LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT - ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO AND REFLECTION

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Abstract. This assessment portfolio explores the design and implementation of fair, valid, and reliable language assessments for an 11th-grade IELTS preparatory class in Uzbekistan. The learners, aged 16–17 and ranging from CEFR A2 to B1, come from multilingual backgrounds and include students with learning differences such as mild dyslexia. The portfolio includes two original assessments: a receptive reading task ("Plastic Waste in Oceans") and a productive speaking task ("Local Environmental Problem & Solutions"), supported by holistic and analytic rubrics. Both assessments are aligned with specific language objectives and scaffolded instructional activities that promote equitable participation.

Grounded in the frameworks of Fulcher (2016), O'Sullivan (2012), and Ayhan and Türkyılmaz (2015), the design emphasizes validity, reliability, and fairness, while ensuring accommodations such as extended time, visual scaffolds, and alternative speaking formats. Reflection on the process highlights how formative assessment data inform future instruction, reinforcing the idea that assessment supports learning rather than merely measuring it. The portfolio demonstrates a learner-centered and inclusive approach to language assessment that prepares students for real-world communication tasks and high-stakes exams like IELTS.

Keywords: language assessment, fairness, validity, reliability, IELTS preparation, differentiation, inclusive assessment, Uzbekistan, analytic rubric, holistic rubric

Part 1: Classroom and Learner Profiles

This 11th-grade English language classroom is located in a public secondary school in Uzbekistan. The class consists of 18 students between the ages of 16 and 17. It functions as an IELTS preparatory course and focuses on developing all four essential language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students attend lessons five times per week, with each session lasting 90 minutes. The learners come from diverse linguistic backgrounds—most speak Uzbek or Russian at home, and a few speak Tajik. Their current English proficiency ranges from CEFR A2 to B1 (IELTS Bands 3.0–4.5).

While the students are generally motivated, they demonstrate varying levels of proficiency, cognitive styles, and classroom participation. This requires the teacher to implement differentiation strategies such as scaffolded instruction, flexible grouping, and visual supports. Learners with special educational needs also require accommodations to promote equitable access. As Taylor and Chen (2016) note, students with disabilities benefit most when assessments are adapted to their needs, not simply standardized. Classroom tasks and assessments in this setting are designed with these considerations in mind to support content validity, reliability, and fairness.

One of the learners, *Sirojiddin* (pseudonym), has an IELTS Band 3.0 and shows signs of mild dyslexia. He finds it difficult to decode dense reading texts and to organize his thoughts in writing. However, he is highly motivated and responds well to visual scaffolding such as charts and color-coded materials. To promote fairness and allow for accurate performance, he receives accommodations like extended time, simplified instructions, and access to enlarged or audio

versions of texts. These adjustments are consistent with the principle that fairness is not about giving all learners the same thing, but about giving each learner what they need to succeed (Puspawati, 2014).

Another student, *Umid*, is at IELTS Band 4.5 and is a strong verbal communicator. He does well in speaking and listening tasks but struggles with academic writing, particularly grammar accuracy and tone. He sometimes blends informal expressions into his formal writing. Umid benefits from tasks that involve peer interaction, speaking preparation, and modeled writing examples. Differentiation for him includes collaborative writing and review activities that help him improve his grammar awareness.

A third learner, *Malika*, is currently at IELTS Band 4.0 and prefers independent work. She is confident in reading and has a good grasp of vocabulary but avoids speaking unless directly prompted. Her oral responses are typically short and hesitant. Malika is supported with structured speaking prompts, visuals, and opportunities to practice in low-anxiety settings such as paired activities. She benefits from targeted scaffolding that promotes her confidence and willingness to speak in front of others.

This classroom design prioritizes equity and learner-centered instruction. Assessment tasks are not only aligned to clear objectives but also adapted to meet the needs of learners with different abilities. As Ayhan and Türkyılmaz (2015) argue, rubrics should make expectations visible and fair, allowing students to understand how their work will be assessed. These principles guide both instruction and assessment planning in this classroom, ensuring that learners are not only prepared for high-stakes tests like IELTS, but also supported in their daily development of English skills.

Part 3: Instructional Outline

This lesson sequence prepares students for both receptive (reading/listening) and productive (speaking/writing) assessments. All instructional activities are designed to meet language objectives and support learners with different proficiency levels and learning needs. The plan incorporates fairness and equity by providing accommodations for students with learning challenges, such as dyslexia, and offering scaffolds for hesitant speakers. Advanced learners are also supported through opportunities for extension.

On , the focus is on receptive skills. The lesson begins with a vocabulary warm-up. Students match environmental terms (such as *pollution*, *recycling*, and *deforestation*) to pictures and definitions. This visual activity helps build understanding and supports students who struggle with decoding or vocabulary, including those with mild dyslexia. Next, students complete a guided reading task. They read a short text about pollution in cities and, with teacher guidance, highlight the main idea and two supporting details using color coding. The teacher introduces reading strategies such as skimming and scanning to help students identify key information. After reading, students complete a listening activity. They listen to a short audio conversation about recycling. In the first listening, they focus on the general meaning. In the second listening, they complete a gap-fill worksheet. The teacher pauses the recording after each sentence to give all students enough processing time, especially those who need it.

On the focus is on productive skills. Students begin with a speaking preparation task. In small groups, they brainstorm local environmental problems and possible solutions. Sentence starters (e.g., "One problem is…", "We can solve it by…") are provided to help hesitant or less confident speakers. During the speaking practice, students take turns describing a problem and offering two solutions to a partner. The teacher circulates to monitor performance and give brief feedback, focusing on vocabulary and the use of linking words like *because*, *so*, and *in order to*.

