The Writing Issue Between Teaching and Testing

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Abstract

This study pertains to the action research and aims at encouraging teachers to do some field research on the teaching of English as a foreign language. The work treats Written Expression as one of the most difficult skills to teach and to evaluate that students mostly fear. The main objective of this research is to demystify the evaluation concept among the student and guide him towards a more optical positive and constructive vision bearing the true sense of evaluation and its outcome on the learning of English. This perspective is backed up by arguments directly drawn from an empirical study achieved at the English Department, University of Batna .

Key words: field research, written expression, learner's evaluation, positive constructive vision

Résumé

Ce travail s'inscrit dans le cadre de recherche-action qui vise à encourager les enseignants à faire des recherches sur terrain dans le domaine de l'enseignement de l'Anglais comme langue étrangère. Il porte sur l'enjeu de l'écrit comme l'un des aspects les plus difficiles à enseigner et à évaluer par l'enseignant et à craindre par l'apprenant. L'objectif principal de cette recherche est de démystifier le concept de l'évaluation chez l'étudiant et de l'orienter vers une vision plus positive et constructive de ce que l'évaluation peut lui apporter dans l'apprentissage de l'Anglais. Cela est supporté par des arguments tirés directement du travail empirique effectué dans cette perspective au Département D'Anglais de L'Université de Batna.

Mots Clé : Travail empirique, l'écrit, l'évaluation, vision constructive de l'apprenant

Introduction

The Statement of the problem

Reaching near native speakers' language is one level of the foreign language teaching/Learning skills set as the primary aim of both learners and teachers. It has become an urgent necessity now for language teachers to exert themselves to the utmost of their power to benefit fully from the works of language researchers. In the context of teaching and testing writing, the necessity has really become a priority, simply because learners' needs to communicate correctly using the learned language. Now, globalization has made of English the world's first language in diverse fields. In fact, to the

learners of English as a foreign language, outside and inside the classroom, writing is a skill that they need to excel in. The rate to which they can do so will be indicated buy the evaluations their teachers make of their written products. In most of the cases, these evaluations take the form of written tests and exams. Therefore, the interdependence of both teaching and testing writing sounds not only beneficial to these learners but also a necessity if the aim is to develop proficiency in the aforementioned skill.

Aim of the study

Investigating the writing issue between teaching and testing in the field of Foreign language education, and mainly in the English Department at Batna University stems from the fact that with the new trend in foreign language teaching much focus is put on teaching and little is said on testing it. We would like also to reach, among other points, a number of objectives to show that:

-Exploring the different theoretical views related to testing the writing skill and see to what extent they can help both partners in the classroom for reaching the planned teaching/ learning aim

-Suggest some points as results of the field work to reinforce the understanding of the issue of teaching/testing writing.

Methodology

The present work investigates the issue of Writing and its relation to testing and evaluation in The English Department, University of Batna. The procedure follows a descriptive way of the current situation based on an analysis of a sample of theoretical concepts suggested by researchers in this field .It is not our intention to establish a causal relationship. A questionnaire that we have administered to a number of teachers and learners in the department aims at gathering opinions and attitudes and their evaluations of the actual situation of teaching/testing writing. Besides this, our own comments and analysis of what the theory suggests will certainly add important dimensions to better the actual teaching operation.

Contextual Study

Introduction

The earliest signs for visual communication that provide a traceable link to later forms of writing are the clay tokens developed for accounting purposes in Mesopotamia in the ninth millennium BC. The system, developed by ancient Sumerians in what is now Iraq ,about the time that traditional hunters-gatherers were developing an agricultural way of life,

consisted of sets of distinctively shaped tokens used to keep records of sheep and cattle and other commodities such as oil, beer and grain. About the fourth millennium, about the time cities grew, the variety of tokens increased, some were pierced so that they could be strung together, and others were placed in envelopes or *bullae* so that they could indicate a single transaction ; hence ,the shift from tokens to writing began when markings were made on these envelopes to indicate their contents.

1. First Signs

Signs for one-syllable words come to be treated as signs for a single syllable of a multi syllable word. So, word signs in language A come to be treated as syllable signs when they are borrowed to represent language B as happened when Sumerian logographs were borrowed to represent a Semitic language Akkadian[(1)] . A noteworthy feature of such syllable signs, or syllabaries, is that they lack signs for vowels .Distinctive signs for vowels are usually credited to the genius of the Greeks. Yet the story is less one of genius that of adapting the Semitic Phoenician syllabary to the special linguistic properties of spoken Greek. Pre-Greek scripts had reduced the complexity of their syllabaries by using a single sign for all the syllables sharing a common " onset" or initial sound.

