Part ONE: Types of Assessment

Summative Assessment: is often a formal type of assessment that is aimed at making judgments about the performance or ability of students by assigning grades to them. Summative assessment occurs periodically; either at the end of year, semester, or two or more units. Representatives of summative assessment can be quizzes, exams, tests, and end-term papers. The focus of summative assessment is directed towards the final **product** rather than the **process.**

The saying below summarizes the features of this type of assessment: 'It is assessment **"of" learning and teaching**'. It is also called **Evaluation, summative**, final to measure quality, **product-oriented**: "what's been learned", judgmental, arrive at an overall grade/ score.

Formative Assessment: while summative assessment focuses on the final product, formative assessment stresses the process, in formative assessment, the teacher does not assign grades every time he asks them to practice a structure or answer comprehension questions. Unlike summative assessment, formative assessment does not take place periodically, but rather constantly (in the form of concept-checking questions, exercises and other examples of such). The purpose of formative assessment is not to assign grades to students, but to receive data about them which can help the teacher adapt his/her teaching methods to meet the needs of the students or to address a particular area of students' problems and weaknesses after the learning process.

The saying cited below illustrates what formative assessment is: 'It is assessment "for" teaching and learning. It is also known as Assessment, formative, ongoing to improve learning, process oriented: "how learning is going", diagnostic, identify areas for improvement.

The definition of a Test

Douglass Brown defines a test as "a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge or performance in a given domain." A test is intended to measure knowledge and skills one acquires during a sequence of sessions. (it is an instrument that is used to measure student's learning at a particular point in time). In short, it is an assessment instrument that is mainly intended to turn students' performance into numbers. (e.g. multiple-choice tests, quizzes, closed tests).

A/ Types of a Test

1. Proficiency test: it is a type of tests that measures a student's knowledge of a language or his/her ability to use that linguistic competence functionally. It measures the student's skills, general knowledge of a language that Ss acquire through their academic years (for getting a job or studying abroad for instance).

2. Placement test: it is a test that is aimed at sorting test takers into groups so that they show approximately the same level as other students in the group when they start studying. It places Ss based on their level or grades

3. Diagnostic test: its purpose is to pinpoint the strength and weaknesses of the test taker. It is usually designed to guide remedial instruction, and it takes place at the beginning of the year, course, unite…

4. Formative test: it is an ongoing process of testing that helps the teachers make improvements or change their educational strategies.

5. Achievement test: it measures what has been learned in a course or a sequence of courses; it measures the extent to which test takers learned the material presented in a course. This type of test means to assess what Ss have learned after completing a unit.

6. Aptitude test: is any type of assessment that evaluates the talent, the ability, potential to perform a certain task, in other words, to discover whether a student has talent or basic ability for learning new language or not.

7. Progress test: is designed to measure students' language and their skills progress in relation to the syllabus they have been following. (to see the progress of Ss in a skill or in a language aspect e.g. speaking. What Ss have learnt).

Achievement Test:	Progress Test:
Purpose: An achievement test is designed to measure a student's knowledge or skills in a particular subject or area at a specific point in time. It is typically used to evaluate what students have learned after completing a course or a specific unit of study.	**Purpose**: A progress test is designed to assess a student's knowledge or skills at various points throughout a course or program. It is used to monitor student learning over time and identify areas where additional instruction may be needed.
Timing: Given at the end of a course or unit of study to assess the level of knowledge or skill acquired by students.	**Timing:** Administered periodically throughout a course or program to track student progress.
Focus: Tests knowledge and skills based on the content covered in the course or unit.	**Focus:** Tests knowledge and skills based on the content covered up to the point of testing, providing a snapshot of the student's progress.
Use: Helps determine whether students have achieved the learning objectives and are ready to progress to the next level of instruction or course.	**Use:** Helps teachers and students identify areas of strength and weakness, allowing for targeted interventions and adjustments to instruction.

B/ Criteria for designing and selecting an effective test

In order make an effective test, in a sense that it measures to what extent students have learned new competencies or have developed or the ones they already have at their disposal, it should have the following characteristics or features, which are explained in detail:

1) Reliability: A reliable test is a test that is characterized by consistency. A reliable test is the one that renders the same (consistent) results when it is administered to the same students in two occasions. (the same environment, timing, no external factors intervened in that test, should yield the same results).

2) Validity: Validity is an important feature in designing an effective test; it refers to the extent to which a test measures what it intends to measure. The saying "Test, what you've taught", illustrates what validity means.

3) Authenticity: Authenticity is defined as the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the feature of 'Target Language Use'. That is to say, the test should make use of language that students are familiar with and that is often based on themes which were previously covered in the class. Also, the test must make use of authentic materials, since authentic materials help in testing students in a realistic way.

