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The Importance of Formative Assessment in the Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes elements, principles and functions of formative assessment in the educational process. The process of student assessment with curricular goals, instructional methods and educational objectives are also considered.

KEY WORDS: formative assessment, evaluation, feedback, methodological approach, criteria, objective, motivation.

I.INTRODUCTION

In the development of learning and education, assessment is considered as a dominant learning mechanism. Identifying the assessment strategies necessary for the proper evaluation of students' progress within individual programs is as important as establishing curricular content and delivery methods. It is believed, assessment is any process, formalized or expert, which ends with evaluation and feedback. A formalized version of the assessment, which provides quantitative estimates, known as measurement. Evaluation is the definition of the value or significance of something. The following article will discuss the concept of assessment in education, particularly assessment of writing and speaking skills.

Assessment is a complex process, which includes the following two criteria:

First, it should be the result of training and education. It means assessment should be given fairly and objectively aimed at the consequences and positive effects. Second, interpretation of data in the context of some important decisions of final learning and goals should be presented. To predict the possible consequences, the results of the implementation of methodological approaches, providing feedback, assessing the degree of achievement of the intended goals and providing evidence for further implementation of methodological approaches are the main objectives of the assessment. Assessment should have features, such as stimulating, checking and diagnosing.

Stimulating - influence the volitional sphere through experiencing success or failure, the formation of claims and intentions, actions and relationships;

Diagnostic - continuous monitoring of the quality of students' knowledge, measuring the level of knowledge at various stages of training, identifying the reasons for deviations from the set goals and timely adjustment of educational activities;

Checking the effectiveness of the teaching activities of the teacher himself; monitoring and evaluation allow the teacher to obtain information about the quality of the educational process, taking into account that he adjusts his work.

Students' adequate self-esteem is formed under the influence of teacher's marks and evaluative judgments. If this influence is negative, it leads to the formation of low self-esteem, drill in the student self-confidence, which results in a decrease in motivation for learning and a loss of interest in learning. Next, a powerful motive for students' learning activities is also important, as it changes interpersonal relations and raises the status of students in the classroom team. The positive or negative attitude of classmates to an individual student depends on the application of positive or negative pedagogical influence and assessment. What is required here is the development of such a system for evaluating the educational results of students, which eliminates the conflicts between the evaluation functions and the existing evaluation system. Besides that, it will allow teachers to associate the assessment with the individual boost of the educational results (knowledge, skills, competencies, etc.) of the student and create the conditions in which the students experience planning and implementing the process of their own learning, thereby growing (by definition of G. A. Zuckerman) " healthy self-esteem ".

A regular assessment provides information on how the student gains knowledge; based on it, the teacher and the student can take certain actions. The teacher's and student's actions make this type of assessment "formative". In the case when the students and the teacher have the same understanding of the goals and expected learning outcomes, the learning process becomes more effective. Pupils should be aware of what the learning outcomes are, and at any



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time understand what stage they are at, evaluate the accuracy of the actions or operations performed, adjust if necessary, understand when the planned result is achieved.

Formative assessment - "feedback" for students, allows them understand what steps they need to take to improve their results. The purpose of formative assessment is to help improve the results of each individual student. Formative assessment is an assessment that facilitates learning and it concerns the following functions:

- serves as an element of effective planning;
- focuses on how students acquire knowledge;
- provides motivation, helps to clarify goals and criteria;
- helps students understand how they can improve their results;
- develops the ability of self-esteem and mutual evaluation;
- reflects all educational achievements;
- should be a constant element of the lesson.

Regarding to principles of formative assessment the teacher is burden with several tasks. The teacher regularly provides feedback by giving comments, remarks, etc. about students' performance. Students take an active part in organizing their own learning process. The teacher changes teaching techniques and technologies depending on changes in student learning outcomes. The teacher is aware that assessing through grades dramatically reduces student's motivation and self-esteem. The teacher realizes the need to teach students the principles of self-esteem and the ways of improving their own results.

Formative assessment is based on certain criteria and standards. The criteria-based assessment system should enable:

- determine how successfully one or another educational material is mastered;
- determine whether a particular practical skill is formed;
- compare the level achieved by students with the help of educational task (a set of training tasks).

The ways of developing a criteria-based assessment are as follows:

- criteria are aimed at assessing the student's work (at an intermediate or final stage);
- the student's work is assessed according to criteria or compared with a standard (an example of excellent work), and not with the work of other students;
- criteria are known to students in advance.

The creation of a clear algorithm assumes the mark by which the student can determine his level of achievement and determine his mark. In addition, assessment criterion is a specific expression of learning goals, where the material that is taught can be evaluated.

Formative assessment allows the teacher:

- clearly formulate the educational result to be formed and evaluated in each case, and organize their work in accordance with this;
- make the student comprehend the subject of educational and assessment activities;
- can help learn from mistakes;
- may help to understand what is important;
- may help to understand what they are doing;
- may help discover what they don't know and how to behave in a particular situation.

In my experience, I frequently try to use the types of formative assessment. Hereby some examples of them are given. From the point of view of learning objectives, they are presented at the beginning of the course and the achievement of learning outcomes are discussed together with the students. The content, topics and all the materials, which must be learned by the end of the course are also discussed. Besides, I conduct peer observation and peer assessment among students when students observe each other's work. It should be pointed out that providing real time feedback on student work to all students is also one of the most effective ways in learning process. Because real time feedback prevents upcoming defaults and negative results.

Another way to give a feedback to students' work is to write an evaluation note on learners' work or writings. The teacher should pay thorough attention to the individual needs of each student. The reason is that every student comes to the classroom with a prior and different knowledge base. The needs of gifted and talented students, their diverse cultural backgrounds and some other factors should also be considered. Scientists have clearly presented that this prior knowledge is vital in how students develop literacy and learn to construct meaning. All instructions should build on the students' prior knowledge and not penalize them for what they bring to the classroom. (Rigg & Allen, 1989). Regarding to self-assessment, I provide time for my students to reflect on their learning and then share their



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thoughts with classmates and me. Thus, I help students to understand their achievements and know what they need to do next to make progress.

In conclusion, the main objective of the assessment is to enhance knowledge, to correct errors and develop qualities in further activities. Points of interest include independence, the ability to give and the way the learner deals with conflict. The overall goal of formative assessment is to get a better understanding of the issue. The sequence of teachers' assessment refers to the order in which the assessment occurs, and should be associated with the sequence of student learning and his background knowledge, methodology and understand their achievements. Preferably, formative assessment tasks should be ordered early in the semester of learning rather than summative assessment.

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