2. Evolution

The Phoenician set of twenty-two graphic signs with a memorized order beginning *aleph, bet, and gemel, was* adequate for representing the full range of meanings and the signs can be seen as representing not only syllables but also the consonantal sounds of the language. Vowels were added to the script by the Greeks about 750 BC, some have suggested especially for the transcription of the orally produced Homeric epic poems[(2)] commercial transactions that could be conducted in the scripts of the trading partners, the Phoenicians.

Prior to the recording of the epics, Greek writing was used for such ordinary purposes as writing curses and identifying valuable objects as one's own-' This cup belongs to Tataie' or ' I am Nestor's cup'. While not minimizing the significance of the Greek invention of distinctive marks for vowels, it is now widely acknowledged that the development of the alphabet, like the development of the syllabary, was a more or less straightforward

consequence of applying a script which adequately represented one language, to a second language, for which it was not completely adequate.

However, in Phoenician vocalic differences were unimportant , in Greek, as in English, vocalic differences mark meaning differences-'bad' is different from 'bed'. Moreover, words may consist simply of a vowel, they may begin with a vowel and words with pairs of vowels are not uncommon. To fill the gap, six of the signs representing sounds unknown to Greek speakers were borrowed to represent the isolated vowel sounds. In this way, syllables were dissolved into consonant vowel pairings and the alphabet was born.

Writing has its origins in the strip of fertile land stretching from the Nile up into the area often referred to as the Fertile Crescent. This name was given in the early 20th century, to the inverted U-shape of territory that stretches up the east Mediterranean coast and then curves east through northern Syria and down the Euphrates and the Tigris to the Persian Gulf. The first known writing derives from the lower reaches of the two greatest rivers in this extended region, the Nile and the Tigris. So the two civilizations-the Egyptian and the Sumerian (in what is now Iraq) are separately responsible for this total transformation of human development. It has been conventional to give priority, through a short margin, to Sumer-dating the Sumerian script to about 3100 BC and the Egyptian version a century or so later.

3. Writing in Modern Foreign Language Education

Most Foreign language teachers agree that there is no one answers to the question of how to teach writing in EFL classes. There are as many answers as there are teachers and teaching styles, or learners and learning styles. The shift in focus in writing research from the product to the process approach has initiated much attention to the teaching of writing as an expressive act besides being a problem-solving activity [(3)] This view was later followed by the genre-based approach, with its analytical description of the text ,focusing on the social context of its creation and the communicative purpose it intends to achieve (Laurie 2003).

It highlighted certain linguistic and structural conventions explicitly enabling the learner to discriminate and make appropriate decisions leading

them to write more effectively for various purposes and varied audiences. Writing has been a major concern for several theorists and specialists in foreign language education. It gained, and sometimes lost, significant attention according to the overall teaching aim set in the theory. Meanwhile, it still remains a convergent point of most approaches that target the communicative proficiency in the foreign language. A short overview to the different teaching approaches and the way they tackled writing seems necessary here.

3.1. The Product Approach

This approach is "a traditional…in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text" [(4)] It is a form based approach focusing on what is produced by a student after assigning him a writing task. The product approach to writing focuses on the end result of the act of composition. Here, the aim is to see the correctness and grammaticality of the produced pieces of writing. Teachers can provide support for learners during the composition in order to avoid mistakes. Moreover, some writing models are given to be strictly imitated. In these cases, the model texts are read, and then important features of the target structures are highlighted. After that, students are asked to produce their own writing pieces, just copying what was given.

