

ПЕДАГОГИКА ЖӘНЕ ОҚЫТУ ӘДІСТЕРІ

PEDAGOGY AND TEACHING METHODS

IRSTI 01.01.09

A.Y. Kuvatova¹, G.M. Kassymova²

^{1,2}Suleyman Demirel University, Kazakhstan, Kaskelen

INFLUENCE OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT ON STUDENTS' SELF-EVALUATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING: THEORETICAL ASPECTS

Abstract. The term “formative assessment” appeared in the second half of previous century has gained an increasing interest among educators, teachers as one of the most effective way to motivate the students’ learning. However until the present in practice formative assessment is used as a form of mini-summative assessment for monitoring the language learning progress which is wrong. Also, some misunderstanding in perception and usage of formative assessment in foreign language learning and teaching are observed in practice. Therefore, this paper focuses on theoretical study of how formative assessment can influence the student’s learning foreign language, the level of their self-evaluation from the point of theoretical findings. In order to answer to this question we have used the following research tools as literature review, content analysis, observation of practice.

Keywords: summative assessment, formative assessment, mini-summative assessment, feedback.

Аңдатпа. Өткен ғасырдың екінші жартысында пайда болған «қалыптастырушы бағалау» термині оқушыларды оқуға ынталандырудың тиімді әдістерінің бірі ретінде мұғалімдер мен оқытушылар арасында үлкен қызығушылық тудырды. Алайда, осы уақытқа дейін іс жүзінде қалыптастырушы бағалау тілді үйрену барысын бақылау үшін мини-жиынтық бағалау нысаны ретінде қолданылады, бұл дұрыс емес. Сонымен қатар, іс жүзінде шет тілін үйрену мен оқытуда формативті бағалауды қабылдау мен қолдануда кейбір түсініспеушіліктер бар. Сондықтан, бұл мақала қалыптастырушы бағалау оқушының шет тілін үйрену процесіне,

теориялық тұжырымдар тұрғысынан өзін-өзі бағалау деңгейіне қалай әсер етуі мүмкін екенін теориялық зерттеуге арналған. Бұл сұраққа жауап беру үшін біз келесі зерттеу құралдарын қолдандық: әдебиеттерге шолу, мазмұнды талдау, тәжірибені бақылау.

Түйінді сөздер: қорытынды баға, қалыптастырушы баға, шағын қорытынды баға, кері байланыс.

Аннотация. Термин «формативное оценивание» появилось во второй половине прошлого столетия и уже вызвал усиливающий интерес среди учителей и педагогов как один из самых эффективных способов мотивирования обучающихся. Однако, до настоящего времени в практике формативное оценивание принимается как форма мини-суммативного оценивания в целях контроля процесса изучения языка, что представляется, на наш взгляд, ошибочным. Также наблюдается недопонимание в восприятии и, следовательно, в использовании формативного оценивания в обучении иностранному языку. В этой связи, данная статья нацелена на теоретическое изучение и анализ результатов проведенных исследований о том, как формативное оценивание может влиять на процесс изучения учащимися иностранного языка, на уровень их самооценки. Для того, чтобы ответить на эти вопросы, следующие методы исследования как обзор литературы, анализ понятий и наблюдения практики были использованы нами в статье.

Ключевые слова: суммативное оценивание, формативное оценивание, мини-суммативное оценивание, обратная связь.

Introduction

For many years teachers all over the world are helping learners understand easily the content being learnt. For some people it may seem like responsibility, for others' duty or job, but teachers play a crucial role in guarantying student's leaving the classroom with amount of information gained in order to continue an education.

Formative assessment is one of the best and powerful ways for the teachers to help the learners evaluate what they know and what they don't, what they can do and what they can't. The term "formative" was introduced by Scriven (1967) and was broadened by Bloom (1969). Teachers and researchers increasingly display an interest in formative assessment as it reflects and supports student learning (Bell & Cowie, 2001; Torrance & Pryor, 2001; Wiliam, 2011) [2]. Traditionally, teachers are informed of the learning of the students via summative assessment, which is given as a test, open-ended question, and quizzes at the end of the chapter, unit or a term to assess the students' knowledge.

However, formative assessment is very different in this case, as Greenstein (2010,p.2) stated: “formative assessment gives teachers information that they can use to inform their teaching and improve student learning while it is in progress and while the outcome of the race can still be influenced” [13]. Also, Guskey (2010, p. 108) suggested teachers using formative assessment “as an integral part of the instructional process to identify individual learning difficulties and prescribe remediation procedures”.

Originally, formative assessment helps learners to evaluate their current level, find and see the gaps in learning. Therefore, productive formative assessment helps students answer the following questions:

1. Where Am I Trying to Go? Learning of a subject is always easy when students know and understand the purpose, what is the aim they are trying to reach. And teachers should help with these issues through whole period, not just at the beginning of the term or unit;
2. Where Am I now? The real success is when students are aware of where should they be and where they are;
3. How do I close the gap? It is the best way to activate students and make them creators of the aim and to help to move from current level to final goal.

