

Assessment techniques as important tool for students' success in ESL classes

Assessment plays an important role in the process of learning, teaching and motivation. It is important to consider how to best measure the learning that you want your students to achieve. Assessments should integrate grading, learning and motivation for your students. Well-designed assessment methods provide valuable information about students learning. They tell us what students learned, how well they learned it, and where they struggled. There are many reasons as to the purpose of assessment. Not only does it serve students, but it also serve the teachers. Assessments serve students by letting them know what errors they made and how they could correct those errors. It also helps teachers better understand what worked and what didn't in the class. For example, if the average score of the class was lower than expected, then the teacher changes the ways to teach the same content.

Today, different types of assessments are used in education : formative assessment, diagnostic assessment and summative.

1. Formative: formative assessment are done throughout the year, usually by classroom teachers. Their purpose is to inform teachers about their students progress, how their instruction needs to be adjusted to improve student learning, they might need to slow down the pace or repeat instructions, or challenge some of them with more difficult task.

2. Diagnostic: When an assessment happens before the learning activity, these are called diagnostic because the results can be used to diagnose problems to focus on during teaching. Educators can then use the information to guide lesson and curriculum planning. Diagnostic assessments are very helpful to teachers who may have a lot of incoming students with unknown ability levels.

3. Summative : When assessments happen after the learning activity, these are called summative because the results are a summation of learning that has occurred. These are measurements, that conclude the learning process, such as final exams, end of until tests. They mostly measure whether students have made progress in their learning.

Focus of Assessment

Individual/self-assessment

Self-assessment is a way of encouraging learners to evaluate and assess their own learning. It's when pupils give feedback to themselves. The advantage of teaching learners how to self-assess their work is that they have to think about what they've done well and what they could do better next time. Self-assessment can play dual role for the student, to both assess the end *product* or outcomes, of their learning (ex. their knowledge of the course content, a final project, essay, etc.), and also the *process* of learning (ex. their approach, strategies, strengths and areas for improvement, etc.) (Google search) Self-assessment provides students with an opportunity to self-evaluate, or make judgments about their learning process and products of learning, based on criteria that they have agreed on with their instructor. It helps students participate in

and take ownership of their own learning. And we can encourage learners to assess themselves, as well. Remember that it's good to use a variety of self-assessment strategies so all students have a chance to find style that works best for them. Any time you introduce a new strategy or assign self-assessment, be very clear about what students should do and how they should do it. How it works:

- At the end of a unit (two weeks' work) in a course book, we can ask them to say yes or no to the statements such as I can give my opinion about things with the expression "*I think that*" or / *can use more than two adjectives* (in the right order) *to describe objects and people*. If they say NO, they can go back to the lessons they have studied and look again at the particular language point.
- At the end of unit, students can do the tasks similar to the ones they have been doing. When they have done these tasks, they themselves say if they have been successful or not. For example, they have to listen to three descriptions of objects and write down what the objects are. If they can do this, they tick (✓) a statement which says I can understand description of object,

When you have got students to assess themselves, it is important to listen to what they say and to take it into account in your assessment of them. One way of doing this as follows: Get students to give themselves the marks for the term or for the semester in the following areas: writing-10, reading-10, vocabulary-10, etc. Students can use their Module Diary to estimate an overall mark, you can then compare them with your own assessment, discuss the point with them and higher or lower the mark. This is the way of linking self-assessment and teacher assessment. Here are ten examples of how self-assessment can make a real difference to progress in learning.

- ✚ It helps pupils to reflect and self-correct.
- ✚ It enables immediate feedback so that pupils can start improving straight away.
- ✚ Self-assessment helps pupils to develop higher-order evaluative skills.
- ✚ Pupils have to reflect honestly, so it also builds integrity.
- ✚ Self-assessment in itself provides another learning opportunity.
- ✚ As pupils need to know the success criteria well, it offers potentially deeper learning.
- ✚ It can help pupils keep track of their progress.
- ✚ Formative self-assessment takes attention away from levels and grades.
- ✚ It promotes autonomous learning.
- ✚ For teachers, self-assessment can reduce marking time!

Peer assessment.

