**Glossary**

**Assessment** noun, **assess** verb

To discover, judge or form an opinion on or test learners’ ability, proficiency or progress either formally or informally.

**Continuous assessment:** A type of testing which is different from a final examination. Some or all of the work that learners do during a course is considered by the teacher on a regular basis and contributes to the final grade given to learners. May also include regular monitoring of classroom performance and contribution.

**Formal assessment:** When a teacher judges learners’ work through a test and then gives a formal report or grade to learners, to say how successful or unsuccessful they have been.

**Formative assessment:** When a teacher uses information on learners’ progress during a course to adapt their teaching or to give learners feedback on their learning. See summative test.

**Informal assessment:** When a teacher decides whether a learner is doing well or not, or whether a course is successful or not, by observing learners rather than setting a test or writing an official report or giving a grade.

**Peer assessment:** When learners give feedback on each other’s language, work, learning strategies, performance.

**Self-assessment:**When learners decide for themselves how good they think their progress or language use is.

**Assessment criteria**: The qualities against which a learner’s performance is judged for assessment. For example, assessment criteria for judging learners’ writing may be: accuracy of grammar, use of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, organisation of ideas.

**‘Can-do’ statements**: Sentences that describe language learners’ language use or an aspect of it on a scale of proficiency, e.g. This learner CAN express simple opinions or requirements in a familiar context.

**Cloze test**: A task-type in which learners read a text with missing words and try to work out what the missing words are. The missing words are removed regularly from the text, e.g. every seventh word. A cloze test is used for testing reading ability or general language use. It is different from a gap-fill activity, which can focus on practising or testing a specific language point. See gap-fill.

**(Open) Comprehension questions**: A task-type in which learners read or listen to a text and answer questions (using their own words).

**Evaluation** noun, **evaluate** verb: To assess or judge the quality, importance or effectiveness of something. Teachers may evaluate learners’ progress or strengths and weaknesses.

**Item:** 1. A piece of language, e.g. a vocabulary or a grammar item.

2.The questions in a test to which a learner has to respond.

**Matching task:**A task-type in which learners are asked to pair related things together, e.g. match two halves of a sentence, or a word with a picture.

**Multiple-choice questions:** A task-type in which learners are given a question and three or four possible answers or options. They choose the correct answer from the options they are given.

**Oral test**: A test of speaking ability

**Portfolio:** A collection of work that a learner uses to show what he/she has done during a particular course. A purposeful document, regularly added to that may be part of continuous assessment.

**Sentence completion**: A task-type in which learners are given parts of a sentence, e.g. the beginning or the end, and are asked to complete the sentence, using specific target language, e.g. At the weekend, I love … ; In the evenings, I enjoy … .

**Sentence transformation**: A task-type in which learners are given a sentence and a prompt, and have to make a second sentence using the prompt so that it means the same as the first, e.g.

It’s too cold to play tennis.

It \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to play tennis. (enough)

It isn’t warm enough to play tennis.

**Test** :A formal assessment of a learner’s language.

An **achievement** test is used to see how well learners have learned the language and skills taught in class. Achievement tests are often at the end of term or end of the year and test the main points of what has been taught in that time.

A **diagnostic test** is used to identify problems that learners have with language or skills. The teacher diagnoses the language problems learners have. It can also be used to diagnose learner strengths. It helps the teacher to plan what to teach, or what not to teach, in future.

An **objective test** is marked without using the examiner’s opinion, e.g. true/false questions, multiple-choice questions. There is a clear right answer.

A **placement test** is often used at the beginning of a course in a language school in order to identify a learner’s level of language and find the best class for them.

A **proficiency test** is used to see how good learners are at using the target language. The contents of a proficiency test are not chosen according to what has been taught, but according to what is needed for a particular purpose, e.g. English for hotel receptionists, English for studying at university, English for general communication. Cambridge ESOL First Certificate in English (FCE) and IELTS are examples of proficiency tests.

A **progress test** is used during a course in order to assess the learning up to a particular point in the course.

A **subjective test** is marked using the examiner’s opinion about the quality of the answer. The answer is not simply right or wrong, e.g. marking written stories, compositions, interviews, conversations, story-telling.

A **summative test** is used at the end of a course. A mark or grade is given, but no other feedback. See formative assessment/evaluation.

**True/false questions:** A task-type in which learners read or listen to a text and decide whether statements are correct (true) or not correct (false).

**Tutorial:** When a teacher talks to a learner individually or to a small group of learners to discuss their learning and give feedback on their progress in class.