EVALUATING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING
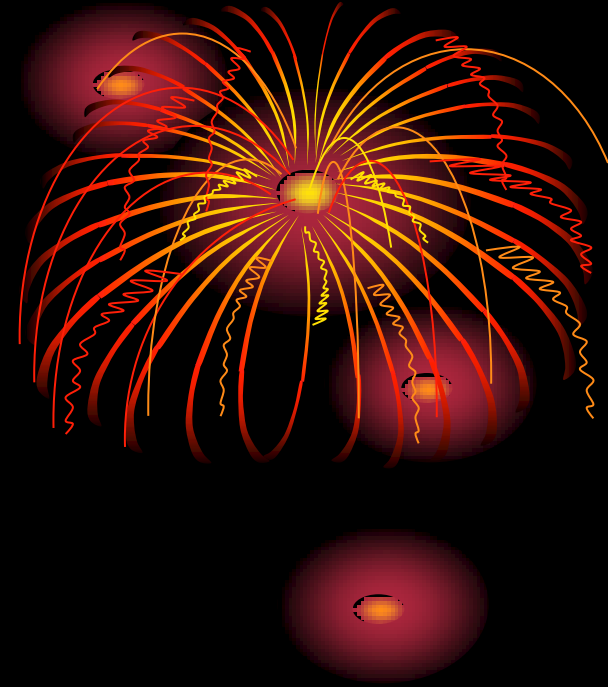
Assessment in Language Teaching

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Key concept

- **Evaluation**
- **Assessment**
- **Test**
- **Measurement**

Evaluation

- **Making judgments about the quality of students' performance or a possible course of action**

Assessment

- **Assessment is an on going process done to collect the information related to the teaching and learning process.**
- **It is a general term that includes all the ways teachers gather information in their classrooms.**
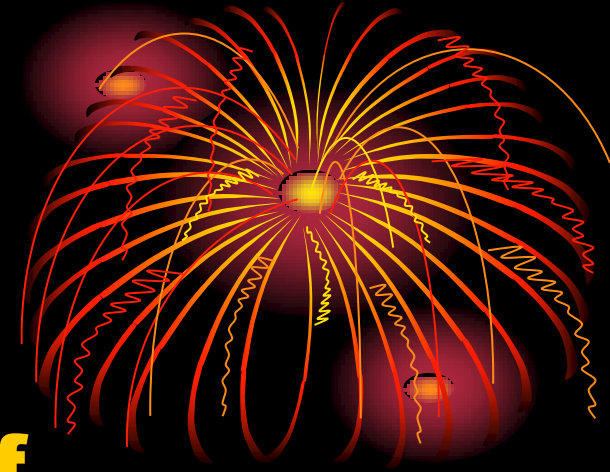
Tests

- Test is one form of assessment. It is a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain.

- Test is a formal form of assessment. It is a set of techniques, procedures or items which is prepared and developed systematically

Measurement

- **The process of quantifying or assigning a number to performance**
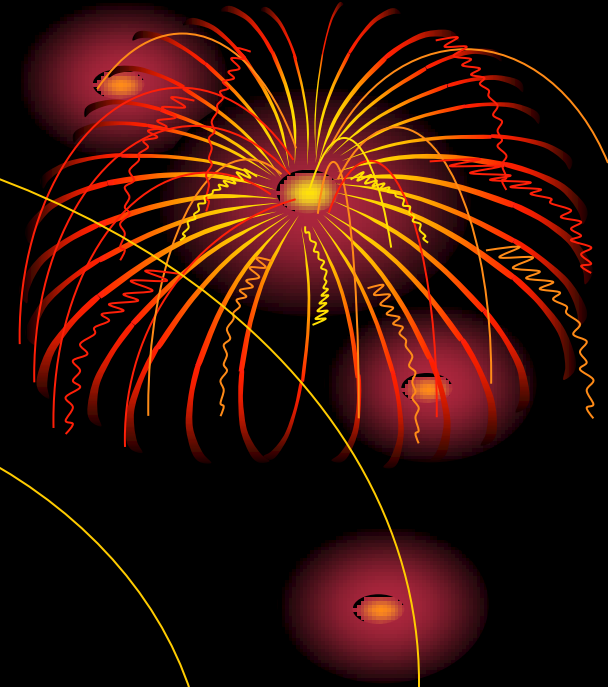
Assessment and teaching

