

Approaches in Language Testing Testing system is an essential part in teaching as it helps us to know the stage of the candidates or the students and depending on the level we as teachers can take advance steps for the development of their quality. This is because a "specific purpose language test is one in which test content and methods are derived from an analysis of a specific purposes target language use situation, so that test tasks and content are authentically representative of tasks in the target situation" (Douglas, 2000, p. 19). Thus, the issue of authenticity is central to the assessment of language for specific functions. This is another way of saying that testing is a socially situated activity although the social aspects have been relatively under-explored (Wigglesworth, 2008). Yet, language tests differ with respect to how they are designed, and what they are for, in other words, in respect to test method and test purpose. In terms of method, we can broadly distinguish traditional paper-and-pencil language tests from performance tests. Paper-and-pencil language tests are typically used for the assessment either of separate components of language knowledge (grammar, vocabulary etc.), or of a receptive understanding (listening and reading comprehension). In performance-based tests, the language skills are assessed in an act of communication. Performance tests¹ are most commonly tests of speaking and writing, for instance, to ask a language learner to introduce himself or herself formally or informally and to write a composition, a paragraph or an essay, on the way he or she spent her summer holidays. These examples are elicited in the context of simulations of real-world tasks in realistic contexts. In terms of purpose, several types of language tests have devised to measure the learning outcomes accordingly. However, each test has its specific purpose, properties and criterion to be measured?. The test types that will be dealt with in this part have been laid-out not in terms of importance, they are all of equal importance, but on the basis of alphabetical order. Yet, dictation, the traditional testing device which focuses much more on discrete language items, will have its fair of attention in terms of its pros and cons.

1. Achievement Test An achievement test, also referred to as attainment or summative test, are devised to measure how much of a language someone has learned with reference to a particular course of study or programme of instruction, e.g. end- of-year tests designed to show mastery of a language. An achievement test might be a listening comprehension test based on a particular set of situational dialogues in a textbook. The test has a two-fold objective: 1. To help the teachers judge the success of their teaching. 2. To identify the weaknesses of their learners. In more practical and pedagogical terms, Brown (1994, p. 259) defines an achievement test as „tests that are limited to particular material covered in a curriculum within a particular time frame". The term "placement test" as Richards et al. (1989) note does not refer to what a test contains or how it is constructed, but to the purpose for which it used. Various types or testing procedures such as dictation, interview or a grammar test (discrete or integrative) can be used for placement purposes. The English Placement test (EPT), which is a well-known test in America, is an illustrative example of this test-type. The EPT is designed to assess the level of reading and writing skills of entering undergraduate students so that they can be placed in appropriate courses. Those undergraduate students who do not demonstrate college or university-level skills will be directed to remedial courses or programmes to help them attain these skills.

7. Proficiency Test A proficiency test is devised to measure how much of a language someone has learned. It is not linked to any particular course of instruction, but measures the

