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A comparison of assessment methods between private and state schools - A study conducted in primary schools in Ferizaj

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Abstract

Over the years, it has been imperative to provide and develop an adequate guide for the correct assessment of the English language. Not only Kosovo but also other countries in the region and beyond in where, the English language is taught as a foreign language have had traditional ways of assessing English language learning and teaching, these traditional forms which, have not been adequate and useful for many reasons!

Through adequate assessment strategies, students are definitely ready to explore the Internet and find, read and understand the necessary English language materials related to the needs of their daily lives, but also to be in the process of becoming of increasingly globalized world, which will absolutely help them expand knowledge in their field of study in the future and will also keep them up to date with the contemporary trends of the scientific language and keep it up with the world.

In this research, the main focus was on providing the right and necessary guidance for the appropriate assessment methods in the primary schools "Gjon Serreqi" and "Aga Xhite" in Ferizaj. Our main research topic would be the correct identification of the problems in the forms and the current ways of assessing the students by the teachers and to highlight the differences in assessment in these two primary schools. In our research work, we chose to apply our study with elementary school students who attend 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade, with a total number of 112 students. Through this research work we continue to follow the recommendations for future use and advancement of the ways and forms of assessment by the responsible English language teachers.

Key words: assessment, way, student, teacher, priority.

Parathënie

Ndër vite ka qenë imperativ të sigurohet dhe të zhvillohet një udhëzues adekuat për vlerësim të drejtë të gjuhës angleze. Jo vetëm tek ne në Kosovë por edhe në vendet e tjera të rajonit e më gjerë aty ku Gjuha Angleze mësohet si gjuhë e huaj ka pasur mënyra dhe forma tradicionale të vlerësimit të mësimnxënies së Gjuhës Angleze, forma këto tradicionale të cilat nuk janë treguar gjithaq të dobishme për shumë arsye!

Nëpërmjet strategjive të vlerësimit adekuat nxënësit definitivisht do të jenë të gatshëm të hulumtojnë internetin dhe të gjejnë, të lexojnë, dhe kuptojnë drejtë materialet e nevojshme në gjuhën angleze të ndërlidhura me nevojat e përditshmërisë së tyre por edhe të jenë në hap me globalizimin gjithnjë e në rritje, gjë e cila absolutisht do t'u ndihmojë atyre të zgjerojnë njohuritë në fushat e tyre studimore në të ardhmen dhe gjithashtu në mënyrë të vazhdueshme do t'i mbajë ata në hap me trendet bashkëkohore të gjuhës shkencore dhe t'i mbajë në hap me botën.

Në këtë hulumtim, ne do të jemi përqëndruar kryesisht në sigurimin e udhëzimeve të denja dhe të nevojshme për mënyrat e duhura të vlerësimit në shkollat fillore “Gjon Serreqi” dhe “Aga Xhite” në Ferizaj.

Tema kryesore kërkimore e jona do të ishte, identifikimi i drejtë i problemeve në format apo mënyra e gjertanishme të vlerësimit të nxënësve nga ana e mësuesve dhe të vemë në pah dallimet në vlerësim në këto dy shkolla fillore.

Në punën tonë kërkimore, ne zgjodhëm të zbatojmë studimin tonë me nxënësit e shkollave fillore të cilët vijojnë mësimin në klasën 6, 7, 8 dhe 9, me numër të përgjithshëm të nxënësve prej 112 sosh.

Nëpërmjet kësaj pune kërkimore ne mëtojmë të përcjellim rekomandimet për përdorim dhe avancim të vazhdueshëm në të ardhmen të mënyrave dhe formave të vlerësimit nga ana e mësimeve të mësimdhënësve përgjegjës të gjuhës angleze.

Fjalët kyçe: vlerësim, mënyrë, nxënës, mësime, mësime, përparësi.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Knowledge of English is historically assessed on the basis of fairness grammar, spelling and pronunciation. Consequently, for decades, teachers have asked their students to memorize grammatical rules and spelling along with exemptions. Such teaching has sculpted generations of pupils and students, whose results had exams very little to do with their real ability to communicate in English. Today, increasingly, foreign language teachers are achieving more success on the way to an effective communication. This phenomenon in English language has happened due to the change of the role of this language in the international arena. Nowadays, most people who seek to learn the language do so for many reasons, among of them we can mention incentives careerist or intentions to live in English-speaking countries in the future or even genuinely to study in this language. For more, this language serves as an instrument of global communication, easily usable in professional contexts where the bulk of interlocutors whose mother tongue is not English. The evaluation process of testing of knowledge gained in this language; however, it shows that is difficult to maintain the same rhythm in the language development. The assessment of communication skills in a standardized way is more complex than assessing grammatical or lexical correctness. Nonetheless, many scholars and experts in the teaching of English language are looking for new ways of evaluation design. Good methods of evaluation will result with improvement of the process of learning. "Some have argued that tests are potentially also 'levers for change' in language education: the argument being that if a bad test has negative impact, a good test should or could have positive washback" (Alderson, 1986b; Pearson, 1988) (as cited in Alderson and Banerjee, 2001, pp. 214). Besides all this, the final objective of this change remains the communicating effectively, whether in written communication, and reading or speaking and listening. Consequently, all language skills need to be assessed carefully and meticulously so that students achieve these skills to improve further in the future. `` Another key component of classroom procedure is the use of appropriate assessment procedures`` (Burns and Richards, 2012. p.250). The debate on the choice of proper means of evaluation test is being developed with a lot of noise around the world, aiming to be changed and to be improved as the assessment techniques of a single teacher as well as the

assessment policies themselves of an entire state. Unfortunately, in our country until now there was not any initiative to change the methods of assessment. Since 2010 the Ministry of Education has started to give signals in the field of assessment starting by training the teachers on the formative and summative assessment. This gives hope that things will be improved.

1.1 The Role of Assessment in the Teaching and Learning Process

Changes in society cause the teachers to face with new tasks in their classes. They face to different ways of teaching and other tasks that are needed to adapt to students and the way how they learn, although they are not sure what other changes await in the future. In recent decades, political, social, economic and environmental changes, as well as the development of science and technology have made every aspect related to school to be reviewed and revised, including the learners assessment. This assessment is questioned today because social expectations for education have changed today, the cognitive sciences have produced new results about the nature of learning and the traditional role of assessment for learning motivation is already challenged. In order to prepare students for the 21st century skills it is needed to be used also the assessment of the 21st century.

The first issue, which goes on everyone's minds whenever we mention "Foreign Language Exam" is the fixation on standardized tests, valid and accurate measuring of language skills. But how much these tests are really valuable and what are the consequences of examinees from such tests? Research on language tests have been attempted to analyze in detail the used tests giving to us some bad news and some good news on the assessment of linguistic capacity through tests. "Testing is certainly not the only way to assess students, but there are many good reasons for including a test in our language course" (Frost, 2004) (cited in Kamis, 2010, p.35). A test can provide valuable information to teachers, showing them where the students are in learning the language and can influence on what the instructor will cover in future. Testes help an instructor to determine if his / her learning has been effective and to highlight of what should be reviewed. Testing can be an evaluation of both teaching and learning.

1.2 Differences between assessments

It seems that understanding the differences between measurement, assessment, evaluation, and testing is fundamental to the knowledge base of professional teachers and effective teaching. These words so closely related that teachers or teachers to be might use them interchangeably or be confused.

As Burhan (2009) states, of the three, evaluation seems to have the broadest coverage. Citing TenBrink (1974), he defines evaluation as the process of obtaining information and using it to form judgments which in turn are to be used in decision making.

Expanded initially and finally, the process is made up five stages, namely:

- 1 - Preparing,
- 2 - Collecting the data,
- 3 - Making judgments,
- 4 - Making decision, and
- 5 - Reporting.

Assessment, as Burhan (2009) states, does not include decision making and reporting. It focuses mainly on data gathering and placing a value on something. Put it another way, assessment seems to cover stages 1, 2, and 3 of the evaluation process. Meanwhile, the last term, testing, is the narrowest in scope. It is one of the techniques for collecting the data or scores. It can be used with other techniques such as observation and interviews. It does not deal with the making judgments.

Again, about assessment, one connotative meaning of assessment is that it is used or done both in formal situation and in informal ways. As complementary efforts, informal assessment is encouraged to be done to get additional data in addition to the data obtained from formal testing. The term assessment is recently often encountered in TEFL or TESOL publications.

Additionally, Kizlik (2010) elucidates some differences on measurement, assessment, and evaluation. He states that measurement refers to the process by which the attributes or dimensions of some physical object are determined. One exception seems to be in the use of the word measure in determining the IQ of a person. The phrase, "this test measures IQ" is commonly used. Measuring such things as attitudes or preferences also applies. However, when

we measure, we generally use some standard instrument to determine how big, tall, heavy, voluminous, hot, cold, fast, or straight something actually is. Standard instruments refer to instruments such as rulers, scales, thermometers, pressure gauges, etc. We measure to obtain information about what is. Such information may or may not be useful, depending on the accuracy of the instruments we use, and our skill at using them. There are few such instruments in the social sciences that approach the validity and reliability of say a 12" ruler. We measure how big a classroom is in terms of square feet, we measure the temperature of the room by using a thermometer, and we use Ohm meters to determine the voltage, amperage, and resistance in a circuit. In all of these examples, we are not assessing anything; we are simply collecting information relative to some established rule or standard (Kizlik.B, 2014, p91).

Assessment, as he further states, is therefore quite different from measurement, and has uses that suggest very different purposes. Assessment is a process by which information is obtained relative to some known objective or goal. Assessment is a broad term that includes testing. A test is a special form of assessment. Tests are assessments made under contrived circumstances especially so that they may be administered. In other words, all tests are assessments, but not all assessments are tests. We test at the end of a lesson or unit. Whether implicit or explicit, assessment is most usefully connected to some goal or objective for which the assessment is designed. A test or assessment yields information relative to an objective or goal. In that sense, we test or assess to determine whether or not an objective or goal has been obtained. Assessment of skill attainment is rather straightforward. Either the skill exists at some acceptable level or it doesn't. Skills are readily demonstrable. Assessment of understanding is much more difficult and complex. Skills can be practiced; understandings cannot. We can assess a person's knowledge in a variety of ways, but there is always a leap, an inference that we make about what a person does in relation to what it signifies about what he knows.

Meanwhile, evaluation is perhaps the most complex and least understood of the terms. Inherent in the idea of evaluation is "value." When we evaluate, what we are doing is engaging in some process that is designed to provide information that will help us make a judgment about a given situation. Generally, any evaluation process requires information about the situation in question. A situation is an umbrella term that takes into account such ideas as objectives, goals, standards, procedures, and so on. When we evaluate, we are saying that the process will yield information regarding the worthiness, appropriateness, goodness, validity, legality, etc., of something for

which a reliable measurement or assessment has been made. To sum up, we measure distance, we assess learning, and we evaluate results in terms of some set of criteria. These three terms are certainly connected, but it is useful to think of them as separate but connected ideas and processes. The key concepts in assessment are also clarified by Cameron (2002). She states that evaluation refers to a broader notion than assessment, and refers to a process of systematically collecting information in order to make a judgment. Evaluation can thus concern a whole range of issues in and beyond language education: lesson, courses, programs, and skills can all be evaluated. If we were to evaluate a course, we would need to collect many different types of information: course information, observation of lessons, interviews with pupils and teachers, course feedback questionnaires, examination results. Analyzing and combining the different types of information would enable a judgment to be made about the success, or the viability, or cost-effectiveness, of the course. She further states that assessment is concerned with pupil's learning or performance, and thus provides one type of information that might be used in evaluation. Testing is a particular form of assessment that is connected with measuring learning through performance.

As Scanlan (2003) states, to many teachers (and students), “assessment” simply means giving students tests and assigning them grades. This conception of assessment is not only limited, but also limiting. It fails to take into account both the utility of assessment and its importance in the teaching/learning process. In the most general sense, as he states, assessment is the process of making a judgment or measurement of worth of an entity (e.g., person, process, or program). Educational assessment involves gathering and evaluating data evolving from planned learning activities or programs. This form of assessment is often referred to as evaluation (see section below on Assessment versus Evaluation). Learner assessment represents a particular type of educational assessment normally conducted by teachers and designed to serve several related purpose (Brissenden and Slater, n.d.). These purposed include: motivating and directing learning, providing feedback to student on their performance, providing feedback on instruction and/or the curriculum, and ensuring standards of progression are met.

1.3 Differentiated instructions

Assessment is the process of measuring performance and progress or progress that has been made, highlighting our work values, knowledge, and human and intellectual skills that each of us feels better or worse not only in function of this assessment for the effects of schooling or work, but also in view of increasing self-esteem, attitude between a defined social group and positioning within this group. As such it is quite complex and above all important deserving more special attention of all of us. "If we want to find out the truths of an education system, we need to analyze its assessment and testing procedures" (Rowntree, D.1987, p3).

