

ЛИНГВОДИДАКТИКА ВА МЕТОДИКА

ТАЪЛИМ ОЛИШДАГИ ТИЛНИНГ НАЗАРИЙ ТАЪРИФИ

CRITICAL EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE WRITTEN TASK AND ASSESSMENT LITERACY



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Аннотация

Ушбу мақола талабалар томонидан бажарилган ёзма ишни баҳолаб беради. Ёзувчи талабаларни бир бирларини ишларини текширётганларида дуч келган муаммолар, қийинчиликларни муҳокама қилади ва фаол ўрганишни талабаларда рағбатлантириш учун синфда қўлланилган самарали машқларни, воситаларни кўрсатиб беради. Шунингдек, ушбу мақола самарали ўрганиш воситаларини бир нечта мисоллар билан изохлаб беради.

Аннотация

В статье оцениваются письменные задания, выполненные студентами. Автор рассматривает трудности, с которыми студенты сталкиваются при оценивании работ друг друга и предлагает практику эффективного оценивания на занятиях для поощрения активного изучения языка. Также в статье иллюстрируются примеры эффективных способов обучения.

Abstract

The article evaluates a written task that has been accomplished by students. The author will discuss the challenges students had while peer-editing and reveals the effective assessment practices used in the classroom to foster active learning. Also, the paper will illustrate some examples of effective learning tools.

Калит сўзлар: баҳолаш билими, баҳолаш, дарс жараёнида баҳолаш, ёзма вазифа, баҳолаш принциплари, ўқувчиларга қаратилган баҳолаш, ҳамма элементларни ўзи ичига олган баҳолаш.

Ключевые слова: оценка грамотности, оценка, оценка во время урока, письменная задача, принципы оценки, ориентированная на учащихся оценка, инклюзивная оценка.

Keywords: assessment literacy, evaluation, formative assessment, written task, principles of assessment, student-focused assessment, inclusive assessment.

The written task I am going to evaluate is a formative assessment done as a problem-solution essay that I have assigned my students as a home task. Students were introduced to this type of essay and we did exercises to practice how to write an introduction, body paragraphs, a conclusion, a thesis statement, a topic sentence,

and supporting sentences in the classroom. Learners were also given and explained assessment criteria (See Appendix 2) which served as a tool to follow while writing their homework.

Students were introduced to writing a problem solution essay as part of the curriculum. It was a learner-centered, achievement focused assessment task in which the assessment technique I used supported a learner centered curriculum (Brown, 2004-2005). This type of an essay was practiced in the classroom as it was included in the final test learners were supposed to take in the end of the semester as a summative assessment. Being able to write the essay ensured successfully graduating the semester with good grades and ending the term with satisfactory marks thus the formative assessment that I focused on has become an integral part of my teaching and learning event.

Once the drafts were collected I distributed them to different students for peer editing. Students were repeatedly told to use the checklist while editing. Before starting I asked learners to explain me some items in the marking scheme to make it clear for everybody. By this I ensured that the assessment is transparent and reliable, both of which are important principles of good assessment practices. When assessment is clear, learners know what they are expected to do, the way they have to perform the assessment task, and how their performance is awarded (O’Farrell, n.d.). This kind of peer editing activity was already practiced many times in the previous lessons with other types of essays, but with some little differences. They were required to use different color pens to edit and give both written and oral feedback after finishing.

Their homework was not marked as a pass or fail instead they were assessed formatively. In this formative assessment a teacher, students and their peers integrated with each other to give fair, meaningful, supportive and detailed feedback. The purpose of the assessment was on improvement rather than marking. The formative assessment was used to encourage learning and improve student achievement (Willian, D. 2013). Learners were assessed on how well they were doing and what their work needed improving. This type of assessment also served as a preparation for their final test. Therefore, it is a good opportunity for both a teacher and a learner to know how their learning is progressing. Formative assessment is crucial for students to improve themselves and the teaching event itself. In other words, students see how well they are doing so far, or teachers can judge their own teaching whether it is proceeding in the right direction (Biggs and Tang, 2011).