learner's general level of language mastery. Most English language proficiency tests base their testing items on high frequency-count vocabulary and general basic grammar. Some proficiency tests have been standardized for worldwide use, such as the well-known American tests, the TOEFL, and the English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) 3 which are used to measure the English language proficiency of foreign students intending further study at English-speaking institutions, namely the USA. However, the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English or CPE, as it is generally referred to, is the most advanced remains the only British top-value and high-prestige standardized language test. It is the most advanced general English exam provided by the University of Cambridge. The Certificate is recognized by universities and employees throughout the world. The English level of those who pass the CPE is supposed to be similar to that of a fairly educated native speaker of English. Clearly, as Valette posits, „the aim of a proficiency test is to determine whether this language ability corresponds to specific language requirements" (Valette, 1977. Ideally, diagnostic tests are designed to assess students' linguistic knowledge (knowledge of and about the language) and language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) before a course is begun. However, the term formative is sometimes used to designate a diagnostic test. One of the main advantages of a diagnostic test is that it offers useful pedagogical solutions for mixed-ability classes. In this very specific context, Broughton et al. (1980) contend that: There will certainly be a large block in the middle of the ability range who can be separated off as a group for some parts of the lesson, or for some lessons, and will form a more homogenous teaching group. If this strategy is adopted, the poor ones and the better ones must receive their due time and attention. (Broughton et al. 1980, p. 189) 4. Discrete-Point Test The discrete-point test, also called discrete-item test, is a language test which measures knowledge of individual language items, such as a grammar test which has different sections on tenses, adverbs and prepositions. Discrete-point tests are based on the theory that language consists of different parts such as speech sounds, grammar and vocabulary, and different skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, and these are made up of elements that can be tested separately. Tests consisting of multiple-choice questions are usually regarded as discrete-point tests. Discrete-point tests are all too often contrasted with what are called integrative tests. An integrative test is one which requires a learner to use several skills at the same time. An essay-writing is an integrative test because it leans heavily on the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and rules of discourse; a dictation is also an integrative test as it requires knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and listening comprehension skills. In this vein, Harmer notes the following distinction between discrete-point testing and integrative testing, "Whereas discrete point-testing only tests on thing at a time such as asking students to choose the correct tense of a verb, integrative test items expect students to use a variety of language at any one given time – as they will have to do when writing a composition or doing a conversational oral test" (Harmer, 2001, p. 323). In the same line of thought and Broughton et al. „more than some thirty years ago, noted that "Since language is seen as a number of systems, there will be items to test knowledge of both the production and reception of the sound segment system, of the stress system, the intonation system, and morphemic system, the grammatical system, the lexical system and so on" (Broughton et al., 1980, pp. 149– 150). 5. Language Aptitude Test Before one ventures into defining what a language aptitude test is, it would be wiser to

start first by defining what a language aptitude is. Language aptitude, as a hybrid concept part linguistic and part psychological, refers to the genuine ability one is endowed with to learn a language. It is thought to be a combination of several abilities: Phonological ability, ie. the ability to detect phonetic differences (e.g. of stress, intonation, vowel quality) in a new language. o Syntactic ability, i.e., the ability to recognize the different o grammatical functions of words in sentences. o Psychological ability, i.e. rote-learning abilities and the ability to o make inferences and inductive learning. Additionally, Crystal (1989, p. 371) suggests other variables conducive to successful language learning such as „empathy and adaptability, assertiveness and independence with good drive and powers of application". According to Brown (2004), in developing performance-based assessment, we as teacher should consider the following principle: o State the overall goal of the performance o Specify the objectives (criteria) of the performance in details o Prepare students for performance in stepwise progressions o Use a reliable evaluation form, checklist or rating sheet o Treat performances as opportunities for giving feedback and provide that feedback systematically If possible, utilize self- and peer-assessments judiciously (wisely/carefully) Strengths and Weaknesses of Language Testing Approach 1. It is, "arguably the most well-known and widely used large-scale language assessment in the world" (Kunnan, 2008, p. 140). It was first developed in 1963 in the United States to help in the assessment of the language competence of non-native speakers. As a test type, it is a standardized test of English proficiency administered by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton. It is widely used to measure the English- language proficiency of foreign students wishing to enter American colleges and universities. According to Taylor and Angelis (cited in Kunnan, 2008) the first TOEFL was administered in 1964 at 57 test centres to 920 test candidates. Recently, the TOEFL has widely been recognized as a model test and have-take-test for our students, graduate and postgraduate, as well as our teachers and researchers in universities and higher education institutions wishing to read for higher degrees and develop further their research potential in North American universities. Kunnan (2008, p. 141) notes that, "Over the years, the TOEFL became mandatory for non-American and non-Stern (1983, p. 340) notes that „if the ultimate objective of language teaching is effective language learning, then our main concern must be the learning outcome". In the same line of thought, Wigglesworth (2008, p. 111) further adds that "In the assessment of languages, tasks are designed to measure learners" productive language skills through performances which allow candidates to demonstrate the kinds of language skills that may be required in a real world context." It consists of a short written passage that the learner reads orally; the teacher then examines a tape recording of that reading against a very detailed checklist of pronunciation errors. According to Oller (1983), if discrete items take language skill apart, integrative tests put it back together; whereas discrete items attempt to test knowledge of language a bit at a time, integrative tests attempt to assess a learner's capacity to use many bits all at the same time. o In the term of scoring, the test is also reliable because of its objectivity; the scoring is efficient, even it can be perform by machine Weaknesses o Constructing discrete point test items is potentially energy and time consuming. o The strength of the test such as dictation, writing, and cloze test is that relatively cheap and easy to make Weaknesses o Even if measuring integrated skills are better but sometimes teacher should consider the importance of measuring skills based on particular need, such as writing only, speaking only o The scoring is not

