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# Types and purpose of assessment

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# Introduction

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In general, the purpose of assessment is to determine as accurately as possible what students should know, understand, and be able to do. In the differentiated classroom, assessment must provide clear information on student progress with regard to classroom content, processes, and products. This information helps teachers make wise, informed decisions about the needs of their students and the direction their instruction should take.

## *Types and Purpose of Assessment*

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- Assessment is a key part of today's educational system. Assessment as an individual evaluation system and as a way to compare performance of students or progress or to determine students' interests to make judgment about their learning process. Teacher can reflect on each student's level of achievement.
- In classroom assessment, since teachers themselves develop, administer and analyze the questions, they are more likely to apply the results of the assessment to their own teaching.
- Therefore, it provides feedback on the effectiveness of instruction and gives students a measure of their progress.
- Two major functions can be pointed out for classroom assessment: one is to show whether or not the learning has been successful, and the other one is to clarify the expectations of the teachers from the students.

# Types of Tests

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There are many types of test ,each with a specific purposes and a particular criterion to be measured :

## *1-Achievement Tests*

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- Is related directly to classroom, teacher will use a test to measure the within a classroom lesson , unit ,or even total curriculum . It is designed to measure the student's performance in specific academic area such as reading comprehension , written or oral expression .
- Achievement test can also serve the diagnostic role of indicating what a student need to continue to work on in the future , but the primary role of an achievement test is to determine whether course objectives have been met and appropriate knowledge and skills acquired by the end of a given period of instruction .

## *Purpose of Achievement Tests*

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- To measure whether students possess the prerequisite skills needed to succeed in any unit or whether the students have achieved the objective of the planned instruction .
- To monitor students' learning and to provide ongoing feedback to both students and teachers during the teaching-learning process .
- To identify the students' learning difficulties.

- To assign grades.
- Achievement tests are often summative because they are administered at the end of a lesson, unit, or term of study.
- They also play an important formative role, because an effective achievement test offers feedback about the quality of learner's performance in subsets of the unit or course. The specifications for achievement test should be determined by the: objectives of the lesson, unit, or course being assessed relative importance (or weight) assigned to each objective tasks used in classroom lessons during the unit of time frame for the test itself and for returning evaluations to students potential for formative feedback Achievement tests range from 5- or 10-minute quizzes to 3-hour final examinations, with an almost infinite variety of item types and formats.

## ***2- Diagnostic Tests***

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- diagnostic test is to identify aspects of a language that a student needs to develop or that a course should include. A test of pronunciation, for example, might diagnose the phonological features of English that are difficult for learners and should therefore become part of a curriculum.
- Diagnostic testing is the process adopted to locate and identify students' difficulties or weaknesses areas of learning in a subject or skill and the cause. It implies a detailed study of learning weaknesses. distinction between a diagnostic test and a general achievement test. Achievement tests analyze the extent to which students have acquired language features that have already been taught, diagnostic tests should elicit information on what students need to work on in the

future. Therefore a diagnostic test typically offers more detailed, subcategorized information about the learner.

## ***-Aim of Diagnostic Tests***

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- The aim is to measure the knowledge and skills of students .It is used to identify student's strength and weakness of the class as a whole and individual student so that appropriate remedial action can taken .
- Diagnostic test might offer information about a learner's acquisition of verb tenses, modal auxiliaries , relative clause ,etc.

## ***3-Placement Tests***

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- A placement test is a test given by a school to determine the academic or skill level of a student, especially a new student, in order to place them in the correct class.
- Is planned to provide information which is to place a student into a particular level of teaching program of a language curriculum or school .
- A placement test includes a sampling of the material to be covered in the various courses in a curriculum , a student's performance on the test should indicate the point at which the student will find material neither too easy nor too difficult , but appropriately challenging .
- Placement tests come in many varieties—assessing comprehension and production, responding through written and oral performance, using open- ended and limited responses, applying selection (e.g., multiple choice) and gap-formats—depending on the nature of a program and its needs.

- Some programs simply use existing standardized proficiency tests because of their obvious advantage in practicality, cost, speed in scoring, and efficient reporting of results.

## Objective of Placement Tests

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- The objective of placement test is to correctly place a student into a course or level.
- it diagnostic information on a student's performance which in turn give teachers a head start on assessing their student's abilities.

## *4-Proficiency Tests*

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- Proficiency refers to a person's competency in using a particular skill. Language proficiency tests assess a person's practical language skills.
- Proficiency tests share some similarities with achievement tests, but rather than focusing on knowledge, proficiency tests focus on the practical application of that knowledge.
- A key issue in testing proficiency is how the constructs of language ability are specified. Constructs are any theory, hypothesis, or model that attempts to explain observed phenomena.
- Proficiency tests have traditionally consisted of standardized multiple- choice items on grammar , vocabulary , reading comprehension and aural comprehension.
- Typical examples of standardized proficiency tests are the test of English as a Foreign Language ( TOEFL) . TOEFL consist of proficiency on all four skills .

## *5-Aptitude Tests*

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- Language aptitude tests assess a person's ability to acquire new language skills. Because of the nature of these tests, they are more general than most other language tests and don't focus on a particular language.
- Two standardized aptitude tests were once used in the United States: the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT; Carroll & Sapon, 1958) and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery
- used in the United States, the Modern Language Aptitude Test Battery (MLAT) and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB)

Two standardized aptitude tests were once used in the United States: the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT; Carroll & Sapon, 1958) and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB; Pimsleur, 1966). Both are English-language tests and require students to perform language-related tasks such as learning numbers, distinguishing speech sounds, detecting grammatical functions, and memorizing paired associates. The MLAT and PLAB show some significant correlations with the ultimate performance of students in language courses