The main objective of the Product Approach is accuracy in writing, neglecting students' own freedom to write or communicate. As it is a product-based, this method seems not to highly value the inner mechanisms that students manipulate to end up writing correctly. Rather, and depending on the already set objective, what is more required and evaluated is the final product without giving too much focus on the*" how process."*

3.2. The Process Approach

The process approach to writing initially stemmed from the fundamental issue of L1 writing but with a shift in emphasis from the text to the writer and on the cycle of writing activities which are involved in text production as a whole. Later, researchers on writing like Raimes [(5)] highlighted the fact that writing as an activity entails also the writer or learner to move through well structured and known stages of developing the text from the initial moment of thinking to write up into the last stage where the product is final. At this point, one can easily understand that cognitive strategies are central to the working of this approach. The

process approach considers writing as a creative act which requires time and positive feedback to be done well (Kroll 1990). In process writing, the teacher finds himself required to smoothly alter his role from being the source of knowledge to a facilitator of learning.

The teacher needs to move away from being an evaluator on which students success and/ or failure depend to an audience and a reader, responding to both the content of what students write and how they write it. Students should be encouraged to think about the audience and the purpose (whom are they writing for?) What does their reader need to know? They also need to realize that what they put down on paper can be changed; things can be deleted, added, restructured, reorganized, etc.

The Process Approach developed as a reaction to the restrictions of the Product Approach. Unlike the latter, the former enables learners to clearly decide about their own writing by means of discussion, tasks, drafting, feedback, and informed choices. Still in the view of Jordan, such activities play a great role in encouraging students to be responsible for making improvements themselves. The teacher can provide students with advice on how to improve their initial ideas to stimulate their creativity and get them think how to approach a topic.

The process approach makes the student more creative, imaginative, purposeful and interested in writing on different topics with personal insights. That approach also focuses more on the content rather than on the form [(6)] .In general, the process approach to writing exploits all the possible ways to render the varied classroom activities as much fruitful to students as possible. It also promotes the development of language use: brainstorming; group discussion, re-writing and gives more freedom to learners for extrapolation.

While most researchers commonly agree on the positive aspect of applying this approach to teach writing, some disagreement, however; is remarked at the level of numbering and naming of the stages that it should go through. Tribble[(7)] says that " There are four stages in writing according to the process Approach: Pre-writing, composing .drafting, revising and

editing, and that these stages are recursive(no linear); whereas others, see that planning is not a unitary stage but a distinctive, thinking process which writers use over and over during composition."(p.206).Flowers [8] (1981),however claims that writers, when re-writing ,they are trying to anticipate their readers' expectations .In all circumstances, the process approach seems to gain much advantage than the product approach-it is more practical, more observational where the learner feels more secure thanks to his teacher's constant guidance.

4. Tests and Measurements

4.1. Definition of Terms

It is generally agreed among language teachers and other evaluators that the terms measurement, test and evaluation are used synonymously in most cases. Indeed, when quantifying a student's proficiency and mastery of a language, or treating a specific aspect of language, we are assigning him a test through which we measure his abilities in order to evaluate him. However, the similarity among these terms tends to obscure the distinctive characteristics of each, and it is therefore valuable to highlight some distinguishing features of each term.

4.1. Measurement:

Measurement in language testing is usually defined as a process of quantifying the characteristics of persons according to explicit procedure and rules. What characterizes measurement, according to this definition, is that it requires attaching numbers to individuals' performances in a given task. This means that measurements are quantitative descriptions, not evaluations in themselves.

What makes differences in practice between these terms is mentioned by Seifert [9] (1991) who states that "…measurements like these do not evaluate students. Teachers or other evaluators do that by interpreting the significance of the measurement." (pp.472-473).

This is to say that measurements are tools used to fit the purpose of evaluation. It follows that measurements occur only when scores are assigned to performances and, technically, evaluations do not occur until measurements are analyzed and interpreted.

4.2. Tests

According to Norris[10] (2000) language tests are instruments a teacher uses for gathering information having to do with students' language abilities. Tests, then, are not measurements but means used to accomplish the goal of measuring.

This means that a test can be used to obtain a precise characteristic of a behavior of an individual in one sample area of language. We have to mention here that a test is characterized by its explicit nature in that it elicits an exact and accurate behavior of an individual.