Assessing in school and teaching, if we were to start from the etymology of this word, we could define it as an element that gives a certain positive value or not, to our knowledge. And since the school is a social environment, it also places those who are valued in a certain position within this environment. Often or always assessment is considered to be the most delicate process of teaching, as in many cases it is considered subjective as well and in many cases it fails to go beyond this context. The challenge of the Kosovar school is to draw the assessment from its subjective contours and classify it as an element of study and placement in a given standard, in which foreign experience isn't lacking. The term assessment has begun to be widely used in education circles anywhere in the world as well as in Kosovo, but it is often noticed that the words test and evaluation are used in a synonym manner, which is not at all fair. "A test is a method of measuring an individual's knowledge or abilities in a particular field, emphasizing in this definition the concepts of method and measurement." (Brown, H. D. 2007, p61). Tests are specific instruments that are carefully crafted and require a detailed punctuation. Tests are administrative procedures that take a certain period of time in a lesson plan and constitute moments in which the learner tries with all his mental capacity to deliver the best possible result, knowing that his answers are being measured by the grade. On the other hand, assessment is a continuous process that extends to a much wider spectrum than testing. Whenever a student answers a question, gives a comment, or tries to pronounce a word, expression, or new notion, the teacher unconsciously makes a student performance assessment. Writing, reading, speaking, or listening and answering skills usually require a kind of productive performance that the teacher analyzes and evaluates implicitly. According to Brown (2007), a good teacher never stopped assessing his students, whether these are accidental or deliberate assessments. After this

analysis, it is seen that the tests are just a subset of the evaluation; but they are certainly not the only form of student assessment. Tests are used by teachers as useful and effective tools to measure students' knowledge, but they are only a part of the many procedures and tools that teachers can use to evaluate their students. Therefore, throughout the following work, the use of the term evaluation will include testing itself as an evaluation tool, while the latter will be considered increasingly comprehensive and more global than testing.

As a foreign language teacher when assessing, we really have to measure the performance of our students by having as a specific goal the measurement of development and progress made in the teaching of the respective foreign language. At the same time, it is necessary to undertake a detailed diagnosis of the problems students have and, what is vital and essential, the students need to be provided with this analysis and they should be helped to find ways to recover the problems which came across. Teachers, trainers or lecturers, all of them are undoubtedly involved in student assessment and testing. Although this process does not occupy most of a teacher's time, he really is the most important part of their work. But let's see how the assessment is defined and what purposes it serves, to ensure that the last one meets the various and often conflicting demands of the key partners in the process of educating students, teachers and society in general. The importance of assessment can not be overestimated. It is generally accepted as the most important impetus in teaching: If all the other elements of the subject are centered in one direction and the assessment elements into the other, then the assessment elements are the ones most likely to have the most impact on the curriculum (Erwin, TD, and Knight , P 1995, p22). But unfortunately, assessment often works against and not pro-teaching: "Assessment can encourage reproductive and passive learning forms and at the same time hide the inadequate understanding towards which inevitably lead such learning forms. In some cases, the subjects tend to either not develop the basic concepts well or use evaluation exercises that allow staff or students to know if they have learned the concepts or not "(Boud, D 1995, p13). This means that incorrect recognition of the assessment and improper use of it will lead to deep problems in teaching and learning. Teachers test and assess secondary concepts, failing to select and test the basic concepts. Such an assessment gives the students the wrong message and the teacher incorrect information about the knowledge of their students. Testing is often seen as something being done to the students, by teachers. Many students feel stressed and frightened. Before them, occasionally "drop off" tests and exams, and they simply have to go through them and reach the

maximum points / grades. The "good grades" students, who are considered to be the most skilled in the field, can enjoy and experience with less anxiety this part because through these tests and examinations they can once again prove their superiority over the rest of the class . However, most students feel very worried before these tests. Often, there is a great deal of pressure on them by different actors (parents, teachers or friends) who want their success and if they do not succeed, get labeled or label themselves as losers. Unfortunately, this competition creates more losers than winners. Many teachers do not feel good about it, and some of them feel that tests are just a useful way to motivate students to work harder and virtually all of us feel unconvinced when we need to pass or have students miss. Many of these negative attitudes to assessment and testing come as a result of the general feeling that there is an enormous gap between learning and teaching on the one hand, and assessment on the other. The underlying reason for this mentality is due to the fact that assessment and testing are often not used to help the teaching process and learning process.

First: Assessment is often seen as synonymous with testing. Testing or formal assessment is definitely a valuable and important way of assessing students. However, it is not the only way and both informal assessment and self-assessment are vital. Informal assessment is the assessment performed by the teacher not in special testing conditions, but in the normal classroom environment (for example, with students helping one another where necessary). Self-assessment is the assessment made by the students themselves who can see and analyze their own progress as well as the relevant problems. The other's assessment, meanwhile, is the assessment that a student gives to others. Secondly, assessment is more seen as an activity that occurs after the lesson is completed than an activity that occurs throughout the teaching process. Tests or exams are usually given to students at the end of the semester or course and they are often seen as a painful but necessary summer vacation prelude. For many students the information that this assessment gives them about performance and progress made is too late to be formative and to influence their learning. Another problem is the type of information given to students. Often the information given about student progress is expressed only by one grade. This grade classifies students but does not give them any real help on the real problems students have or on the possible ways to overcome these problems. There is no detailed analysis of the tests to point out the advantages and disadvantages of each student in order to take further measures to overcome the gaps identified. Another disadvantage of how we appreciate the class

is that it often focuses only on a part of what has been developed in the classroom. It is easier to test tangible grammatical knowledge than to evaluate spoken performance. An overestimate of grammar tests gives students the clear message that they have lost their time trying to speak in class (what is important is grammar). Moreover, students' negative behavior towards assessment comes as a result of the fact that instead of giving them the opportunity to show their knowledge and cognition, the assessment tries to point out what they have not been able to learn.

Teachers' discussions focus mostly on these students' failure to do so. Students also feel left out of testing or assessment because they play no role in it, except being passive participants. For many students in such situations, assessment takes on features of arbitrariness and sometimes even injustice. Sometimes they go well with their teachers and sometimes not and this fact often plays a role in their results in exams and tests. In some cases they are lucky and repeat the proper material for testing and at other times they are simply unlucky. According to Musai "the first and most serious risk is when students see that the assessment of their progress is lower than that of peers who share the same level with them or is lower than a certain standard as accessible to them. For this they may be despaired and discouraged" (Musai, B. 2002). Since arbitrariness is a characteristic of erroneous valuation practices, then recognition and elimination of this factor remains essential. On the other hand, it is very strange to notice how little help is given to teachers to teach them to evaluate effectively and fairly, or to carry out an assessment practice that is capable of reflecting on it, what happened in the classroom. The end result of these problems inevitably causes teachers to be in a protective position whenever they face their students, parents, or even school principals. From this point of view, it is important to select and well-define an assessment option that will end many of the above-mentioned problems. When should we assess?

Assessment should be a continuous chain process, which takes place at different levels and periods, because only in this way it can provide constant data, which will help guide the teaching process. Students' assessment by teachers and not only, must be carried out in a regular manner, in parallel with teaching, in each lesson, albeit informally. A more formal and in-depth assessment is best done at a frequent time throughout the school year, helping to provide timely information to both students and teachers on the issues encountered. It is very important that this assessment is an integral part of the course development, not only reflecting the content of the subject but in many cases and further developing and extending the topics discussed earlier. At

the same time it is advisable to apply by the same regularity the self-assessment, so that students can be given an opportunity to think about their achievements as well as about their problems. What remains to be done at the end of the school year is a summary of all the assessments made throughout the year in order to reach a final outcome that will reflect the student's linguistic achievements and, at worst, the lack of the same! Who should assess?

For decades, the assessment was exclusively the property of the teacher, as he was a master of class and students. Undeniably, it is the responsibility of the teacher to assess classroom work or homework informally, as is the responsibility to design and correct tests conducted under formal conditions. Without bypassing or neglecting these responsibilities, a teacher can improve and supplement his judgment by asking students to actively participate in them throughout this assessment process. By doing so, the teacher not only has created the opportunity to gather useful information through self-assessment but moreover, the involvement of students in the assessment process also means that their attitudes to learning and themselves can differ considerably. Rather than being motivated by the threat of testing, students may begin to feel more responsible for their progress, thus acquiring an internal motivation to learn. At the same time, self-assessment can help students become more efficient as students, to diagnose their weaknesses and problems, and then to try to improve them. How should the assessment be carried out? Assessment needs to be done constructively, focusing more on students' achievements than on their failures. This process should give students the opportunity to put in front of teachers and other students in the classroom what they know, avoiding attempts to "catch" students in what they do not know. As a teacher it is necessary for students to be given the appropriate assessment for their progress and most classroom students should be able to get a (minimum) passer-by rating. If this does not happen, there is a necessity to carefully analyze what has happened in the class during the semester or the school year. It is imperative that the assessment has a degree of credibility, which means that it is consistent and that under the same conditions and with the same student performance, the assessment will produce the same or at least the same results. If teachers fail to develop clear assessing criteria and if they do not apply clear procedures for their performance and obey them objectively, there is a risk that some students will be discriminated against in relation to others. It is also necessary for students to be minimally informed of the assessment structure applied in the class so that this assessment is not only trustworthy to the teachers but also to be trusted and fair by the students themselves.

Equally important is to be clear about what teachers want to assess and to ensure that it is being assessed precisely that, and not something else, to show that our assessment is valid. For example, if teachers want to assess listening, then it is suggested to consider understanding from a listened text and not to assess the ability of students to read or write or even their ability to produce a correct language. Consequently, in order to achieve the purpose of validation in assessment it is very important for teachers to have clear assessing objectives in the first place and then strive to ensure that these objectives are achieved. Another important feature is practicality. Any approach to assessment is not good to take a lot of time in terms of lessons and at the time spent out of the classroom. Assessment is just one aspect of the teacher's work and should not be allowed to take much time out of the lesson or the preparatory time of the teacher. It should also be practical in terms of physical and material aspects of such sources as tape recorders and photocopies. A last element (though not of importance) is the responsibility. As professionals, teachers should be able to provide students, parents, institutions and society in general with information on progress made in class when the latter is achieved and if there are no such achievements then the reasons should be given why this has happened. Teachers need to be able to explain the reasons of staying behind the selection of an assessment structure and should never hide behind a smoke curtain about this decision.

Chapter II

In this chapter, we were focused on bringing up the views of various authors, through adequate citing of their works on the methods of assessment and evaluation.

2.1. Literature review

The main meanings of the term "assessment" (from the earliest to the most current) are the following:

- Set the value of a tax or fine
- Put a tax or fine on a person or a community
- Assess the value (of ownership, income, and so on) for tax matters
- Evaluate value or measure or judge. (The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary and Chambers Dictionary .1993)

The final meaning is closer to what we use today in the education system, a meaning that has been attached to this word only in the mid-twentieth century. For the purposes of this paper, the word "assessment" is used in its fourth sense to judge the extent and learning of students. Very close to this meaning lies the definition given in the Frame work the Common European Reference Framework for Languages in which this term is defined as an assessment of "language skills implementation". Each language test is a form of assessment, but there are many other forms of assessment, such as checklists in the ongoing assessment, the informal assessment of the teacher, etc., which would not be considered a test. Evaluation is a far wider term than control. "(The Council of Cultural Cooperation. 2006. p16),

Second: a particular interest in this paper also reveals the other term used, self-assessment. Over the last 10 years, an increasing interest has been noted for self-assessment in foreign language teaching methodologies. "Much work has been done in different parts of the world and numerous reports have been published on the theoretical and practical implications that have been observed in the use of self-assessment techniques" (Oscarsson, M. 1997. P17).

Part of this paper will be reviewing the advantages and the need to use self-assessment techniques in foreign language teaching. According to Blue, interest in self-esteem was developed by a more general interest in the autonomous learning or student independence (Blue, G. 1994, p88).

However, self-assessment is seen as one of the most problematic areas of self-directed learning. It is widely recognized and widely accepted that students may not have the necessary experience to make such trials. In addition to these criticisms, there are a number of reasons why self-assessment should be encouraged in foreign language learning. Mats Oscarsson, a renowned scholar in the field of self-assessment, ‘offers six different reasons why self-assessment can be beneficial to language learning’ (Oscarsson, M. 1997, p9).

Firstly, he emphasizes that self-assessment promotes learning, clear and simple. Gives students experience in assessment which results in the benefit of the learning process. Secondly, it gives both teachers and students a high level of responsibility over skill levels. Training on self-assessment, even in its simplest form, as in raising the question: "What did I learn?" encourages students to look at the content of the course in a more critical way. Thirdly, it is highly motivating in terms of setting goals. Fourthly, through the use of self-evaluation methodologies in the classroom we have an enlargement and a wider range of evaluation techniques. As a result of self-assessment, ‘the student extends his / her spectrum of experiences in the field of assessment. Fifthly, practicing self-assessment, students participate in self-assessing’ (Dickinson, L. 1987, p41). In fact, they share the weight of assessment with their teachers. Finally, by successfully involving students in self-assessment, what will follow are positive after-effects. The use of carefully constructed assessment techniques can help teachers and curriculum developers in determining achievement of goals stated at the beginning of the school year.

According to Brissenden and Slater, the assessment can help teachers respond to the following questions:

- To what extent are my students achieving the goals set?
- How should class time be allocated to discuss broadly the topic of the day?
- Can I explain this topic in a more efficient and effective way?
- Which part of this chapter or book is most valuable to my students?
- How will I change the explanation of this chapter or book the next time when I'll have to redo it?
- What grades should I mark my students, with?

Meanwhile, viewed from the student's point of view, the assessment of learning responds a different set of questions:

- Do I know, what my teacher thinks is more important?

- Am I fully assimilating the content of the subject?
- How can I improve the way this course is taught?
- By what mark will I be evaluated in this subject? (Brissenden, G., & Slater, T.2000, p44).

