

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
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GRADUATION WORK:

**“INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (IAS): A COMBINATION OF
TRADITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE
DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR”**

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TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF:

Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés opción Enseñanza

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Main Campus, September 1st 2010



Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

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I. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First, I want to thank God in Heaven, our Almighty Father, who illuminated us to complete this valuable work, and who has been giving us the wisdom that surpasses all understanding, but also who has lifted us from ashes every time we have failed and whose all things are, including this great achievement.

I want to thank my beloved parents and family who have been supporting and helping us as long as they have could during the whole work, therefore I want to thank them for having been there whenever we needed.

And finally, we thank our instructor and assessor, Lic. René Arturo Hernández Rivas, who has been our support in the development of this project, and who oriented us to work in a very important issue not only at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador, but also education in general. For that reason we will be endlessly grateful with him.

Rafael Antonio Fuentes Gudiel



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To God almighty:

Without Him, I could not be here. He's everything. He has given me strength, patience, and the courage to continue in this career despite the difficulties. I know that everything I have, I achieve, and I am, is because of Him.

To my dear parents:

For being my encouragement and for always being there when I needed them. They have pushed me to the top to make me give the best of me every day. For their love, their patience and their trust in me, I really want to thank them and no words can describe how proud I feel of being their daughter.

To my husband:

To my husband for his understanding, patience and love throughout the development of this work.

To our professors:

For being my light to the success, for helping me to be better people, for their devotion to this career of demands and sacrifice, thank you very much.

To our advisor:

Thanks for your time, your knowledge, your patience and support. Licenciado René Arturo Hernández Rivas you have been very devoted to this Project and your ideas and suggestions were always the best. Without your help this final graduation project would not be possible.

Karla Corina Bellosó Barrientos



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II. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, there are many countries in Central America that are going through new educational challenges. And one of those challenges has to do specifically with the current assessment system. In El Salvador, the issue about enhancing the current assessment system is also being discussed and analyzed to yield new and effective results in education. Since the implementation of the plan called “plan 2021” by the Ministry of Education (MINED), many foreign language teachers have felt committed to implementing a better assessment system that aims at generating more proficient students in L2. However, to conceive changes that produce effective results is necessary the power of visionary minds and constant inquiring effort to understand the art in education.

This paper has been written with the purpose of demonstrating how beneficial the Integrated Assessment System (traditional and alternative) can be. So to reach the construction of this paper, it was necessary to follow a systematic process that allowed the group to understand some issues in the current assessment process and finally offer a proposal.

In essence, this work includes an analysis of some classroom assessment concepts as well as their application, with especial emphasis on alternative assessment and the construction of a combined assessment system (Integrated



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Assessment System) that keeps old effective practices of Traditional assessment, but at the same time includes the variety of techniques Alternative assessment offers, leaving out the weaknesses of each other. Moreover this paper includes some other parts in order for the reader to have a complete picture of this work, and those are the analysis of traditional and alternative assessment until the final proposal which makes this work as a whole.

First of all, we present the justification. In this section, it is presented the rational arguments that explain why it is necessary to run this work and the possible benefits it might have in the evaluation process. Therefore, to complete this paper, it was necessary to catch readers' attention through the abstract; which gives a short but concise explanation of what the paper is about.

In addition, to develop this essay, it was necessary to carry out a review of relevant literature on both Traditional and Alternative assessment. Once all the data was collected, the body was designed in four important parts: the first part is related with a description and analysis of traditional assessment. Secondly, an overview of alternative and traditional assessment was designed, taking into account important features of it. In addition, this essay promotes a new evaluation process which is called Integrated Assessment System; and this one emphasizes the strengths of traditional and alternative assessment into a specific Integrated Assessment System (IAS). Finally, there is another important section of this paper, and it has to do with a concluding proposal. It proposes teachers from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador a guide that develops the integration of IAS in the evaluation process.



III. OBJECTIVES

General objectives:

- To analyze how traditional assessment and alternative assessment can be used in the current assessment system to measure students' knowledge through different paths at the Foreign Language Department of UES
- To promote a study on how the integrated assessment system can be applied at the Foreign Language Department to measure students' real knowledge and performance.
- To provide a proposal that helps teachers who work at the Foreign Language Department of UES to improve the evaluation system.

Specific objectives:

- To make teachers conscious of the benefits of an Integrated Assessment System (IAS) may have in order to provide significant changes in students' evaluation process.
- To analyze traditional and alternative assessment system through the identification of its weaknesses and strengths in order to carry out an



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efficient combination of their benefits and mix them into an integrated assessment system.

- To promote the application of an IAS to help students become critical thinkers and more analytical when facing a real-world task.

IV. JUSTIFICATION

At the present time, assessment has been recognized by many experts as an important and powerful tool in education. And this is due to the fact that many teachers still depend on it while evaluating students' learning achievements. For that reason, teachers at the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador have also recognized the contribution this essential element may represent in the preparation of future second language learners for measuring their knowledge. However, the main reason why this paper was written was to persuade second language teachers of the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador to bring about changes in the current assessment system and to devote more efforts in the improvement of alternative assessment techniques, or even better the development of an integrated assessment system to measure as accurately as possible students' learning.

In a traditional assessment system, students do not have plenty of opportunities to show what they have learned and what they can really do with it in different ways. So, the evaluation system can take place in equal ways through alternative and traditional assessment to provide different forms to come up with plenty of opportunities. The current assessment system only allows for one



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possible answer. So, it is necessary to provide students with different opportunities to create their own answers. In other words, they need a chance to develop their critical thinking skills. Besides that, it seems to be that teaching to the test is becoming a common practice in the University of El Salvador. This means that teaching to the test does not cover all the skills that students can manage in a deep sense. For that reason, teachers should trust more in the Integrated Assessment System and promote assessment to learn in order to encourage students to perform well in real life rather than filling a paper.

Finally, paper and pencil tests do not measure progress or outcomes in students' performance because they only focus on pieces of knowledge. They also allow superficial knowledge through memorization, so it is not possible to address student outcomes in a real context (Puckett, Black, 1994). On the other hand, the Integrated Assessment System may demonstrate the continuous progress about how proficient students are becoming during instruction. That means, students need to reflect real proofs and products of learning to provide evidences that lead to sound judgments and not only assumptions.

Clearly, *Lawrence M. Rudner and Carol Boston* state that by increasingly administering traditional assessment techniques in students it may be difficult for teachers to distinguish among those students who select the correct answer on a test because they truly know the answer, and those who do not understand the problem but simply guess correctly. In fact, this is a reality in our school. That is why we intend, in this essay, to prove that an Integrated Assessment System is beneficial. It can provide teachers with the necessary information and



new proposals to improve the quality of L2 learning at the University of El Salvador

V. ABSTRACT

Assessment as a teacher's tool for bringing education into a more desirable condition has to be a priority in our country. As a result, the adoption of the combination of alternative assessment and traditional assessment strategies to evaluate students' progress as a mean to enhance the current assessment system is the focus of this paper. This study promotes the appropriate understanding and application of different types of assessment techniques from alternative and traditional assessment.

The function of traditional assessment is described and analyzed in order to find weaknesses, strengths, contribution and real application in the evaluation process. At the same time, alternative assessment is analyzed the same way. So, an integrated assessment system is suggested. This one will combine both traditional and alternative assessment in a balanced way, taking into a count the advantages of each one during the evaluation process.

Finally, all this process helped us to conceive a proposal for this work that will guide how policy makers from the Foreign Language Department of The University of El Salvador (the head and teachers) can collaborate and initiate a new assessment practice in favor of the evaluation process.