4) Practicality: A practical test is a test that usually does not take too much time for the students to accomplish, has a specific and time-efficient evaluation procedure, that is, just as the test should be conducted within a timing that is appropriate (5 hours for a test is too much), the test should be relatively easy to correct for the teacher, a test that takes a teacher too much time to correct is impractical. The instructions should be clear and marks allotted to each items should be reasonable. The principles of practicality are grouped in the following four statements:

It is not excessively extensive.
It stays within appropriate time constraints.
It is relatively easy to administer.
Its shape, layout, size, use of colors …. should be appropriate
It has a scoring/evaluation procedure that is specific and time-efficient.

5) Washback effect: Washback effect refers to the influence a test on individuals. More specifically, it refers to the influence the test has on the test takers, students, and the test designers, teachers. Students, for instance, would realize the mistakes they have made in a test after its correction and rectify them. The same applies to teachers who may as well work on improving or changing their pedagogical strategies.

Part Two: Error Correction Techniques
1) Error and Mistake

A mistake can either be a slip of tongue or a temporary deficiency in producing language. Mistakes can occur when learners are tired or when they unwillingly fail to apply grammar while speaking. Generally, mistakes are self-corrected, since learners promptly notice them. If they don't, a simple hint from the teacher or other learners would suffice to make learners aware of their mistakes and accordingly correct them. On the other hand, an error is a repeated mistake that is suggestive of the learner's failure to grasp a structure or apply it properly. For instance, if a student says repeatedly, "she musts", instead of must, it implies that he has not fully grasped the rules governing modals or is not acquainted with them all together. ¬ In concise terms, a mistake is a lapse made at the surface, while an error is a lapse that indicates a deficiency in the deep surface (competence; linguistic knowledge, as Chomsky refers to it).

2) Sources of Errors

Significant researches have been conducted to trace the sources of errors in L2 learning. This substantial body of literature point to three major sources; interlingual interference (interference of the mother tongue), intralingual interference (overgeneralizations), and context of learning.

a. Interlingual interference: the interference of L1 in the learning of L2 is a major source of errors. Students, especially beginners, draw from the system of their L1 in order to use and understand L2. This reliance may lead students to utter wrong statements. For instance, many Moroccan students say, "I have 17 years old", as an alternative to "I'm 17 years old". This shows evidently that the source of error is the interference of L1 (Moroccan Standard Arabic) in L2 (English).

b. Intralingual interference: overgeneralization is one of the most prominent sources of errors. Students gradually learn grammatical rules of the language. As they do, they form hypotheses about the language on the basis of their prior linguistic language. It often results in them falling in the trap of overgeneralization. A student may say "Informations", believing that forming plural is done by adding s to nouns.

c. Context of learning: Refers to the materials, or the atmosphere where the learning takes place, and it also includes the teacher. The latter can also be a source of errors. Teachers' failure to explain a lesson adequately or clarify it but wrongly, may lead students to make errors. The Ss might have learned knowledge wrongly from the first time, e.g. they may have learned a mispronounced word from the teacher, they always believe that this is how the word is correctly pronounced.

3) Error Correction Types:

a. Self-correction: the teacher may help the student recognize his mistake/error and may also help him correct it.

b. Peer-correction: A student may be aided by his peer in identifying and correcting his mistake/error.

c. Class-correction: The entire class may pay attention to the utterances of students, identify the mistakes in them, and correct them accordingly. **d. Teacher-Correction:** When spotting a mistake made by a student, a teacher may intervene in order to correct it. It is preferable that the teacher makes students aware of their mistakes. If they fail to know their mistakes, a teacher can resort to entire class group for correction. If other students fail to see the mistake as well, the teacher can then correct him/herself.

e) Repetition: This is typically used to correct pronunciation mistakes. A teacher may verbally repeat the utterance of a student in order to correct the mistake in it. For example, a beginning-level student may say "I know him", pronouncing the word "know" as it is written; a teacher can repeat the word again and correct the students' pronunciation.

f) Reformulation: a teacher may reformulate a mistaken sentence in order to correct it. Example; "I like to playing soccer"; student's statement. The teacher's statement would be; "oh, you like to play soccer".

g) Body language and facial expressions: believe or not, body language and facial expressions can help students realize their mistakes. A look of confusion coupled with hand gesture can make students aware of their mistakes.

h) Students' repetition: When a student makes a mistake, a teacher may tell him/her to repeat the utterance and stop him at the mistake he made.

i) Note-taking: another useful technique for correcting language blunders is by noting them down. A teacher may take a notebook and write down the recurring mistakes/errors of his/her students, so that he/she can later on devise a remedial activity to correct them.

j) Self or Peer-correction: Do you think it's pronounced like this? do you agree with this answer? g) Explicit correction: Ss: 'I seed a bird yesterday', Teacher: we don't say 'seed', but 'saw'.

k) Clarification request: Ss: 'I play football yesterday', Tr.: excuse me! You played what? To get Ss repeat it in the correct way.

l) Metalinguistic feedback: Ss: 'I writed a letter last week', Tr.: 'wrote' is the simple past of 'write'.