Explaining the importance of the assessment, Brissenden and Slater point out that, first of all, assessment is important as it leads students' learning. Reality shows that whatever we want or dislike, most students tend to concentrate their energies in the best or fastest way possible to pass their exams. Based on this data, teachers can use their assessment strategies to manipulate the types of learning practiced by students. For example, evaluation strategies that focus primarily on knowledge recall are likely to promote superficial, reproductive, non-verbal, and mechanical learning. On the other hand, if teachers choose to use assessment strategies that require critical or creative thinking for solving problems, it is more likely to achieve a higher level of performance or student achievement. As mentioned above, motivating and guiding learning is just one of the goals of the assessment. Well-valued assessment strategies play a role critical and decisive in decision-making about education in general and constitute a vital component of ongoing quality improvement processes at the teaching, subject and / or curriculum level. The functions that carry out assessment and self-assessment are numerous. In practice, they overlap, but they can be grouped into five main categories:

- We assess to select
- We assess to certify
- We assess to describe
- We assess to help learning
- We assess to improve teaching

Assessment helps the selection, such as when selecting students for a further course or for employment. This is an example of the use of assessment to predict, as is the case with the selection of students who will benefit from further studies or how individuals will be able to perform their work. Selection has historically been closely related to the rankings of students and as a result, as we will see and following the work, this selection lies very close to the "normative assessment." Assessment in this form has been a tool for student positioning merits or accomplishments, and then they can be selected at the top of the list, in those cases where these

opportunities are rationalized (as is often the case). Assessment can help learners to learn. As mentioned above, this function is considered to be the most important function Assessment can stimulate learning in many different ways, such as:

- Motivating students
- Practicing the students so that they can see how well they are doing their learning outcomes.
- By following the internships to help students analyze their strengths and areas where they need to be improved.
- By providing them information that helps students plan it what they have to do next.
- By helping students, and other stakeholders interested in teaching, to observe and analyze the progress made.

The information obtained from the assessment can help us review the effectiveness of all the tools and techniques used in teaching. If our students find it difficult to deal with a given task regularly and systematically, this fact can tell us that the assigned task is far more demanding than what students can do and as a result we may need to change the methods learning or instruct students to gain certain technical skills, such as writing. Assessment can help us to notice the impact of our teaching and taking appropriate measures for improving it. Erwin further extends this topic by saying that the assessment results can also inform decisions of a higher institutional level (Erwin, T D. 1997) For example: What modules continues to provide the school; • What staff to recruit.

In order to assess the ability of students to use a language, it is necessary for the assessment to be focused on measuring their communication skills or language acquisition in general. Burhan (2009) in one of his works concludes that possessing a foreign language involves the acquisition of these competences.

- Grammatical competence

Grammar competence includes knowledge of vocabulary and spelling / spelling rules, word formation and sentence formulation. Such competence is an important concern of the communicative approach so that students understand and correctly express the direct meaning of the sayings.

- Sociolinguistic competence

It addresses the extent to which grammatical forms can be used or understood properly to communicate in different social environments.

- Discourse competence

Discourse competence refers to the mastery or combination of sentences and ideas to obtain a spoken and written text through cohesion and coherence.

- Strategic competence

This competence constitutes the language user's ability to use verbal and nonverbal communication strategies when communication is interrupted due to interference, distraction or other inappropriate competencies (Burhan.2009).

Fifth and Macintosh (1984) as cited in Burhan (2009) point out that there are two approaches to the assessment, which we are explaining as follows:

➤ Pragmatic approach

This approach has to do with the actuality of teaching-learning situations. This is an appreciation of what is happening in the classroom. Such an approach to evaluation is applied to highlight the differences between students and the analysis of the results derived from this comparison of students aims to ensure that the assessment is well balanced. The choice of evaluation techniques depends on the opportunities presented after receiving the results. The final score is determined only after all evaluation results have been balanced and properly calculated.

➤ The default approach

This type of approach is based on the plan set up before. In this approach, the objectives are set before the beginning of the lesson and several criteria are formulated to determine the level of language ownership. Pre-assessment and evaluation of assessment materials is carried out in such a way as to ensure that they are suitable for students, are related to the subject being taught

students, as well as to ensure that the results are and will be taken into account both by the student and the teacher.

On the other hand, the measurement of student language skills means the student's acquisition of language acquisition. On the other hand, mastering a language has to do with the ability to use this language in real-world communication situations that require a proper functioning of the language (Burhan.2009, p21).

The communicative competence of foreign language students can be determined on the basis of three criteria of judgment, which are interrelated:

- Function
- Content
- Accuracy

Naturally, the question arises: "What were the students able to communicate and how they communicated this message?"

The question that refers to the topic or context while the question refers to language accuracy. The first and second criteria appear to be closely related to the use of language and the situation in which language is used while the third criterion is based on language form. Technically, we would say that the criteria of function and content are oriented in sociolinguistic direction while the third criterion is oriented to linguistic direction.

2.2. Types of assessment

Depending on the different goals we have, our needs for different types of assessment will vary. Given the fact that there is a wide range of assessment types, thus their selection will depend on:

- Purpose of the assessment
- Time and resources available to students and teachers
- Age and language skills of students.

All of these types of tests and assessments are variants and opportunities offered to teachers. In many cases, each of these pairs of terms stands on both sides of continuity. This does not mean

that one is better than the other. The challenge facing all teachers is to identify the type that best suits our goals to assess in the relevant context of teaching, learning and assessment.

- **Validity**

The most complex criterion for a good assessment is the validity, or the degree to which the assessment actually "really measures what it is intended to measure" (Hughes, A. 1989, p17). Every book, paper, or article on the assessment is up to some extent and in one way or another related to validity. According to Spolsky, "validity is the main problem in evaluating foreign languages" (Spolsky, 1985. p5). It is the root concept of testing and assessing, and is therefore the first to be considered. Traditionally, the term "validity" in testing and assessment implied the discovery of "the affiliation of a certain appraisal as a measure of what is meant to be measured" (Henning, G. 1987). This view presupposes that when drawing up a form of assessment we intend to measure something and that "something" is "true". In this respect, validity is a form of seeking the truth. "The more they match, the assessment objectives with the assessment tasks, the higher is the degree of internal validation of the assessment procedures." (Brown, G, Bull, J and Pendlebury, M. 1997, p22). This means that validity is judged in relation to a use or purpose assigned, "meaning in relation to the actual decision taken and the evidence used for that decision" (Woolfolk, A. 2011, p187). A certain test may be valid for one purpose but not for another.

- **Reliability**

The concept of reliability is extremely important in assessing foreign languages. "The results of an assessment are reliable if a test provides consistent and consequent reading of a person's abilities as in one case and another, assuming that the person's abilities remain the same" (Brown, G. with Bull, J. and Pendlebury, M. 2003, p155). If the same group of students is taken to be assessed twice within two days without reflecting on the first assessment, before developing the second assessment they must achieve the same results in both cases and only then we can say that the test results are reliable. This criterion operates on two main levels, on the

reliability of the assessor and on the reliability of the test although the reliability of the test or the reliability associated with the student is also known. Reliability related to the assessor can be referred to as the assessment that the same assessor does for essays, assignments or similar exams, as well as assessments made by different assessors of the same essay, presentation, assignment or exam. In the case of 9-year schools, it is often difficult to get the same job or exam from two different teachers because it is rare for the school to have the luxury of two English language teachers. How can this be done? Reliability is one aspect that every teacher faces. As a human being, we can all be "not trustworthy" in the reliability of the assessment we make. In Kosovo's reality, the lack of assessment criteria is the biggest problem faced by our teachers, not to overlook the tiredness, neglect or the impact on "good" or "bad" students. All of these factors and many others play an important role in our "not trustworthy". The consequences of subjective assessment techniques all fall to the reliability.

- **Knowledge assessment / Capacity assessment**

Assessment of knowledge (or levels) is an internal assessment that is closely related to what the learner has learned over one lesson, one week, one month, and so on. This assessment is the assessment of specific objectives. "It corresponds to an internal look" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006). From this point of view it is obvious that this kind of assessment is directly related to the work that the teacher and the student have done together to acquire the relevant skills during a certain time. Exams or tests that assess students' knowledge in a particular subject or program are exactly examples of this type of assessment. Meanwhile, capacity assessment under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is "assessing what we can do or know in relation to its implementation in everyday life." (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006). They measure the general competencies of students in the target language. This type of assessment other than that of knowledge is not related to any course, subject, or specific program, but it assesses the overall student capacities according to a rate, standard or external degree. Usually they are used to determine whether the students' capacity level reaches national or international standards.

- **Normative assessment / Criterion assessment**

The normative assessment "classifies students one toward another" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006). This assessment refers to those tests that assess a punctuation compared to the punctuation of another competitor. The purpose of this type of assessment is to list the scores of competitors or participants in the evaluation, or determine the results of the transition or not, to select 10% of the competitors to be admitted to a particular program / project / branch or to report the levels achieved in basis of a common norm or standard. Most of the tests of great importance are normative tests and they are previously given to a similar population of tested, the normative group, to determine the punctuation rates to be used with the target group of the testers. In contrast to this type of assessment, criterion assessment evaluates the tested, based on predetermined criteria. Illustrated with a concrete example taken from the Kosovo reality, in final school examinations, teachers and / or schools determines the skills needed to get a passing grade. All those who prove that they have these skills and who attain this level will pass the exam and continue with the next stage of education regardless of their number or high scores achieved. They pass since their performance in the test shows that they meet the criteria set for the passing level. "This assessment also provides information to identify students' difficulties and helps overcome them." (Musai, B. 2002, p98). From that point of view, such an assessment is vital for the progress of the teaching process and helps to restore students throughout the whole process, throughout the academic year, not just at the end or at the beginning. Choosing a kind of assessment to another, remains an individual choice of the teacher always guided by the goal set out earlier.

- **Mastery or Continuity**

The method of mastered skill according to defined criteria "is a method in which a single minimum skill rate is set to distinguish between able (successful) and disable (unable) students, without taking into account the level of quality displayed in the way the objective is achieved" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p37). Meanwhile, the method of continuity, "is a method by which the given ability is classified by referring to the ability at all levels in a given field" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p39).

- **Continuous assessment / meticulous assessment**

Continuous assessment is, in fact, the assessment made by both teachers and students of the work done throughout the continuity of the course. The grade taken at the end of the semester or the academic year is a direct reflection of all student achievements. When we mention the fact that this assessment is actually assessment by students', we will also include here, the self-assessment. Meanwhile, the meticulous assessment as understood by the term used is an assessment that takes place at a certain point in most cases at the end of the chapters or at the end of the entire linguistic level. What is of interest to this kind of assessment other than continuous assessment is not what the student has done throughout the semester or the academic year but what the student is capable of performing at this particular moment. "We are not concerned with what has been done before, but what the learner is capable of doing here and now" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p41).

- **Formative assessment / Summary or Somatic assessment**

Formative assessment is a "continuous process that allows you to take information on strengths and weaknesses" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p44). The teacher uses this information to create an idea of the student's final assessment, and in the meantime, he has the ability to share this information with the student so that the latter is in tune with the development and progress made. On the other hand, the somatic assessment or otherwise known as the summary "checks the learning at the end of the learning by assessing it by mark" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p47). The differentiation we can make between formative and somatic assessment lies in the function that the assessment does. When we want to help students improve their learning process and when we give them feedback on their strengths and weaknesses we are formatively assessing them. Again, the aim here is to help these students develop better skills and improve their learning process. Various feedback techniques, student conferences, student activities, or self-assessment activities can be used for training purposes. Brown (2003) summarizes this kind of assessment by saying that teachers use formative assessment in "student assessment in the process of creating competencies and skills in order to help them continue that growth process" (Brown, HD 2004, p123). Somatic assessments are used to make a final judgment about a

student's learning process. These assessment instances are developed at the end of a chapter, semester, course, subject, program or school year. They provide a summary of what the students were able to learn. Depending on our assessment needs, knowledge and capacity estimates can be used for somatic purposes.

- **Direct assessment / indirect assessment**

Direct assessment "assesses what the candidate is doing, e.g. When working in small groups when it comes to a conversation, the teacher observes, refers to the criteria of a table and gives its assessment. "(Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p49). As can be easily understood, direct tests or assessments are those assessments where the answer given by the student involves the use of language skills being tested. Meanwhile, indirect assessment will be designed to assess the skills needed to guide the learner to use that ability.

- **Performance assessment / Assessment of knowledge**

The assessment of performance requires the student to reproduce a part of the oral or written discussion (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p53). This type of assessment is largely used in the Kosovo environment mainly in the form of a spoken or written, retelling of a predetermined text. The advantages of this kind of assessment lie in the fact that the learner is trained with some ready-made vocabulary and concepts, which by copying and reproducing them repeatedly, literally or with little change, can absorb one day and use them in realistic situations. On the other hand, the drawbacks of this kind of assessment lie in the fact that the learner is mechanically learning and reproducing a given material and does not contribute almost anything in the material he is writing or telling. From this point of view, the student becomes a reproductive machine of a ready-made model, machinery, which does not go beyond programming. An extremely pronounced use of this kind of assessment does not give the teacher accurate information on what the learner is really capable of thinking and producing independently.