Traditional assessment such as paper and pencil tests, reports, quizzes, pupil papers, and assignments and similar ought to be a matter of discussion at the present time. The standard contents in the curriculum and tests corresponding to them are just the focus of the teachers' efforts, which are valuable and most of the time considered reliable. However, after a long time applying the same traditional assessment methods with some proven limitations arises a valid concern to bring about changes that help to optimize the way of assessing students' progress (Archibald, 1991, p.7). In that sense, alternative assessments such as performance and authentic assessment seem to be an appropriate complement to make a better and stronger assessment system. Besides that, there are some arguments regarding their benefits in the educational process. Dr. Judith Liskin-Gasparro in her web site called "Comparing Traditional and Performance-Based Assessment", considers that one of the benefits of performance assessment is that it does not only measure the correctness of a response given by the test-takers but also the reflexive process, namely the thoughts involved in arriving at the response is an important component to identify and judge student's performance. Or as Lawrence M. Rudner and Carol Boston (2007, pag. 5) consider it, performance assessment allows students to be more responsible for creating or constructing their responses by their own. That means students do not have to be required to produce only a single possible response when asked. Moreover, Jon Mueller (2005) believes that



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through authentic assessment teachers can be able to check more directly for students' ability to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in the real world beyond the classroom and as a result, teachers will be provided with the most direct evidence to interpret the real level of performance in their students. So taking this context as departure point, we strongly believe teachers must combine alternative and traditional assessment for evaluating students' learning process because each type of assessment measures in a different way the domains of students' learning.

Traditional Assessment

Traditional assessment facilitates the assessment process by helping teachers to gather information as well as decision making. At the present time, many school and university teachers have relied on common standardized assessment techniques to measure the learning of their students. The methodology that is being used by teachers to measure students' knowledge is known as traditional assessment. This kind of assessment, as Alenoush Saroyan and Cheryl Amundsen (2004) consider, tends to evaluate the products of learning through artifacts that demonstrate students' acquisition of declarative knowledge in summative ways (P. 169). Likewise, experts such as Jon Mueller believe that traditional assessment is a kind of assessment that facilitates assessment completion by allowing students to recall information to complete the assessment when choosing a single response. Another definition comes from Grant Wiggins (1998 p. 18) who considers it relies on direct and simplistic substitutes from which one can make assumptions about what the performance of an individual student would be in a real situation. So it is arguable to say this



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common assessment technique is a simple but effective way of assessing the learning of students, and it is not necessary to dispose of it but improve it.

Traditional assessment techniques.

In order to achieve satisfactory result with traditional assessment in second language, it is necessary to make use of multiple assessment techniques to accurately measure students' learning by describing the function of each technique, For example: Laurie Rozakis (2003, P. 162-165) says that standardized tests that use multiple-choice items are instruments in which learners are required to choose one answer from several options. She believes this kind of test helps students to enhance their common sense. A second technique is fill-in-the-blank; such item provides choices for the students to come up with the correct answer and sometimes requires students to recall the correct answer from the material studied. Tests that include this kind of item may be useful to develop the common sense in learners as well as to help students to learn how to summarize events or facts. Another common type of Item used in standardized tests is true-false. Here learners are required to recognize a fact or idea, but it also allows teachers to check their students' reading comprehension. One more technique is matching; this type of item can assess the ability of students to see which pieces of information go together. In other words, matching can help students to recognize the structure of a sentence. In this sense, these kinds of standardized or teacher-made tests have remained so common in education to measure the learning of the students (Jon Mueller, 2004). For this reason, we believe this kind of tests should continue



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being used in the current assessment system at the Foreign Language Department of The University of El Salvador because second language teachers have the responsibility to report positive and reliable data from students' learning by calculating how much they know about the new language.

Contribution of traditional assessment to the evaluation process.

Since traditional assessment is the matter of discussion at the starting point, this research study presents some of the relevant contributions of traditional assessment in the evaluation process. First of all, while it is true that some teachers claim traditional assessment does not reveal authentic information from learners, other experts such as Cordelia Bryan and Karen Cleg (2006) argue that it provides teachers and instructors with the facility of collecting information about the learning of the students in a quick and easy way in a minimum of time, and this is because learners are required to get the same answers in a test (page. 44) Moreover, some educators claim that traditional assessment has to do mainly with grades and marks to measure the level of learners' knowledge. But, it is also important to remember that it includes formative assessment. As David Scott (2001) indicates, formative assessment is developmental and aims at identifying areas for remediation so that subsequent instruction can be improved (p. 63-65). Finally, we believe that traditional assessment helps teachers to make quick decisions about learning. Cordelia Bryan and Karen Gleg (2006) state that traditional assessment does not comprise subjective thinking, but administering a scale or a numerical value related to multiple-choice tests (p.44). It is reasonable to assume that such assessment can help significantly in the process of assessment. In other words,



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we consider that complementing the current assessment with alternative assessment may help instructors to gather information during assessment to reach a final and more valid judgment.

Benefits of traditional assessment

In addition, some teachers may still maintain that in the current assessment system, just specific subjects should be evaluated with standardized tests, for example Grammar, reading and listening. Some reasons may be that they are easy to design and score and they are not time consuming as James Dean Brown (2004, page. 1) believes. This kind of test does not represent too much effort at all because they all are ruled by particular standards in order to assign a number (Dr. Judith Liskin- Gasparro, 1997). Similarly scoring is not a problem because teachers should perform quantitative assessment; that means, calculating the number of right answers in the paper to determine a grade according to their knowledge. Besides that, standard tests are easy to administer and amenable to item analysis and inexpensive. They are adaptable to a wide variety of subject matter domains (Stacey Beth and Mathew T. 1993). It is also important to mention that traditional assessment can be very effective when identifying weaknesses during instruction. In fact, traditional assessment is likely to reach satisfactory standards. As Lily Robert and Mark Wilson (1998) say “oral exams constitute a flexible route to let students be asked to expand, clarify and justify their response, namely not limiting learners to select for some particular responses far from his or her own, and consequently, test administrators can be able to assign a grade not only to knowledge, but to performance as well.”



Disadvantages of traditional assessment

There is a predominant and controversial aspect of traditional assessment, which has to deal with disadvantages. For some specific reasons, there are some opponents of traditional assessment who claim that the use of such techniques cannot be used to interpret the level of performance a student has achieved at the end of the process because it is commonly used to demonstrate superficial learning and not critical thinking at the end of the school year or course. A clear example of this is a chemistry class in which students might be asked to identify the chemical composition of a premixed solution by applying tests for various properties. Unlike the latter example, the best thing would be to take these students to a forest and ask them to identify pollutants in a river, so that the task involves real-world problem and make it more authentic (Lawrence M. and Carol Boston, 1994 p.5). So according to this, it can be inferred that traditional tests, such as, paper-and-pencil tests, do not take into account the cognitive process that leads to that response. Lawrence M. Rudner and Carol Boston (1994 p.5) believe there is no way to distinguish among those students who select the answer because they truly understand the problem, and those who have no idea how to do the work, but simply guess correctly.

In addition, the problem with standard evaluation is that a teacher-made test contains the same structure where the students just select one possible answer from many choices. Students are not allowed to come up with a new answer because these kinds of tests do not provide students with the freedom of applying different skills to achieve more than one answer and become



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problem solvers and creative thinkers, but providing established responses. According to Grant Wiggins (1998) this kind of test has the purpose of revealing a minimal percentage in students learning only. In short, much of the information mentioned above presents some arguable disadvantages.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

Alternative Assessment provides multiple paths to demonstrate students' learning. Alternative assessments require students to perform and apply acquired knowledge and skills. Grant Wiggins (1998) states that Alternative assessment is most of the time called performance and authentic assessment and these two can accommodate varied learning styles and serve the purpose of instruction while traditional assessment does not let students show what they can do in different ways. In that sense, there are different key concepts on these two types of assessments. The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) of the U.S.A Congress (1992) states that Performance assessment is "Testing that requires students to create an answer or a product that demonstrates his knowledge or skill" (Page. 2) Ralph Tyler (1995) proposes authentic assessment as an enlarged concept of students evaluation encompassing each other approaches besides tests and quizzes (P. 251). Alternative assessment includes a variety of real activities that demonstrate specific things that students can do. The implementation of performance assessments involves a general process that has been described by a number of authors (Allen, 1996; Brualdi, 2000; Herman, Aschbacher, & Winters, 1992; Moskall, 2003). The three basic steps in this process are defining the purpose, choosing the activity, and developing the scoring criteria (Wren, 2009 p. 4). The first step in developing



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alternative assessment involves determining which concepts, knowledge, or skills should be assessed. The developer needs to know what type of decisions will be made with the information gathered from the assessment. Another step is selecting the performance activity. Right here we have to devote special care; Brualdi (2000 p.5) reminded teachers that they should first consider several factors, including available resources, time constraints, and the amount of data required to make an adequate evaluation of the student's performance. The last step in constructing alternative assessment and most of the time the most difficult one is developing performance criteria. In this case rubrics are used to evaluate the level of a student's achievement on various aspects of a performance task or product. A rubric can be defined as "a criterion-based scoring guide consisting of a fixed measurement and descriptions of the characteristics for each score point. Rubrics describe degrees of quality, proficiency, or understanding along a continuum" (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005 p.5). Certainly, we have to consider this before creating or adopting a rubric (which is valid), it must be decided whether a performance task, performance product, or both a task and product will be evaluated." It is true as long as teachers follow the correct systematic procedure they will increase the affectivity and accuracy of their own assessment processes.