efficient and not reliable 3. It will give them learning experience more than just paper and pencil test) o Authentic (since the materials and topics we use in class is authentic, the students can see the relation of what they learn with the reality in their daily lives) o Challenge high order thinking of students (In order to prepare for the best performance, the students will try their best to analyze the problem deeper and find many learning sources by themselves) Weaknesses o Time consuming (for students: they need to prepare the performance e.g. Download information for the Internet or preparing the costume and property for role-play, for teacher: Teachers need to provide guidance in every stage they are going to be through. Norm-Referenced Test Norm-referenced tests are designed to highlight achievement differences between and among students to produce a dependable rank order of students across a continuum of achievement from high achievers to low achievers (Stiggins, 1994). Placement tests come in many varieties: assessing comprehension and production, responding through written and oral performance, multiple choice, and gap filling formats. Criterion-referenced tests report how well students are doing relative to a pre-determined performance level on a specified set of educational goals or outcomes included in the school, district, or state curriculum. This approach stated that communicative competence is so global that it requires the integration of all linguistic abilities. The fact that discrete point and integrative testing only provided a measure of the candidate's competence rather than measuring the candidate's performance brought about the need for communicative language testing (Weir 1990). The principles of testing in the communicative language testing can be described as the following (Anon, 1990): o Tasks in the test should resemble as far as possible to the ones as would be found in real life in terms of communicative use of language There is a call for test items contextualization. Weaknesses o Not efficient (time and energy consuming) o Problem of extrapolation (Weir, 1990) (we cannot guarantee that the students who successfully accomplish the task in class will also be successful in the communication in real life) 4. Performance Testing Approach Strengths Increasing learning motivation (The students tend to be more motivated and involved when they are allowed to perform according to their own plan, collect data, infer a pattern, draw conclusions, take stand, or deliver a presentation.) o Meaningful (it is meaningful assessment since we require students to show what they can do through project, performance, or observation. Proficiency tests have traditionally consisted of standardized multiple- choices item on grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension. According to John Carrol and Stanley Sapon (the authors of MLAT), language aptitude tests does not refer to whether or not an individual can learn a foreign language; but it refers to how well an individual can learn a foreign language in a given amount of time and under given conditions. Criterion-referenced tests give detailed information about how well a student has performed on each of the educational goals or outcomes included on that test. Diagnostic tests in pronunciation, for example, might have the purpose of determining which particular phonological features of the English language are more likely to pose problems and difficulties for a group of learners.p. 6) Actually, there are four other types of Cambridge proficiency tests, the Cambridge Key English Test (KET), the Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET), The Cambridge First Certificate of English (FCE) and the Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE). Discrete point tests aim to achieve a high reliability factor by testing a large number of discrete items, but each question tests only one linguistic point. Integrative

Testing Approach This approach involves the testing of language in context and is thus concerned primarily with meaning and the total communicative effect of discourse.