- **Subjective assessment / Objective assessment**

Objectivity or subjectivity of an assessment depends on how the results are calculated, defined and interpreted. For example, a meticulous, well-researched and well prepared assessment is usually objective because it evaluates a specific linguistic element and because there is a single correct answer and no other. Everyone, even the student himself, can evaluate or correct an objective test as long as he or she has access to the test or test answer key. Meanwhile, in the subjective assessment, assessors make value judgments about the student's performance. Assessing producing skills, such as writing and speaking performance, usually requires a subjective assessment.

- **Scalable assessment / Assessment with checklist**

The scalable assessment under the European Common Framework of Languages References (KPERGJ) judges whether a person is at a certain level of a scale consisting of so many levels (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p57). The aim of this kind of assessment is that, the student is assessed at a certain level: to what extent does the student go to this level? Consequently, it is considered very necessary to clarify different levels by scale descriptors. Each of the constituent parts of the scale must be clearly expressed and easily measurable. Meanwhile, the checklist assessment aims to evaluate a student by checking and assessing one for one component of a particular module, chapter, or lesson. In this case the judgment is horizontal (how many of the component elements are acquired by the student).

- **Impression-based assessment / oriented assessment**

Impression-based assessment is a completely subjective judgment made based on the student's performance experience in the classroom, without referring to specific criteria regarding a particular assessment. Meanwhile, oriented assessment has a lower level of subjectivity than Impression-based assessment by fulfilling the impression created with a conscious assessing of specific and well-defined criteria. The term "oriented assessment" is used to describe the situation in which that impression is led to a reasonable assessment through an assessment approach.

- **Holistic Assessment / Analytical Assessment**

Holistic assessment or otherwise known as the global assessment gives a global judgment of a certain skill while the analytical assessment "considers the different aspects of judgment of a certain skill different" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p60). The descriptors needed in a holistic assessment specify what students need to do in order to be evaluated with a certain grade. If we stop for a bit here, we would see that global assessment carries its problems. It may happen that the descriptors given do not exactly match the student. If, for example, by holistic assessment we want to judge speech, we have students who have problems in pronunciation but are still grammatically correct. Consequently, a global and non-analytical assessment would not be accurate and fair. There is also the risk that different teachers "will not agree on the understanding of the same descriptors" (Upshur, J and Turner, C. 1995, p134). Thus, we can say that holistic assessment does not help us achieve the reliability required by teachers. On the other hand, analytical assessment makes it possible for judgment to become more reliable because student performance is analyzed in sharp details (Harmer, J. 2007, p18). Instead of a general assessment of all performance, the student is given an assessment of the various elements of the activity, task, exercise, or exam.

- **Series assessment / Category assessment**

"The assessing by category is based on a single task in which the performance is assessed in the function of the categories of an assessing table" (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p62). Series assessing includes a series of isolated tasks (often role-play between students or with the teacher), and gives a global rating on a scale from 0 to 3 and from 1 to 4. The series assessment is a good way to correct the tendency of rating with categories where the results of one category affect the other category. At low levels the emphasis is on fulfilling the task and here we may have combinations with the above types of assessment because the teacher here assesses the

actual performance and does not make an impression-based assessment. Results can be presented in the form of a profile.

- **Assessment by others / Self-assessment**

According to The European Common Council of References for Languages, assessment by others is the judgment given by students for each other and self-assessment is the judgment each gives for its capacity (Council of Cultural Cooperation 2006, p65). From this point of view, assessment uses its sources as not only the teacher or exam corrector but also the student himself. What is interesting to note here is the fact that Brown, Bull and Pendlebury consider others' assessment and self-assessment not as assessment methods but as sources of assessment that can be used with different assessment methods and instruments (Brown, G. with Bull, J. and Pendlebury, M. 2003, p17). Both self-assessment and assessment by others encourage the students to judge their own work or other classroom students in the right and proper way. Often, students are not capable of accurately assessing the quality of their work or judging the progress they have made over a given period of time. Students should be provided with an opportunity to measure their own work, often by giving a rating section.

- **Traditional Assessment / Alternative Assessment**

Taking into consideration traditional and alternative assessment, requires a great deal of time and physical space, but a realistic comparison of these two major assessing groups is, in fact, as will be presented further, reflection of the major changes in the education system itself and mainly in methods used in teaching foreign languages. Unfortunately, even today, in our schools the notion of "assessment" carries in itself a vision of tests, exams or a long list with grades. All of these are considered very important and generally thought to measure objectively, accurately and reliably student achievements. "Exams are one of the forms of final student-learning control that take place at the end of the academic year. They aim to identify the realistic level of knowledge for each student, determine the degree of preparation to proceed further to a higher school category or to be accommodated "(Brown, JD and Hudson T. (1998) This system has many advantages in terms of administration facilities, can easily compare individuals (norm-based assessment), and

everyone knows that a grade 4 is better than a grade 2. In this way, an efficient way of "classification of those who stand on top, in the middle or in the end, offering them a certain position in society" is offered (Moon, B. and Mayes A.Sh.1995, p59). But how real is this assessment and this grade? Has a grade mark assessment been done honestly and fairly? Would another teacher or the same teacher, but on another day, have the same assessment for the same exam? Should the assessment purpose be the selection and ranking of students or should the assessment play an educational and constructive role? The answers to these questions and many others similar to these, during the last three decades in the world and this last decade in Kosovo, have brought dramatic changes to the way of perception of assessment and its application in practice. Many would argue that years ago, besides the exams, many other activities within the learning process were developed, processes in which teachers tried to learn more about what their students had learned or about what they have learned to do. It is quite true that such activities developed (though fewer in number and poorer in variety) but they were by no means seen as related to the assessment and were not directly taken into account in the student's assessment as they are now considered. The following table, adopted by Armstrong and Bailey (1994), summarizes the main differences between traditional assessment and alternatives in assessment (as called by: Brown and Hudson) or alternative assessment as recognized by the European Common Council of References for Languages.

Traditional assessments	Alternatives in assessment
Standardized individual examinations.	Continuous long-term assessment
Multiple choice forms, limited in time	Format with unlimited responses, free on time
Discontextualized test items	Contextual communicative items
Scoring or marks is enough to give an answer (feedback)	The answer is interactive and formative.

Norm based grades	Criteria based grades
Focus on the "right" answer	Creative answer with free answers
Somativ	Formative
Product-Oriented	Process oriented
Non-interactive performance	Interactive performance
Encourages external motivation	Encourages internal motivation

Table 1. Traditional forms of testing and assessing (taken from Brown, H.D. 2007, p38).

As can be easily deduced from the table above, the focus in the past few decades, not only in Kosovo but everywhere "has been the one in the classroom administration of formal classes" (Brown, H.D. 2007, p422). Traditional tests differ largely from alternative assessment as "students are valued over what they integrate and produce more than what they are capable of recalling and reproducing" (Huerta-Macias, A. 1995, p56).

- **Portfolios or folders**

One of the most heard forms of assessment alternatives within the communicative framework is portfolios design. A portfolio is "a deliberate collection of students' work that presents their efforts, progress, and achievement to particular areas" (Genesee, E., and Upshur, J. 1996, p61). They are used to sum up parts of students' work in order to see and analyze the student's linguistic development. According to renowned researcher Tierney (1991), in a portfolio the following types of materials may be included:

- Audio and video recordings of reading or oral presentations.

- Written part as dialogues obtained from the diary, book reports, written assignments or various written projects
- Artistic works such as paintings, drawings, graphics and tables
- Notes received during interviews or conferences
- Testing

To gain a multiple perspective on student academic development, it is essential for teachers to include more than one type of material mentioned above in individual students' portfolios. The two most important types of files used are the "Best Works File" and "File for Development and Learning Process". There is a difference between these two types of files. The difference is similar to the "difference between formative and summary evaluation" (Woolfolk, A. 2011, p61)."

Best work files are a selection of products, best student jobs ... while development and learning files are used to gather all student work patterns over a certain time." (Musai, B. 2002, p28). Portfolios are considered useful, especially for students who are learning a foreign language (in our case English) because they "offer a wider measurement of what students can do and because they replace the limited time context written assignments, which for a long time have been claimed as a discriminatory element against non-English students "(Bushman, L. & Schnitker, B. 1995, p81). They seem to be an important promise in "promoting the dimensions of learning and promoting student autonomy" (Chen, L. 1993) and "stimulate the sense of ownership over their work" (Tierney, RJ, Carter, MA, & Desai, 1991, p66). For many students, the tests are very tedious and boring, while diaries, portfolios or interviews are a real fun.

- **Consultations**

Through many years, they have been part of a routine foreign language teaching, especially in writing. Consultations perform many functions, but among them we can mention: commenting on essay drafts, reviewing the portfolios, counseling the student on a presentation or writing assignment, commenting on the results achieved in the test, etc. Such consultations have been used and continue to be widely used in foreign language learning, but they are often not seen as part of assessment. In fact, through it, teacher helps and facilitates the improvement of written work of his students. "Through consultation, a teacher can take on the role of the facilitator and

guider, rather than the one of a controller and giver of the final grade. In this motivational atmosphere, students may feel that, teacher is an ally who is encouraging them to self-reflect on their work "(Brown, H. D. 2007, p44).

- **Observations**

One of the key features of a good teacher is the ability to observe students while they work or present their work. Teachers are constantly involved in a process of taking and measuring the performance of their students and intuitively they are assessing them and using them to provide their comments. "Even without conducting any tests or exams, teachers know a lot about their students" (Brown, H.D. 2007, p46).

- **Assessment of four basic skills, grammar and lexicon**

The assessment process in teaching and learning foreign language is truly complex based first of all on the integral aspects of learning a foreign language. So if we were to identify the basic elements we would like to assess on a student's achievements then we would list four basic language skills: speaking, reading, listening, and writing.

- **Evaluating listening, speaking, reading, and writing**

Each classroom lesson includes an assessment form, which may be unplanned, informal and intuitive as well as expressed in the form of an official, prepared and measurable test. In order to turn our attention to a very important role teachers have to play in the teaching process, we will present a series of principles and guidelines on the assessment of four basic classroom skills.

- **Assessment of listening**

Assessment of listening ability is one of the less widely understood and less developed, although it is one of the most important areas of language testing and assessment. In fact, Nunan calls the listening comprehension "the poorest cousin among the many linguistic abilities" (Nunan, D.

2003, p31). Not by chance in this paper, the listening was first analyzed by four basic linguistic abilities. As a teacher we recognize the importance of listening to our students' ability to listen and then assess their language skills but, for many reasons, we cannot work efficiently to achieve this. One reason for this is the fact that the listening process is an internal process and cannot be the object of direct study or observation. But, to learn the speaking of a foreign language, students must first understand the spoken language they hear. In the past, "linguists hypothesized that hearing was a passive skill because it could not be observed" (Coombe, C., Folse, K. & Hubley, N 2007, p128). But in more modern theoretical models, the very different, listening is now considered an active process. Another reason for ignoring the listening in the past was, the fact that productive writing and speaking skills were at the center of foreign language teaching. However, in recent years, the positioning of linguists on this issue has changed, and listening is now being paid more attention. According to Nunan, before we develop appropriate assessment techniques for listening, we must first understand the nature of the listening (Nunan, D. 2003, p37). Literature offers us mainly two listening models, bottom-up and top-down. In the process of listening according to the bottom-up model, "hearing is believed to be a linear process that is derived from data" (Coombe, C., Folse, K. & Hubley, N 2007, p122). In other words, understanding occurs when the listener successfully decodes the spoken text. These sounds may range from smaller meaningful units, such as phonemes to full texts. So, understanding occurs when the student hears the word, decodes it and then links it with the other words to form the sentence. These sentences together, in the end, create meaningful texts. On the other hand, in the case of listening by the top-down process, the listener is directly involved in building the meaning from the listened text. In this process, the student uses information obtained from the context and situation to reach the understanding of what is heard. Teachers should not only teach their students both these types of listening but assess them. A well known linguist Buck in 2001 was able to identify three major approaches to listening skills, discrete point, integrated and communicative approach (Buck, G. 2001, p181).

- **Assessment of speech**

If speech is a productive ability that can be observed empirically and directly, these observations are invariably influenced by the accuracy and effectiveness of the auditor's listening ability,

which necessarily involves the reliability and validity of an assessment in speaking. But as we know, it is likely that the score or grade taken in the speech is exclusively just a measure of speech productivity without the possible and frequent explanations of the interlocutor? Speaking and listening interferes with the draftsman of an oral assessment and asks him to remove as far as possible the factors related to the hearing. In listening assessment, we mentioned some listening assessment approaches. A similar taxonomy is also encountered in speaking assessment; the taxonomy developed by Brown in two of his most widely read books: "Teaching by principles" and "Language assessment, principles and classroom practices". The imitative assessment (Brown, H.D. 2004, p57) is directly related to the ability (too simple) to repeat (as a parrot) of a word or phrase or possibly a sentence. Here, the teacher is only interested in what is traditionally known as "pronunciation", no attention is paid to the student's ability to understand or express something or even to participate in an interactive conversation. Another type of speech, which is often used in contexts of assessment, is according to Brown's "production of short parts of the spoken language in order to demonstrate the student's ability in a narrow field of grammatical, fractional, lexical or phonological relationships "(Brown, HD 2004), (such as: prosodic elements, intonation, emphasis, rhythm, etc.). Examples of intensive assessment include guided response exercises, loud reading, word or dialogue supplements, photo interpretation exercises and various translations.

