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Validity of Language Testing in the Military Context

Abstract

Validity is one of the key concepts in language testing. Its importance is paramount because it helps language testers discover whether the test assesses what it intends to and whether it does so accurately. Although it has been accepted widely as a very important concept to be tackled from the very first steps a test begins to be constructed, there is a tendency to overlook some aspects of validity. By doing so, we neglect important pieces of evidence that contribute to score meaning and score interpretation, thus jumping to conclusions that might have a negative influence on the lives of people who take the tests. Therefore, an in-depth exploration of validity before and while constructing language tests in the military context is a pivotal step in giving this test credibility. The main aim of this paper is to present an overview of different layers of what is often referred to as the 'validity cake' and how well they translate in language testing in the military context.

Key words: *validity, language construct, score interpretation, accuracy and credibility.*

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Teaching Business and Legal English to Foreign Students at University Level

Abstract

This study examines the importance of English Language beyond the local context as a foreign language. It deals in particular, with the core taught elements of ESP in functional Business and Legal English disciplines. The inquiry into this matter will be guided and focused on the language of the learner's profession, illustrated through terms and phrases, including realistic reading comprehension passages, checks, grammar, lexis, specific register, study skills, discourse and genre and listening skills to make the learning from manuscripts and Cds more effective and motivating. As a result, from the perspective of ESP: the acquisition of Legal and Business English language in specialized contexts will be successfully achieved from students through written and oral production. This will contribute to the teaching theory of international Business and Legal English. By the end of the ESP course, students found learning not only interesting and useful, but they also achieved excellent developed language skills more relevant to the learners needs. Furthermore, students demonstrated their self- awareness of courtesy strategies and communicational language in the final role-play of the course.

Key words: *legal and business English, specific purposes, foreign students.*

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The use of innovative methods in teaching English along the skills of the century

Abstract

The 21st century skills as set out in the Recommendation 2006/962/EC on key competences for lifelong learning include among others basic skills of language and ICT technologies. There are a number of related skills that apply such as collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and innovation. Thus, in the role of English language scholars and trainers preparing future teachers of English, there are some tasks to be fulfilled. Students should be taught through innovative methods, strategies and techniques so that they are trained to master them within the educational context and then further apply these cores skills in the real world.

However, this is not always the case and there are reasons for failure to do so which could either be related to the lack of continuous development training and information on the part of the teacher or due to students' culture of passive learning cultivated since their earlier learning experience.

Therefore, this article aims to provide an overview of the benefits of using innovative teaching methods so that students will be in the center of teaching and learning and particularly with a special focus on teaching and mastering the century skills through an active learning process.

Key words: *core competences, critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy, innovation, creativity, problem solving, constructivism, cooperative learning and technology integrated learning approaches*.

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Topic: Balancing Learning to Read with Reading to Learn in a language class

Abstract

Reading is important in today's life and a very helpful skill for the 21st century when people take information from a variety of sources. Faced with new challenges in reading to understand unfamiliar content in complex language forms students have to be guided and helped by the teachers to approach reading so that it focuses on comprehension, building vocabulary and students' knowledge.

This paper presents data from a survey conducted with third year students on their perception of 'Learning to read' and 'Learning to read', their problems in reading to learn.

It also gives some suggestions of teaching reading in a foreign language class, which involves engaging tasks, which make the students work and engage with the text, not simply learning the content, cooperative work in reading and writing, new knowledge must be based on the previous one and through extensive use of discussion in classrooms students activate higher thinking skills.

Key words: *comprehension, engaging tasks, learning to read, learning to read and vocabulary.*

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Using Creative Writing Poetry In the EFL Classroom

Abstract

This paper will focus on the theoretical advantages of using creative poetry writing in the EFL classroom and gives concrete examples of activities teachers can use.

Poetry is seen as an elite or threatening subject to some adult learners, but the playfulness and fun of poetry can be brought out usefully in the EFL classroom. By teaching poetry writing, the teacher is able to encourage students to think creatively about their language through project-based learning.

Writing formal poetry takes attention away from concerns of grammar and "correctness" and instead elicits students to expand their vocabulary because they concentrate on specific restraints. Likewise, these restraints force students to think more abstractly and fluidly about pronunciation, intonation, spelling, and parts of speech.

