



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN NONTRADITIONAL WAYS

Abduhakimova Gulnoza

Teacher

Kimyo International University in Tashkent

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ABSTRACT

The article focuses on defining alternative assessment, its advantages, and the methods to incorporate it into the English language classroom.

Aristotle also articulated that the quality of any endeavor hinges on two key factors: accurately defining the ultimate objective of the activity and selecting the appropriate means and techniques to attain it.[2]

Within the realm of teaching, a teacher's responsibilities encompass planning for quality assurance in knowledge, formulating methods for its execution, and analyzing outcomes to facilitate timely adjustments.

Assessment doesn't invariably entail assigning grades; it can serve as a tool to prepare students for the mastery of new content, the organization of their knowledge, self-reflection, and self-improvement.

Conventional assessment methods encompass oral and frontal questioning, written tests, independent assignments, and examinations. On the other hand, unconventional assessment forms include quiz-style lessons, puzzles, crosswords, and creative tasks.

Non-conventional English lessons are generally employed after the study of one or more topics, functioning as educational evaluations. These lessons are conducted in a distinctive and atypical setting. This change in the usual learning environment is advantageous as it fosters a celebratory atmosphere during the assessment, diminishing the apprehension often associated with traditional evaluations. Such unconventional lessons serve various methodological, pedagogical, and psychological objectives.[4]

Students tend to enjoy holistic learning sessions and group-based or paired competitive exercises. In this form of assessment, the entire group or team's performance is evaluated, and each participant receives the grade earned collectively by the team. Non-traditional lessons and assessment approaches promote heightened interest in the subject matter, personalized learning, and create an environment where each student can experience success.

Knowledge is assessed for several important reasons. Assessments serve as a fundamental component of our activities, ensuring the accuracy and comprehensiveness of our



progress toward our goals. Without assessment, our endeavors would risk falling into chaos. Therefore, the evaluation of knowledge, abilities, and skills is essential, with the primary aim of identifying opportunities for improvement, deeper understanding, and clarity. This process is crucial for actively engaging students in diverse labor and creative activities, ultimately fostering a better grasp of and transformation of reality.[1]

Assessment is conducted periodically as new topics or sections are covered, helping to structure and organize students' knowledge. This form of assessment occurs during review and consolidation lessons, preparing students for subsequent assessments such as oral and written tests.[3]

One particularly beloved form of non-traditional assessment among students is the use of games. These games are typically employed after completing a module to consolidate knowledge. Games enable teachers to monitor how well students have absorbed the material on a specific topic or across multiple modules, allowing for the timely analysis of errors. The game typically takes 15 to 30 minutes and is presented in a table format. The class is divided into two teams, with each team member choosing a task. Teams may coordinate beforehand which task each participant will take to adequately represent their team. In this way, the teacher not only organizes and assesses knowledge but also creates a conducive atmosphere for each student to experience success.

An example of such a table might include categories like this:

Uzbek-English Translation (5 points)	English-Uzbek Translation (5 points)	Describe the Picture (10 points)
Guess the Word (10 points)	Taboo (10 points)	Write as many words as you can on the topic (1 minute) (10 points)
Grammar (Negatives) (15 points)	Grammar (Affirmatives) (15 points)	Grammar (Interrogatives) (15 points)

The "Uzbek-English translation" and "English-Uzbek translation" tasks involve translating words related to the lesson studied or the entire module.

In the "Describe the picture" task, the number of sentences for the description is determined based on the students' preparedness level, and this is discussed in advance.

For the "Guess the word" task, one student from the team faces away from the board while the teacher writes a word on it. The other team members must explain the word in English without using facial expressions or gestures.

The "Taboo" task is similar to the previous one, but here one team member describes a word or phrase, and the rest of the team must guess it.

In the "Write as many words as possible" task, students are required to list words related to the topic being assessed. The words must be correctly spelled, and the time allotted for writing is 1-2 minutes at the teacher's discretion.



The grammar tasks involve constructing affirmative, interrogative, or negative sentences using various subject pronouns. Multiple topics may be covered, and students are asked to create sentences using pronouns like "I," "he," or "they."

The complexity of tasks can be adjusted based on the group's preparedness level. At the end of the game, all members of the winning team receive A grades. This approach fosters responsibility for teammates, teamwork, the ability to distribute work within the group, and the application of knowledge in non-standard situations. Control lessons should not be held too frequently, but having two or three per quarter significantly enhances students' cognitive engagement.

Furthermore, this form of preliminary control helps determine each student's level of knowledge and enables the selection of optimal teaching methods. The feedback provided during this type of assessment allows for both a recapitulation of previously studied material and timely corrections.

Success in the teaching and learning process is contingent upon the alignment of three main components: objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment. Objectives define the skills teachers aim for students to develop by the course's end. Instructional strategies are chosen to facilitate student learning toward these objectives, and assessment is used to evaluate students' progress.[1]

Objectives are continuously adjusted to meet real-life needs. Nowadays, the emphasis is on communication skills. However, does traditional assessment align with evolving objectives? Many educators today answer negatively and advocate for alternative assessment. This article delves into defining, exploring the benefits of, and implementing alternative assessment. But first, let's consider the general functions of assessment.

The role of assessment is multifaceted and serves various important functions. It provides diagnostic feedback for both teachers and students, enabling teachers to design and adjust instruction to enhance its effectiveness. Assessment also helps set standards for students to strive for. For students, assessment serves as a tool to evaluate their progress and comprehension of the material, thereby assisting them in improving their learning strategies. It also allows students to compare their progress to that of their peers. Many educators today acknowledge that these functions are best fulfilled by alternative assessment methods.

Alternative assessment can be broadly defined as gathering evidence about how students approach, process, and complete real-life tasks in a specific domain. Its primary goal is to evaluate students' practical application of knowledge and skills in authentic contexts.

The distinctive features and benefits of alternative assessment become evident when compared to traditional assessment methods. Firstly, alternative assessment focuses on students' strengths rather than weaknesses, highlighting their achievements. It is performance-based, making the classroom more learner-centered by emphasizing communication over right or wrong answers. Furthermore, alternative assessment encourages creative language use as students are tasked with creating performances or products, fostering self-correction and reflection on their progress.

To implement alternative assessment, teachers should gradually incorporate it into their classroom activities, reflecting on each step. Patience, consistency, and readiness to address potential skepticism are essential. Start by discussing the benefits of alternative assessment,



highlighting the limitations of traditional assessment, and explaining how it can make learning more productive. Begin with checklists, and if students are comfortable with them, introduce rubrics. These rubrics can evolve from holistic to analytic, primary trait, or multitrait rubrics. Peer assessment can be introduced when the class demonstrates a supportive environment and a willingness to accept evaluations from peers, allowing students to compare their progress and enhance their learning strategies. The highest level of alternative assessment is self-assessment, which empowers students to become independent learners and boosts their motivation.

In conclusion, implementing a comprehensive assessment program that balances traditional and alternative assessment methods can provide a clear understanding of how well students align with learning objectives and standards. The key is to enable students, in this case, cadets, to reflect on and articulate information about their own learning, ultimately promoting a more effective educational experience. The success of this approach has been demonstrated even in challenging contexts, such as military academies with time constraints, program objectives, and cadets with lower language proficiency levels.

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