- **Assessment of reading**

The process of reading assessment in a similar way to speech and listening requires first the discovery and recognition of the ability of reading. Initially, we need to clarify that reading is not a passive activity as is often labeled in the past. In the 1960s, this ability began to be considered by psycho linguists as the most active psycho linguistic guessing game (Cohen, A. 1994), a process that requires readers to continually give meaning to the text. Reading involves the activation of rhetorical information networks from the real world for the sole purpose of the text interpretation. According to many researchers like Rumelhart, Anderson and Pearson, Carrell and Eisterhold, etc., these prior knowledge sources are known in terms of technique as schemata. Such schemes are classified according to three basic types:

1. Content schemes, which include knowledge systems, values and cultural factual conventions.
2. Language schema, containing sentence structure, spelling and punctuation, vocabulary and cohesion structures.
3. Text schemes, rhetorical structures of various types of text, for example, cooking recipes, letters, tales, studies and scientific books.

Research into the theory of schemes emphasizes readers' problems with regard to alternative schemes and either their complete lack, or the excessive use of previous knowledge. Carrel, Devine and Eskey (1988) claim that the theory of schemes has brought a significant number of benefits to English language teaching and, in fact, there is an even wider use of pre-reading activities in many textbooks (Carrell, PL 1988, p221). However, teachers should be attentive to the limitations of the effectiveness of these activities because there may be signs of overestimating the use of schemes. The difference between the intended message from the writer and the reader's message is even clearer when readers have had life experiences different from those of the reader's model for which the writer has written. Readers also often feel that they understand the text, but make it an interpretation other than the author's own. It is thought that the cultures that come from readers can influence everything from reading readers' texts themselves, content schemes, as well as to their understanding of individual concepts. Some basic concepts may be missing in the scheme of some readers of another language or they get interpretations different from those of the writer. The concept of "full moon", for example, in Europe is linked to schemes involving scary stories while in Japan this concept activates beauty-related schemes and full moon feasts (Wallace, C. 1992, p109). This change in readers' perceptions is inevitably reflected in the understanding of text and exercise related to the text itself. The focus in this schema discussion is highly related to the assessment as cultural issues, prior knowledge, or lack of a new text contrast completely the reader's response and as a result and student responses in reading-related exercises. Swales believes that research in this area "supports logical expectations that when the content and form of the text are known to the reader then these texts will be easier to read by students" (Swales, J.M. 1990, p87). The text on which students' reading is assessed varies and should vary, enabling the reader to deal with both texts with familiar content, as well as entirely foreign and unknown texts. Only in this way we can achieve a realistic assessment of student's knowledge. Based on the issues raised above and in

many other aspects of reading, it turns out that the assessors have devised different methods of reading assessment, among which we can list:

1. Communication tests
2. Fixed answer format
3. Format with structured responses
4. Assessment of lexical knowledge
5. Open answer format, etc.

Ideally, any assessment would involve more than just one of the above mentioned methods. Such an assessment would, moreover, be straighter to the student if it involves multiple measurements of the same skill, since different types of measurements may yield results that may vary easily or wholly from one another.

Assessment of writing

A shallow analysis of the writing would make us think that the written language is simply a graphic representation of the spoken language and that the writing output is the same as the one speaking, where the only difference lies in the use of graphic signs and sounds. Fortunately, no one holds that attitude today on writing. "The writing process requires a completely different set of competencies and is essentially completely different from speech. The sustainability and timely writing of the writings, combined with the unique rhetoric conventions, make writing so different from speech, as it is a different color than walking "(Brown, H. D. 2007, p73). This strikingly versatile comparison given by Brown reveals quite clearly the gap between speech and writing. Writing assessment is undoubtedly a complicated issue, and this is because of the fact that according to Brown there are known about "thirty different types of written language" (Brown, H. D. 2007, p76). Certainly, students in a 9-year school will not need to learn all these types of writing and it is the teacher's job to select those types of scripts that their students really need, scripts that will 'they need to expand their knowledge in English or for their final educational purposes. It should be noted that students from 1st grade up to 9th grade are learning in parallel different types of writing in their mother tongue. It is these scriptures that should become the focus of true writing in the classroom. Before we analyze the assessment of writing, it is of interest to briefly mention the role of the teacher in this process. Numerous scholars among whom O'Brien, Silva and Brice have conducted extensive studies on the nature of the creative writing process. According to them, the writings are often the result of thought-

provoking, reviewing and rejuvenating procedures, procedures requiring specialized skills, skills that not every speaker develops naturally (O'Brien, T. 2004, p3). Moreover, "the students exhibit a variety of different styles and preferences in their process of creation" (Chen, K. 2005, p8). And it is precisely the recognition of the creative nature of writing that has changed the look of writing classes. Half a century ago, teachers in their writing hours were more interested in the final product of writing: paper, design, essay, report, or story as well as in the look of this product. Drafts should:

1. Meet some rhetorical style English language standards
2. Reflect accurate grammar
3. To be organized according to what the reader would consider being conventional.

Much more attention was paid to measuring the product with a list of criteria that included content, idea organization, dictionary usage, grammar usage, and mechanical considerations such as spraying and punctuation. Practically, even today, these above mentioned criteria are part of the concern of many teachers regarding writing. But what has changed is the mentality that students are already seen as language creators. They are now allowed to focus on their content, messages, and internal motives, and individual focus on learning. Precisely in the light of these new mentalities, what was already known in the term approximation to the process of writing teaching became possible. This approach is an attempt to get the best out of the nature of the writing code (unlike conversation, writing can be planned and revised several times before it is released) in order to give students the opportunity to think as they write. Put in another way, writing is the process of thinking itself. From this point of view, teacher is no longer an external corrector and censor of the writings of his students, but instead he turns to a facilitator of the process of creating writing by his students. Following this, it is easy to deduce that the writing process has overcome many difficulties and has been radically transformed over the years. "But the fundamental issue that arises today has to do with the judgment that needs to be made to the creativity of our students. If the teacher has to be the facilitator of writing, how can he simultaneously do the role of a judge? "This is the main dilemma of all teachers. Playing this two-way role requires intelligence and sensitivity. The key to a fair trial is the impartiality and reliability of what we are considering whenever we assess it. One way to look at writing assessment is through checklists that can show students their strengths and weaknesses.

According to Brown, a typical list of general categories would include "content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary and mechanics" (Ferris, D. and Hedgcock, J. 2005, p180).

- **Grammar Assessment**

Why do we assess grammar?

Which grounds justify the separate assessment of grammar?

Earlier this question would seem extremely improper. Control of grammatical structures was seen as the fundamental basis of language ability and its lack of appreciation was not even thought. But times have changed. With regard to capacity assessment, since language skills are usually of interest and not the knowledge on which these skills are built, then these skills need to be assessed. Based on these arguments, "many well-known capacity tests did not include the grammatical component" (Hughes, A. 1989, p25). However, many other exams fanatically observe the grammar section.

Why is this happening?

One reason for this is the ease, with which a large number of test articles can be administered and assessed very easily, even in a computerized manner, in a very short time. Equally important is the issue of the validity of the exam contents. Even if anyone has doubts about incorporating grammar assessment into a test of capacity, there are often good reasons to include a grammatical component in knowledge assessment tests, analytical or holistic assessment of teaching institutions. It seems unlikely that there will be "many institutions, howsoever" communicative" they are, not to teach grammar to their students, in one form or another" (Genesee, E., and Upshur, J. 1996, p221). Whenever teaching of the grammar lesson seems to be necessary, then the ability to include the grammatical component in the assessment of knowledge should also be considered. If this is done, however, it would be cautious, from the point of view of the consequences of the assessment, so as not to these components are given more importance than other skills.

- **Assessment of the lexicon**

Why do we assess the lexicon? All the doubts raised about the grammar assessment are also valid for the assessment of the lexicon. It is clear to all of us that the knowledge on vocabulary, idioms, phraseology expressions, etc. are essential for developing and displaying language skills. But this does not necessarily mean that this assessment should be made separately from other assessments. The same reasons as those relating to grammar can also be given for assessment of lexicon in terms of their space in capacity and knowledge testing. However, arguments for a particular lexical component in other types of tests do not stand. "Many may think that the conscientious and regular teaching of the lexicon is devoted less time than grammar teaching" (Hughes, A. 1989, p32).

Chapter III

3.1. Research Methodology

This research has been carried out by the quantitative and qualitative method through monitoring work in two elementary schools "Gjon Serreqi" and "Aga Xhite" in the city of Ferizaj, one public and the other one private school, and through this research we managed to find out the differences between those two educational institutions in assessing the English Language teaching and learning. There were involved several classes of different grade, thus the students were of different age. All the students were involved on this application and it was collected enough information about assessment strategies used and differences too.

Four informal interviews have also been conducted with the English teachers of the elementary school "Gjon Serreqi" and "Aga Xhite" in Ferizaj, to collect their diverse experiences, which have been incorporated assessment process.

3.2. Research aim

To assess and test are two different things, so as soon as this is understood right by the teachers and the students but also by the side of parents', the better the situation will be in teaching of English in our schools. There must be a valid strategy of continuous assessment and this should not happen two times a year or four times a year (every semester or two times in a semester) but the assessment process should be a continuous, an everyday process. Through this research, we have attempted to raise awareness of the English language teachers of the two above mentioned educational institutions, as well as how to make the necessary changes or reforms in the teaching process of the English language, respectively in the process of assessing it in so that this process is as objective and as qualitative and useful to the students and society as a whole.

3.3. Research questions

This research answers the following questions:

- What benefits have students through continuous assessment?
- How can teachers define the student's level of proficiency and their learning needs?
- Which assessment methods are mostly used?

3.4. Research Hypothesis

This research has had to answer the below hypothesis:

- Assessment and testing is not given the deserved importance in the learning process and that testing is often considered as an assessment equivalent.

3.5. Research Design and Methodology

This research has included the qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research has been conducted through observation, monitoring and interviews. In this research along with the English Language Teachers we have followed, respectively we have monitored the way of testing and assessing the students in these two educational institutions by reviewing the applied tests and other assessment methods. During this period, teachers have had the opportunity to provide data regarding this process. After identifying problems and difficulties, together with English language teachers, we had the opportunity to analyze these problems and to come to the conclusion of the need to change the way of applying new assessment methods.

3.5.1. Materials

The selection of proper assessment methods materials have consisted on the needs of the students in relation to their future perspective that is, materials through which teachers have focused the appropriate ways and include “phases, tasks and activities that practice the assessment areas” Harris, M. and Mc Cann, P (1994). Another criterion to be considered in this research was the strict application of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages framework.

3.5.2. Participants

The students were 12 up to 15 years old; they are attending the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade in the Elementary Schools “Gjon Serreqi” and “Aga Xhite” in Ferizaj. The total number of students was 112, of both genders, male and female.

3.5.3. Instruments

As the instruments used for this research were: a selection of numerous tests conducted by teachers and performed by students. This has also served as part of the needs analysis, an observation conducted (a second instrument). As the third instrument there have been informal interviews with the English teachers in order to find out their opinion on this matter.

3.5.4. Procedures

Important differences among learner’s approach to the language and their preferred learning strategies makes teaching very hard. Difficulties are unpreventable when it comes to teach

different learners in the classroom and creating an equal teaching approach preventing problems during the language learning.

These data will serve as a tool for developing qualitative assessing strategies with a special emphasis on teachers' usage. The data gathered from the research aim to give thorough insights to all factors that influence learner's attitude about the English language and guides teachers' towards a prosperous path.

Chapter IV

4.1. Discussion of the results of research

This chapter presents the results of the research conducted in two schools in city of Ferizaj, respectively in elementary public school "**Gjon Serreqi**" and private elementary school "**Aga Xhite**", and their analysis and interpretation. The aim of this chapter is the full coverage and analysis of the forms and methods used in the elementary schools in Ferizaj, to assess the language achievements of students, learning English as a foreign language. To achieve this goal, we have chosen to analyze and interpret used tests and other assessment activities developed in the classroom, afterwards by focusing on the problem of correcting and evaluating them by teachers and students. In order to collect a material as close as possible to the reality of our research, we initially chose to collect various test samples used by the teachers' part of our sample.

These tests generally relate to the last year of their work in teaching English (year 2018) and we have managed to reflect the current trend of the test model used today in our schools. A distinctive feature of these tests is the fact that we very easily and naturally managed to group them into two separate groups and often very different from each other in the set of tests designed by the teachers themselves and in the group of tests, accompanying textbooks.

While there is intent or a point of view of the simplest and quickest (simpler and faster) evaluation of the assessment tests in the public school "**Gjon Serreqi**", on the other hand in the private elementary school "**Aga Xhite**" has a somewhat different way and approach in the good sense of the word in the design of assessment tests. In both schools have been included in one way, all the essential areas of assessment of English language, depending on the applied tests, where the tests in the manner of inclusion of these fields varies from one another depending on the teaching chapter which was assessed with that case, as can be seen in the following chart:

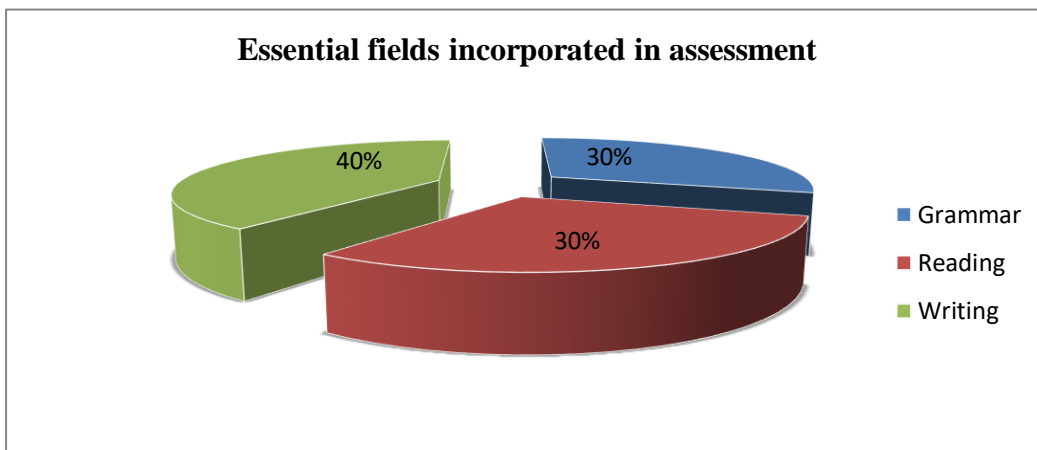


Chart 1. Essential fields of English Language, incorporated in assessment tests.