All of this engenders a large volume of language production while students build camaraderie with their classmates.

Key words: *poetry; creative writing; project-based learning; intonation; pronunciation*

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Teaching vocabulary to Albanian students in an English classroom

Abstract

Learning and teaching vocabulary requires a lot of effort and various techniques. This study investigates the importance of vocabulary in learning English language, and the importance of context in guessing the meaning of the vocabulary items in relation to the students' language level. Many scholars claim that vocabulary is the cornerstone of a language and emphasize the idea of learning and teaching vocabulary in context. However, the majority of students and teachers are oriented by traditional a method that pays insufficient attention to vocabulary practice, thus, vocabulary learning in context is neglected. Moreover, this study attempts to elicit information about the importance of vocabulary in language learning, and to establish a new tradition by incorporating recent methods in learning a foreign language.

In order to answer the research questions, qualitative and quantitative methods are conducted to collect data through questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The participants in this study were teachers of the high schools who have different experiences in different levels.
The study also sheds light on the actual level of students in vocabulary, and what they really want to learn as far as learning vocabulary is important for them. The study is focused even on the problems that students and teachers face when learning, teaching vocabulary and what is suggested by the scholars to overcome these problems whenever they occur.

Key Words: *Contextual vocabulary, learning,teaching,traditional methods.*

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Mësimdhënia e fjalorit të gjuhës greke krahas atij të gjuhës angleze tek studentët e gjuhës greke

Abstrakt

Në këtë kumtesë do të bëhet fjalë rreth mësimit të fjalorit të gjuhës greke sot. Sot, sa më shumë që studimi përparon, kemi të drejtën e plotë të mendojmë se mësimdhënia sistematike e fjalorit është nevojë. Arsyeja e parë është sepse ne tashmë e dimë çfarë studentëve tanë u nevojitet, ku duhet të fokusohen. Ky interes i gjuhëtarëve për fjalorin u rrit më tepër në mesin e viteve 80 dhe vazhdon dhe sot. Arsyeja e dytë është rrjedhojë e të parës. Kemi në dispozicion një larmi mënyrash për t'u përballur me problemin e fjalorit si përsa i përket procesit të mësimit të gjuhës amtare, po aq edhe për mësimin e një gjuhe të dytë ose një gjuhe të huaj. Arsyeja e tretë ka të bëjë me faktin se si mësuesit edhe nxënësit apo studentët janë ndërgjegjësuar për rëndësinë e mësimit të fjalorit gjatë mësimdhënies së gjuhës, dhe jo vetëm në gjuhë të huaj. Si përfundim duhet thënë se nuk është e nevojshme të theksojmë se çdo rast komunikimi ka të bëjë në një mënyrë apo një tjetër me fjalor. Atë do ta gjejmë kudo para nesh.

Fjalët kyçe: *fjalor, mësimdhënie, të mësuarit, të kuptuarit, student.*

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Linguistic communication and the model of Common European Framework

Abstract
The document that certainly more than any other document has influenced and guided the evolution of language learning is the Common European Framework for Languages. "Lesson, defined as a set of activities to consistently articulated in a series of stages, is one of the fundamental concepts of the operational aspects of language learning. Knowledge of the structure of this operating model helps the teacher to choose the textbook on accurate criteria, using selected materials by adapting them to specific terms and autonomous organization of the educative process. This position, taken in the mid-90s, constitutes the focus of our article making us consider some of the dynamics of the current situation of teaching foreign languages.

Keywords: *communication, module, teaching unit, glottodidactics*

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English language acquisition errors by Albanian students

Abstract

This paper discusses the variety of errors made by Albanian learners of English as a foreign language. It provides a description of the major causes of errors, such as mother tongue interference, intra-lingual analogy, overgeneralization, etc. The central focus of this paper is the analysis of different types of errors made by Albanian learners of English as a foreign language, including lexical, grammatical and phonetic ones. Examples of different types of errors are the results of the study are also discussed.

