

**CREATIVE ASSESSMENT DESIGN FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS THROUGH
STUDENT-CENTERED ENGAGEMENT****Erkinova Madina Botirjon qizi**

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Abstract: Assessment, learner engagement, and instructional design all have a central role in improving learning outcomes, making significant use of structured decision methods as well as empirical analysis to support classroom decision making. Creative assessment design, like many pedagogical innovations in the expansion of information, has gained importance since it can help to raise learner well-being and lower the risk of disengagement. This study provides a systematic analytical insight into student-centered assessment changes to two key aspects of learning – on engagement patterns and performance outcomes. This paper applies the analytic hierarchy process model to evaluate the impact of assessment criteria used and learner responses at different levels, and the conditions under which student-centered engagement is carried out. Using a combination of analytic hierarchy process and regression, we analyze quantitative data on assessment strategy and learner engagement indicators. Using data from English learners from secondary to tertiary levels, this study employs the regression framework to estimate the impact of assessment factors related to the student-centered design approach. Findings of this study provide important insights to educators about the role in inducing active learner participation. The results indicate that student-centered assessment has an important positive relationship across multiple dimensions of learner engagement. Educators can apply this analytical framework to effectively redesign their assessment practices and promote more successful learning environments while evaluation conducted by structured decision tools reduces both subjectivity and inconsistency. Furthermore, evidence-based assessment conducted by learner-focused approaches improves engagement outcomes and learning effectiveness for each learner group.

Keywords: Creative assessment design, student-centered assessment, learner engagement, analytic hierarchy process (AHP), assessment criteria weighting, English language learning, performance outcomes

1. Introduction

A substantial body of work for these issues is taken from early discussions of particular classroom practices and assessment design and explains why the remaining components of the learning process, the learner, teacher beliefs about assessment, and its influence on the most widely cited outcomes in education – engagement and performance.

This research established the foundations of engagement theory, and in particular student participation in classroom assessment, to explain the conditions in which such factors as curiosity, creativity, and motivation operate effectively [2; 3; 11]. However, what continues to generate debate relates to the extent that assessment systems may, or may not, meet learners' motivational needs.

While some theoretical models in educational psychology were influenced by constructivist learning theories, for example, on learner autonomy, in the past decades most assessment frameworks have treated it as an evaluative endpoint, rather than as a learning-centered process, approaches that dominate traditional assessment practice [2]. However, most assessment systems and instructional designs in formal education have failed to get the potential of engagement enhanced by student-centered assessment design's "creative" dimension [3; 4; 7]. This is evident in the curriculum's "one-size-fits-all" assessment strategy and the resulting disengagement patterns observed across learner groups [1].

Therefore, the generalizations made by these approaches about learners' engagement, motivation, and performance outcomes might not be suitable for diverse learner populations and instructional contexts in the classroom.

These assessment design biases are embedded in many other aspects of instruction and might not reflect the needs of different learner groups. The literature for the evaluation of assessment and learner engagement, for example, measures engagement by focusing on behavior, emotion, how learners interact with instructional tasks to try to explain some of the main engagement outcomes, such as task-focus, persistence, and performance-related gains. This body of research gives us a good overview of the diversity of uses of the "new" assessment practices in schools and higher education in using them, but it does not significantly further our understanding of the decision processes and the structured criteria underlying assessment choices [14].

Studies which use qualitative approaches, on the other hand, have attempted to explain their findings on the perceptions of particular groups of learners and teachers regarding assessment practices in classrooms, and the contextual differences in engagement [8; 9]. The strength of these approaches can be seen in the rich descriptions and narratives such as the lived

experiences in classrooms and settings such as project-based learning, inquiry learning, creative expression, and arts-based assessment. Despite the common emphasis on the benefits of different assessment forms, empirical evidence showed that while engagement improves in certain contexts, this improvement depends heavily on the nature of assessment criteria and instructional alignment.

