The measurement of productive skills: Doubts concerning the assessment criteria of certain public examinations.

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The measurement of productive skills: doubts concerning the assessment criteria of certain public examinations

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Abstract

The currently fashionable test-type for productive skills involves assessment criteria expressed in terms of behavioural traits, and recently the trend has been towards the separate assessment of component subskills. This article points out that, from an assessor's point of view, there are serious problems relating to this particular trend and to criterion referencing in general. These problems are discussed and an alternative design is proposed. The article was prompted by experiences as an assessor for four international EFL examinations: the Royal Society of Arts Examination in the Communicative Use of English as a Foreign Language (CUEFL); the Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE); the Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE); the English Language Testing Service (ELTS); and the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Issue Section:

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