- **Assessment is a part of teaching process.**
- **It is done to make sure that the teaching learning process runs as expected**
- **It is done to see whether learning objectives are being or have been realized**

Ways of assessing student learning
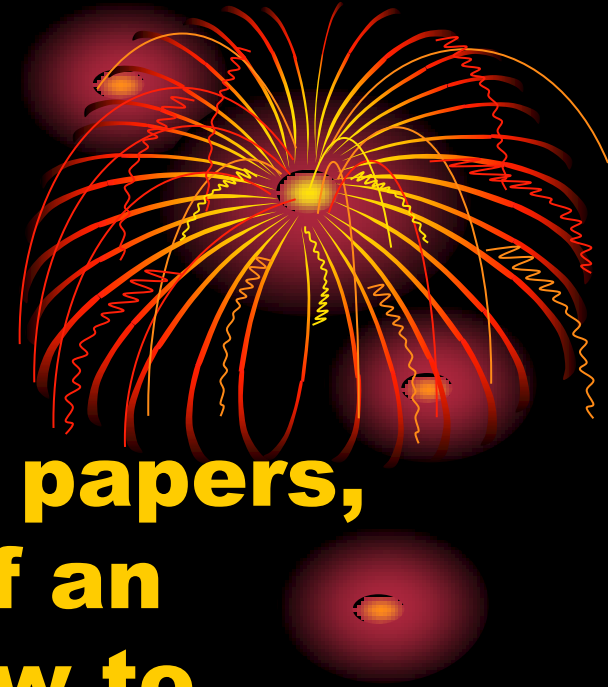
- **Informal Assessment**
- **Formal Assessment**

Informal Assessment

- It is embedded in classroom tasks designed to elicit performance without recording result and making fixed judgements about a student's competence.

- Teacher listen and observe learners carefully while they are doing ordinary classroom activities

Example

- **marginal comments on papers, responding to a draft of an essay, advise about how to better pronounce a word,**
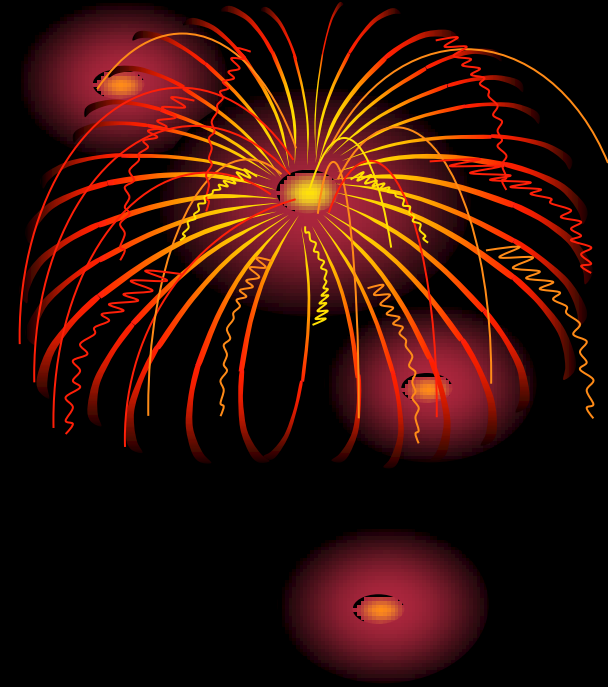
Formal Assessment

- **Exercises or procedures specifically designed to tap into a storehouse of skills and knowledge. They are systematically planned sampling techniques constructed to give teachers and students an appraisal of students performance**

