialities.

First of all, "negatif" and "positif" are written in Turkish (or almost in Turkish "pozitif"). We, Turkish learners of English, generally make this mistake both in writing and in speaking (consider "psychology, sociology"). We may

have similar words in both languages; however, we must pay attention to their spellings and pronunciations.

Secondly, "Kanka" is a Turkish word. It is correct to highlight it either by using double quotations or writing in italics, but does this explain what "Kanka" means? Do all of us (including foreign instructors reading this writing) need to know this word which is used mostly by teenagers? It is common practice to use foreign words or expressions. If we use them, we need to make ourselves clear by explaining their meanings.

Thirdly, we see many misspelled words. We can deduce what they are but do we have to? Unless we write words correctly, we cannot expect others to understand us. This attitude "This is how I write / talk. If they want to understand me, they should get used to my style" would not help anyone, and should not be.

C. CONCLUSION

Modern assessment not only gain objectives of the subject but also includes using assessment to inform next steps of teaching and to improve teaching and learning process through feedback and turning assessment into a learning event.

Language assessment is part of a system for establishing what an economy, province, or state will establish as the framework for instruction. Language assessment should be based on Language Policies and Language Content Standards, which make clear what students will be expected to know and be able to do as a result of having participating in language learning experience. Language Performance Standards are important because they determine which areas and levels of performance by the students will be examined in order to assess their learning. The assessment may cover listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Catatan:

¹ Black, P. & William, D. 1998. *Inside the Black Box*. London: Kings College.

² Shane Hall. *What is the meaning of Evaluation*. http://www.ehow.com/facts_5004171_what-meaning-evaluation.html . Download 13th June 2010.

³ Adi Suryanto, dkk. 2008. *Evaluasi Pembelajaran di SD*. Jakarta: Universitas Terbuka.

⁴ Ibid

⁵ <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/test>

⁶ Look at Human Resources Development Working Group: <http://hrd.apec.org/index.php/LanguageAssessment>

⁷ Richards, C. Jack. 2004. *Methodology in Language Teaching*. USA: Cambridge University Press.

⁸ For further information of authentic Assessment see: <http://www.teachervision.fen.com>.

⁹ See Larry Alan Nadid: <http://www.drnadig.com/listening.htm>

¹⁰ <http://it40106.tripod.com/page2.htm>

¹¹ <http://www.esl-lab.com/dir2.htm>

¹² <http://www.parapal-online.co.uk/exercises/homeworking.html>

¹³ <http://www.sjl.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/otherresources/SpeakingSkill.htm>

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Kenneth Beare. **Asking Questions Lesson Plan - Lower Levels:** http://esl.about.com/od/conversationlessonplans/a/ask_low.htm

¹⁶ Smith, Frank. 1978. *Understanding Reading: A Psycholinguistics Analysis of Reading and Learning to Read*. Second Edition. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.

¹⁷ Lamb, Annette and Larry Johnson. "Skimming and Scanning". <http://eduscapes.com/42explore/topic.html>.

¹⁸ Addison, Joseph. "Reading is to the Mind What Exercise is the Body?". <http://www.hio.it.hanze.nl/thar>.

¹⁹ http://www.members.tripod.com/supergirl/writing_theory.html

²⁰ <http://www.buowl.boun.edu.tr/students/Paragraph%20Writing%20Exercises.htm>