



**ASSESSING SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN
USING COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH**

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Abstract

The ability to maintain communication in the face of linguistic difficulties is an essential component of foreign language learning. However, most traditional assessments of English language skills in secondary schools focus on grammatical accuracy, vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and speaking performance. Hence, the ability of students to use communicative strategies to overcome communication problems is not adequately assessed in the current examination systems. This thesis focuses on developing assessment criteria for evaluating secondary school students' competence in using communicative strategies in English.

Communicative strategy competence can be assessed by observing students' ability to maintain interaction, compensate for lexical gaps, clarify meaning, request assistance, reformulate messages, and respond appropriately to communication difficulties. Based on these features, five assessment criteria can be proposed: strategic effectiveness, interaction management, linguistic flexibility, comprehensibility, and appropriateness of strategy use.

The assessment can be conducted through role-plays, dialogues, information-gap activities, picture-based tasks, and problem-solving situations. For instance, students can be asked to describe an object without naming it, explain an unknown word using alternative expressions, or continue a conversation when they do not understand their partner.



The assessment framework operates through four different levels which include emerging and developing and competent and proficient. Students need full support from their teachers because they cannot keep their conversations going at the emerging stage. Basic learning strategies exist for developing students who require particular assistance to apply them. Learners who reach competence level can perform suitable strategies by themselves when they deal with situations they already know. Students who achieve proficiency status will learn to choose different strategies which they can combine to keep their communication work in unpredictable situations.

The assessment framework which has been proposed will help teachers understand student communication abilities at a more detailed level. Teachers can use this assessment tool to find student learning issues which help them create proper teaching approaches.

The research includes these essential terms: communicative strategy competence and assessment and secondary school students and English and speaking and interaction and formative assessment and communication skills.