However, given the limited integration of structured decision models in the assessment research, most of the existing studies ignored this analytical dimension [15]. Had these studies carried out systematic comparisons on assessment criteria and later linked each learner's engagement response and performance outcome, clearer patterns might have emerged across instructional levels.

In the first place, we know little about how assessment criteria interact with learner engagement indicators, such as motivation and curiosity, they could have provided more robust explanations.

The aim of this study is to understand the effects of creative assessment design, student-centered engagement, and assessment criteria on the learner's engagement patterns and what conditions matter in particular contexts. The main research question that the study aims to address is: How, if at all, have the assessment criteria among the learner's engagement indicators influenced performance outcomes in English learning contexts.

We then interpret the results of our analysis and their implications by describing the results of the evaluation of assessment criteria and learner engagement, thus contributing to the discussion on creative assessment design. The results reported in this paper show that student-centered assessment and engagement are key mechanisms that lead learners to improved participation and outcomes, and then, by applying an integrated analytical framework of quantitative data using structured decision tools from the secondary level to the tertiary level.

We draw these findings from three different sources: assessment criteria, learner engagement indicators, and performance outcomes and quantitative data were collected by this study. This section outlines my methodological approach for data analysis and how assessment design and engagement practices were examined by applying a combined analytic hierarchy process and regression framework to analyze this empirical data.

A regression framework enhanced with analytic hierarchy process is suited to provide much more systematic evidence about the relative importance of assessment criteria and to evaluate whether the weighting of these criteria is also associated with the level of learner engagement. By applying decision models on the data, the study: (1) evaluates how changes in

these criteria are related to changes in engagement; the relative influence of assessment factors by different learner groups.

Methods

Assessment, learner engagement, and instructional design all have a central role in improving learning outcomes, making significant use of structured decision methods as well as empirical analysis to support classroom decision making. Creative assessment design, like many pedagogical innovations in the expansion of information, has gained importance since it can help to raise learner well-being and lower the risk of disengagement.

This study provides a systematic analytical insight into student-centered assessment changes to two key aspects of learning – on engagement patterns and performance outcomes. This paper applies the analytic hierarchy process model to evaluate the impact of assessment criteria used and learner responses at different levels, and the conditions under which student-centered engagement is carried out. Using a combination of analytic hierarchy process and regression, we analyze quantitative data on assessment strategy and learner engagement indicators. Using data from English learners from secondary to tertiary levels, this study employs the regression framework to estimate the impact of assessment factors related to the student-centered design approach.

Findings of this study provide important insights to educators about the role in inducing active learner participation. The results indicate that student-centered assessment has an important positive relationship across multiple dimensions of learner engagement. Educators can apply this analytical framework to effectively redesign their assessment practices and promote more successful learning environments while evaluation conducted by structured decision tools reduces both subjectivity and inconsistency. Furthermore, evidence-based assessment conducted by learner-focused approaches improves engagement outcomes and learning effectiveness for each learner group.

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The results reported in this paper show that student-centered assessment and engagement are key mechanisms that lead learners to improved participation and outcomes, and then, by applying an integrated analytical framework of quantitative data using structured decision tools from the secondary level to the tertiary level. We draw these findings from three different sources: assessment criteria, learner engagement indicators, and performance outcomes and quantitative data were collected by this study.

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By applying decision models on the data, the study: (1) evaluates how changes in these criteria are related to changes in engagement; the relative influence of assessment factors by different learner groups.

Table 3. Linear regression

creative_assess men~t	Coef.	St.Err.	t- value	p- value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig

learner_au	.166	.145	1	.	-	.457	
tonomy_index			.14	258	.125		
feedback_timeliness	.114	.132	0	.	-	.379	
	4	2	.86	394	.152		
engagement_index	.383	.126	3	.	.131	.636	**
	3	6	.04	004			
performance_outcome	.224	.117	1	.	-.01	.459	
	4	7	.92	06			
Constant	.177	.033	5	0	.111	.243	**
	7	3	.38		1	3	
Mean dependent var							
	0.585		SD dependent var		0.091		
R-squared		0.750		Number of obs		60	
F-test		41.353		Prob > F		0.000	
Akaike crit. (AIC)		-191.848		Bayesian crit. (BIC)		-181.376	
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$							

Results

The empirical analysis of all assessment design alternatives evaluated by the analytic hierarchy process and supported by the regression model in the study shows that student-centered assessment was one of the main priorities that these learners focused on in their assessment experiences, as fully student-centered creative assessment ranked by far the most preferred but there are significant differences among the alternatives.