Black and Wiliam (2009, p.8) noted that teachers and students all play an important role in the learning process. Teachers’ role is to accentuate clear goals for learners, provide with feedback, and encourage their self-reflection. Learners’ are required to understand learning objectives and always evaluate self-progress [5].

Literature review

Throughout history of education all teachers used different methods in teaching students. They used these means to check whether students gained knowledge properly. Scriven (1967) wrote about the formative process which was the evaluation for the purpose of improvement. In scientific article in 1967 Michael Scriven explained the terms formative and summative as two distinct roles of evaluation could play in evaluating curriculum. There is a lot of investigation relevant to the question of using formative assessment [15].

Soon, Benjamin Bloom (1969) and Wiliam (2006, p. 283) suggested to apply the same meaning to the evaluation of student learning what we call today assessment. According to Greenstein (2010, p.20) the formative process is “while a program is in the planning and developmental stages, it is still malleable, and the information gathered from evaluation can therefore contribute to change in the program”. Starting from here the term formative assessment became a way to notify teachers about students’ learning and teachers were able to collect information and make changes in content in order to students master it [13].

Black and Wiliam (1998) stated formative assessment as one of the most effective strategies for encouraging students’ learning. They also identified that the main points of formative assessment are sharing ideas with students,

questioning and talking on progress and understanding, giving feedback for peers and self-assessment [4]. It is widely focused on teaching and learning than on curriculum, because learning process and dialogue between the learners and the teacher help students to become an independent and self-controlling learner. The developed form of formative assessment is discussion of students with the teachers, who mirror of learners' achievements and assist to see the next steps.

Later, the terms formative and summative became fundamental in understanding assessment. Bloom (1969, p. 48) noted that the purpose of *formative assessment* was "to provide feedback and correctives at each stage in the teaching-learning process" [6]. Afterwards, some scholars began to describe summative assessment as assessment of learning and formative assessment as assessment for learning (Black&Wiliam, 2003; Broadfoot, 2008; Gipps&Stobart, 1997; Stiggins, 2002). Formative assessment emphasizes on feedback that evaluate learning (Black &Wiliam, 2004; Sadler, 1989; Shavelson, 2006).

Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2014) wrote a book and explored that there are common formative assessment methods which can be used in the classroom and the importance of these methods for learning process. Also two authors argued about insufficiency of these techniques when teachers check learners' understanding and reaching the level of learning with questions like "Did you all get that?" or "Does that make sense?" (Fisher & Frey, 2014). They put into some categories such as "oral language, questioning, writing, projects and performances, tests, and school wide approaches" (Fisher & Frey, 2014, p. 1-2). In addition, Fisher and Frey (2014) organized a foundation with three parts which are learning goals, student feedback and planning of student instruction according to weak points and errors. These parts of foundation helped a teacher to understand the significance of formative assessment system [11].

Feedback is a vital part of the formative assessment and John Hattie and Helen Timperley (2007) wrote in the article about importance of learning can be noticed according to the answers of three questions: "Where am I going? (What are the goals?), How am I going? (What progress is being made toward the goal?), and Where to next? (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress?)" (Hattie & Timperley, 2007, p. 86). Ramaprashad (1983) suggests that feedback should not contain only the information about the current task, but also the information on how to improve. Also Sadler (1989) developed this idea and stated that the answers right or wrong are insufficient for teachers. They should better give task-based comments for improving learning. Sadler shows three steps for effective feedback: "the learner has to (a) possess a concept of the standard (or goal, or reference level) being aimed for, (b) compare the actual level of performance with the standard, and (c) engage in appropriate action which leads to some closure of the gap" (p. 121) [14].

However, according to Torrance (2012) and some more researchers (Bennett, 2011; Klenowski, 2009; Hargreaves, 2013) formative assessment

decreases amount of tests and quizzes which are helpful to control students' progress and to develop grades and results [17]. They think that formative assessment takes form of mini-summative assessments or a set of teaching methods for tests. Also Stewart (2012) complained that "the problem is that government told schools that it was all about monitoring pupil progress; it wasn't about pupils becoming owners of their own learning" and he ended his idea because it "failed" by ignoring the "basic ideas that we had been advocating" [16].

Assessment Reform Group (1999) explained the term "formative" itself is open to a variety of interpretations and often means no more than that assessment is carried out frequently and is planned at the same time as teaching. It may be formative in helping the teacher identify areas where more explanation or practice is needed [1]. But for the pupils, the marks or remarks in their work may tell them about their successes or failures, but not how to make progress towards future learning' (p.7). Soon Stewart (2012) published his idea in the Times Educational Supplement and stated: "The big mistake that Paul and I made was calling this stuff "assessment"... because when you use the word assessment, people think about tests and exams". Later he suggested changing it to "responsive teaching" (William, 2013). It means that when students take score for a test or quiz, the learning was assessed and concluded and instead of being formative assessment, it becomes mini-summative assessment [13].

