

THE ROLE OF ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Gulnoza Giyosiddinovna RADJABOVA

Teacher

Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

rad.gulnoza@gmail.com

Abstract

This article reveals the principles of assessment strategies and their main characteristics in order to make the teaching English more efficient. Moreover, it reveals both formal and informal methods of assessment reflected in the related literature written by foreign linguists as well as my experiences as a teacher, showing and discussing the ways in which the effectiveness of activities can be evaluated. In the view of the extensive changes which have taken place in higher education over the last decade this article includes new approach on the higher education context, evaluation and staff development, since assessment strategies can enhance educational standards, looking in particular at evaluating the effectiveness of teaching, the key area facing every teacher in higher education.

Keywords: assessment; learning process; technique; test; acquisition; formative assessment; summative assessment; outcomes.

ИНГЛИЗ ТИЛИНИ ЎҚИТИШДА БАҲОЛАШНИНГ ЎРНИ

Гулноза Гиёсиддиновна РАЖАБОВА

ўқитувчи

Ўзбекистон давлат жаҳон тиллари университети

rad.gulnoza@gmail.com

Аннотация

Ушбу мақола инглиз тилини янада самарали ўқитишни таъминлаш мақсадида баҳолаш стратегияларининг асосий принциплари ва уларнинг асосий хусусиятларини очиқ беради. Муаллиф хорижий тилшунослар томонидан ёзилган адабиётларда акс эттирилган расмий ва норасмий баҳолаш методларини, шунингдек ўқитувчи сифатидаги ўз тажрибаларига суяниб, фаолият самарадорлигини қандай баҳолаш мумкинлигини кўрсатади, муҳокама қилади. Охирги ўн йилликда олий таълим соҳасида амалга оширилган кенг кўламли ўзгаришларни ҳисобга оладиган бўлсак, ушбу мақола олий таълим нуқтаи назаридан янгича ёндашувни, баҳолаш ва ходимлар малакасини ривожлантиришни ўз ичига олади, чунки баҳолаш стратегияси таълим стандартларини такомиллаштиришга ёрдам беради.

Калит сўзлар: баҳолаш; ўрганиш жараёни; техникаси; синаш; сотиб олиш; форматив баҳолаш; жами баҳолаш; натижалар.

РОЛЬ ОЦЕНИВАНИЯ В ОБУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

Гулноза Гиёсиддиновна РАДЖАБОВА

преподаватель

Узбекский государственный университет мировых языков

rad.gulnoza@gmail.com

Аннотация

Данная статья рассматривает эффективность оценивания студентов и школьников при обучении иностранному языку. В статье рассматриваются основные виды оценивания учащихся и особенности оценивания как средства мотивации обучаемых. В свете обширных изменений, которые произошли в системе высшего образования за последнее десятилетие, материал статьи включает в себя новый подход не только в контексте образования, но и в системе оценки и развития персонала высшего звена, поскольку стратегия оценивания может повысить качество образовательных стандартов, в частности, при оценке эффективности обучения, которая является ключевой для каждого преподавателя.

Ключевые слова: оценивание; процесс обучения; методы и способы; тестирование; овладение знаниями; формирующее оценивание; итоговое оценивание; результат.

In recent years the role of English learning as well as English teaching have been enhancing very greatly. Our government pays a great attention to the development of English language teaching. Therefore, teachers conduct lessons with the help of modern technology and techniques targeted on developing all language skills. Teachers from UzSWLU help and observe colleagues from colleges suggesting fresh ideas for getting a better result. The role of assessment in revealing progress of students, in motivating them for further development is undoubtful. Furthermore, if organization and motivation in teaching process are considered to be the basis of progress, consequently the role of assessment is enormous in this process.

Nowadays, the role of assessment has greatly altered and it has become not only an important and essential in the process of learning and teaching but also it “has become both the vehicle and engine that drive the delivery of education” (4, 98). In my opinion, teaching will be productive and learning effective if the teacher can master using the principles of assessment in teaching. Because good organized assessment provides motivation for students and conduce to attain good results in learning. There are different purposes of assessment, well known among efficient teachers, but here I am going to cover three of them: diagnostic, formative and summative. Such order of evaluation can give effective results otherwise teaching will not be progressive. Before, I did not pay attention to the role of assessment, but during this course, I have been said and learnt a lot. Since then, I have changed my strategy of assessment and it helped me to reinforce my students to develop knowledge and involve them to make progress.

Let us focus on the first assessment purpose from aforementioned order - diagnostic assessment, main aim of which is to identify students’ background knowledge, where they are now and how to continue their learning for effective and best results. “What students already know is the most important factor in

determining what they will learn” (2, 142). Moreover, it is helpful for teachers to organize good teaching where objectives directed on students’ needs. I use this type of assessment in my private classes to identify learners’ level and their expectation through interview and test. Interview is a good technique to make a picture about learner as individual, his or her expectation from learning and identify acquisition of language because “interviews can provide information about students’ prior knowledge as well as their interests and misconception” (2, 142). Test is effective for identifying grammar acquisition because most of my students prepare for passing exams where grammar knowledge will be evaluated. I widely use diagnostic assessment at school. This approach helps me to diagnose and refresh students’ knowledge after summer holidays by questioning. At this stage, not only I assess them but they also evaluate themselves. I think that in this stage self-assessment is effective because students make judge about their knowledge and reflect on what they have learnt and they are involved and motivated in making progress.