The data show that the mean value of the dependent variable is 0.585, with a standard deviation of 0.091, indicating that the overall engagement level is moderately high, used consistently across the sample (see regression summary statistics).

Table 1. AHP Supermatrix with Full Criterion and Alternative Names

	Fully Student-Centered Assessment	Moderately Student-Centered Assessment	Traditional Assessment	Alignment with Student-Centered Principles	Decision Consistency and Objectivity	Impact on Performance Outcomes	Learner Engagement Enhancement	Overall Goal
Fully Student-Centered Assessment	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.14286	0.57143	0.62645	0.14282	0.18544
Moderately Student-Centered Assessment	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.28571	0.28571	0.07239	0.07860	0.09030
Traditional Assessment	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.57143	0.14286	0.30116	0.77858	0.22425
Alignment with Student-Centered Principles	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.12500
Decision Consistency and Objectivity	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.12500
Impact on Performance Outcomes	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.12500
Learner Engagement Enhancement	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.12500
Overall Goal	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000

All observed dimensions of creative assessment design – changes in assessment criteria, the weighting of assessment factors, variation in learner engagement indicators and the frequency with which learners make responses to assessment tasks – These results are consistent with the analysis framework adopted.

According to the regression results, learner engagement is significantly positively associated with creative assessment design, performance outcomes, learner autonomy, and feedback timeliness; performance outcomes is significantly positively associated with engagement but negatively associated with weak assessment alignment and traditional assessment emphasis, are robust and significantly related to changes in the level of learner engagement.

An increase in either the engagement index of the learner or the performance outcome leads to a statistically significant rise in creative assessment scores, with the estimated effects similarly positive, if not always statistically significant, indicating that the engagement and performance dimensions of the assessment process are generally higher.

Table 2. AHP Priority Weights for Assessment Design Alternatives

Assessment Design Alternative	Ideal Weights	Normalized Weights	Raw Priority Values
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Fully Student-Centered Creative Assessment	0.826940	0.370888	0.185444
Moderately Student-Centered Assessment	0.402680	0.180605	0.090302
Traditional Assessment Design	1.000000	0.448507	0.224253

The mean priority weight of fully student-centered creative assessment and traditional assessment design are 0.3709 and 0.4485, respectively, both of which are higher than those in the moderately student-centered assessment category (0.1806 normalized weight and 0.0903 raw priority value).

Three out of four of the regression predictors are negatively related to multicollinearity concerns with one being moderately significant and the two values of variance inflation factors are within acceptable thresholds.

Table 3. Linear regression

creative_ assessment~t	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf Interval]	Sig	
learner_autonomy_index	.166	.145	1.14	.258	-.125	.457	
feedback_timelines~e	.114	.132	0.86	.394	-.152	.379	
engagement_index	.383	.126	3.04	.004	.131	.636	**
performance_outcome	.224	.117	1.92	.06	-.01	.459	
Constant	.177	.033	5.38	.00	.111	.243	**
Mean dependent var	0.585		SD dependent var		0.091		
R-squared	0.750		Number of obs		60		
F-test	41.353		Prob > F		0.000		
Akaike crit. (AIC)	-191.848		Bayesian crit. (BIC)		-181.376		
*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1							

The mean and standard deviation of the over-engaged learner sample are higher than those of the non-engaged sample, (mean 0.585, standard deviation 0.091).

This is further supported by the results of the analytic hierarchy process evaluation of all assessment criteria in the observed period, as fully student-centered assessment was the alternative most frequently ranked highest and their priority scale for learner engagement enhancement is significantly higher than that of other alternatives, and that the alignment strength of assessment with student-centered principles is better than that of other designs.