Alternative assessment techniques

Alternative assessment encounters the constructive nature of learning by using different paths. For example, it includes a variety of innovative testing procedures including portfolios, self and peer- assessment, diaries and learning logs, and teacher checklists and observations, Journals, Essays, Interviews, Performance tasks etc. as stated by Prem Shankar (2008, p 202). Moreover, Foster and Masters (1996) indicate all portfolios are “sources of evidence for judgments of achievement in a range of context, from classroom monitoring of students performance to high-stakes summative assessment. All contain pieces of evidence; the more relevant the evidence, the more useful it is for inferring a student’s level of achievement in a learning area”. (P. 2) According to ESL 2205 Curriculum Guide, peer assessment, is an assessment in which learners can assess each other’s work, and self-assessment on the other hand, is to assess students’ own work critically to examine it (P. 73-74). Teacher observation checklists can be used in a similar fashion to rubrics in that they measure a student’s ability to perform a desired task successfully states Daniel L Ronis, (2008, p. 104). Hays B. Lantz Jr. 2004 states that performance tasks assess what students know and what they can do with what they know. Task diaries, learning logs and journals focus on having students reflect on what they are learning and learn while they are reflecting on what they are learning according to M.E McIntosh and R.J. Draper (2001, p. 556). All the activities mentioned above require students’ active participation and commitment. In addition, alternative assessment has the capacity to assess higher-order thinking and is



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more student-centered than traditional assessment. However, it is pertinent clarify that the literature distinguishes between two types of performance-based assessment activities that you can implement in your classroom: informal and formal (Airasian, 1991; Popham, 1995; Stiggins, 1994). Assessment is considered informal when students do not know that the assessment is taking place. On the other hand, a student who is being formally assessed knows that you are evaluating him/her and they perform a task or complete a project (Brualdi, 2008). We dare to say that in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador teachers very often use informal performance assessment.

Contribution of alternative assessment to the evaluation process

Alternative assessment supports the learning process because knowledge and skills like critical thinking, self monitoring and reflection are actually applied through the simulation of real life activities in and out of the classroom (Rudner and Boston 1994, p. 7). According to Gibbs (2006, Pag. 18) there are some conditions in which alternative assessment supports the learning process on some findings from the assessment experience questionnaire:

- ✓ Quantity and distribution of students' effort/assessed tasks need to capture sufficient study time and effort and distribute students' effort evenly across topics and weeks.
- ✓ Quality and level of students' effort-assessed task need to engage students in productive learning activities and communicate clear high expectations.



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- ✓ Quantity and timing of feedback/sufficient feedback needs to be provided both often and quickly enough to be useful to students.
- ✓ Quality of feedback/feedback should focus on learning rather than on marks should be linked to the purpose of the assignment and to criteria and should be understandable to students.
- ✓ Students' response to feedback/feedback is pointless unless it is received by students and attended to. It needs to be acted upon in order to improve students' work or learning.

As a result these implementations allow teachers to be organized and measure specific skills and domains in the language of students also allow students to assess their own learning because of the different steps that can be applied in the process.

Benefits of alternative assessment.

Each type of assessment has advantages; in fact, alternative assessment is not the exception. Advantages of alternative assessment are mentioned by Sandra K. Enger and Robert E. Yager in their book "assessing students understanding in science", (2009) and these are the following: It provides opportunities for application of inquiry skills; also, it provides opportunities to practice with opened-ended questions; it promotes opportunities for critical thinking; it provides more direct evidence of what students can do versus indirect evidence from traditional test; It promotes opportunities for creativity (p.25). Moreover, Keneth G. Shipley and Julie G. Macfee in their book "assessment in speech-Language Pathology", (2004) the



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present list includes the following advantages for authentic assessment: It is natural and similar to the real world, students participate in self-evaluation and self-monitoring; it allows for individualization (p.11). This is particularly beneficial with culturally diverse students; it offers flexibility, and the test environment is realistic.

Alternative assessment provides students with the opportunities to fully demonstrate their abilities in a range of areas. (Kerka, 1990, p.1) this is something that traditional standard tests do not allow. Alternative assessment examines higher-level thinking skills, unlike traditional testing that often evaluates factual recall. "Research is quite clear that standardized tests have serious limitations for assessing performance on open-ended problem-solving tasks – tasks involving creativity, sustained inquiry, and analysis of diffuse problems." (Archbald, 1991, p.7) Basically, these are the areas covered by alternative assessment; in contrast traditional tests do not stress those skills.

Disadvantages of alternative assessment

Disadvantages of alternative assessment cannot be omitted. In this sense, the most complex problem of alternative assessment is its high cost. Wiggins, (1990), one of the biggest promoters of alternative assessment, estimates scoring authentic tests cost 200 times the price of scoring a traditional exam. For every penny spent on traditional tests, an alternative assessment would cost \$2 (p.4) Most of this cost is in time and development of authentic programs. As a result the challenge of implementing alternative assessment must represent a genuine investment and a genuine commitment for educators (Casallar, 2004 p. 3). Certainly, there is not law or code that punishes or



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pushes teachers to innovate. It is an ethical matter and it is up to every teacher to integrate efforts with other teachers to promote changes. In this way, they must be committed with progress and good teaching practices that innovate and that lead them to applying techniques and strategies that better facilitate students' learning and production. Some other disadvantages regarded by the detractors of alternative assessment are the lack of objectivity (Kenneth G. Shirpley and Julie G. McAfee (2009, p. 11) and Sandra K. enger and Rober E. Yager state that it is difficult to agree on assessment criteria for practical skills (p. 16). In addition, learners may feel embarrassed when being observed as is stated by Phil Race, Sally Brown and Brenda Smith (2004 p.87).

INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (IAS)

The Necessity to have an integrated assessment system.

After discussing what traditional assessment is and its contributions, benefits and disadvantages in the evaluation process, it is appropriate to explain the reasons for contemplating possible changes in the current evaluation system at the foreign Language Department of The University of El Salvador. First of all, it is necessary to recognize individual learner differences because it is important that all teachers know what their students want to learn, taking into account the needs of their students (Cordelia Bryan and Karen Cleg, 2006 p.42) that is, accepting that each student is different and unique. However, Dr. Judith Liskin – Gasparro (1997) suggests that by encouraging learners to become problem solvers and creative thinkers, teachers are pushing their students into a more



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thoughtful, reflexive, and richer mode of learning(p.7). The use of traditional assessment techniques should renew and incorporate better standards in the current assessment system; this has to do with the process of obtaining information about students and the abilities to meet specific curricular objectives (Grant Wiggins, 1998).

Having said this, we strongly believe resistance to making specific changes to traditional assessment would be quite illogical because it is simple and measures superficial knowledge only (Archbald, 1991, p.7). Traditional assessment just attempts to measure the level of student's knowledge. Furthermore, there is no doubt that there are many reasons that suggest that traditional assessment has to be changed. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the best way to change the current assessment system is to combine traditional assessment with alternative assessment, so that both assessment techniques provide understandable and manageable information to help teacher to support their evidences of the learning in students, as well as, to administer a final judgment together with a quantitative and reasonable outcome or scale.

Developing an accurate integrated assessment system.