Communicative Testing Approach Communicative testing approach lays more emphasis on the notion and function, like agreeing, persuading, or inviting, that language means in communication. For example, a multiple choice test might be useful for demonstrating memory and recall, for example, but it may require an essay or open-ended problem-solving for students to demonstrate more independent analysis or synthesis.

Indirect Competence Test The indirect competence test is a test that focuses on to measure the student's knowledge about language component, like grammar or vocabulary, which the elicitation does not use one of the basic skills, speaking, listening, reading, or writing.

Cloze Test A cloze test, also alternately referred to as cloze procedure, consists of a set of techniques for measuring, for example, reading comprehension. of written ... The learners filling the missing (Adapted from Richards et al., 1989, p. 41)

Here, the test-taker or the reader has to guess the following missing words: a, passage, which, removed, try, by and words. Both of these are English tests and require students to perform such tasks as learning numbers, listening, detecting spelling clues and grammatical patterns and memorizing (Brown, 1994). When the assessment is used at the end of the term, semester or year with a view to measuring what has been gained both by groups and by individuals, this kind of assessment is known as summative assessment.

Discrete-point Testing Approach Discrete Point tests are constructed on the assumption that language can be divided into its components parts, and those parts can be tested successfully. The components are the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and various unit of language of phonology, morphology, lexicon, and syntax. There is a need to make test items that address a definite audience for a purposeful communicative intent (goal) to be envisioned (might happen).

Integrative Testing Approach Strength o The approach to meaning and the total communicative effect of discourse will be very useful for pupils in testing o This approach can view pupils' proficiency with a global view. Proficiency tests should elicit information on what students need to work in the future; therefore the test will typically offer more detailed subcategorized information on the learner.

Type of objective test includes multiple-choice tests, true or false test, matching and problem based questions. Language competence test is a test that involves components of language such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation while performance test is a test that involves the basic skills in

English that are writing, speaking, listening and reading.

Direct Competence Tests The direct competence test is a test that focuses on to measure the student's knowledge about language component, like grammar or vocabulary, which the elicitation uses one of the basic skills, speaking, listening, reading, or writing. The content of norm-referenced tests is selected according to how well it ranks students from high achievers to low. The second is that they are fundamentally trying to test that knowledge of the language system that underlies any actual instance of its use –linguistic competence in

the Chomskyan sense– they are not concerned with the ability to master the language system for particular purposes with particular people in particular situations.

Diagnostic Test As its name denotes, a diagnostic test is primarily designed to diagnose some particular linguistic aspects. Language aptitude tests usually consist of several different test items which measures such abilities as:

- o Sound-coding ability, i.e. the ability to identify and remember new sounds in a new language.

Two well-known

standardized language aptitude tests have been used in the United States, the Modern Language Aptitude Test (Carroll and Sapon, 1958) and the Primsleur Language Aptitude Battery (Primsleur, 1966).

A progress test may be viewed as similar to an achievement test but much narrower and much more specific in scope (Richards et al., 1989). They help examiners in general and language teachers in particular to assess the degree of success of their programmes and teaching and therefore to identify their shortcomings and weaknesses respectively. When teachers try to find out the improvement of their students, to observe how they have developed and to pinpoint out what they should have learned and finally use this information to modify their future teaching plans. By the mid-1980s, the language-testing field had abandoned arguments about the unitary competence and had begun to focus on designing communicative language testing (Brown, 2004).

3. o Expensive (Students: the students should provide extra money to prepare the performance such as costumes for role play) o Challenge the teacher to match performance assessment to classroom goals and learning objectives. Those tests are proficiency test, diagnostic test, placement test, achievement test, language aptitude test. If usually includes a sampling of the material to be covered in the various courses in a curriculum.

Achievement Test The purpose of achievement tests is to determine whether course objectives have been met with skills acquired by the end of a period of instruction. In other words, the content selected in norm-referenced tests is chosen by how well it discriminates among students. For example, if a student receives a percentile rank score on the total test of 34, this means that he or she performed as well or better than 34% of the students in the norm group. This type of information can be useful for deciding whether or not students need remedial assistance or is a candidate for a gifted program.

