

## MODULE 5

# 5.5 - NEEDS ANALYSIS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The needs analysis allows us to understand better students' learning goals and determine which tasks we should prioritize in our assessment procedure.

In order to do it, we should ask ourselves a series of questions concerning our class, focusing on how diverse it is in terms of linguistic skills and motivation to learn. Moreover, it is essential to identify the functional language students will need in their lives.

Students can directly be involved in this procedure by taking part in activities aimed at finding out their language learning goals. For instance, we can prepare function cards and ask students to say whether they find a list of linguistic skills useful or not.

Therefore, such analysis will help us understand the real-world conditions associated with the target tasks that should be replicated under assessment conditions and determine the features and the procedures involved.

**Let's imagine** we have already carried out the needs analysis and we have noticed that our students are particularly interested in learning how to give advice, make a suggestion, talk about their interests and share their opinion. Therefore, we have planned a series of lessons targeted at achieving the following learning outcomes:

- Learn how to use phrases and structures for proposing and expressing agreement/disagreement;
- Develop speaking and writing skills;
- Talk about interests and make recommendations regarding cultural topics, like film/cinema.

How can we assess students' performance and their ability to make use of relevant functional language?

In this case the activity we have analysed together in module 4 and in the previous video: *Create a catalogue with recommended / worth-seeing films?* will be particularly useful.

If we were to use this activity in our assessment we should be very clear concerning the procedures involved, use clear instructions, specify the format of the oral test, and – especially for activities involving a presentation component – provide an audience. Finally, it is important to set and present clear assessment criteria.

But, we will talk about these topics in the next video in which we will see what assessment methods we can use and how to set proper assessment criteria.

## References

Norris, J. (2014, April). How do we assess task-based performance? Invited LARC/CALPER testing and assessment webinar

Shehadeh. A., (2012) Task-Based Language Assessment: Components, Development, and Implementation in Coombe, Davidson, O'Sullivan, Stoyhoff (Eds) The Cambridge guide to second language assessment, Cambridge University Press