Forms of formal assessment

- Tests
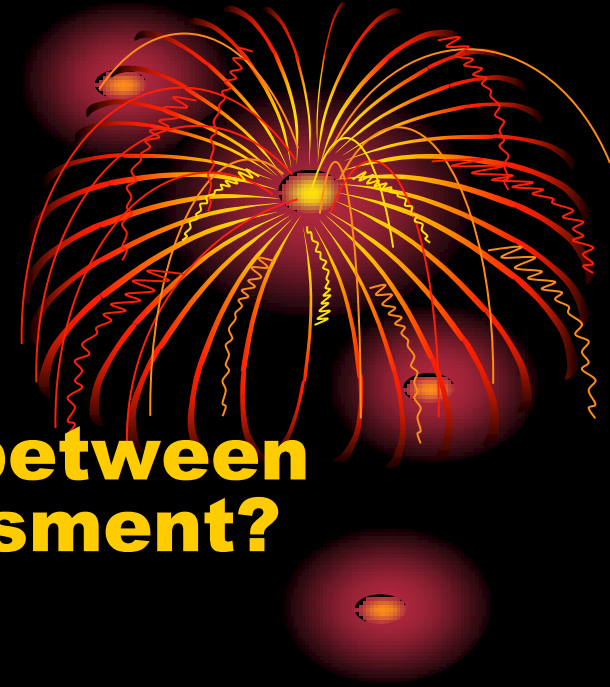- Journal
- Project
- Portfolios
- Systematic observation

Traditional versus Alternative Assessment

- Tests are traditional assessment
- While the others are alternative assessment

KEY CONCEPTS

- What are the differences between formal and informal assessment?
- Formal assessment:
  - Assessment tasks: tests, examinations
  - Marking: learners receive grades (%, A-F, Pass/Fail, etc.)
  - Purpose:
    a. To assess overall language ability (proficiency test)

Formal Assessment

b. To assess learning at the end of a course (achievement test)

c. To assess learning at the end of part of a course (progress test)

d. To decide if learners can continue to the next level

Informal Assessment

- **Assessment tasks: normal classroom teaching and learning activities, homework tasks**

- **Marking: teacher keeps records of progress but does not give grades**

Purposes of Informal Assessment

a. Feedback for the teacher (i.e. to find out how successful our teaching has been)

b. to help us improve our procedures or choose different materials or activities for future lessons

c. feedback for learners about what they can do and what they still need to work on

Key Concepts

- Formal assessment can consist of tasks with single answers (e.g. multiple-choice questions, matching task, true/false questions) that are easy to mark. The purpose of giving objective test tasks like these will give us information about learners' knowledge of particular language items and specific areas of language skills.

- Formal assessment may also make use of more real-life tasks, such as oral interviews, letters and essays, to get information about learners' general ability to use spoken and written language.
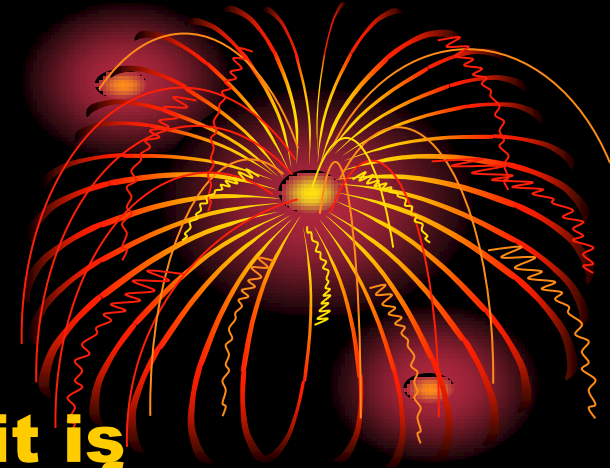
- When preparing a class test, it is important to include a number of different tasks, so that we get a good picture of our learners' strengths and weaknesses, and to test the main things we have taught.

- In the case of productive skills, whether the assessment is formal or informal, we need to judge learners' performance against clear descriptions of different levels of skill. These may be general descriptions of speaking or writing or they may give separate descriptions of different subskills.