Key words: *error, interference, lexical, grammatical, phonetic*

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Roli i gjuhës amtare në përftimin e gjuhës së huaj: si ka ndryshuar qasja ndaj tij

Abstrakt

Dekadat e fundit, përdorimi i gjuhës amtare në përftimin e gjuhës së huaj ka marrë një dimension të ri. Nëpërmjet gjuhës amtare kemi mësuar të mendojmë, të komunikojmë dhe të përftojmë në mënyrë intuitive të kuptuarit e komponentëve gramatikorë. Gjuha amtare përbën në këtë mënyrë asetin më të çmuar që çdo person mbart me vete gjatë procesit të mësimit të gjuhës së huaj, duke shërbyer kështu si një themel i pazëvëndësueshëm në procesin e përftimit të saj. Teoria që ne mbështesim në këtë punim, sipas së cilës gjuha amtare duhet përdorur gjatë përftimit të gjuhës së huaj, teori që ekziston sot si një nga alternativat më dominuese në mendimin shkencor në këtë fushë, ka përhapje të gjerë e kërkon një ridimensionim të metodologjisë së mësimdhënies së gjuhës së huaj.

Përmes një këndvështrimi historik e empirik do të vërtetojmë saktësinë e kësaj teorie dhe inkurajmë përhapjen dhe mbështetjen e saj si një metodë mjaft efektive në përvetësimin me sukses të gjuhës së huaj.

Fjalë kyçe: *gjuhë amtare, gjuhë e huaj, monolingualizëm, bilingualizëm, përftim i gjuhës, aftësi komunikuese, teknika dygjuhëshe*

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Collaborative testing and student retention of course content: a case study of Albanian students of English as a foreign language

Abstract

Letting students work together on exam or testing questions is not a common instructional practice abroad and in Albania.

Research has shown that collaborative testing has a significant positive association with test performance. When students discuss questions and possible answers: they intensely engage with the content, increasing the learning potential of an exam experience; the activity develops cooperation and communication skills and decreases exam anxiety.

This study was designed to test the hypothesis that collaborative–group testing improves student retention of course content even in a foreign language classroom. To test this hypothesis, first year students of EFL were tested on English morphology subject they had been learning, at three class sessions. The test consisted of two variants: A and B. They had never done a collaborative test before. The students were randomly divided into two groups: group A (n=18) and group B (n=18). During the first test session, students from both groups did the test in the traditional format as individuals: group A did test 1/A, group B did test 1/B. During the following class session (two days later, based on the course schedule), students from group A and B did respectively test 1/B and 1/A, in groups of three or four (the division of students into groups was based on proximity and/or students' choice). On the last test session (one day later), students did the same test (group A did test 1/B, group B did test 1/A) in the traditional format as individuals. The study showed that 42% of the students scored higher in the second individual test (after a collaborative testing experience).

Key words: *collaborative–group testing, student retention, test performance, learning potential, collaborative testing experience*

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Children's Picture Books

Abstract

Do children's picture books have a place in the modern classroom for secondary and adult ESL learners? Children's picture books are increasingly accessible via the Internet, and more and more classrooms have audio-visual equipment to allow their incorporation in lessons. Older learners are not the target audience of picture books, but they can be invited to evaluate them using higher-order critical thinking skills appropriate to their cognitive abilities.

In this presentation we view a lesson prepared for university learners that explores a picture book as a specimen of children's literature. The lesson is designed to identify forms of children's literature, experience an example of a children's picture book, and reflect on how to evaluate picture books as children's literature.

Participants will be asked to share their thoughts on what skills development a lesson like this offers and whether their secondary or adult learners would be receptive to such a lesson.

We provide suggestions for finding high-quality children's picture books accessible in digital form online.

Key words: *children's literature, children's picture books and authentic materials for EFL/ESL.*

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Means of providing Feedback to Learners

Abstract

Feedback is one of the crucial components of teaching and learning processes in EFL classes. Providing feedback to learners throughout teaching is very important. *Why should teachers use feedback? How many types of feedback may be used in a foreign language class? Which are the advantages of using it?*

These are some of the research questions that this paper deals with, from theoretical to practical point of view. Feedback affects learners' proficiency at any level. Reviewing goals, techniques, strategies, perception, help efficient teaching. Without feedback students do not know *where?* are their difficulties, *what?* to do to improve, *where?* to focus. Sometimes it may be neglected without knowing its importance. Effective teaching depends even on effective feedback given to learners. Feedback does not have an established point of time and space, in other words EFL or FL teachers may use it in different ways and times. Feedback may be practiced in different forms: visual, verbal and written. In this paper we'll consider some means of providing feedback to learners and how to use them effectively. Fostering student's proficiency depends not just from one component, but also of many items of teaching woven together to enhance learning. It serves to both learners and teachers, to the latest as a source of changing methodology and being more professional. In this paper we'll consider some means of providing feedback to learners and how to use them effectively in EFL/ESL classes.