As far as the field of English language learning that has to do with, “**WRITING**” portion of it, we have noticed a difference in the forms of tests developed in the schools that were part of this research, and below we have presented the two forms of compilation evaluation tests for each school, and also highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of one and the other 40% of the participants said that Writing is their preferred field of assessment, while 30% of the p[articipants have stated that in both, Grammar and Reading they feel more comfortable while being evaluated or assessed.

In the public school “**Gjon Serreqi**” we encountered a test cycle aimed at the form of evaluation through “guided writing”, compiled by the constituent elements as follows: e.g. using photos, notes, or diagrams (giving students preliminary information). Guided writing assessment testing form:

Note: *The percentage we have shown on each chart separately can be subject to discussion.*

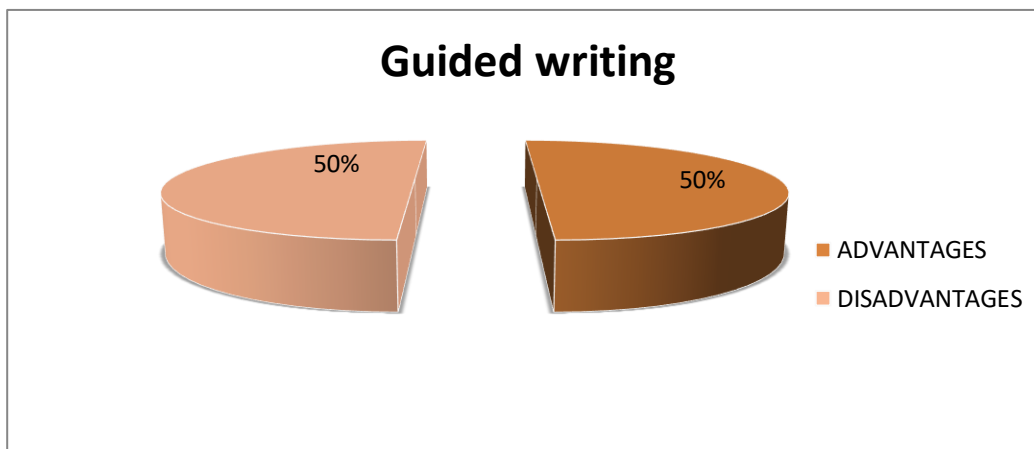


Chart 2. Testing form of GUIDED WRITING applied in public school “Gjon Serreqi” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: More real than the essay because the preliminary information could create space for communication. It gives the students help, so it works well even for the low linguistic levels. It is easier to be corrected compared to free writing.

DISADVANTAGES: Preliminary information may be a testing of their reading abilities, and if the students do not understand the information provided, this will then be reflected in their work or their writing!

In the private elementary school "Aga Xhite" we encountered a test cycle that aimed at the form of assessment through "essay writing", which have had for the topic, writing an essay about: "A day that has remained in my memory".

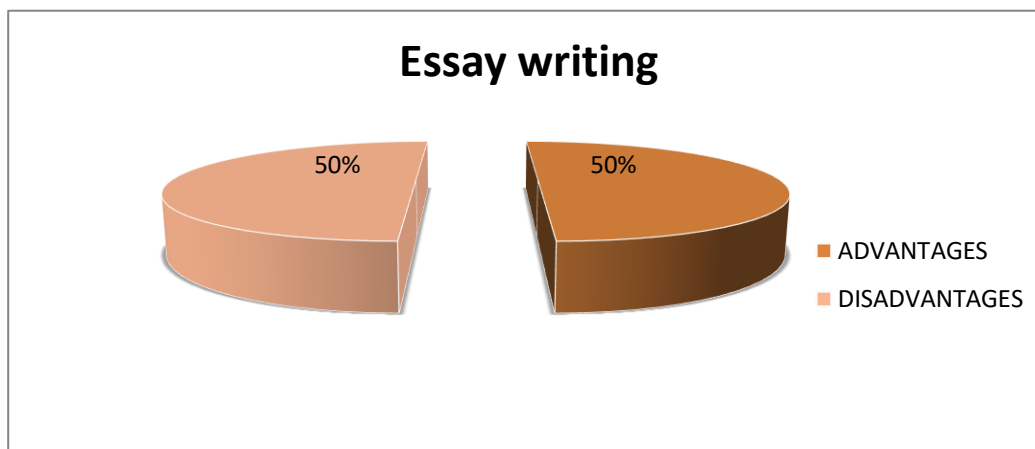


Chart 3. Testing form of ESSAY WRITING, applied in private school “Aga Xhite” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Very easy to create or design, but works better for high levels of language!

DISADVANTAGES: Far away from reality and often test the imagination or knowledge of content. It's hard to be corrected and also it is time consuming in correction phase.

In the public school "Gjon Serreqi" we also encountered a test cycle aimed at the form of evaluation through "punctuation", compiled or designed in such a way as to determine the students' ability to properly use the punctuation marks:

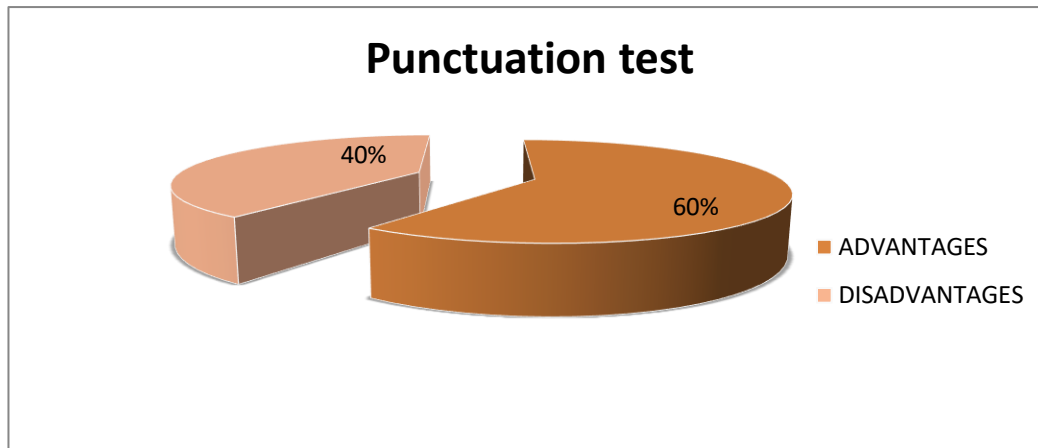


Chart 4. Testing form of PUNCTUATION TEST, applied in public school “Gjon Serreqi” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: It is good to test the specific recognition of the punctuation marks and their meaning.

DISADVANTAGES: It is limited and not easy to correct, and at the same time the punctuation may be subjective as it is associated with style.

In the private school "Aga Xhite" in Ferizaj, we encountered another test cycle that had to do with the combined form of the assessment, which for assessing target had the topic of “*Read the letter and write a reply*”.

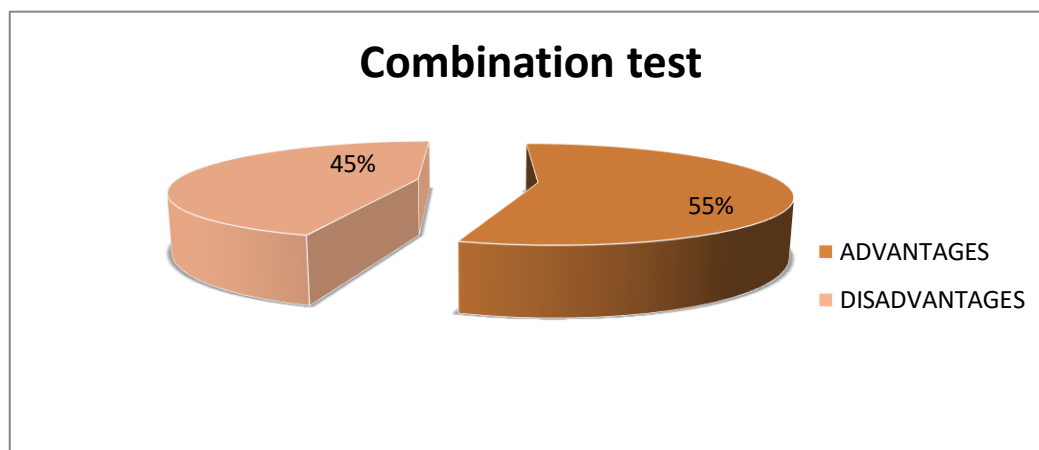


Chart 5. Testing form of COMBINATION TEST, applied in private school “Aga Xhite” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Real and very good to write.

DISADVANTAGES: It is difficult to correct because it is hard to distinguish, problems with reading and problems in writing!

As far as the field of English language learning that has to do with, “READING” portion of it, we have again noticed a difference in the forms of tests developed in the schools that were part of this research, and below we have presented the two forms for each school of compilation assessment tests, and also highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of one and the other.

In the public school "**Gjon Serreqi**" we encountered a test cycle aimed at the form of evaluation through "listing", compiled by the constituent elements as follows: e.g. List the kinds of foods and drinks mentioned in the text:

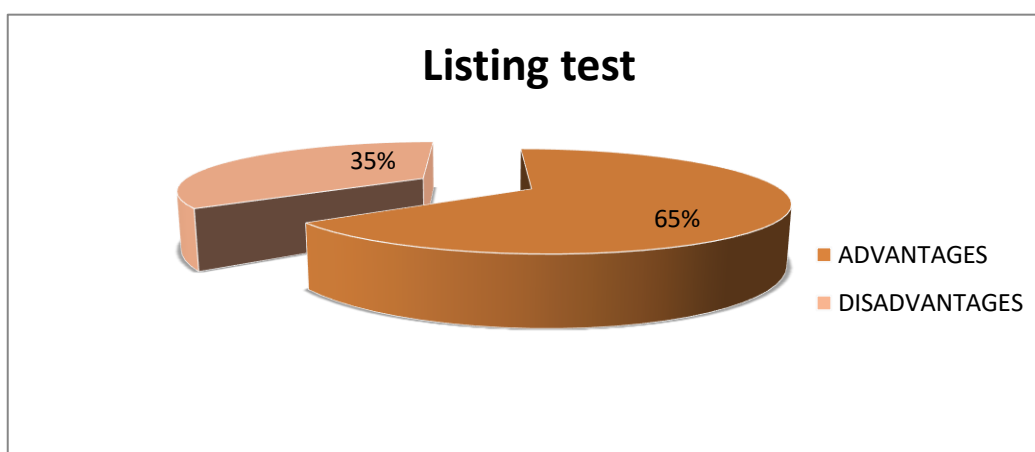


Chart 6. Testing form of LISTING TEST, applied in public school “**Gjon Serreqi**” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Real. Easy to design and correct. Better during hearing, than during reading.

DISADVANTAGES: Tests the knowledge of words but not their meaning, too!

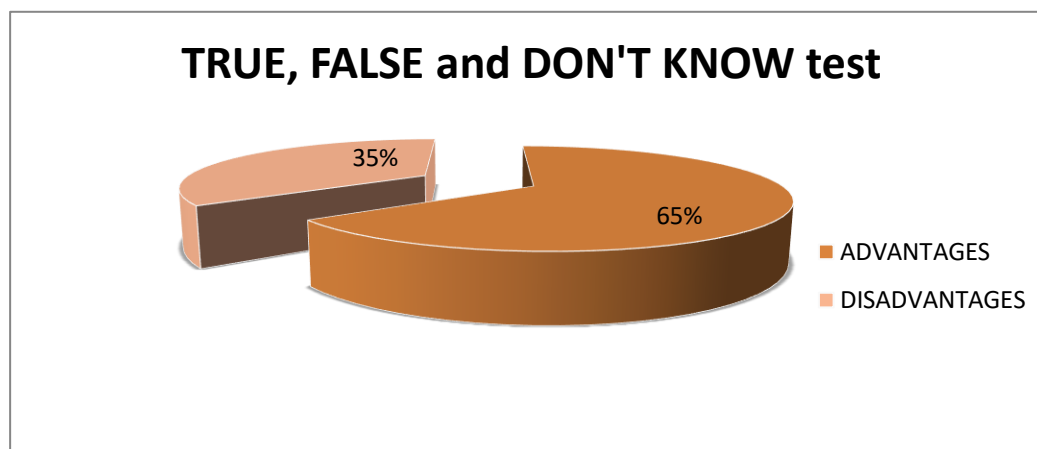


Chart 7. Testing form of TRUE, FALSE and DON'T KNOW, applied in private school “**Aga Xhite**” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Real. Easy to design and correct. It's easy to design and real. Assesses well, intensive understanding.