Fautley and Savage (2008) admitted that there was some pressure in some schools from admission to teachers and learners. They asked to show high scores or marks for assessment. In order to fulfill the request for mark system, teachers ignored formative practice to the advantage of summative assessment [10]. Department for Education (DfE) announced in Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without Levels: "formative assessment was not always being used as an integral part of effective teaching" (DfE, 2015: p.13) and schools "Instead of using classroom assessment to identify strengths and gaps in pupils" knowledge and understanding of the programs of study, some teachers were simply tracking pupils' progress towards target levels' (DfE, 2015: p.13). Research suggested that the term "Formative assessment" was misunderstood and misused [9].

Swaffield (2011), also criticized assessment for learning, she stated that formative assessment was to improve students' learning by motivating active participation in the lesson with assessment, discussing and monitoring them to become more individual learners. However, Swaffield insist on its failure, because it focused on features of summative than formative assessment. Additionally, assessment for learning strategy accentuated on controlling learners' progress, but not improving their responsibility. She finalized that "assessment for learning was seen as being about the use of tests" (2011 p. 444).

Conclusion

Educational reform is taking place all over the world. But teachers remain as the primary source of knowledge. Examination-oriented system is not only way to educate anymore. The emergence of formative assessment becomes positive improvement in education, but there are still some problems teachers and students meet with. The definition of formative assessment, in other words assessment for learning, changed according to learning process. Initially it was defined as a communication between teacher and student in learning, mostly emphasizing the responsibility of the learner.

Nonetheless, formative assessment also introduced as “closing the learning gap” which was aimed to improve teaching and learning processes by checking, controlling progress and giving feedback according to level. Here the role of teachers should change of being patriots of traditional evaluation to a settlers and observers of a new curriculum evaluation system.

Formative assessment has a great possibility to improve classroom practice and education at all, but needs further investigations. Because believing in only “closing the learning gap” is not enough, we should develop formative assessment more as a dialogical process, in other words relationship between educators and learners in the classroom.

After having done a literature review on influence of formative assessment on foreign language learning process and learners’ self-evaluation we are planning to reveal in Kazakhstani educational context how formative assessment is perceived by foreign language instructors using semi-structured interview and learn about how formative assessment used by foreign language instructors may affect the learners’ self-evaluation. The level of self-evaluation of learners will be revealed by questionnaires Likert scale.

Reference

- 1 Assessment Reform Group. *Assessment for Learning: Beyond the Black Box*. Cambridge: Cambridge School of Education, 1999. – 12 p.
- 2 Bell, B., Cowie, B. *Formative assessment and science education*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2001. – 156 p.
- 3 Black, P., William, D. Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 5 (1), (1998): pp. 7–73.
- 4 Black, P. William, D. *Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment*, *PHI DELTA KAPPAN*, 80 (2), (1998): pp. 139-148.
- 5 Black, P., Wiliam, D. Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Accountability*, 21, (2009): pp. 5–31.

- 6 Bloom, B.S. Some theoretical issues relating to educational evaluation. In R. W. Tyler (Ed.), *Educational evaluation: New roles, new means* (National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook, 68 (2), (1969): pp. 26–50 .
- 7 Bloom, B.S., Hastings, J.T. Madaus, G.F. *Handbook on the formative and summative evaluation of student learning*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971. – 932 p.
- 8 Crooks, T.J. The impact of classroom evaluation practices on students. *Review of Educational Research*, 58, (1988): pp. 438–481.
- 9 Department for Education *Final Report of the Commission on Assessment Without Levels*. London: The Stationery Office, 2015. – 51 p.
- 10 Fautley, M. Savage, J. *Assessment for Learning and Teaching in Secondary Schools*. Exeter: Learning Matters, 2008. – 114 p.
- 11 Fisher, D., Frey, N. *Checking for understanding: formative assessment techniques for your classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2014. – 160 p.
- 12 Guskey, T.R. Formative classroom assessment and Benjamin S. Bloom: Theory, Research, and Implications. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the *American Educational Research Association*, Montreal, Canada. (2005): pp. 1-11.
- 13 Greenstein, L. *What teachers really need to know about formative assessment*. Moorabbin, Vic.: Hawker Brownlow, 2010. – 198 p.
- 14 Sadler, D.R. Formative assessment and the design of instructional strategies. *Instructional Science*, 18, (1989): pp. 119–144.
- 15 Scriven, M. *The methodology of evaluation*. In R.W. Tyler, R.M. Gagne, M. Scriven's (Eds.), *Perspectives of curriculum evaluation* Chicago, IL: Rand McNally. (1967): pp. 39–83.
- 16 Stewart, W. Think you've implemented Assessment for Learning? *Times Educational Supplement*. URL: <https://www.tes.com/news/tes-archive/tes-publication/think-youve-implemented-assessment-learning> (accessed 25 June 2017).
- 17 Torrance, H. Formative assessment at the crossroads: Conformative, deformative and transformative assessment. *Oxford Review of Education*, 38 (2012): pp. 323-342.
- 18 Wiliam, D. Formative assessment: Getting the focus right. *Educational Assessment*, 11 (3), (2006): pp. 283–289.
- 19 Wiliam, D. Example of a really big mistake: Calling formative assessment formative assessment and not something like “responsive teaching”. (2013) URL: <https://twitter.com/dylanwiliam/status/393045049337847808> (accessed 25 June 2017).