The integrated assessment system is not new, but in El Salvador the discussion is just beginning. According to the European Association for Research on learning and Instruction 2004 to develop an accurate integrated assessment system that fulfills the needs of a changing society, we have to consider some generic features: For example, an integrated assessment system (IAS) has to serve a dual purpose – assessment for learning and assessment of learning this



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addresses the needs of both learners and teachers; this assessment system has to contain a built-in mechanism for quality control. Teachers have to be informed by research findings, piloted, evaluated and revised according to learners and teachers needs. IAS has to promote a deep approach for learning and conceptual understanding. Therefore, IAS addresses the needs of today's knowledge and information society. IAS has to take into account factors affecting learning outcomes such as intellectual abilities, use of resources, learning opportunities, and assessment modes, approaches to learning and views of learning. In addition, to develop an IAS in our country we have to consider including some principles for example: learners have to participate in the assessment process. Assessment is contextual and responsive – it is aligned to instruction. The topics of assessment is what the learners know and are able to do. Both learning processes and learning products are assessed, besides, assessment criteria are transparent to individual learners, and teachers also get feedback from assessment results and outcomes. The key aim of IAS is to inform learners and teachers on how the progress is in their learning. Finally, IAS allows for the planning of a learning route. The IAS that fits in the above elements has to integrate both new and old ways of assessment, provide new perspectives on 'test' validity, develop new methods, Integrate formative and summative assessment modes and be economical (Adapted from Cascallar, 2004). So it is clear that if an IAS is developed, it will promote a major role in developing a better assessment practice and positive results as well.



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As a conclusion, a mixture of traditional and alternative assessment will best enhance students' learning process. The application of an IAS is necessary to envision a better future for new generations. We need students as future professionals to become problem solvers and creative thinkers in all subjects and areas. Also, we need students to go beyond recalling information. Besides, it is important that teachers understand the authentic sense of this paper and adhere their support to this initiative by focusing on promoting the necessary improvements on the current assessment system in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador instead of prioritizing personal teaching expectations, the combination of traditional assessment and alternative assessment seem currently not to reflect the proper balance in some areas of our educational system. However, implementing such changes demands the will and support of policy makers to allow conditions for researchers, educational experts, teachers and learners arise, not only in higher education; particularly in the University of El Salvador but also at national scale. The results and benefits of creating a new society of active citizens will be perceived in short term once changes begin to work.



Proposal

Certainly, over the years traditional assessment has been a very controversial topic because it is difficult to answer if traditional assessment should be changed completely or just complemented with alternative assessment techniques to strengthen the current assessment system. In our opinion, we truly believe that traditional assessment should be complemented to enhance the assessment process. Through this study, we suggest a combination of traditional and alternative assessment that leads to an eclectic connection of both in the following way: 50% Traditional assessment techniques and the other 50% Alternative assessment techniques. The reasons for contemplating such connection are the following:

Traditional assessment

- ✓ It is easy to design and score
- ✓ It helps teachers to carry out the official record of their students and aspects of teaching such as grading, grouping and placing.
- ✓ It is inexpensive
- ✓ It can be very effective when measuring grammar, reading, listening and writing skills.
- ✓ It is effective to identify weaknesses within instruction.



Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

- ✓ It is objective.

Alternative assessment

- ✓ It provides opportunities for applications of inquiring skills.
- ✓ It provides direct evidence of what students can do with the target language.
- ✓ It provides opportunities for creativity.
- ✓ It is natural and similar to the real world.
- ✓ It promotes diversity for students to arrive to a response.
- ✓ It allows for individualization.

To conclude this group proposes the following six point plan that indicates the improvements that can be done by bringing about significant changes in the current assessment system. Just to clarify “This proposal is an adoption of the work group commissioned to Paul Black and Dylan William (British Educational Research Association.) that consists of the major review of research on classroom assessment and its impact which resulted in the pamphlet, ‘Inside the Black Box.’” That aside, we believe that it is possible to implement and integrate an assessment system in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador that includes the characteristics mentioned above. So It is our belief that teachers from the Foreign Language Department at the University of El Salvador do appreciate the value and importance of assessment that may reflect real learning and applicable knowledge of students



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to achieve real and lasting improvements in the educational field. Therefore, we strongly believe this proposal will be accepted or at least discussed.

- 1- Assessment for learning should be the central focus in the Foreign Language Department; therefore, it is necessary to develop a plan oriented to improving standards. That means teachers that have developed some expertise in assessment conform a commission and should check out how the assessment curricula has to be planned and oriented toward the new changes at the beginning of the new academic year.
- 2- The head of the Foreign Language Department must promote Changes and adjustments in initial teacher training (students as future professionals) and continuous teacher training to develop and unify criteria about a new integrated assessment system. These changes can be taught in the didactics subjects to students, and for teachers the authorities should promote workshops, forums and training with experts of foreign institutions that have succeeded already in this subject. For example, the European association for research of learning and instruction (Eduardo Cascallar Assessment Group International, Brussels info@agi-assessments.com.)
- 3- Changes in the application of evaluations in the classroom should be promoted by the head of the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador accompanied by the teachers and administrators as a means to grant effectiveness in the implementation of such changes in practice.



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- 4- Changes in assessment methodology must be field tested before they are fully implemented. It means the head as well as the current professors in charge of Didactics should try with a small group of volunteered students from every subject to find out for possible weaknesses and improvements in IAS.
- 5- The authorities of the University of El Salvador as the head manager and the head of the Foreign Language Department should encourage teachers to develop better teaching practices by asking them to create new alternative assessment tasks and scoring rubrics and then conducting pilot tests in their classrooms. If the results are positive and are adopted by others, they must receive an economical payment for each activity (Brown, Hudson, 1998)
- 6- It has to be mandatory to set up a permanent evaluation program led for an especial commission to feed directly back the different initiatives promoted in order to monitor their development. In this sense, professors specialized who will conform the especial commission will be in charge of evaluating the progress of the changes performed.



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<http://www.earli.org/resources/1st%20EARLI%20Position%20Paper%20A%20Learning%20Integrated%20Assessment%20System.pdf>

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[http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/uhwpe/sl/22\(2\)/Brown.pdf](http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/uhwpe/sl/22(2)/Brown.pdf)

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http://www.sedl.org/loteced/comparing_assessment.html



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www.ideasite.net/files/auth.doc](http://calpro-online.org/eric/textonly/docgen.asp?tbl=archive&ID=A032;www.ideasite.net/files/auth.doc)
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- ***Wiggins, Grant; The Case for Authentic Assessment. CLASS,*** [*http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=2&n=2;*](http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=2&n=2;)



ANNEXES



Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

University Of El Salvador

School of Arts and Sciences

Foreign Languages Department



Graduation process profile.

Assessor's name: Lic. René Hernandez.

Topic:

Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

Students' names: Karla Corina Belloso Barrientos

Manuel Antonio Láinez

Rafael Antonio Fuentes Gudiel.



Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

Main Campus, December 9th 2009

Introduction

The present paper attempts to show that an improvement in standards of the current assessment system is possible. The British Educational Research Association states that assessment is one of the most powerful educational tools for promoting effective learning. But it must be used in the right way. So taking this assertion into consideration we believe that a critical analysis to bring about some changes in the current National assessment system and more specifically in the Foreign Language department of the University of El Salvador needs to be done. Certainly this essay is going to explain how this process is achievable. We state that there exists an urgent need to examine traditional policies and practices in assessment to find out weakness and limitations at the same time we propose alternative assessment techniques that complement traditional assessment into an integrated and stronger assessment system.



Objectives

General:

1. Persuade readers about the necessity of producing changes by integrating traditional and Alternative assessment into a better assessment system.

Specific:

1. To present to the readers a proposal about how to implement a new integrated assessment system.
2. To show the potential benefits that the implementation of a combined assessment system offer.



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- Dr. Judith Liskin-Gasparro ; **Comparing Traditional and Performance-Based Assessment**; at the Symposium on Spanish Second Language; Acquisition held at the University of Texas at Austin. October, 1997. © SSDL © Southwest Educational development Laboratory youthwest Educational Development Laboratory.
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- Jon Mueller professor of Psychology; **The Authentic Assessment Toolbox: Enhancing Student Learning through Online Faculty Development.;** Merlot – Journal of Online Learning and Teaching;Volume 1, Number 1July 2005.
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Book	Practical assessment research , and evaluation
Author	Torulf Palm
Editorial	A peer-reviewed electronic journal.
Year	Volume 13, Number 4, April 2008

April 2008 Practical assessment research, and evaluation.