Measurements which are not tests do not accurately indicate students' capacities in a language aspect as do tests. However, this does not mean that measures are less reliable than tests in highlighting samples of learners' abilities. For example, a teacher's ranking of a student's collected letters does not indicate how well this student is successful in manifesting his abilities to write for a news magazine. A proficiency written test would suit that same purpose fairly. This view is also held by Cummins [11] 1 (1980) who comments that "This does not imply that other measures are less valuable than tests,but to make the point that the value of tests lies in their capability for eliciting the specific kinds of behavior that the test user can interpret as evidence of the attribute or abilities which are of interest." (p.22)

This quotation suggests that, indeed, both measure and test are of value in providing information on how well an individual learner or a group of learners are doing in developing certain competences. The difference in terms of value between these terms tends to favour tests for their accuracy, in that test items are standards through which learners' performances are measured. Here, again, it is worth to say that tests in themselves are far from being evaluations (Seifert(1991). Meanwhile, recent literature stresses the potential usefulness of including varieties of testing procedures for the evaluation purpose (Short (1995), (Norris 1996)

There are examples of evaluations which do not necessarily use test or measures. This can be the case of informal observation of a students' performance in speech improvement through classroom discussion and involvement. A non-test measure used in evaluation can be the teacher's ranking of a learner's progress in mastering punctuation system through collected term written products. A good example of a test used for evaluation is an achievement test which indicates students' progress after a given period of instruction. There are still cases of a non-evaluative tests used for measurement. Most common examples among these are research works assigned to students for the purpose of developing reading skills and note-taking abilities.

Measures which are not evaluations are instances of tasks requiring assigning code numbers which serve as standards for quantifying students' performances as a motivating act for acquisition.

In short, all tests are measures but not all measures are tests. Not all tests or measures are evaluations. Then, not all evaluations evolve either measurements or tests.

4.3. Types of Tests

4.3.1. The Progress Test

The progress test is intended to quantify the student's amount of learning in a specific course. Commonly used progress tests are those tests administered after a certain number of teaching-learning periods within the school year [(12)] .While aptitude tests are used to suit immediate objectives like foreign language course entry requirements, progress tests are used to check whether short-range objectives are attained, and may take place at the end of each semester, or after one or more teaching units.

4.3.2. The Proficiency Test

Language teachers use progress tests to determine, for instance, whether learners have attained the teaching objectives of a given or set of courses. This is used in an educational context to measure students' capacities in particular language areas.

Similarly, other testers, mainly employers, use other types of tests to measure the candidates' abilities in specific areas of language for specific purposes. These are proficiency tests.

Norris suggests that proficiency tests are measures used by testers (teachers, employers, evaluators, and others) to quantify the candidate's mastery of the language in specific language uses .According to this same author ,the proficiency test is based on the specification of what the candidates are expected to do, to be considered proficient.

The aim of this test is to select the candidates that are most likely to fit in specific language uses. For instance, this can be the case of any private television channel looking for people with high abilities to use language for interpretation, translation, journalism, and so forth. Within an educational context, this is used by universities which require students to have reached a certain standard of English to be admitted for higher language courses.

According to Brown (1995), placement tests, used to place learners in the appropriate sub course in language programmes with respect to their linguistic abilities, are proficiency tests. Indeed, each sub-course requires some skill of language use in accordance with the area where the student

will have access to proficiency in appropriate written or oral aspects of language.

Clark defined proficiency tests as "those testing procedures aimed at certifying the acquisition of real-life competences" (p.5). He added that a student's performance in a proficiency test is analyzed not only to know how much he has learned, but also to see how his performance is appropriate to the goals specified by language use for some purposes.

Whether orally held or done in a written form, proficiency tests measure the examinee's competences against concrete standards and apparent criteria: those of manipulating language as a whole in some areas to suit specific needs in real-life situations.

For Jones and Spolsky [(13)] , proficiency test is:" …any measurement procedure that aims at determining the examinee's ability to receive and transmit information in the test language for some pragmatically useful purpose." (p.10)

This is what suggests that the testee has to demonstrate, through a proficiency test, his abilities to master some areas in language for practical use. Although ways of testing proficiency are various, it is the kind of language proficiency requirements which determine the way in which the test is to be held. For instance, if high oral fluency is required, face-to-face conversation characterizes the procedure of test taking. This involves the testee and one or more evaluators to be engaged in a dialogue.

The testee's performances are observed, and success and/or failure are determined accordingly. If the candidate looked for is the one with a high listening skill, the process of test taking may be listening to recorded tapes ,or radio broadcast.

The common point among different proficiency tests is that they do not generally stem from courses which the candidate might have taken. This could lead us to criticize these tests when they are used as means to select, among different students coming from different high schools, those who will study foreign languages at the university .In fact, learners show different rates of motivation and willingness to language study. Then ,a proficiency test which keeps out some candidates from attending further language courses ,regardless of their previous-language training, is likely to be subjective and unfair.

