

# Assessment Criteria In English Language Lessons

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**Abstract:** This article provides a scientific analysis of how assessment criteria in English language classes are structured across different educational stages—primary, secondary, and upper secondary levels. The study is grounded in CEFR international standards, psycholinguistic theories, and contemporary methodological approaches. The article examines the adaptation of assessment practices to age-related characteristics, the gradual development of language competencies, and the influence of assessment criteria on learner motivation. The findings indicate that a consistent, stage-based assessment system plays a significant role in effectively developing students' communicative competence.

**Keywords:** Assessment criteria, CEFR, age-related characteristics, communicative competence, primary level, lower secondary level, upper secondary level, language skills.

**Introduction:** In English language education, the assessment system plays a crucial role in identifying learners' language skills, monitoring their developmental dynamics, and improving the overall instructional process. As emphasized by international methodologists such as Harmer, Richards, and Lightbown & Spada, effective assessment is an integral component of language teaching; it not only measures learner performance but also guides their progress. In the general education schools of the Republic of Uzbekistan, English instruction is aligned with CEFR requirements, and assessment criteria are implemented in accordance with learners' age-specific characteristics and the stage-by-stage development of language competencies. The CEFR provides a standard way to describe language ability in terms of six proficiency levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). The CEFR emphasizes developing communicative competence, meaning the assessment focuses on a student's ability to actually use the language in real-world situations, rather than just knowing grammar rules or vocabulary lists. The assessment system measures a student's proficiency across the four major language skills: Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing.

The primary aim of this article is to provide a scholarly analysis of assessment criteria in English language teaching at the primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels, to reveal the theoretical principles underlying these criteria, and to highlight the

significance of assessment for learner development. Throughout the study, CEFR (2020), the Cambridge approach, developmental psychology, and modern methodological frameworks were used to systematically examine the assessment system.

## Assessment Criteria in Primary Grades (A1 Level)

In the primary grades, assessment is primarily aimed at developing elementary language skills. Studies by Cameron and Moon emphasize that assessment for young learners should be visual, contextual, and communication-based. Therefore, the main directions of assessment at this stage include listening comprehension, simple speaking, short reading tasks, and basic writing activities.

Key assessment indicators include the learner's ability to understand instructions, participate in simple question-answer exchanges, comprehend the main idea of short texts, and produce basic sentences. At this stage, assessment relies heavily on demonstrative and activity-based tasks, as language learning is closely connected to early cognitive development.

## Assessment Criteria for Middle School (A2–B1 Level)

At the middle school stage, assessment becomes more complex, requiring students to consciously utilize grammatical structures, construct thematic monologues, extract information from texts, and produce short written compositions. According to Larsen-Freeman and Richards, the primary objective of

assessment at this stage is to develop the learner’s ability to independently employ the language in real communication contexts. Consequently, the key competencies include the ability to distinguish main ideas and details during listening, to produce coherent monologues of 5–7 sentences in speaking, to comprehend texts consisting of 10–15 sentences in reading, and to create short paragraphs in writing. At this age, students begin to prepare for the independent use of language, which makes the evaluation criteria more demanding in terms of content and complexity.

**Assessment Criteria for Upper Grades (B1–B2 Level)**

In upper grades, the assessment process focuses on evaluating students' analytical thinking, logical

consistency, and their ability to employ complex language structures. According to CEFR (2020) standards, assessment at this level should measure not only the core content but also nuances of meaning, semantic differences, and cause-and-effect relationships. Key components of assessment include analyzing complex texts in listening comprehension, delivering two-minute monologues, engaging in debates and argumentation, understanding texts of 200–300 words in reading, and composing essays in writing. According to Lightbown & Spada, the primary goal of assessment at this stage is to develop learners into independent speakers capable of critical thinking and effective communication.

CEFR Level	User Category	Description of Ability
A1	Basic User	<b>Beginner:</b> Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases. Can introduce themselves and others.
A2	Basic User	<b>Waystage:</b> Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).
B1	Independent User	<b>Threshold:</b> Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
B2	Independent User	<b>Vantage:</b> Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.
C1	Proficient User	<b>Effective Operational Proficiency:</b> Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much

CEFR Level	User Category	Description of Ability
		obvious searching for expressions.
<b>C2</b>	<b>Proficient User</b>	<b>Mastery:</b> Can understand virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently, and precisely.

**Table 1. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Council of Europe.**

**CONCLUSION**

The research findings indicate that assessment criteria in English language education should be systematically developed in accordance with students’ age characteristics, psycholinguistic capabilities, and stages of language learning. In primary grades, assessment is simple and visually oriented, while in intermediate grades, conscious use of grammar becomes the main criterion, and in upper grades, analytical thinking and the ability to communicate independently are prioritized. A systematic assessment based on CEFR standards helps gradually develop students’ communicative competence. The consistent application of these criteria has a direct positive impact on the quality of education.

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