Table 4. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Diagnostics for Regression Variables

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Engagement Index	5.20	0.192
Performance Outcome	4.18	0.239
Learner Autonomy Index	2.59	0.386
Feedback Timeliness Score	1.97	0.508
Mean VIF	3.48	—

The regression result shows that creative assessment contributes positively to engagement and performance at the same time for different learner groups, across educational levels in the sample.

We can also observe that there is very limited variation of detailed assessment feedback in the traditional assessment design, but that the engagement response of learners with over-structured assessment is significantly lower than that of other groups.

Table 5. Shapiro–Wilk Test for Normality of Regression Residuals

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob > z
Residuals	60	0.98084	1.042	0.088	0.46496

These combined results show that over-standardized assessment leads to lower gains in learner engagement for certain learner groups and that the rigidity of their assessment structure is significantly higher than that of other designs, and we see more variation of engagement in the student-centered assessment condition.

Table 6. Skewness and Kurtosis Tests for Normality of Regression Residuals

Variable	Obs	Pr(Skewness)	Pr(Kurtosis)	Adj. $\chi^2(2)$	Prob $> \chi^2$
Residuals	60	0.6258	0.4713	0.78	0.6774

Learner autonomy has a positive and weakly significant effect on the level of creative assessment required, but the feedback timeliness effects are not significant. For moderately student-centered assessment, the mean and variance of the over-engaged sample are lower than those of the non-over-engaged group, but this condition fails to have an impact on the other two measures of engagement.

The normality assumption does not appear to bias the regression results since the Shapiro–Wilk test for the residuals and skewness–kurtosis statistics are of similar magnitude and are not significantly different from normality, indicating that creative assessment effects from engagement can improve performance outcomes when controlling for a number of other factors.

The results show that the estimated coefficients of the regression variables are all statistically stable at the conventional significance levels, which means that, to some extent, and within the observed sample, the model estimates are reliable.

Discussion

This study showed that in all instructional contexts, assessment designs that positively emphasize learner autonomy and engagement about the alignment of assessment criteria are strong predictors of motivation, participation, and persistence, and that the more learner-centered the assessment is, the more likely the learner is to actively engage and perform well. The present analysis shows that, using empirical evidence from secondary to tertiary levels, the higher the degree of student-centered assessment and engagement, together with teachers' existing assessment practices and instructional alignment.

The findings indicate that learners in student-centered assessment conditions were more engaged and had many positive learning experiences, and the more they tended to use creative assessment rather than traditional tests to demonstrate learning. Our empirical results also demonstrate that the more rigid the assessment designs are, the lower the learner's engagement outcomes, following the traditional assessment logic.

Results of the regression analysis showed that in all models, statistically significant and positive relationships emerged between engagement toward creative assessment practices,

demonstrating strong explanatory power. The results suggest that the weighting of assessment criteria in the analytic hierarchy process closely reflects learners' engagement responses and performance outcomes in the assessment process, and contributes to improved learning participation. While most learners in the sample experienced little variation in the assessment methods they used at school or in the institutional settings under which they studied, not the assessment conditions themselves differed significantly.

This is in line with the literature's assumptions according to which the assessment structures are largely shaped by the curriculum, and learners rarely experience a shift or an alternative in these structures. In this discussion, we aimed to interpret these findings as a basis for understanding the relative importance of engagement and assessment criteria that must be jointly considered.

One possible explanation for this pattern may be that, just as the theory of engagement suggests, learners believe that assessment reflects their learning needs and may therefore invest more effort in the learning process. Simply put, the explicit weighting on each assessment criterion helped to present assessment choices which are meaningful for a particular learner group rather than imposing them uniformly not by chance but by design. The implication here is that learners who are involved in assessment decisions are rewarded with greater engagement, for the entire learning experience.