The whole class had about 20 to 30 minutes to peer-edit and they were not allowed to ask their peers for clarification. For some students the time I have given was not enough and they had a couple of problems with identifying thesis statement, topic sentences and supporting sentences. I could have met the needs of diverse students if I had used technology. For example, learners would write their homework at home and make them available on the online platform where a teacher, students have access. On the platform, students will have a lot of time to discuss their work, assessment criteria, and make essays ready for whole class discussion (Plymouth

University, 2014). Every participant should be given an equal chance, which allows them to develop their writing abilities and motivate their learning potential (Brown, 2004-2005). By this I would have ensured that the assessment was inclusive and equitable, both of which are assessment principles used to maximize all students learning in the classroom (Race, 2001 cited in Scott, et al., 2005).

Moreover, I tried to stick to the time students were supposed to complete the assessment, so when learners started peer editing I was constantly monitoring, guiding, and supporting as I was walking around the classroom to see how well they were doing with their peers' home task. In this way I tried to make the assessment event efficient and timely, which learners find manageable, relevant and developmental (Brown, 2004-2005). To achieve this, I approached each student's desk to see if they were doing the task in the right way. For example, some students had difficulty in understanding certain items in the assessment criteria, and others questioned about the essay they were editing. Thus I explained students to different aspects of the assessment task (Biggs and Tang, 2014). While learners were editing, I reached each student to encourage them to make their written feedback as clear and unbiased as possible.

In the class there were several learners with limited English knowledge which caused difficulties to complete the assessment, so I explained them the process of peer editing, the checklist they had to use while editing. To do this I first used English and then their first language, Uzbek. These students were given the same task (editing peers' home task) which belonged to students with the same level of English. By this I tried to make the assessment task authentic, which allowed assessing students' ability of lesson objectives (Brown, 2004-05). In other words, learners regardless of their language abilities will learn to write a written task which consequently results in their achievement in the final test. As usual, students with high performance finished their task earlier, which made me involve them to support those with low performance. Wiliam notes that learners can become very effective assessors of each other's work, if grading is not focused at all; rather improvement is aimed at (2013). I noticed their performance and understood that peer support was so helpful to students with limited English to understand the intended learning objectives.

Now it is time to evaluate my assessment task in terms of inclusiveness. The peer evaluation activity I implemented in the classroom benefited most students in my teaching event because there was learning atmosphere resulted from a teacher, students and peer interaction. Students after finishing evaluating their friends' essays they were busy with discussing errors, and improvements to be done further. This activity was based on formative feedback which enabled student progression, added variety to students' learning experience, maximized learners' motivation (Bennett, 2017).

I used limited assessment techniques to advantage all students in the classroom. The assessment criteria I created was designed for students with high English proficiency level students. However, in the class where there are students with mixed English proficiencies the task did not work well. I should have created criteria which is “clear, explicit, framed in language that is meaningful” to all

involved in assessment (Brown, 2004-05). In other words, a learning milieu should be produced to improve the opportunities for learners with different abilities (Plymouth University, 2014)

Certain learning outcomes were measured in the assessment task. Particularly, students paid attention to the following criteria during peer assessment process

- a) structure the problem solution essay (using methods: block or point by point)
- b) write a thesis statement, topic sentence, supporting sentences
- c) use cohesive devices to achieve a coherent and cohesive essay
- d) good paragraphing (introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, etc.)

Items on the checklist students used to peer edit contained similar information with the learning outcomes. Here I focused on the validity principle of the assessment, which is all about measuring what is supposed to measure (Bennett, 2017). As it was instructed they had to follow good paragraphing. They should start with introduction where they would introduce the topic and write the thesis statement. Then they would write the body paragraphs with topic sentences connected to the thesis statements with supporting sentences (details, examples, explanation). Lastly, they would finish with a conclusion which either restates the thesis or summarizes. Also learners had to pay attention to using the method (point by point, block) properly to order their ideas.