REFERENCE CARDS

The dissatisfaction with the emphasis on multiple-choice testing in the US was also a fundamental factor for the development of the concept of authentic assessment. (Palm, 2008)

Interpretations of test results from such tests were claimed to be invalid indicators of genuine intellectual achievement and since assessments influence teaching and learning they were also said to be directly harmful (Archbald & Newmann, 1988; Wiggins, 1989).

...A conceptually different approach is adopted by Berk (1986). According to his definition a single event cannot be regarded as a performance assessment.

Archbald & Newmann acknowledged that “traditional tests” have been criticized for neglecting the kind of competence needed for dealing successfully with many situations beyond school. They stated that assessment should not measure just any kind of achievement, but valuable or meaningful forms of mastery.

in authentic assessment “The tasks are either replicas of or analogous to the kinds of problems faced by adult citizens and consumers or professionals in the field” (Newmann, 1993, p. 206),

According to Schack (1994) authentic assessments include that the assessments “*give students both feedback upon completion*” as well as “*guide their work along the way*” (p. 39).



Bibliography	
Book	An Integrated Assessment System as a Medium for Teacher Change and the Organizational Factors that Mediate Science Teachers' Professional Development
Authors	Lily Roberts and Mark Wilson
Editorial	University of California, Berkeley
Year	April 1998

Efforts to change the assessment culture are direct responses to calls for better assessments given the limitations of standardized tests (Bullough, 1988; Linn, 1987; Office of Technology Assessment, 1992; Shepard, 1989; Spring, 1988; Wiggins, 1989). To change the assessment culture, it seems clear that one must begin with the teacher who works directly with the students being measured.

Alternative science assessments will be implemented “only if teachers understand their use and the depth of the content they demand, are empowered to make instructional decisions, and are supported by school districts which encourage teacher change” (Harmon, 1995, p. 46).

Book:	An Analysis of traditional classroom assessment techniques and a discussion of alternative methods of assessment.
Authors:	Stacey Beth Zarembra and Mathew T. Schultz
Year:	March 24-26 1993
Editorial	Educational Resource Information Center

Classroom tests are typically teacher made tests (it does not have traditional standard format)

They include multiple choice, constructed response or essay items, in addition quizzes, lab reports and home works. They are easy to administer and score, amenable to item analysis and inexpensive. They are adaptable to a wide variety of subject matter domains.

Encourage superficial learning of material

May be answer correctly by guessing.

Are susceptible to coaching and test wiseness



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Do not lend themselves to assessing all type of knowledge,

Costly to develop and hence are not feasible for most classroom testing.

Oral exam permits flexible why because students can be ask to expand, clarify and justify their response.

Bibliography	
Book:	("Classroom assessment", concepts and applications)
Author:	Peter W. Airasian Boston College
Year:	2001
Editorial	McGraw-Hill Higher Education

Teachers assess for many purposes because they are required to make many different kinds of decisions. The overriding purpose of all assessment is to gather information to facilitate decision making.

-The task of grading or making final judgments about the students' learning at the end of instructions is termed "Summative assessment."

-A first kind of assessment is used by teachers early in the school year to learn about their pupils' social, academic and behavioral characteristics and needs in order to foster and enhance instructions, communication, and cooperation in the classroom. These assessments are called "Sizing- up assessments, *allow teachers to set up and maintain an effective classroom society.*

-_Tasks such as grading, grouping, assessing progress, interpreting test results, conferences with parents, identify pupils' for especial needs placement, and making promotion recommendation at all part of the official responsibilities a teachers' assumes as an employer of a school system. These assessments are official assessment.

- The process of collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting information to aid in decision making is called assessment.

- there are differences between assessment, tests, measurements, and evaluations. Assessment is a general term that includes all the ways that teachers gather informations in their classroom.

- a test is a formal, systematic usually paper- and- pencil procedure used to gather information about pupils' behavior. Test results are used to make generalizations about how pupils' would have performed on similar but untested behaviors.

- Measurement is the process of quantifying assigning a number to pupil's performance. the most common example of measurement in the classroom occurs



Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

when a teacher score a quiz or test. In measurement, a numerical score is used to represent the individuals' performance.

-_Evaluation involves judging the quality of a pupil's performance or determining a possible course of action.

- Evaluation describes the merit, worth, goodness, or desirability of pupils' performance.

Most of the evidence that supports teachers' decisions comes from informal observations and perceptions. Rarely written down or saved informal records, they are used to guide teachers' interactions with pupils during both instructional and non-instructional classroom encounters.

- Such assessments are used primarily to "form" or alter ongoing classroom processes or activities and are called **Formative assessments**. They provide information when it is still possible to influence or "form" the everyday processes that are at the heart of teaching.

-Although critical to teachers' decision making, informal assessment should be supplemented by more formal kinds of evidences. Such formal assessments usually come at the end of a classroom process, or activity, when it is difficult to alter or rectify what has already occurred. **Called summative assessments**, they are used mainly to assess the outcomes of instructions and are exemplified by end of chapter tests, projects, term papers, and final examinations.

- Summative assessment represent a third type of classroom assessment called **official assessment**. Official assessment is more formal and systematic than either sizing-up or instructional assessment. It helps teachers to make decisions that the school bureaucracy requires of them: testing, grading and grouping pupils; recommending whether pupils should be promoted or placed on an honors section; and referring pupils to special education services if they have special needs. The most common forms of official assessments are unit and chapter achievement tests and report cards grades.

- **despite their sometimes lukewarm endorsement by teachers, it is a grave mistake to underestimate the importance of official assessments.**



Bibliography	
Book	The Case for Authentic Assessment.
Website:	http://people.ucsc.edu/~ktellez/authenres.htm
Authors	<i>Grant Wiggins</i>
Editorial	CLASS.
Year	April 1998

WHAT IS AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT? Assessment is authentic when we directly examine student performance on worthy intellectual tasks. Traditional assessment, by contrast, relies on indirect or proxy 'items'--efficient, simplistic substitutes from which we think valid inferences can be made about the student's performance at those valued challenges.

- * Authentic assessments require students to be effective performers with acquired knowledge. Traditional tests tend to reveal only whether the student can recognize, recall or "plug in" what was learned out of context
- * Authentic assessments present the student with the full array of tasks that mirror the priorities and challenges found in the best instructional activities:
- * Authentic assessments attend to whether the student can craft polished, thorough and justifiable answers, performances or products. Conventional tests typically only ask the student to select or write correct responses--irrespective of reasons
- * Authentic assessment achieves validity and reliability by emphasizing and standardizing the appropriate criteria for scoring such (varied) products; traditional testing standardizes objective "items" and, hence, the (one) right answer for each.
- * Authentic tasks involve "ill-structured" challenges and roles that help students rehearse for the complex ambiguities of the "game" of adult and professional life. Traditional tests are more like drills, assessing static and too-often arbitrarily discrete or simplistic elements of those activities
- * "Test validity" should depend in part upon whether the test simulates real-world "tests" of ability. Validity on most multiple-choice tests is determined merely by matching items to the curriculum content



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Beyond these technical considerations the move to reform assessment is based upon the premise that assessment should primarily support the needs of learners.

WHY DO WE NEED TO INVEST IN THESE LABOR-INTENSIVE FORMS OF ASSESSMENT?

While multiple-choice tests can be valid indicators or predictors of academic performance, too often our tests mislead students and teachers about the kinds of work that should be mastered.

Authentic assessment also has the advantage of providing parents and community members with directly observable products and understandable evidence concerning their students' performance.

A LONG OVER VIEW ON ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

The performance assessment movement encompasses much more than a technology for testing students. It requires examining the purposes of education, identifying skills we want students to master, and empowering teachers

Key Features of Performance Assessment the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) of the U.S. Congress (1992) provides a simple, yet insightful, definition of performance assessment: ***testing that requires a student to create an answer or a product that demonstrates his or her knowledge or skills.***

A wide variety of assessment techniques fall within this broad definition. Several are described in Table 1. One key feature of all performance assessments is that they require students to be active participants

Students are responsible for creating or constructing their responses.

Testing has traditionally focused on whether students get the right answers; how they arrive at their answers has been considered important only during the test development.