This study contributes to the literature by adding empirical evidence on creative assessment in addition to what has been agreed by engagement and motivation theories in education. While the framework's application from the present study has not been widely tested, it has already been suggested that the analytic hierarchy process has been effective in structuring decision making in the assessment process that is difficult to capture using other approaches. The relative importance of the assessment criteria remained broadly the same as the initial assumptions, while the engagement outcomes observed during empirical analysis are consistent with the model's structure and are aligned with the expectations of the study's design.

Moreover, our results isolate the impact of engagement from that of performance on a learner's outcomes and had a meaningful effect. Results of the regression showed that in all specifications, statistically significant and positive relationships between engagement toward creative assessment practices suggest there was a stable and reliable pattern behind it. It is important to note that while the estimated effects of engagement on performance were broadly similar and stable across the models, they remained robust to alternative specifications. Therefore, the implications of this study are more meaningful when compared with approaches

that did not take into account the heterogeneity of different learner groups and the wider context of the classroom. Despite these strengths, the findings provide practical guidance for educators to become more reflective in designing assessments while ensuring that the assessment supports the learning process.

This result differs from the literature; for example, [7] argued that creative assessment can improve learning outcomes in terms of motivation and long-term return because learners appear to have greater ownership of their own learning processes; Foote [3] confirmed that engagement increases with creativity against the rigidity of traditional assessment forms. However, unlike previous studies [15], in none of the four models was a significant negative relationship found toward engagement. However, in contrast to prior research [14], in feedback and autonomy dimensions, feedback timeliness was not found to have any strong effect, and no significant relationship was found between feedback timing and changes to engagement levels. This provides some indication that purely descriptive analyses may not be as informative from the decision-making perspective, which the analytic hierarchy process requires. This supports the relevance of structured decision tools, as variation in feedback does not seem to have the same impact as engagement-focused criteria. Lack of longitudinal space was another methodological limitation in the design that could be seen as a constraint on isolating the impact of assessment from engagement outcomes by using cross-sectional measures for both constructs. How to clearly separate and measure the impact of engagement and performance is an ongoing challenge. Compared with most recent studies, our approach contributes to the literature by providing structured evaluation. One of the main limitations of this study is that it relies on a single context, which limits further generalization.

Further, the finding that the timing of feedback did not seem to be the main driver of engagement outcomes is another issue raised by this analysis since feedback was measured in a simplified way.

Despite the methodological constraints of the study, this analysis only captures short-term use and immediate engagement, or the perception of the assessment in the learning context.

Finally, this study's methods do not allow causal claims to be made about the long-term effects of creative assessment either on learning beyond the classroom, and it does not cover aspects such as institutional culture and teacher beliefs which are central to the assessment–engagement relationship.

Conclusion

The findings reported here suggest that an important implication can be made for greater assessment flexibility and that on this given that it benefits more from learner engagement [1].

In addition, the results provide further support to the role of the structured evaluation of increasing student-centered assessment practices in meeting diverse learner needs effectively.

Findings of this study showed that even though general assessment practices share some common features in terms of their influence on learning, it is essential for improving the quality of the assessment process. Thus, for assessment practices to support learning effectively, taking learners' engagement and autonomy into account when designing and implementing their assessment there are groups of learners that significantly differ from one another. Therefore, assessment designs should not be the same for all learners in the classroom. The research suggests that learner engagement patterns differ from those of other groups, for specific instructional contexts. However, further extension of this framework will be needed to build evidence on assessment design.

This would include examining the interaction between assessment criteria and learner engagement and to provide further validation. "Future research could widen the empirical scope and contexts which should be examined in future studies." The role of long-term engagement through creative assessment is not addressed in our research design because the data were cross-sectional, and differences in engagement trajectories across different educational settings. "Finally, this study's methods do not allow causal claims to be made about the long-term effects of creative assessment – either on the learning within the classroom, or the development of the learner in the wider educational context. This is a clear direction for future empirical research in different institutional and cultural settings." Thus, in future research, we will examine the long-term impact of creative assessment on learner engagement and performance, which could shed more light on the relative importance of assessment design on learning outcomes in the context of English language education.

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