Key words: *visual, verbal, written feedback, students' language proficiency, efficient learning.*

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Perceptime dhe praktika të mësuesve lidhur me qortimin e gabimeve gramatikore në mësimin e gjuhës së huaj

Abstrakt
Ashtu si vetë mësimdhënia e gramatikës dhe roli i saj në mësimin e gjuhës së huaj, edhe qortimi i gabimeve gramatikore është nje çështje mjaft e debatuar në fushën e përvetësimit të gjuhës së huaj. Ndonëse një aspekt jo i drejtpërdrejtë i mësimdhënies, ai përkrahet dhe kundërshtohet nga studiues dhe mësues të gjuhës së huaj.

Ky studim ka natyrë eksploruese dhe nëpërmjet metodave sasiore dhe cilësore synon të nxjerrë në pah perceptime dhe praktika të mësuesve shqiptarë të anglishtes si gjuhë e huaj në lidhje me qortimin e gabimeve gramatikore gjatë mësimittë gjuhës së huaj. Pjesëmarrës në këtë studim janë 56 mësues të 14 gjimnazeve publike të qytetit të Tiranës dhe 9 mësues të shkollave të mesme dhe 9-vjeçare në disa qytete të tjera.

Pas shqyrtimit të literaturës dhe prezantimit të disa metodave të përdorura për qortimin e gabimeve gramatikore, në studim paraqitet një tablo e përgjithshme e udhëzimeve të autoriteteve përkatëse shqiptare lidhur me vendin që duhet të zërë ai në procesin mësimor. Më pas jepen të dhënat e grumbulluara me anë të instrumentave përkatës, analiza e të cilave, në përgjithësi, nxjerr në pah një qëndrim pozitiv të mësuesve lidhur me rolin e qortimit të gabimeve gramatikore. Studimi paraqet gjithashtu dhe një përmbledhje të metodave më të përdorura për praktikimin e këtij aspekti mësimor nga mësuesit pjesëmarrës në studim.

Fjalë kyçe: *gjuhë e huaj, qortimi i gabimeve, perceptime, praktika, mësues*

Ways of using formative feedback to support EFL students' learning in an assessment oriented HE system

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Abstract: There is considerable research proof that testifies to the close link between the learning of foreign languages and formative feedback. This is the reason why supporting foreign language acquisition through formative assessment and feedback has become the focus of teaching and learning in HE institutions all over the world. However, in Albania issues related to formative feedback as a means of promoting student learning are still new and not investigated in depth. We argue that in a system like ours where students are still motivated and driven by summative assessment, providing them with continuous formative feedback is still a challenge for our teachers in Higher Education and in order for them to support student learning, they should be aware of the impact formative feedback has on learning and their need for expertise in providing it. After highlighting the characteristics of effective formative feedback we go on to examine several practical strategies of producing and providing good-quality feedback in an environment which is increasingly becoming dominated by technology.

Key words: assessment, formative feedback, EFL learning, EFL teaching, higher education

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Aspects of Teaching Gifted and Bright Students

Abstract

The following paper will present some key aspects of teaching and considering gifted towards bright students in EFL classes. The teaching process is experiencing numerous, frequent and consequent changes in Albania throughout a relatively short period. Apart from specific problems that these changes may carry out, less or no importance is given to gifted or talented students, especially to the ways of distinguishing them. If you ask a teacher who the gifted kids are, they are likely to point out the bright ones. Only few teachers, especially those who have decades of experience, would distinguish the gifted ones. Most of the gifted students are unaware of their gifts at an early age, so they enter and leave school unnoticed by their teachers. This situation is not only deficient but also unproductive, mainly because such students finish to hate school and this determines in most cases what they do next in their lives. On the other hand, teachers become more and more frustrated by such students, whose behavior affects teachers' commitment and other students' concentration at the same time. As the saying goes, '*the wasted talent is the saddest thing in one's life*', now it is time to consider it, also, as a great loss for the society. Based on these indicators and on the results of surveys, the recommendations of this paper will be primarily addressed to the in-service and pre-service teachers, in order to equip them with tips and attention tailored for such situations.