ORAL LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

- **oral interviews,**
- **story retelling, simulations/situations (role play),**
- **directed dialogues,**
- **incomplete story/topic prompts which students are asked to complete,**
- **picture cues,**
- **teacher observation checklists,**
- **and student self-evaluations**

Reading Assessment

1. **Multiple Choice**
2. **Short Answer**
3. **Gap Filling**
4. **Information Transfer**
   Testing reading skills by supplying simple information on the table, following a route on a map, labelling pictures, and so on.
5. **Rating scales**
   A rating scale is a checklist that contains predetermined performance tasks and a systematic procedure for indicating a student's level of performance relative to specific criteria

Writing Assessment

Prompt:

1. Instruction

2. Diagram

3. A series of pictures

Items assessed: Dictions, grammar, organisation, punctuation, content, spelling, patterns

Listening Assessment

1. Multiple Choice
2. Short answer
3. Gap filling

Scoring Rubrics/Rating Scales for Productive Skills

- **Global/Holistic Assessment Scales:** creating pre-defined descriptions of performance (what Ss need to be capable of in order to gain the required marks)

- **Analytic Profiles:** to get more reliable marking, by analyzing performance in details. Marks are awarded for different elements.

Speaking (Holistic)
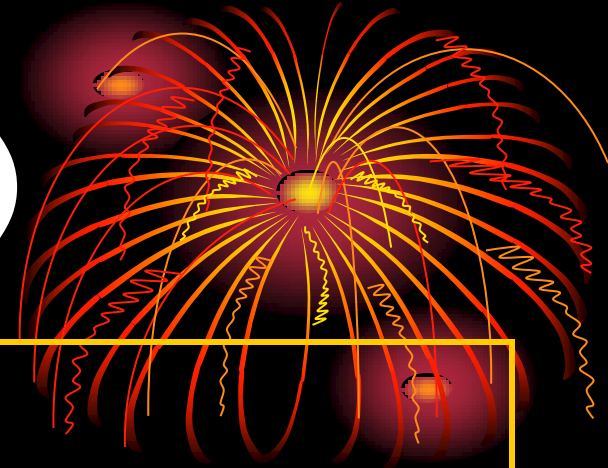
| Score	Description
0	The speaker is almost unintelligible, uses words wrongly, no sign of grammatical understanding
1	Transmits very basic ideas, using individual words rather than phrases, very hesitant, pronunciation makes intelligibility difficult

2	Transmits ideas in a fairly stilted way, some pronunciation problems and examples of grammatical and lexical misuse and gaps
3	Transmits ideas moderately clearly, some minor hesitations, and the speaker makes him/herself understood.
4	Speaks fairly fluently, communicate ideas with not too much trouble, some minor problem of grammar and accuracy
5	Speaks fluently with a wide variety of lexis and expressions with only very few mistakes

Method of Assessing Productive Skills: Example 2, Analytic

	Accuracy	Fluency	Pronunciation
5	Grammatical and lexical accuracy extremely high	Speaks fluently without hesitation or searching for words	Very clear; stress and intonation help to make meaning clear
4	Quite accurate; some errors, but meaning is always clear	Some hesitation and sometimes has to search for words	Generally clear; reasonable control of stress and intonation
3	Frequent errors; meaning is not always clear	Quite hesitant; limited range of vocabulary and structure	Frequent errors; not always clear enough to understand
2	Very frequent errors; difficulty in making meaning clear	Extremely hesitant; very limited range of language available	Very frequent errors; often very difficult to understand
1	Almost unable to communicate		

How to plan the evaluation in your lesson
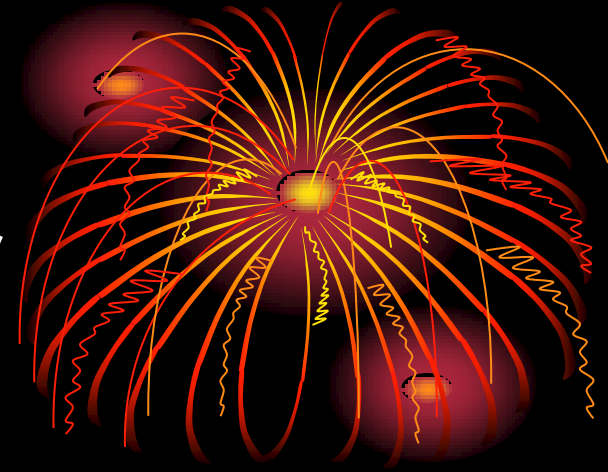
- **See the SK and KD**
- **See the learning objectives**
- **See the indicators**
- **Make tasks suitable with the indicators**
- **Plan how to score students' work or judge their performance**