Criterion-Referenced Test Criterion-referenced tests determine what test takers can do and what they know, not how they compare to others (Anastasi, 1988). The content of a criterion-referenced test is determined by how well it matches the learning outcomes deemed most important. In other words, the content selected for the criterion-standard test is selected on the basis of its significance in the curriculum. Ideally, achievement tests are rarely constructed by classroom teacher for a particular class. However, two substantial criticisms have been made to the cloze-test types (Broughton et al., 1980).

Grammar-coding ability, i.e. the ability to identify the grammatical functions of different parts of sentences.

Placement Test A placement test, as its name implies, is originally designed to place learners at an appropriate level in a programme or course. Progress tests can also be diagnostic to some degree, in the sense that they help identify areas of difficulties encountered by learners in general. Test instructions and scoring plans should touch on effective communication of meaning rather than on grammatical accuracy.

4. o Success in doing the test is not readily inferable to the ability of the test taker to communicate in real life circumstances.

Communicative Testing Approach Strength o The tests are more realistic to evaluate the students' language use, as the students in a role as though they were to communicate in the real world / daily lives. The reason(s) for giving a test will help you determine features such as length, format, level of detail required in answers, and the time frame for returning results to the students. o Maintain consistency between goals for the course, methods of teaching, and the tests used to measure achievement of goals. If, for example, class time emphasizes review and recall of information, then so can the test; if class time emphasizes analysis and synthesis, then the test can also be designed to

demonstrate how well students have learned these things. Use consistent language in stating goals, in talking in class, and in writing test questions) to describe expected outcomes. These tests offer a checklist of features for the teacher to use in discovering difficulties. Achievement tests should be limited to particular material addressed in a curriculum within a particular time frame.

Subjective Test Subjective test is a test in which the learners ability or performance are judged by examiners' opinion and judgment. **Direct testing** is a test that the process to elicit students' competences uses basic skill, like speaking, writing, listening, or reading while **indirect language testing** is a test that the process to elicit students' competences does not use basic skills.

Direct Performance Test Direct performance test is a test that focuses on to measure the students' skill in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that the elicitation is through direct communication. **Indirect Performance Test** Indirect performance test is a test that focuses on measure the students' skill in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that the elicitation does not use the basic skill. School systems might want to classify students in this way so that they can be properly placed in remedial or gifted programs. A student's performance on a norm referenced test is interpreted in relation to the performance of a large group of similar students who took the test when it was first normed. Educators may choose to use a criterion-referenced test when they wish to see how well students have learned the knowledge and skills which they are expected to have mastered.

Types of Language Tests The needs of assessing the outcome of learning have led to the development and elaboration of different test formats. In other words, they are designed primarily to measure individual progress rather than as a means of motivating or reinforcing language. In a cloze test words are removed from a reading passage at regular intervals, leaving blanks. To provide learners with a way to start learning with their own personal learning programme or what would be called in the literature of testing learning paths. This kind of assessment is known as formative and summative assessment. It should produce truthful measures of the abilities in which we are paying attention.

Communicative language testing approach is used to measure language learners' ability to use the target language in authentic situations. The approach beliefs that someone/ a student is considered successful in learning the target language if she/he can communicate or use knowledge and skills by way of authentic listening, speaking, reading and writing .Communicative language tests have to be as accurate a reflection of that situation as possible. Performance-based assessment believes that the students will learn best when they are given a chance to perform and show what they know according to their own plan, collect data, infer pattern, draw conclusion, take a stand or deliver presentation.

o The test allows quantification on the students' responses. grammar, or vocabulary of their .writing. 1.3. 1.2.2. 1.2.3.4.5. 1.2. 1.2.3.4. 1.2.....2.3. 1.2.6.8.9