Keywords: *gifted, bright, teaching. talent, commitment, school etc.*

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How does teaching reflect my students' learning and the world they live in?

Abstract

Globalization has called for a new change in ESL teaching for the 21st century. Rethinking teaching and its pedagogy is as important as developing the learners skills and competences in social and ethical learning. The new pedagogy requests the teachers to transfer traditional teaching so that it meets the needs of the learners and the requirements of the global world in order for them to get adjusted in the world market.

Through this presentation, I will show how the new pedagogy and the new teaching methods will contribute to the further development of the new skills and competencies in social and ethical learning. In this way I am emphasizing the fact that the quality of learning derives from and depends on a new vision on teaching and engages the learners in DIY activities in class.

Key words: *globalization, new pedagogy, skills, competences, social and ethical learning, vision, transfer*

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English teachers and importance of professional development through their career.

Abstract

The education systems around the world are in current change and thus it is important for teachers to be up to date with the latest educational changes. Professional development is very important and in a broad sense, it refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. One of the key elements in most of these changes and reforms is the professional development of teachers, especially of those teaching a foreign language like English. This study will be focused on the English teacher professional development in the city of Durres and Tirana.

For conducting this quantitative study, as unit of measurement was used the quantitative questionnaire consisting of 5 background information questions, 10 Yes/No questions and 20 Likert Scale questions (CD, D, NO, A, SA) with 1 to 5 scale. The study was conducted on the following variables: formal participation, informal participation, personal professional development and professional development and influence on teaching. A total of 40 teachers and 20 lectures participated in this study (N= 60). The data were then collected and analyzed by Spss.

The study concluded that teacher development is very important for teachers and the professional development was considered more important by the university lectures, while English teachers of elementary or high schools tended participating state trainings that supplied them with credits.

Key words: *professional development, English teaching, career improvement, formal and informal participation.*

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Six Important Tips for Beginning and Ending the Lesson

Abstract

Teacher courses often include a unit on `*lesson planning*`, which relates mostly to the selection of the lesson components, and how these will be ordered. So when planning the activities, for a lesson, it is important to do them in a sequence that indicates a gradual progression from simple to more complicated tasks. It is crucial to be aware of how to pace the class. Pacing involves the rhythm of the lesson. On the other hand, effective teachers strive for a balance among whole-class work, pair work, and individual work.

But it's important also to think about how teachers, especially *novice teachers*, will '*frame*' the lesson with effective beginnings and endings. It is a fact that in the early years of teaching, teachers feel a bit scared of the students and they try to be tense and serious at the beginning of the lesson. Novice teachers think that being serious at the beginning will help them gain authority later?! It may take too long to learn to relax and smile. They forget that a serious or neutral expression on teacher's face, does not convey a neutral message to the students, it conveys a negative one (*'I'm here because I have to be, not because I have the slightest pleasure in teaching you!'*), which can be easily changed by a smile, *that is the first important tip for the beginning of the lesson.*

This paper suggests some practical piece of advice, for pre service teachers, to help them overcome emotions, establish a warm and friendly atmosphere, and begin and end clearly.

Key Words: *lesson planning, tips, novice teachers*, *frame*, *pre service teachers, beginning, ending.*

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How to improve communicative skills while teaching ESP students

Abstract

At present, speaking a foreign language represents one of the essential requirements of society. Besides other skills and knowledge, it is considered as one of the most influencing factors while applying for a job or sustaining in a particular work position under the condition of advancing the language level. Based on my work experience, I can confirm that knowing a foreign language is a necessity for everyone in general. Today, students of different branches are required to reach a sufficient level in a foreign language in order to accomplish their education. One of the aims of specialized language courses is to prepare students for professional communication with other specialists worldwide. Successful communication means not only to be able to speak about a certain problem or subject but it also means to be able to talk about various needs. When planning any ESP course, teachers of English language should consider the idea that the students' purposes and interests are too large extent uniform. As a variety of ESP, Business English implies specific terminology which might look like a daunting task both for teachers and students, when, in fact it only proves to be a matter of preparation and teaching it is not a lot more difficult than teaching general English.

Key words: *business English, difficulties, teaching, native, language.*