5. Criteria for Language Tests

Tests are tools used to know language knowledge through, and to highlight both learners' areas of weaknesses and strength. The extent to

which these tests are efficient to indicate such data is determined by the rate to which tests are valid and reliable. Then, validity and reliability are two major characteristics of good tests.

5.1. Validity

There are of the opinion that any time a test user asks what does the test really test, he is wondering about construct validity which is seen as the extent to which a test may be said to measure theoretical constructs or trait. Seifert (1991) and Cohen (1994) hold a similar opinion and specify that the theoretical constructs a test aims at measuring can be adequately defined only in the light of data gathered in the process of validating that test. Weir[(14)] (1990) has summarized the situation in the following terms: "…it is only through the empirical investigation of the relationship of test scores to other external data that we can discover what a test measures." (p.23)

This view holds that to establish test construct validity, we need external empirical data which serve as criteria against which test scores are validated. These external and independent data can be samples of expected behaviors a test is intended to measure.

This is what suggests that test validation, whether posteriori held or delayed until scores are gained, seems indispensable at least for two reasons: First is that it eliminates among test items those which are not adequately formulated to test what is meant to be tested. And, second, it enables test users to see what variables need to be included and /or excluded from the test field.

Content validity

The more a test stimulates the dimensions of observable performance and accords with what is known about that performance, the more likely it is to have content and construct validity applying other terms. Seifert (1991) said 'Evaluations are valid if they measure what they claim to measure and if they therefore help teachers reach significant decisions or conclusions about students' (p.475)

The statements above put forward two elements which need to be taken into account by test constructors to meet the requirements of content validity. First, the test has to indicate to a considerable extent some kind of proficiency the testee is expected to have, and at the same time he has to show where the deficiencies may lie. Second, the test has to demonstrate that the areas selected for measurement are appropriately chosen to represent the broader skills a testee is asked to manifest.

From a theoretical viewpoint, this seems a far reaching aim because of the considerable interrelation of content and constructs validity.

5.2. Reliability

A language test, after it is administered and scored has to be tested. The criterion against which a test has to be judged is its reliability. Reliability means the extent to which a test ensures consistency of the data it collects (Norris 2000)

In practice, this can be achieved by scoring the same test performances of the same group of testees by two scorers. The degree to which the test is reliable is indicated, through comparison, by the interval, the more likely the test is reliable.

There seems to be interdependence between test validity and test reliability (Miller and Legg, 1993).Both reliability and validity are measures used to ensure that a test is objective and efficient to highlight learners' expected language knowledge. Weir (1990) argues that the interdependence of validity and reliability exists in the sense that one has sometimes to enhance either one behalf of the other. Weir reports that' …the problem is that which one can have test reliability without test validity. A test can only be valid if it also reliable.' (p.3)

This same author went on commenting that in language test, the focus is often on validation especially in cases of achievement tests in the classroom. Moller (1981 a) has already drawn this conclusion where he specifies that this is particularly the case of foreign language test. The following statement is very illustrative of his opinion. Moller claimed

While it is understood that a valid test must be reliable, it would seem that in such a highly complex and personal behavior as using a language other than one's mother tongue, validity could be claimed for measures that might have a lower than normally accepted level of reliability." (p.67)

The conclusion to draw here is that one should not abandon reliability even though it is not necessarily a condition to valid assessment in certain circumstances. It is one among many tools that can be used to justify decision –making claims at validity, but a tool that should be faced with critical dialogue from other possibly warranted perspectives.

6. Assessing the Writing Skill

One of the most important skills in foreign language learning is writing. While listening and reading are reception skills, with some interpretations of an already formulated language; writing requires a certain degree of knowledge and mastery of the target language system. At early stages of teaching instructions, communication through writing consists of short messages expressed in simple statements, sentences or paragraphs. At

intermediate and advanced levels, it requires writing longer papers to convey more significant messages.

Testing students' abilities to write in a foreign language poses, as suggested by Clark[15] some complications when compared to evaluating learners' performances in listening and reading skills. In fact, printed texts and paragraphs may suit the purpose of measuring students' abilities in reading. Similarly, recorded spoken language used in test situations provides enough information as to the testee's capacity to recognize and interpret speech.