DISADVANTAGES: High probability of conjecture: 33% for TRUE, 33% for FALSE and 33% for D / K.

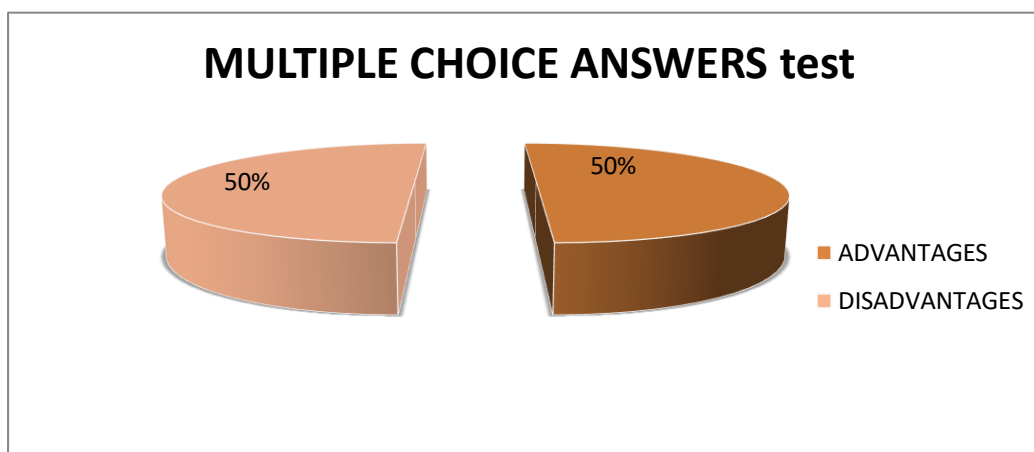


Chart 8. Testing form of MULTIPLE CHOICE ANSWERS, applied in public school “**Gjon Serreqi**” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Very easy to correct. Efficient for higher classes. Assesses well, the intensive understanding.

DISADVANTAGES: Very difficult to create or design. Wrong options can disorient the good students. High probability of conjecture.

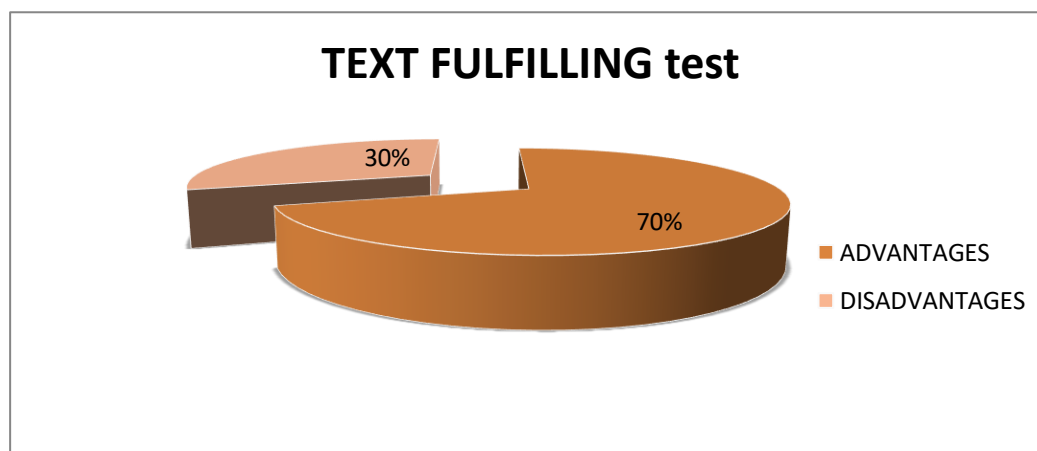


Chart 9. Testing form of TEXT FULFILLING, applied in private school “**Aga Xhite**” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Very real, very good to be used in hearing for specific information.

DISADVANTAGES: In reading, it tests the knowledge of the language.

As far as the field of English language learning that has to do with, “**GRAMMAR**” portion of it, we have also noticed a difference in the forms of tests developed in the schools that were part of this research, and below we have presented the two forms of compilation assessment tests for each school, and also highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of one and the other.

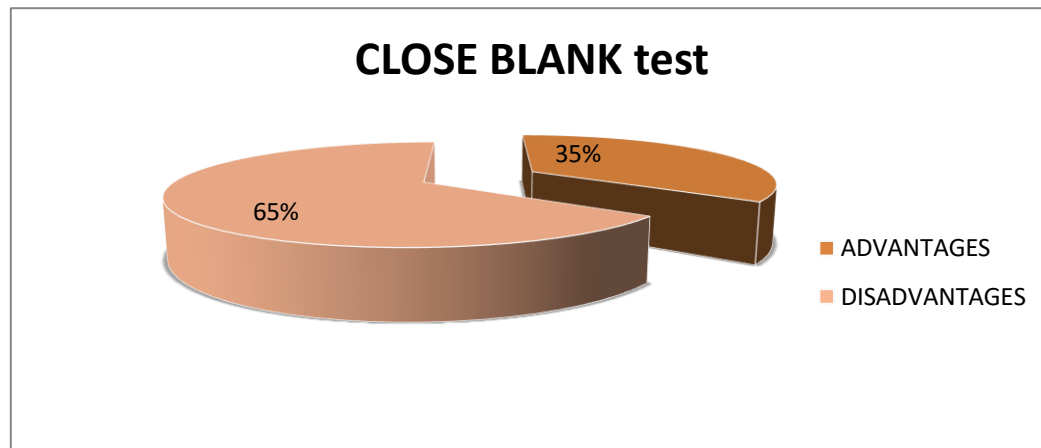


Chart 10. Testing form of CLOSE BLANK, applied in private public “**Gjon Serreqi**” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Easy to be designed.

DISADVANTAGES: Can test the student's intelligence coefficient, more than his linguistic abilities. It may also be irritating to the students.

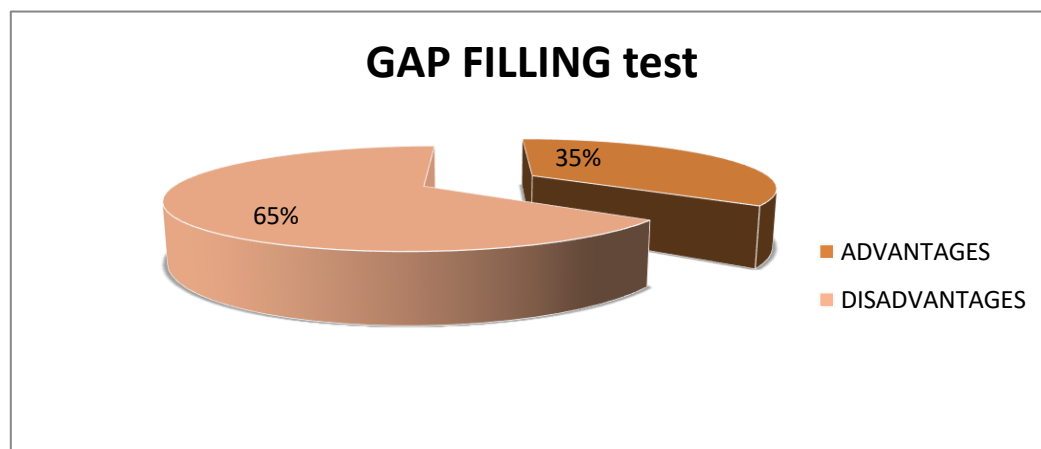


Chart 11. Testing form of GAP FILLING, applied in private public “**Aga Xhite**” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Good to test different structures, provides clear contexts. Easy to design and correct.

DISADVANTAGES: It is necessary to think of possible responses.

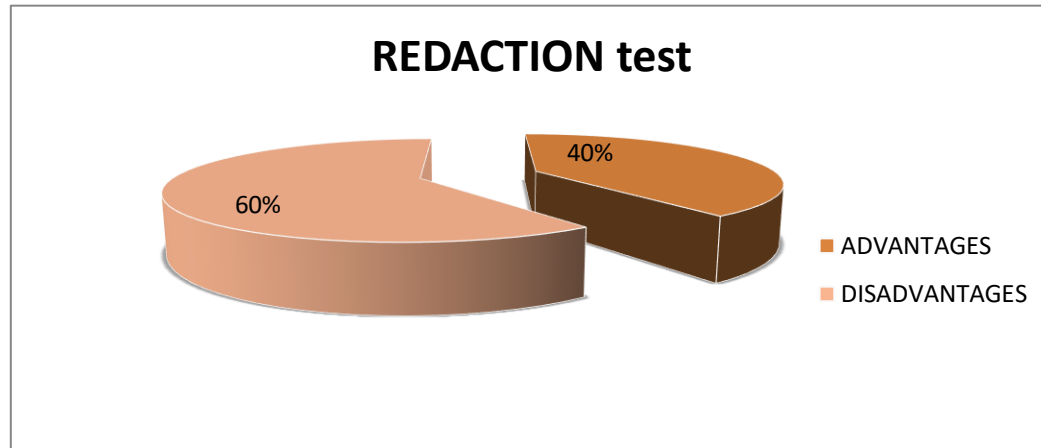


Chart 12. Testing form of REDACTION TEST, applied in private public “Gjon Serreqi” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Real and good to test the interference of the first language.

DISADVANTAGES: It may be very difficult if mistakes are not signaled to the students before.

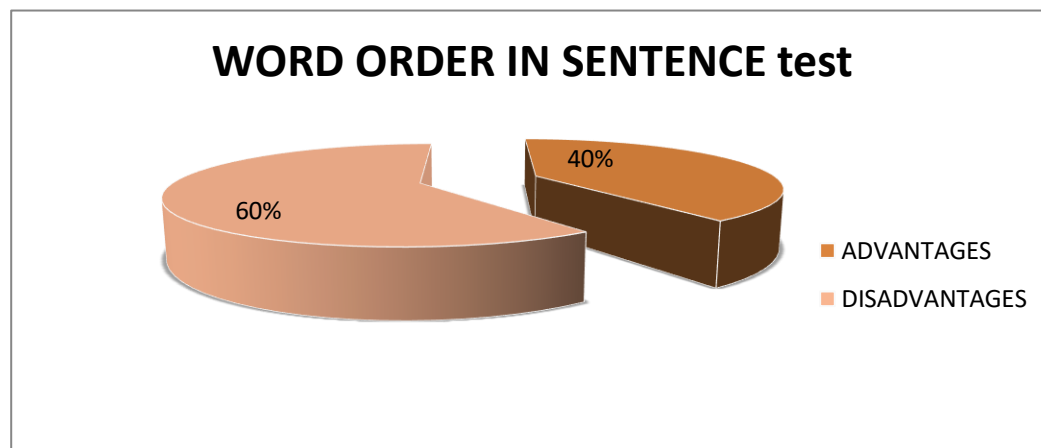


Chart 13. Testing form of WORD ORDER IN SENTENCE TEST, applied in private public “Aga Xhite” in Ferizaj.

ADVANTAGES: Great to test structures that display problems with the order of words in sentences.

DISADVANTAGES: It may be difficult to correct (some mistakes are more severe than some others) and it contains the element of conjecture.

Only the use of the tests would not be sufficient and would lead to somewhat blind and curtailed this process so vital and meaningful to both the teachers and the students themselves. The diverse, systematic, and transparent assessment would undoubtedly ease the weight of the teacher's final assessment as it would offer him / her, a range of tools and assessment components that would naturally lead to the calculation of a student's final assessment. However, remaining in the control tasks, because in these circumstances and conditions they constitute the epicenter of the assessment activity, it is necessary that this activity be as efficient and well-organized. To achieve these efficiency goals, we must first dwell on the key elements that teachers need to consider whenever they face the design of control tasks. For this reason, the following work will reflect the steps followed in compiling a test by comparing these theoretical steps with their practical implementation by the teachers' part of our research.

In order to design a quality testing product, firstly, it is essential to better define and analyze the learning objectives, which will serve as a guide to building the curriculum. Within this framework, it should be considered what is meant to be assessed and when this assessment is to be conducted. Then, it is necessary for the teacher to take the time to decide on the method of assessing and the choice of the most appropriate format for the fulfillment of the predetermined goal. Only after we ensure that all of the above steps are met successfully will we begin to compile the test and then apply it to the classroom. Equally important is the management and administration of the results gathered from these assessment tests. It is essential for the teacher to draw conclusions and then to act on the basis of them to encourage his students or to fill the gaps identified during the assessment. Positive reinforcement of accomplished achievements would enable further promotion of the progress made, while the identification and redistribution of the problems faced by students during the assessments would provide a solid foundation of knowledge where the deficiencies would not exist or would've been too small. In order to create an efficient assessing test, we have chosen as a model Harris and McCann (1994), who outlined the following steps schematically in the design of an assessment test.

It is worth mentioning that some of the steps outlined in the Harris and McCann model apply not only to the case when tests are self-designed by teachers, but also when teachers are simply administrators of tests incorporated in textbooks. As we will see in the next scheme, steps 1, 3 and 4 respectively: planning, administration and test results are steps that need to be

implemented rigorously in both possible scenarios. It is only the second step, the test construction, which constitutes franchise in the case of tests drafted by the teachers themselves. This phenomenon is a clear indicator of the weight that the test development holds itself and secondly, it is an indicator of the complex, consecutive and important aspect that each step leads to achieving a more transparent and realistic assessment.