What's Wrong With the Way We've Been Doing It? Many tests used in state and local assessments, as well as the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, have been criticized for failing to provide the information we need about students and their ability to meet specific curricular objectives. Critics contend that these tests, as currently formulated, often assess only a narrow range of the curriculum.

performance assessment as empowering teachers by providing them with better instructional tools and a new emphasis on teaching more relevant skills.

On the Value of Performance Assessments Advocates of the motivator and empowerment viewpoints concur that performance assessments can form a solid foundation for improving schools and increasing what students know and can do.



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According to the motivator viewpoint, performance assessments will make the educational system more accountable for results.

Proponents expect them to do the following:

- Prompt schools to focus on important, performance-based outcomes;
- provide sound data on achievement, not just aptitude;
- allow valid comparisons among schools, districts, and states; and yield results for every important level of the education system, from individual children to the nation as a whole.

Performance assessments that are closely tied to this new curriculum can give teachers license to emphasize important skills that traditionally have not been measured. Performance assessments can also provide teachers with diagnostic information to help guide instruction.

Performance Assessment for Teacher Empowerment

The assessments are expected to encompass performance-based tasks that call on students to demonstrate what they can do.

Performance assessment can be seen as a lever to promote the changes needed for the assessment to be maximally useful. Among these changes are a redefinition of learning and a different conception of the place of assessment in the education process (Mitchell, 1992)

administrators and teachers must have a clear picture of the skills they want students to master and a coherent plan for how students are going to master those skills.

Rather, meaningful instruction engages students actively in the learning process. Good teachers draw on and synthesize discipline-based knowledge, knowledge of student learning, and knowledge of child development.

performance assessment offers an opportunity to align curriculum and teaching efforts with the important skills we wish children to master. Cognitive learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is constructed and that learners vary, provides some insight into what an aligned curriculum might look like

WHAT PROBLEMS HAVE ARISEN AS A RESULT OF WIDESPREAD USE OF STANDARDIZED TESTING? When tests are constructed in this manner, active skills, such as writing, speaking, acting, drawing, constructing, repairing, or any of a number of other skills that can and should be taught in schools are automatically relegated to a second-class status.

When test scores are used on a comparative basis not only to determine the educational fate of individual students, but also to assess the relative "quality" of teachers, schools, and school districts, it is no wonder that "teaching to the test" is becoming a common practice in our nation's schools. This would not necessarily be a problem if standardized tests provided a comprehensive, indepth assessment of the knowledge and skills that indicate mastery of a given subject matter. However, the main purpose of standardized testing is to sort large numbers of students in as efficient a manner as possible.



WHAT ALTERNATIVES TO STANDARDIZED TESTING HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED? skills, it has been suggested that a "portfolio assessment," involving the ongoing evaluation of a cumulative collection of creative works, is the best approach (Wolf 1989).

INFORMATION
TITLE: What's Good about AAs?
AUTHOR:
YEAR:
EDITORIAL:
WEBSITE: http://calpro-online.org/eric/textonly/docgen.asp?tbl=archive&ID=A032

*Well-designed AAs demonstrate a rich array of what learners know and can do; they display both the products and the processes of learning, making learners aware of the processes and encouraging ownership. Authentic assessments are adaptable, flexible, ongoing, and cumulative, depicting learner growth over time (Custer 1994; Holt 1992).

*"The process of assessment is itself a constructivist learning experience, requiring students to apply thinking skills, to understand the nature of high quality performance, and to provide feedback to themselves and others" (Rudner and Boston 1994, p. 7).

*Alternative assessments can accommodate varied learning styles and serve the purposes of instruction,

*They are time consuming for teachers to prepare and implement, because they require clarity in goals, outcomes, criteria, and expectations and assurance that all stakeholders understand (Hayes et al. 1994).

*Students need to be prepared for self-monitoring and reflection (Jones 1994).

*Authentic assessments do not necessarily have to replace other forms of evaluation but can be used to augment and broaden the picture of learner progress. Jones (1994)

***Some Advices for Implementation**

It should be clear that authentic assessments must be carefully designed and evaluation criteria rigorously selected. Among the characteristics of good AAs are the following: (Custer 1994; Rudner and Boston 1994):

- Engaging, meaningful, worthy problems or tasks that match the content and outcomes of instruction
- Real-life applicability
- Multistaged-demonstrations of knowing, knowing why, and knowing how
- Emphasis on product and process, conveying that both development and achievement matter



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- Rich, multidimensional, varied formats, both on-demand (in-class essays) and cumulative (portfolios)
- Opportunities for learner self-evaluation
- Cognitive complexity-requiring higher order thinking skills

They should be planned at the same time. The following questions can guide planning (Reif 1995; Rudner and Boston 1994):

One type of performance evaluation criteria are rubrics. Rubrics are scoring devices or tools that specify performance expectations and the various levels to which learners should perform (Custer 1994).

They should be learner centered and individualized; teachers should collaborate whenever possible in their development.

INFORMATION
TITLE: Task-based Performance Assessment for Teachers: Key Issues to Consider
AUTHOR: Hyunjoo Kim
YEAR: 2004
EDITORIAL: Teachers College, Columbia University Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics, Vol.4, No. 2 The Forum.
WEBSITE: http://www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol/WJFiles/pdf/HyunjooForum.pdf
PAGES: 1-2

*Performance Assessment refers to any Assessment procedure involves either the observation or behavior in the real world or a simulation of a real-life activity with raters to evaluate the performance (Bachman, 2002, Nomis, Brown, Hudson and Yoshioka,1998; Norris, Hudosa And Bonk, 2002; Weigles, 2002).

*Doyle, 1993: Long 1985; Nunan, 1989, Skehan, 1998) Norris et al (1998) Defined tasks as real world activities” that people do in everyday life and which require language for their accomplishment” (p. 33).

*Bachman and Palmer (1996) consider tasks as “an activity that involves individuals in using language for the purpose of achieving a particular goal or objective in a particular situation.

INFORMATION
TITLE: The Authentic Assessment Toolbox: Enhancing Student Learning through Online Faculty Development.
AUTHOR: Jon Mueller professor of Psychology



YEAR: Volume 1, Number 1 July 2005

EDITORIAL: Merlot – Journal of Online Learning and Teaching

PAGES: 2 and 3

***What is authentic assessment?** It is a form in which students are asked to perform real-world task that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.

*Wiggins(1993) describes it, authentic measure are “engaging and worthy problems or questions of importance in which students must use knowledge to fashion performances effectively and creativity.

INFORMATION

TITLE: Comparing Traditional and Performance-Based Assessment

AUTHOR: Dr. Judith Liskin-Gasparro at the Symposium on Spanish Second Language Acquisition held at the University of Texas at Austin.

YEAR: October, 1997.

EDITORIAL: © S SDL © Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

WEBSITE: http://www.sedl.org/loteced/comparing_assessment.html

*With assessment that is performance-oriented, the thinking goes, with assessment that aims to measure not only the correctness of a response, but also the thought processes involved in arriving at the response, and that encourages students to reflect on their own learning in both depth and breadth, the belief is that instruction will be pushed into a more thoughtful, more reflexive, richer mode as well. Teachers who teach to these kinds of alternative assessments will naturally teach in ways that emphasize reflection, critical thinking, and personal investment in one’s own learning.

*Grant Wiggins (1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994) The key notion here is that a test measures knowledge or ability after the fact, with the assumption that the product of learning will contain in itself all of the information that the evaluator needs to know about the learners and the quality of their thinking processes.

*The assessment requires time, as well as interaction between the assessor and the person or property being assessed

*Authentic assessments have been criticized for their subjectivity (largely the reliability issue), and it is certainly true that it is far more difficult to develop standards for evaluation and to apply them consistently across a group of portfolios or oral performances or research projects than it is to do the same for an objective paper-and-pencil test.



INFORMATION
TITLE: Performance Assessment: Existing Literature and Directions for Research
AUTHOR: James Dean Brown
YEAR: 2004
EDITORIAL: University of Hawai'i at Manoa
WEBSITE: http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/uhwpe/sl/22(2)/Brown.pdf
PAGES: 1-2

“Task-based assessment does not simply utilize the real world task as a means for eliciting particular components of the language system which are then measured or evaluated; on the contrary, the construct of interest in task-based assessment is performance of the task itself”

INFORMATION
TITLE: Psychoeducational Assessment of Preschool Children
AUTHOR: Bruce A. Bracken, Richard J. Nagle
YEAR: 2007
EDITORIAL: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers

Problem related with traditional assessment methods and instruments.

