

LA 6.2 ESL Assessment Issues

Extracting Practical Suggestions through Analysis



Learning Outcome

Understand issues of assessment and accommodation and use a variety of measurement tools to evaluate English Language Learners for placement, proficiency and instruction.

Assessment: 25 pts.

TA: 40 Minutes

Pedagogical Intent

Teachers can provide accommodations and adjustments to support their students (particularly ELs) in taking standardized tests.

Student Position

Students have focused on improving their skills in writing traditional test items. They are now prepared to consider test adjustments and accommodations for second language learners.

INSTRUCTIONS

PART A: Partner Discussion (20 minutes)

PART A:

1. Begin by downloading [Standardized Test Scenario](#). Read the test scenario and answer these questions:

- *How is this student's experience the same and different from ESL students in the United States?*
- *Why is it important that assessments actually differentiate between what content a student knows and what language the student knows?*

2. Study and discuss the following charts in relationship to the scenario and answer the questions:

Chart 1: **Typical ESL Assessment Accommodation Strategies** (scroll down to pages 2-4 of the Standardized Test Scenario document linked above.)

Chart 2: **The Concepts and Principles of Second Language Acquisition from an Assessment Perspective** (scroll down to pages 5- 10 of the Standardized Test Senario document).

- *What can I do to support ESL students in testing situations when I cannot adjust the test items?*
- *How can I modify my own test formats, items, and administration procedures to better support ESL students?*

PART B: Partner Analysis and Synthesis (20 minutes)

3. With a partner, use [The Reform Movement Test](#) you analyzed in LA 5.4. Underline or highlight the language issues you identify in the test.
4. In response to the items you underlined and using the charts you reviewed, consider how you could accommodate EL students.
5. Each partnership in your group will consider a different student from the two described below. Discuss: If you were going to give this test to the student your partnership was assigned, described below, identify the language issues, cultural issues and content issues that you might need to consider for these two students.
6. Review each item and issue you identified concerning the test in relationship to your assigned student. How will you accommodate each of the issues you identified for that student?

Student A is a recent immigrant from Mexico who has a solid academic foundation in his native language but little to no oral or written English skills. You do not speak the student's native language and neither do any of your other students.

Student B is a Bosnian student who has been in U.S. public schools for six months. This student has had little formal schooling in her native language. She has begun to speak English with her peers and with you, but still does not have a high literacy level in English or in her native language. You do not speak this student's native language, but other students in your class do.

7. Report what you discussed to your group.
8. Working in your four person group based on your discussion and analysis of a student, make a list of practical suggestions you would offer the teachers in your school to guide them in making appropriate accommodations to traditional testing practices for ELs. Turn in your list. Make certain all your names are on the list.





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