In the writing segment, the teacher models a short paragraph that includes a problem, a cause, and a solution. Then students plan and write their own paragraph. Those who need additional support receive sentence frames or guided templates. Students who are more confident are encouraged to extend their ideas with examples and more complex sentence structures. After

writing, students exchange papers and complete a peer review using a checklist. The checklist focuses on paragraph structure and content. Finally, the teacher collects student writing and evaluates it using the analytic rubric.

This instructional plan promotes fairness and equity by including multiple supports: visual aids, structured sentence starters, guided practice, and flexible pacing. Accommodations are built into the tasks. For example, learners with dyslexia receive enlarged texts or the option to listen to audio versions. Students with speech anxiety can record their responses privately. The variety of activity types ensures that all students, regardless of their strengths or challenges, have access to the content and can demonstrate their language skills.

Part 4: Assessment Development and Rubrics

Assessment 1: Reading Task (Receptive Skill)

Primary Skill: Reading

Secondary Skill : Writing, Vocabulary, Grammar

Task Title: "Plastic Waste in Oceans"

Language Objectives:
 1. Students will identify the main idea of a short expository text about environmental issues.
 2. Students will locate and interpret two supporting details from the text.

Instructions for Students:
Read the short article titled "Plastic Waste in Oceans." Then answer the 5 multiple-choice questions and 2 short-answer questions.

Rubric: Holistic

Score	Descriptor (Objective 1 & 2)
4	All answers are accurate. Main idea and details are clearly understood.
3	Most answers are correct. Main idea is clear, some detail confusion.
2	Some correct answers, but main idea or details are unclear.
1	Limited understanding of the text. Main idea and details not grasped.
0	Task not completed or answers unrelated to text.

Assessment 2: Speaking Task (Productive Skill)

Primary Skill: Speaking

Secondary Skill: Listening, Vocabulary,Writing

Task Title: "Local Environmental Problem & Solutions"

Language Objectives:

1. Students will describe a local environmental problem using appropriate vocabulary.
2. Students will suggest two relevant solutions using cause-effect or problem-solution language.

Instructions for Students:
Prepare to speak for 1 minute about an environmental issue in your community. Describe the problem and give two possible solutions. You may use notes but not read a script. You will speak to a partner, then the teacher.

Rubric: Analytic

Criteria	4 (Excellent)	3 (Good)	2 (Developing)	1 (Beginning)
Fluency & Pronunciation (Objective 2)	Speaks smoothly and clearly	Minor hesitation, clear	Some pauses, fair clarity	Frequent pauses, hard to understand
Vocabulary & Accuracy (Objective 1)	Uses precise and appropriate vocabulary	Some minor errors, mostly correct terms	Limited vocabulary, errors present	Frequent errors, unclear vocabulary
Organization of Ideas (Objective 2)	Problem and two solutions are clearly structured	Mostly clear structure	One solution unclear or missing	Lacks clear problem/solution structure

Part 5: Assessment Portfolio Reflection
In designing the assessments for this portfolio, I focused on creating valid, reliable, fair, and practical tasks tailored to the needs of my diverse 11th-grade classroom. Based on learner profiles, I developed a reading comprehension task to assess receptive skills and a speaking task to assess productive skills. These tasks align with IELTS preparation goals and offer real-world relevance. According to Fulcher (2016), language assessments should reflect the kinds of tasks learners are expected to perform in real life, not just artificial testing conditions. Both tasks were designed with this in mind, covering academic topics that students can connect with, such as environmental problems and solutions.

Validity was maintained by ensuring alignment between assessment tasks, language objectives, and classroom instruction. For example, the reading assessment required students to identify the main idea and key details from a short text. This objective had been addressed in prior lessons through vocabulary pre-teaching, guided reading strategies, and pair discussions. The speaking task focused on describing a problem and suggesting solutions, using specific sentence structures and target vocabulary. Learners had previously practiced similar tasks through sentence starters, brainstorming, and structured speaking frames.

Reliability was supported by clear rubrics. For the speaking task, I created an analytic rubric with distinct performance categories (fluency, vocabulary, and organization), as recommended by Ayhan and Türkyılmaz (2015). This helped reduce subjectivity and allowed students to receive focused feedback on specific skill areas. The reading task used a holistic rubric, which offered a simple and practical way to assess overall comprehension. As O'Sullivan (2012) points out, speaking assessments must balance structure and flexibility. This task allowed for student choice and expression while still following a defined prompt.

Differentiation and accommodations played a central role in ensuring equity. Students with dyslexia received enlarged text and additional time. Learners with speaking anxiety were allowed to record responses in private or participate in small-group formats. Visual supports, sentence frames, and model responses were used across all stages of instruction and assessment. These measures reflect the principle that fair assessment is not about giving everyone the same test, but about providing equal access to success (Puspawati, 2014; Taylor & Chen, 2016).

Assessment results will be used to guide future instruction. If students struggle with identifying key ideas in reading, I will return to skimming and scanning strategies. If oral responses lack development or vocabulary, future lessons will include thematic vocabulary sets and response modeling. This approach aligns with **Butler (2016)**, who emphasizes that assessment should inform instruction, especially for young or developing learners.

One strength I developed during this process was the ability to design rubrics that are clearly aligned with specific language objectives. This improved both the transparency and usefulness of feedback. One area for growth is expanding the range of assessment types I use. In the future, I plan to include more listening and writing assessments to build a complete picture of learner progress.

Through this project, I've learned that assessment and instruction are not separate—they work together. Effective assessment supports learning, not just grading. By following the recommendations of experts like Fulcher (2016) and O'Sullivan (2012), I now feel more confident designing assessments that are meaningful, inclusive, and useful for all my students.

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