Formative assessment or it can be said assessment for learning, which controls not only learning but teaching process as well. “Formative assessment is a planned process in which assessment evidence and information about student learning is collected and used by teachers to adjust their ongoing instructional programs and by students to adjust their current learning strategies or tactics” (3, p.139). Formative assessment leads to formative feedback providing comments on students’ current achievements, strong and weak sides. Feedback promotes a great opportunity for students to amend their learning. I totally agree with Richard I that regular use of formative assessment improve student learning, especially for those students who are struggling (2, 142). Learners need to be directed and characterized properly, as they “need a mirror to reflect back to them an image of what they are doing, or what they are not – some means of judging how well they do whatever they are trying to achieve” with one aim for further improvement (1, 93). Thus, teacher must timely give students sense of what they have learnt and how to make progress.

Formative assessment provides with information of how learning is proceeding while Summative gives general and final result of what has learnt. As Biggs noted, “When the chef tastes the sauce it is formative assessment; when the customer tastes it, it is summative”. Summative assessment or assessment of learning has one aim to identify achievements and final results of any course. According to Arends and Ann Kilcher Summative assessment “summarizes what

student have learned at the end of an instructional segment such as a unit of work, a course of study, or a year in school” (2, 134).

It is important to value two methods of assessment: formal and informal. Both of them provide beneficial approach for teachers to monitor learning and evaluate their own teaching besides they “give you a complete picture of student readiness and interest for your teaching” (5, 399). Formal and informal methods of assessment are interconnected with three purposes of assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative) and effective in appropriate situations. “Informal assessment is naturalistic, often subjective, close to reality, even covert, whilst formal assessment is predetermined, objective, often in a contrived situation, and overt”.

In our educational system, teachers evaluate learners by marking them every lesson. The ultimate aim of this kind of assessment is to enable effective and reliable discrimination amongst students (7, 171). Marks are main indicator of students’ knowledge and relate to “norm-referenced” assessment. All learners’ work and performance in each lesson are evaluated and at the end of each quarter, the average mark is given for every student. There are four quarters and at the end of school year, students get final mark. Due to my curriculum during one quarter, I must assess my learners three times as intermediate control. Therefore, there are twelve tests in one school year and all of them under control of school authorities.

Now I want to focus your attention on how I organize assessment in my teaching. As I mentioned before there are three intermediate controls (summative assessment) in my subject area. Besides I evaluate students during quarter at least twelve times (formative assessment and plus three test marks are included. So approximately fifteen marks during each quarter every learner must get. In my teaching experience, I widely used formal method of assessment and partially informal methods of evaluation consider them not effective. After sessions on assessment and exploring theory, my opinion changed completely towards feedback providing. Before I used only marks for evaluating my learners and faced with some problems during several activities. For example, after games and role-plays performances were hard to assess. Now I comprehend the only way to evaluate is to give them feedback orally, which I implement successfully. I monitor their performances and make a list with strong and weak points. After the game, we analyze not only their mistakes but also their strong sides in order to make them feel confident in practice. The main aim of my evaluating strategy here is to create a friendly atmosphere where learners feel support and are able to reflect on their own results and achievements and push themselves to do their best.

Let move our discussion on the organization of formative assessment in my teaching. I use assessment tasks to reveal strength and weakness in order to prepare for summative assessment. For summative assessment, I apply tasks, which the main purpose to determine knowledge, which were obtained after unit or term. Mostly they directed on subject monitoring and results are passed to school authorities. For this purpose, I use Test, Essay,

Assessment cannot support effectiveness of good practice without principles such as validity, manageability, reliability, transparency, redeem ability, authenticity, fairness and etc. After exploring the value of principles in the process of evaluating via different sources, I would like to focus on the ones that I practice more often. Through my working experience, I noticed that student achieve progress in learning due to their interest of learning outcomes at the end of unit or term. Their success base on rivalry among peers and after each control or independent work they start to compare marks and wait comment from me. For this purpose, I implement such tasks for evaluating, which based on measure skills, knowledge and ability that they obtain in a certain period. Therefore, validity, transparency, authenticity and fairness are important principles in my assessment strategy for promoting motivated learning.

However, it is in great importance for teachers to plan the assessment and evaluation process according to the purpose of final results. In terms of final purpose we can distinguish such types of assessment as assessment *for*, *as* and *of* learning which play a great role in supporting, enhancing and progressing students' learning. But these types of assessments should be carefully balanced, because the most important part of assessment should be chosen for its intended purpose.

Another point of discussion is to share my own understanding of these principles. Validity from my point of view signifies assessing what it out to assess. Thus, "validity is evidenced by the degree that a particular indicator measures what it is supported to measure" (2, 11). The main aim of studying is to obtain knowledge, which can be applied in real life. The principle of Authenticity provides actuality in learning and creates motivation. Sally Brown claims that "the method used need to be authentic, that is, assessing what they claim to assess" (1 83). The next principle, from my point of view, is the most essential for learners is to be assessed fairly. This principle incorporates different factors and maintains nondiscrimination against students. Main feature of fairness in assessment is care about providing an equal opportunity for all learners. When learners find assessment fair, their attitude towards learning becomes concrete and effective. Assessment conduce to rise quality of learning, enhance engagement and motive to

reach better results in case students are provided with relevant information what to learn and how they will be assessed. A clear criteria and description of the task brings to the principle of transparency. Transparency supposed students to take responsibility over own studies and be in charge of progress.

Considering significance of applying all features in the aggregate assessment definitely provides and goal-oriented process with fruitful outcomes. Ramsden suggest that: “The assessment of students is above all about understanding the processes and outcomes of student learning, and understanding the students who have done the learning. In maintaining this understanding, we aim to make better not only student’s learning but also our teaching” (8, 180). Coming to the end of this article, we can conclude that assessment should not be the purpose of teaching, but a tool which can reveal not only students’ skills, talents and abilities, but also motivate them to get positive outcome in teaching process.

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