As is widely known, much of criticism has been levelled at the use of traditional assessment instruments with minority populations. One criticism has been that traditional methods of assessment have made little allowance for cultural differences. Methods that incorporate standardized administration procedures limit the amount and nature of interaction between child and examiner. These methods also permit only a narrow repertoire of acceptable responses many of which can be completely unknown to a child of U.S subculture. Begence test for preschool children (Flanagan and Alfonso, 1995) indicated that the standardization samples of five frequently used norm-referenced test all closely matched population estimates on U.S census data and were rated as adequate or good.

INFORMATION
TITLE: Authentic Assessment Toolbox
AUTHOR: Jon Mueller, Professor of Psychology



YEAR: 2004
EDITORIAL: <u>Merlot Classic 2008</u>
WEBSITE: http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/whatisit.htm

Traditional Assessment: By "traditional assessment" (TA) I am referring to the forced-choice measures of multiple-choice tests, fill-in-the-blanks, true-false, matching and the like that have been and remain so common in education. Students typically select an answer or recall information to complete the assessment. These tests may be standardized or teacher-created. They may be administered locally or statewide, or internationally.

TA is grounded in educational philosophy that adopts the following reasoning and practice:

1. A school's mission is to develop productive citizens.
2. To be a productive citizen an individual must possess a certain body of knowledge and skills.
3. Therefore, schools must teach this body of knowledge and skills.
4. To determine if it is successful, the school must then test students to see if they acquired the knowledge and skills.

It is likely that some mix of the two will best meet your needs.

INFORMATION
TITLE: PLANNING A COURSE
AUTHOR: IAN FORSYTH, ALAN JOLLIFFE AND DAVID STEVENS.
YEAR: SECOND EDITION/ 2002
EDITORIAL: STYLUS PUBLISHING US.
PAGES: 113, 114

Assessing learners: some general considerations. Let us clarify some terms. In the educational community the terms "test" and "examinations" are considered to be synonymous. The activities in test and examination are carried out by learner. Test and exams are tools to assist you in informing an assessment of the ability of the learner. A

question-and-answer test will indicate if the learner has learned some fact. The information you gain from these tools will enable you to reach some decisions about the learner and evaluate if the learner has:

- Pass (has passed what?)
- Reached a satisfactory standard
- Areas of weakness that need to be improved (what determines those weaknesses?)

INFORMATION
TITLE: Rethinking teaching in higher education .
AUTHOR: Alenoush Saroyan and Cheryl Amundsen



Integrated Assessment System: Alternative and Traditional Assessment.

YEAR: first edition 2004

EDITORIAL: Stylus publishing LLC

PAGES: 98, 100, 101,103,104

Formative Assessment: is a diagnosis growth and improvement of learning. It's usually done in an ongoing way during the learning process and commonly associated with evaluation techniques that don't involve grading

Summative assessment: Is done for the purpose of reporting decision or making a final judgment about the learning at a particular point in time. It's usually done at the end of the learning process and is usually associated with grade or mark.

Evaluation: is a judgment about students' progress toward learning goals.

Grading: consists of placing a value usually numbers or a letter on that judgment.

Traditional Evaluation: Are those most commonly considered and used in higher education such as test, term-paper and exam. They tend to evaluate the products of learning through artifact that demonstrates students' acquisition of declarative knowledge in summative ways.

Alternative methods: Those less commonly used move beyond evaluating learning product toward evaluating students thinking and ability to apply in authentic situations what students have learned. Students' acquisition for cognitive processes may be evaluated through artifact that provides evidence of students thinking such a case solution, portfolios and journals.

Evaluate progress in learning that is development growth and advancement of learning.

INFORMATION	
TITLE:	INNOVATE ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION
AUTHOR:	CORDELIA BRYAN AND KAREN CLEG
YEAR:	FIRST EDITION 2006
EDITORIAL:	ROUTLEDGE
PAGES:	1, 2,18,

INNOVATIVE ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION: is a collaborative effort which inquires into how we innovate in assessment and what practices "work" in different context and cultures

- Quantity and distribution of student effort- assessed tasks need to capture sufficient study time and effort and distribute students effort evenly across topics and weeks.
- Quality and level of students effort- assessed task need to engage students in productive learning activity and communicative clear an high expectations.



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- Quantity and timing of feedback- sufficient feedback needs to be provided both often enough and sufficiently quickly to be useful to students.
- Quality of feedback- feedback should focus on learning rather than on marks, should be linked to the purpose of the assignment and to criteria and should be understandable to students.

Students response to feedback- feedback is pointless unless it is received by students and attended to.

INFORMATION	
TITLE:	INNOVATE ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION
AUTHOR:	CORDELIA BRYAN AND KAREN CLEG
YEAR:	FIRST EDITION 2006
EDITORIAL:	ROUTLEDGE
PAGES:	18,42,44

How and why is assessing changing?

More recently Biggs (1999) advocating a more sophisticated and aligned use of assessment to support high-level learning, much of our assessment still focuses on testing knowledge and comprehension and ignores the challenge of developing and assessing judgements. It is time we recognised the changing nature of society and acknowledge that quality is more complex concept than traditional assessment criteria suggest-quality cannot be reduced to a set of easily quantified learning situations. People learn what they want to learn and in different ways. The innovations described in this book show that assessment which support learning is flexible and takes into account the need for individuals to make sense of feedback in the context on their own experience.

Authentic assessment

To take an extreme example, multiple-choice test are still sometimes favoured in some areas of higher education, not necessarily because they produce the most revealing and authentic assessment information, but because they can provide a quick and easy way to produce assessment results with a minimum of time input from students and staff. At worst, assessments can be designed on the basis of choosing something easy to assess, which will perform the function of producing students results of grades with no real regards.

INFORMATION	
TITLE:	Developing Portfolios for Learning Assessment.
AUTHOR:	Ralkenowiski
YEAR:	2002

Key concepts in portfolio assessment. The development of a portfolio of work involves personal engagement with important learning processes and an opportunity



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for the learner to achieve a “personality unique accomplishment” far as stated by stake”Knowing the rank order of students as to proficiency is not at all the same as knowing what students, knowing what students know”....

A portfolio can be used to monitor progress or as a summative assessment tool. The collection of evidence provide insights into what knowledge and skills are required for individual to move forward and how also indicate what has been achieved

Assessment. As used as an integral aspect of teaching and learning cycle and can include a range of methods for monitoring and evaluating students performance and attainment, these methods range from formal testing and examinations performance assessment including practical and oral presentation

Gipps (1997,13)has indicated that good assessment practice should:

- Support learning and reflection including formative assessment.
- Be opened and connected to clear criteria and rather than be linked to comparative performance of
- Include a range of assessment strategies so that all learners have a chance to perform well.

Portfolio offer students the opportunity to benefit from assessment practices that meet Gipps requirement.



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INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH

Traditional assessment such as paper and pencil tests, reports, quizzes, pupil papers, and assignments etc. ought to be a matter of discussion at the present time. The standard contents in the curriculum and tests corresponding to them are just the focus of the teachers' efforts, which are valuable and most of the time considered reliable. However, after a long time applying the same traditional assessment methods with some proven limitations arises a valid concern to bring about changes that help to optimize the way of assessing students' progress (Archibald, 1991, p.7). In that sense, alternative assessments such as performance and authentic assessment seem to be an appropriate complement to create a better and stronger than the current assessment system. And besides that, there are some arguments regarding their benefits in the educational process. Dr. Judith Liskin-Gasparro in her book called "*Comparing Traditional and Performance-Based Assessment*", considers that one of the benefits from performance assessment is that it does not only measure the correctness of a response given by the test-takers, but also the reflexive process, namely the thoughts involved in arriving at the response is an important component to identify and judge student's performance. Or as Lawrence M. Rudner and Carol Boston (2007) consider it, performance assessment allows students to be more responsible for creating or constructing their responses by their own. That means students do not have to be required to produce only a single possible response when asked. Moreover, Jon Mueller



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(2005) believes that through authentic assessment teachers can be able to check more directly for students' ability to apply the acquired knowledge and skills in the real world beyond the classroom, and as a result, teachers will be provided with the most direct evidence to interpret the real level of performance in their students. So taking this context as departure point we strongly believe teachers must combine alternative and traditional assessment for evaluating students' learning process because each type of assessment measures different domains of students' learning.