At elementary levels of foreign language learning, the ability to write in the target language presupposes, as already stated, that the learner is acquainted with spelling, vocabulary and grammar .The teacher may wish to measure students' achievements in these fields by adopting several ways of testing writing .When the aim of a writing test is to check correctness of spelling, dictation is often preferred. In this case, the teacher reads a list of words, phrases or sentences that students write. The emphasis, here, is on how successfully learners transform sounds into graphemic symbols. This is based on the assumptions that students can equate letter or combination of letters with sounds. In the case of English, one sound can be represented by one or moiré letters. For example, in words like," enough", "phrase" and "far" ,the sound /f/ is represented by the letter "f" in "far" and by the combinations "gh" and "ph" in "enough" and "phrase", respectively.

In testing vocabulary through writing, visual and oral cues are examples of the many possibilities at hand. Pictures, for instance, can be introduced in a test situation to stimulate students to provide appropriate and relevant vocabulary words in an instruction requiring them to describe the picture in simple written sentences .This way of testing the writing skill also serves to indicate learners' abilities to recall and reproduce the foreign language. This task presupposes knowledge of the lexical units of the target language independently of listening or reading skills and away from any recourse to the mother tongue.

In testing grammar through writing, test items may require from students to supply omitted elements from a sentence or set of sentences. The missing elements can be forms of verbs, phrases, adjectives, predicates, and so on. This same kind of test may require students to produce correct sentences whose meanings fit with the already given ones. This happens especially when students have to use reported speech, passive form, or to complete dialogues.

In our view, tests of writing do not only measure the students' abilities in the written aspect off the language. Other skills may also be tested. The use of dictation to test the skill of writing is one reason which rises our claim

that testing the learner's skill to write what he hears does not only rest in his mastery of grammar, vocabulary and spelling ,but also calls for potential capacities to listen and comprehend.

Field Work Results

The field work results in this paper are opinions and attitudes of teachers and students in the English Department revealed through the analysis of the questionnaire. What is worth mentioning in general is that teachers of English at the University of Batna possess different educational backgrounds, teaching experiences and instructional careers. These diversities resulted in different teaching perceptions in terms of attitudes, viewpoints and evaluations of writing.

All of the teachers claimed that teaching and testing English and its basic skills mainly writing using different tools becomes an urgent priority to achieve real language proficiency. Yet, we felt through their responses that this target cannot be achieved now. Certainly, this leaves their students still in encounter with serious difficulties in learning the writing skill.

Although the teachers have realized that varied ways of testing and evaluating are important, necessary and helpful in teaching/ learning language skills, they reported that they never had adequate training in such a field.

The lack of such training is felt from the respondents' answers. This constraint hinders teachers from a better exploitation to their capacities to make their learners feel the difference.

The questionnaire also showed that the major problems associated with crowded groups, insufficient time, the absence of an effective teaching technique for the writing skills create an obstacle for teachers to improve and develop their students' average ability in written performances. Teachers' efforts to help their students overcome their learning difficulties by designing well –suited activities and variety of tasks are still required to be doubled.

Students' difficulties in writing cannot be effectively simplified unless their teachers get the utmost benefits of the variety of teaching and assessing writing theories set in the field. Therefore, as a research requirement, we suggest the introduction of evaluation and testing as fundamental courses in pre-service training. Hence, what should be mentioned is the importance of interdependence of the different language skills in designing any teaching/testing activity.

Conclusion

The present research work tried to investigate some pedagogical implications in teaching and testing the written skill which we think contribute in helping teachers visualize the importance of the interdependence between these two factors in teaching English as a Foreign Language. The teacher's motivation and willingness to better things for the better are enough. Of course, this will offer students the chance to improve their language skills especially the written performances. Both teachers and learners' responses to the different items and their perceptions of the issue under study helped us to suggest that even at this stage, some points are of value and deserve to be reconsidered. In both teaching and testing students' written performances, the problem originates from many factors, and in most of the cases it lies in the teachers' insufficient theoretical knowledge evaluation which also affects their practical view to it. The tools teachers use in evaluation are generally written term exams which proved inappropriate indicators for learners' potential abilities. Communicating in a foreign language means using appropriately one of the two forms of the language; yet, learners receive intensive written courses and are consequently exposed to excessive use of written tests.

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