Through this analysis, I have noticed that assessment is a crucial tool that should be used appropriately in order to achieve learning outcomes, support our students, and create a learning environment where diverse students feel being a part of learning. It is really important to understand what assessment really is, which helps to understand the purpose we want to target on. We may want our students learn something, pass an exam, or have fun in the classroom. In creating assessment tasks we should design our lessons taking different assessment principles into consideration, which are keys to students’ achievement. Through reflections on my own teaching, I came to conclusion that assessment is something that I have a limited knowledge and I need to research more.

Appendix 1

Topic	Lesson Plan - Problem – Solution Essay
Aims	<p>1. <u>Cognitive (обучающая)</u> Ss will be aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>2. <u>Affective (attitudinal) (воспитательная)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to take responsibility for the group performance • to share own opinions and listen to others <p>3. <u>Performance (развивающая)</u> to develop students’ speaking, reading, listening and writing skills</p>
Objectives	<p>To let students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop their activity to work in teams and in pairs • practice fluency

<p>Lesson plan</p>	<p>Activity 1 Second draft evaluation – 15-20 min.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let students share their second drafts with their peers’ • Walk around to make your comments <p>Activity 2 Problem Solution essay – 15 min.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students how they would write about a problem • Let them do “7 steps” exercise • Give handout with an essay sample (“Water shortage”) • Let them discuss the essay in groups <p>Activity 3 Vocabulary 10 min. Let students do vocabulary exercise</p> <p>Activity 4 Ideas for an essay – 20 min.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let students discuss one of the problems and brainstorm ideas for the first draft (you can ask students to discuss different ideas in small groups) • Write ideas on the board in random order • Tell them that they will write the introduction for the first draft and continue writing at home <p>Homework Students will bring first draft of problem solution essay for peer-editing</p>
<p>Teaching methodology</p>	<p>Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brainstorming</i> • <i>Discussion</i> • <i>Mapping</i> <p>Form <i>Group-work, team-work, pair-work</i></p> <p>Resources <i>Course Book, blackboard</i></p> <p>Teaching techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation • Elicitation • Presentation <p>Informal assessment <i>Questioning, summarizing</i></p> <p>Assessment 2 points</p>
<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>By the end of the lesson students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure the problem and solution essay • Write a thesis statement for this type of essay • Follow seven steps to produce an essay • Use vocabulary for problem solution essay
<p>Reflection</p>	

Appendix 2

Criteria Maximum 8 points	Inadequate 1-2	Adequate 3-4	Above Average 5-6	Exemplary 7-8
Language accuracy	–Spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors distract, – makes reading difficult for the reader; – Errors occur frequently	– A few spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors – usually errors make difficulties to the reader.	– Essay has few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors – allows reader to follow ideas clearly	– Essay is free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors
Cohesion/coherence	– Writing lacks logical organization. – It shows some coherence but ideas lack unity. Serious linking errors.	– Writing is a bit coherent and logically organized. – Some ideas remain unsuitable and irrelevant to the topic. – Linking words are seen in some places but not used throughout essay.	Writing is coherent and logically organized with transitions used between ideas and paragraphs to create coherence. Overall unity of ideas is present.	Writing shows high degree of attention to logic and reasoning of ideas. Unity between sentences and words are evident throughout the essay up to the conclusion and relevant to the topic.
Idea	Irrelevant to the topic, very limited fulfillment of requirements	Relevant to the topic with some off-topics, partly covers requirements	Relevant to the topic, sometimes partly covers the task, partly addresses requirements	Fully relevant to the topic, addresses all requirements
Organization	Lack of thesis statement, topic sentence, bad paragraphing	Irrelevant, unclear thesis statement, body paragraphs	Unclear thesis statement, partly related to topic sentence,	Clearly states thesis statement, topic sentences, supporting sentences, good paragraphing

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