Peer assessment is one of the modern approaches of assessment. Peer assessment or peer review provides a structural learning process for students to critique and provide feedback to each other or their work. It helps students develop lifelong skills in assessing and providing feedback to others and also equips them with skills to self-assess and improve their own work. (Google search). Peer assessment is most commonly used with written work, but can also be used with presentations, performances, posters, videos and other types of assessment. Peer assessment can take many forms and activities that can vary depending on the learning goals, curricular content and available technologies. It can be formative, where students give feedback on each other's draft before a final product is submitted, or summative, where students use a rubric to grade to final submissions. We are all agreed that teachers should discuss the general exam skills and do practice tests, so that they get a feel for the experience and through peer assessment practice, students will become familiar with assessment criteria. Teachers must involve actively their students in the assessment process, and the teachers are the ones, who help and teach them how to give feedback, how to respond to the feedback they receive. Peer assessment is a great tool for enhancing communication and understanding

of assessment criteria. It also builds a culture of collaboration, trust and respect in the classroom, so that a learner doesn't feel judged or insecure when engaging in peer-assessment. When students assess their peers' work they are actively comparing their own work peers' work with reference to assignment requirements, instructor expectation, and perception of quality (Baker 2016 Nicol, Thomson and Breslin 2014). Engaging students as critical readers of their peers' writing also helps them develop a better understanding of how readers might interpret the texts they produce (Cho and Cho 2011; MacArthur 2010).

Peer assessment encourages active learning by engaging students in the feedback process rather than just being passive recipients of feedback from an instructor (Liu and Carless 2006; Cartney 2010; Nicol 2011). Peer assessment can help to provide opportunities for earlier feedback so that students can use it to improve their work through revising drafts or incorporating what they've learned into subsequent assignments. Opportunities to apply knowledge through practice and receive quality feedback on that practice are known to have positive impacts on students learning (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006). "...students are not just learning by construction meaning form feedback provided by others, rather they are learning by constructing feedback 'meanings' themselves. (Nicol 2011) ; As we said above, peer-assessment is a good way for individuals to get familiar with constructive criticism. But, just because students need to practice certain test types doesn't mean this has to be done in a boring or tense way. There are a number of ways/ techniques of having fun with tests and exams.

Peer Assessment Techniques . Share with another pair

Ask students to share positive feedback about partner's work with another pair. By sharing good practice, ideas are shared further in the class. It also helps learners to feel good about themselves when their work is praised in front of others.

Peer quizzes

This is a nice and easy peer assessment technique. Use the lesson's aim and success criteria to make a short quiz. This can include questions where they have to find evidence in their partner's work.

A favorite quote

Students select and share their favorite quote from a partner's piece of work. It's great for creative writing. The quote could be shared verbally or, instead, be written on a sticky note and put on a learning wall display.

A shared success

Ask students to work together to come up with something they both did well, or something they could improve on.

Setting a challenge

Why not ask the class to create a goal or challenge for their partner? They can write this on a sticky note and put it on their book.

Then, next time you do a related piece of work, they can look at the sticky note and go back to it after they've finished.

One minute feedback

Set the timer and ask the class to give as much feedback to their partner in a minute! Then, switch over so the other person can have a go. Write a few sentence starter prompts on the board so they can refer to it if they get stuck.

If you use these peer assessment techniques, the children in your class will have lots of fun.

Plus, any lesson observers or inspectors will be impressed too.

Let's get an idea of the benefits of peer assessment and how do they help teachers and, more importantly, learners?

Peer assessment can:

- Encourage social skills and communication by getting students to talk openly about their own and others' work.
- Pave the way for self-assessment and individual learning. This is because it can develop learner's understanding of success criteria and constructive criticism.
- As long as time is given for students to respond to the feedback, it could improve their work and give them something useful to act on next time.
- Make feedback less daunting for children because it's from a peer rather than a teacher. As we all know, pupils often make the best teachers!
- Gives children new inspiration and techniques to use in their own work. Seeing others' work whether it's creative writing, reasoning in math, the way some data has been presented in science, a piece of artwork or a dance-can help them to magpie ideas.
- Make sure every child has their work acknowledged by someone else, because it's impossible for teachers to respond to every child individually in a lesson.
- Develop important character attributes, such as respect, responsibility and independence. Peer assessment is a great tool for enhancing communication and understanding of assessment criteria. It also builds a culture of collaboration, trust and respect in the classroom.

...if feedback processes are to enhance, we must move beyond a view of feedback as transmission and acknowledge the active role that students must play in such. (Nicol, Thomson and Breslin 2014)

In conclusion the article highlights the importance to assessment. To choose the right type of assessment, depends on students' needs. Knowing what decisions you need to make is how you determine which assessment fits your purpose. You need to ask yourself "what decisions am I trying to solve". The answers to these questions drive when you assess and how you assess and what you assess.

This article represents different types of assessment used; formative, diagnostic, summative specifically in terms of classroom strategies.

Much of this work focused on the effects of feedback in classes, as peer assessment represents one of the modern approaches of assessment, this type has been thoroughly discussed. The article provides with number of peer assessment technique of having fun with tests and exams. It also reviews the benefits of peer assessment for both, teachers and learners.

We tried to pay your attentions to assessment as an integral part of learning process, as the way of improving learning outcomes for students. Also attempts were made to connect classroom practice to feedback, motivation and self-regulated learning.

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