OUTLINE

Thesis statement: we strongly believe teachers must combine alternative and traditional assessment for evaluating students' learning process because each type of assessment measures different domains of students' learning.

Traditional Assessment

II. Traditional assessment: an analysis on the necessity of implementing and making some changes.

Topic sentence: Traditional Assessment facilitates the assessment process by helping teachers gather information as well as decision making.

1. Traditional assessment
 - 1.1 Definition
 - 1.2 Types
2. Contribution of traditional assessment in the evaluation process.
 - 2.1 Collect students' information.
 - 2.2. Summative and formative assessment.
 - 2.3. Help teachers to make decision.
3. Benefits of traditional assessment
 - 3.1 Easy to design.
 - 3.2 Scoring is easy.
 - 3.3 Identify weakness
 - 3.4 Reach satisfactory standards



Topic sentence: There is a predominant and controversial aspect of traditional assessments which are disadvantages.

1. Disadvantages.

1.1 Encourage superficial learning

1.2 Allow students to get the correct answer by guessing

1.3 Hinder students from demonstrating what they've learned.

III: Alternative assessment

Topic sentence: Alternative assessments provide innovative and multiple paths to demonstrate students' learning

1. Performance and authentic assessment.

1.1 Definition of performance and authentic assessments.

1.2 Different types.

1.3 Implementing performance and authentic assessment.

1.4 active students' participation in the different tasks based assessment.

1.5 Grading the authentic and performance assessment with performance criteria

1.5.1 Rubrics and checklist

1.5.2 Identify what is going to be evaluated in advance.



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2. Contribution of alternative assessment to the evaluation process.

2.1 Students perform a task.

2.2 It allows examine higher level thinking skills.

2.3 Activities emulate real life.

3. Benefits of Alternative assessment.

3.1 It provides a way of observing the application of procedures

3.2 It provides direct evidence of learning.

4. Disadvantages of Alternative assessment.

4.1 Time consuming

4.2 Subjective

4.3 Expensive

INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

IV. There is no point in being reluctant about implementing Alternative assessment; because a new integrated assessment system is possible.

Topic sentence: It is important to get reasons for contemplating possible changes in the current evaluation system.

1- The necessity to have an Integrated assessment System (IAS)

1.1 Considering students' needs

1.2 Assess students' performance. (Airasian, 1991)

1.3 Time consuming and difficult to score is argued.



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2. . Developing an accurate Integrating assessment system.

2.1 generic features

2.2 principles

V. Proposal.

Topic sentence: Providing a guide that leads the implementation of an integrated assessment system through new ideas and suggestions to be applied in the assessment process at the Foreign language Department of the University of El Salvador.

It is important focus the attention on assessment in order to reach higher educational standards and quality.

To conclude this group proposes the following six point plan that indicates how changes can be done.

Note: "This proposal is an adoption of the work group commissioned to Paul Black and Dylan William (British Educational Research Association.) That consists of the major review of research on classroom assessment and its impact which resulted in the pamphlet, 'Inside the black box.'"

1. Assessment for learning should be the central focus in the in the foreign language department; there fore, is necessary to develop a plan oriented to improve standards.
2. Changes and adjustments must be promoted in initial teacher training and continuous teacher training to develop and unify criteria about a new integrated assessment system.
3. Promoting the changes by policy makers and administrators as well as a means to implement such changes in practice.



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4. Changes in assessment methodology must always be field tested before they are fully implemented.
5. Encourage teachers to develop better teaching practice by asking them to create new performance and authentic assessment tasks and scoring rubrics and then conducting pilot tests in their classroom. If the results are positive and are adopted for others, they must receive an economical payment for each activity (Brown, Hudson, 1998)
6. It has to be mandatory to set up a permanent evaluation program led for an especial commission to feed directly back the different initiatives promoted in order to monitor their development.



JUSTIFICATION

Assessment as recognized for different specialists is the most powerful tool that helps teachers' teaching learning process to make it more effective. There are some Ideas that for example mention that traditional tests do not immediately demonstrate the domains of knowledge that students can have and as a result teachers teach to the test not to learning; therefore, we can easily infer that paper and pencil tests are focused on objectives related to content not on the needs of the students. In addition Language assessment is important; however, gathering information about students' progress in content of knowledge is equally important so it cannot be measured only with standardized tests. Standardized tests, which are often multiple choice, fill in the blanks, true-false, matching and others cannot adequately reflect students' learning achievement. Regarding this premise, we believe that it is necessary to combine alternative with traditional assessment as well as a deep discussion and analysis about the role of some current assessment techniques applied in our traditional assessment system especially in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador. The idea is not only to persuade teacher and students to recognize the necessity to bring about changes that improve the way assessing students learning, but also show that these changes are going to produce better results. Clearly, Richard Stiggins states that teachers who



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gather accurate information about student achievement through the use of sound classroom assessment contribute to effective teaching learning. On the other hand, those who fail to understand and apply the rules of evidence for sound assessment risk doing great harm to students. That is why we propose in this paper to devote a lot of effort to understand the complexity that represents assessments, as well as its contribution in the development of qualified professionals at the present time.



METHODOLOGY

To start with this research, we have followed a well-structure methodology based on a list of steps or procedures found in the book “The Literature Review”. It has been the most important resource because it enables writers to combine six steps to write argumentative essays in a suitable and structured way.

1. Select a Topic

First of all, we have to develop the study by choosing an interesting topic, so “Implementing different strategies to enhance oral proficiency” seemed to be the most appropriate and reliable topic at that time and that was when we started looking for the literature. Although, all the information gathered was important and helpful, the real thesis statement did not seem to match what the real purpose of our study was for, becoming a waste of time and money at the end. Fortunately, our research team could finally come up with a curious topic focused on a specific concern in the English major in the Foreign Language Department from the question “How appropriate is the combination of both traditional and alternative assessment at the time of assessing students learning?” So it became an argumentative issue where some readers may be in favor while other may not. Since then, our new literature research was carried out, as well as, a new kind of outline structure; it was a new experience for us all.

2. Search the Literature

Secondly, in order to carry out the study, the literature search was another important component because by the time of presenting the ideas and assertions, the literature determines the kind of information that best fits with the



study. Moreover, there was a careful selection and organization of the specific topic-related literature. To do this we had to take into account a variety of different bibliographical sources, specially by authors whose focus of study was the enhancement of the assessment system in second language learning.

3. Developing the Argument

Next, to develop the thesis there were also some essential parts related to producing simple arguments that cannot be excluded: claim, the evidence, and the warrant. So as it is presented in this third step, it is necessary to combine these three parts because by applying claims a position can be established and aimed to achieve consideration and acceptance, and also by applying evidences the claims can be supported and consequently resulting in acceptable and believable arguments. In addition, considering warrant, arguments may be able to persuade and convince the readers to adopt or change their point of view.

4. Survey the Literature

In addition, there was a necessity to assemble, synthesize, and analyze the data about the current knowledge on the topic chosen. And this was possible through the literature survey support because the real purpose of this part was to develop the knowledge of the information that is already known by researchers, including personal experiences when attending the different English courses.

5. Critique the Literature

In the case of interpreting the current understanding on the topic, it was also necessary the utility of the literature critique because it is important to determine what the findings reflect about the topic being studied. In this sense, whether is more appropriate excluding traditional assessment and implementing alternative assessment or using both assessments to complement and enhance evaluation system.

6. Write the Review

And finally, the last step to write the thesis and, of course one of the most important ones because in a research process it is important not only the



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understanding of the subject matter by the researchers, but also understanding the writing by working on preliminary drafts, as well as composing outlines to follow up a sequence of various systematic procedures to develop the topic that is going to be studied. However, is appropriate to clarify it will be a very complex task.