Table 2. Proper form of building an assessment test. Taken from: (Harris, M. and Mc Cann, P 1994, p55).

We estimate that the above scheme best describes the steps to be taken in the design of an assessment test so we decided to analyze each of the component elements of this scheme by dealing it with the reality found in our schools in the case of tests compiled by the teachers themselves. One of the first decisions a teacher should take during his / her work with students is, when he plans to implement the control tasks. As traditionally, unfortunately, and in the case of our teachers, the exams are conducted at the end of the semester and at the end of the school year. The reasons behind this choice were numerous, but some of them related to the large number of students in each classroom and to a generally problematic level of student knowledge of English. Under these conditions, teachers stated that: Correction of exams took them a lot of time (based on the number of classrooms where the lessons were taught and the number of students per class). Conducting a more frequent assessment (than the one outlined above) will "spend time for no purpose" while they use the 45 available minutes, to allow most students to engage in performing various exercises in their books. According to the teachers, "conducting frequent assessments does not allow you to explain and continue 'normally' with the lesson"!

But what are the disadvantages of the exams collected at the end of the semester / year?

First, students are under great pressure and in most cases, do not give their best. Teachers, on the other hand, are overwhelmed by the preparatory work of testing and then with their corrections. Basic decisions regarding the passage of subjects by teachers are generally taken during or after this 'landing' period of testing. Consequently, the shortcomings of the exams in this period of the academic year are numerous:

Students and teachers are under stress. On the one hand, for teachers a large amount of work is focused in a short period of time. On the other hand, for students, if the exam coincides with a bad day, the work done throughout the year is questioned. Consequently, the exams at the end of the semester do not represent realistically the performance of a student throughout the year. If it were to be used as a single assessment tool then it would result in an unreliable and unrealistic assessment. The information received from such assessments is generally useless and worthless.

Outcomes and data obtained on students' weaknesses or problems are collected very late, when all are overloaded with the termination of the semester / year and often they cannot be used as means of information. Teachers said that exams are often drafted, supplemented and then corrected precisely to 'fill' the diary with grades for students at the end of the semester or the school year.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of the following year, this information was almost never used by subject teachers, whether they were the same teachers!

On the other hand, the students themselves are very concerned about their outcomes and are not able to critically analyze the difficulties encountered or to reflect complacency over the progress made. The foreign language is only one of the many other subjects, which are generally equally evaluated at the end of the semester or the school year. As a consequence, pressure is multiple on students and the assessment is no longer seen as an opportunity to move forward, but as a final, irreversible verdict. In student's angle of view, assessment is separate from learning. The type of assessment, the fate of the day, or the ability to write quickly are qualities that are evaluated more than systematic work, active participation, interest and enthusiasm on the subject.

Having considered the above-mentioned shortcomings of the exams at the end of the semester, and at the end of the year it is necessary to recall that the teachers of our research selected this evaluation system every school year.

But what should be done?

Reality is simply plausible. It is essential to provide a solution to the problem. In order to overcome some of the issues related to the examinations at the end of the semester or year it would be worth a balance of formal and informal assessment conducted throughout the semester or the school year (this though has in some manner determined to be conducted in private school "Aga Xhite" in Ferizaj). This helps those well-prepared students, but who are obliged to sit down before the exam on their darkest day of the year, not giving the maximum of their mental potential. In addition, it is important that after the assessment, the teacher stops at the achievements of each student by identifying their strengths and / or potential deficiencies. In this way students have the opportunity to reflect on the problems they have encountered and at the same time the teacher is able to assign appropriate tasks and activities to the students to overcome these difficulties.

Similarly, it would also be thinking of a different alternative other than the end semester exam, a set of assessment tasks that are distributed over time throughout the semester or the school year. The time spent to formally evaluate is the same but this time is far more efficient than in the first case. After the above-mentioned ideas and thoughts were discussed with the teachers, part of our research, here is what they managed to plan and implement successfully at the end of their group work: This assessment organization carries considerable advantages compared to the traditional assessment of end of semester and end of year.

First, assessment is less stressful for both teachers and students. If a student does not feel good on a certain day, he/she is given the opportunity to get better at a second assessment point. Consequently, this system of assessment based on different tasks and exercises provides the teachers with a more accurate overview of the student's language skills.

Secondly, the work and time spent preparing and correcting tests is spread throughout the school year, instead of focusing on a single peak period, a factor which leads to an increase in the degree of credibility of the assessment.

Thirdly, assessment exercises provide lifelong diagnostic data to teachers, which then, if used properly and timely, help increase the quality of learning. In addition, students receive valuable information about their course progress and this does not allow them to be surprised at the end of the semester or year when the final grade is declared. This fragmented assessment makes it possible to avoid the 'divorce' that exists between testing and teaching, divorce produced exactly as a result of exams at the end of the semester or annual teaching process. Since they are developed during the learning period, these test articles are likely to be directly related to topics that are being studied by students, further linking assessment or testing with learning and teaching. On the other hand, while they measure the progress made, these exercises can be interesting and fun. If the theme is "FOODS," a reading of "SUSHI" will expand the student's knowledge.

Fourthly, the distribution of tests across the semester enables teachers not to be forced to perform a critical measure of critical size by not putting pressure on students of such a tender age but giving them the opportunity give the maximum throughout the semester and not just at the end of it.

CHAPTER V

5.1. Conclusions

Measuring, testing and assessing language skills is a matter of fundamental importance in defining education policies in general, determining the degree of language skills at the beginning of the school year and those achieved by students at different levels of their education, in determining the learning progress, monitoring of achievements and learning objectives, in the preparation and activation of "best practices" of language education, etc. This is an issue that affects the entire education system and very often, debate on this subject has been particularly intense in recent years in the world, though less so in Kosovo. In this educational and scientific debate, general theoretical aspects have been considered, such as contrasts and parallels between testing and assessment, test and assessment goals, their content, language models and language skills, standard definition or learning objectives and outcomes for different levels of education. Addressing the issue of testing and assessing English language skills in this research and many others to come, can be a good opportunity for:

- Clarifying, the relevant role of testing and assessment in teaching (classroom assessment or single student);
- Clarifying, what tools are most appropriate in the field of language testing and assessment, taking into account the intentions of each skill.
- To best clarify the difference between testing and assessment
- To put into practice assessment and self-evaluation skills of students.
- To unify as much as possible the testing and assessment of language competencies whether at school, district or country level.

To summarize the above, fundamental in assessing student knowledge is understanding how principles and general/fundamental ideas of assessment can be used to promote student motivation and to enhance teachers' efficiency. This can be achieved as teachers learn about the concepts, methods and technical/conceptual procedures of testing and assessment and how they apply these basic elements in their teaching.

Consequently, there is a need for a fair understanding of the principles of assessment to guide the professional development of current and future teachers so that we can produce a more productive and useful assessment for the individual, society and the nation. In the era of standard-based reforms, assessments are being widely used to measure student achievements. For a population of students that is increasingly diverse in linguistic and cultural terms, a number of issues and problems arise in collecting, analyzing and reporting information collected through testing and assessment, which is often used for different decision-making. With great concern, over-the-counter reliance on test results was used through instruments, while worldwide standards of assessment require teachers and schools to use multiple methods of assessment. Below we have summarized some of the important issues that fall on English language teachers and students. The first major issue is that most of the schools in Kosovo do not have adequate procedures, resources, and personnel to identify, develop and implement multiple assessment techniques for English language students. In addition, schools in general are not informed on best practices in student testing and assessment and they have inadequate means to measure their progress. In addition, both current teachers and teaching faculty students are offered an inadequate professional development on proper use and the correct interpretation of the testing and assessment results for their students.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages has published numerous chapters that would assist many schools of all cycles by instructing teachers in drafting good assessments of skills and capacities achieved by English language learners but this information is not yet well known and properly implemented from foreign language teachers.

The second point is that the estimates used in many English language learning programs in Kosovo do not reflect current research findings and best practices in the classroom. The assessments are not based on the principles established by the The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, principles that show a clear positioning between standards, guidance, and assessment of learning.

Existing language recognition assessments, often do not measure learners' knowledge of speech or listening - two very basic elements in foreign-language communication. Consequently, neither the school principals nor the parents are given the correct and accurate information on the student's progress.

A third issue is that students face many obstacles in the assessment tools used by different teachers or institutions. These obstacles are the lack of knowledge of the language of testing, content, vocabulary, test format, and cultural orientation of the tests. Student learning with just one test pattern makes them dependent on this type of test and unable to cope with other types of test in the future. Language factors, the content of the test, and the lack of assessment sections affect the validity of the assessment and result in great future consequences for future students when they compete for a place at a working place or studying in the future abroad. It is very important that the assessment is impartial, non-subjective and yields important, realistic and useful results.

5.2. Recommendations

Assessment and testing goals should be identified. In a responsible education system, the main goal should be to document students' learning to improve and inform the teaching.

Guidelines provided by the “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” should be used as a key source to develop accountability measures and based on these guidelines national assessment standards should be developed.

Teachers should have the same knowledge on assessment issues and using this knowledge as a foundation, they should prepare students to succeed in all language components by helping them with language, content, vocabulary, different test formats and assessments, etc.

In assessing and testing students with different levels of language, it is necessary to use a wide range of assessment techniques that match the student's best practice and language skills.

Ultimately, the responsibility for student outcomes lies at the school level, and lies in achieving the highest outcomes. Adequate student progress needs to be well-defined, and when students are not progressing as needed, then additional intervention is needed. The school can gather an assessment team that includes teachers, social workers and parents to address individual student profiles and develop a plan for improving and correcting flaws.

Professional development of teachers should address issues directly related to them with the academic performance and assessment and testing of English language students.

Although the measures at the local and central level are very important and are often promoters of development, it is equally important for each teacher to take up his role not only as a knowledge provider, but also as an assessor. Let's look at some recommendations on the main tasks a teacher should perform in the field of assessment.

Main competencies of teacher activity in the field of assessment are:

- Develop its student assessment and testing policy;
- Recognize assessment tools and techniques;
- Select and use assessment tools and techniques in accordance with teaching materials;
- Apply grading procedures;
- To administer, interpret and report the conclusions of testing and assessing in front of students, principals and parents;
- Use test and assessment conclusions for decisions on students and teaching;
- To develop students' skills for self-assessment;
- To fulfill ethical and legal responsibilities related to student testing and assessment.

On the other hand, we must not forget that testing and assessment can and should be discussed in cooperation with students. This experience should be as positive, informative and honest as possible to take account of the student's views. The latter should be part of the fundamental decisions on various testing and assessment issues and teachers should be the leaders of this process by helping students assess their learning. The sharing of learning responsibility should be applied and practiced not only by students but first by teachers; it does not develop in itself but should be promoted.

Let us consider the findings and recommendations given throughout this research as a clear evidence of the hypothesis of this research that assessment and testing is not given the deserved importance in the learning process and that testing is often considered as an assessment equivalent.

I strongly believe that objective assessment methods are of particular importance and much more precisely determine not only the achievement of students but at the same time determine their needs and setbacks. I also believe that this paper will serve to increase the quality of assessment in terms of using appropriate assessment methods when working with our students.

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Appendix A:
South East European University - Tetovë



UNIVERSITETI I EVROPËS JUGLINDORE
УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ НА ЈУГОИСТОЧНА ЕВРОПА
SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

Study questionnaire for the diploma thesis of master in English Language studies, by the candidate: **Salih Beqiri**

Name of School: Elementary school: **“Gjon Serreqi” in city of Ferizaj.**

General data about teacher: 1. Genre: a) female b) male

Teacher’s name: _____.

Note: *Please provide your answer in written form.*

TASKS

- 1- Please follow me, while I am dictating you on writing as properly as possible the following text:
- 2- Please write an essay with no less than 100 words. You chose the topic.
- 3- On the following text give to you, please make sure you do the proper punctuation.
- 4- In the provided text, please first of all read the same loudly and then make sure you do the necessary corrections on the mistakes in it.
- 5- Please listen the following text carefully, and then perform the comprehension by answering the questions related.
- 6- Please answer the following questions with: TRUE and FALSE option.
- 7- On the following questions, please make sure you read them carefully first, because there can be more than one correct answer.
- 8- On the following text please make sure you fill the gaps with the most appropriate missing words.
- 9- On the following text, please make sure you add the needed appropriate essential missing words?
- 10- Please fill out the gaps on the following text, carefully.

Appendix B:
South East European University - Tetovë



UNIVERSITETI I EVROPËS JUGLINDORE
УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ НА ЈУГОИСТОЧНА ЕВРОПА
SOUTH EAST EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

Study questionnaire for the diploma thesis of master in English Language studies, by the candidate: **Salih Beqiri**

Name of School: Elementary school: **“Aga Xhite” in city of Ferizaj.**

General data about teacher: 1. Genre: a) female b) male

Teacher’s name: _____.

Note: *Please provide your answer in written form.*

TASKS

- 1- Please follow me, while I am dictating you on writing as properly as possible the following text:
- 2- Please write an essay with no less than 100 words. You chose the topic.
- 3- On the following text give to you, please make sure you do the proper punctuation.
- 4- In the provided text, please first of all read the same loudly and then make sure you do the necessary corrections on the mistakes in it.
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- 10- Please fill out the gaps on the following text, carefully.