

ASSESSMENT FOR, AS, AND OF LEARNING; INTEGRATING LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

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Abstract. *The following scientific article helps to differentiate among various assessment-related terms as AfL, AoL, and AaL. Also, it compares and contrasts three views of learning (behaviorism, constructivism, and cognitive science) and describes how each leads to a different vision of assessment.*

Keywords: *assessment, assessment literacy, assessment for learning, assessment as learning, assessment of learning, behaviorism, constructivism, cognitive science*

Assessment is the most important component of teaching and learning process. They are like cycle, one cannot exist without other. All three components should be aligned together to rich the excellent result at the end of a journey. However, sometimes we can observe some misbalance in form of discrimination of one of the components. Usually it is assessment. It happens because teachers always care about the content of the course, what materials to use, what activities to apply and assessment usually stays as a final consideration. Despite the fact that assessment comes after teaching and learning, it is the

most important thing we can do to help our students learn. Teachers may not like assessment process, but this is the way to involve learners to the progression. Hence, students usually do their best if they know or want to get qualification. However, there is usually one question weather what we are doing in assessment helps or undermines the whole learning process? And the answer is simple. Everything depends on how teachers organize assessment. It should not be a process which shocks and frighten students. Assessment should be accepted by learners as a way to progress.

.....assessment has to be seen as an interconnected part of teaching and learning. The conception of assessment is one that focuses on describing student learning, identifying where each student is in his or her personal learning progression, diagnosing any difficulties students may be having in their learning, and providing direction to the teacher and the student in the steps to be taken to enhance learning. This focus on the use of assessment to support learning, rather than to document achievement, has come to be referred to as "assessment for learning". To bring the concept of assessment for learning to fruition in the classroom, assessment activities have to be designed and conducted with the purpose of learning in mind. If teachers are to embrace this new philosophy of assessment, they need to understand how assessment for learning works.

(Rita Berry, Assessment for learning, Hong Kong University Press, 2008)

Thus, a lot trainings, conferences, online courses are organized today to develop "assessment literacy" of teachers. "Teacher" is profession, and the difference of profession and job is that it always needs development. Today in XXI century the nature of methodology of teaching has been changed, and lot of new approaches and techniques have been

presented to make the learning process more communicative and interactive. It clearly demonstrate that the process and the ways of assessment also changed.

Assessment is the broad name which collect and evaluate the evidence of students' learning. It is the integral part of teaching and learning, and has multiple purposes. Assess-

ment should provide opportunities for teachers to gather evidence about student achievement in relation to outcomes, enable students to demonstrate what they know and can do with language, clarify students understanding of concepts and provide deeper understanding, and provide evidence that current understanding is a suitable basis for future learning.

Thus, assessment activities should be valid and based on the syllabus outcomes. The criteria which clarifies what aspects of learning are being assessed should be presented to students at the beginning of the course. Moreover, these activities should enable students to demonstrate their learning in a range of different contexts. Also, it should be a part of ongoing process where progress is monitored over time and enable teachers to use feedback effectively which will enable learners to reflect to the learning process. Teachers should always remember that the effect that learners have from assessment and feedback is the base of motivation and self-esteem, and the factor of active involvement of students in their own learning.

However, very often we come across with some problems in assessment. There are several reasons for that. The main one is that assessment is not aligned with the course objectives which leads to several problems, as.....

-students usually expected to guess the nature of assessment requirements: The problem is that the requirements of the course assessment are not presented at the beginning of the course. Students do not know what they are expected to produce at the end of the course.

-assessment requirements are often separate from what happens in the curriculum:

Very often the content of the course is interactive and communicative but, when comes to assessment it usually the traditional paper-pencil test, which doesn't check learners' abilities and skills in the language.

-assessment is unclear to students:

This part is connected with the previous problem, when assessment is not aligned with the course content, there will be problems of comprehension of that.

-assessment occurs late in the process:

The problem is that learners are presented with the assessment requirement after taking the test. As E. White states in his report on the research conducted at Tokyo University

“for many learners assessment is not an educational experience in itself, but a process of guessing what the teacher wants”.[1]

So, here is the question arises, “What should we do to keep students in the loop?”

The answer can be found in the following terms which we always come across with, but do not put emphasize on. They are Assessment for Learning, Assessment of Learning and Assessment as Learning approaches. As we have mentioned earlier to overcome the problems, teaching, learning and assessment should integrate these approaches. These approaches can be used as individually or together, formally or informally, and to gather students achievement and to improve students' learning.

The Influence of Behavioural Views of Learning on Assessment

Behaviourism is a theory which emphasize concepts such as stimulus-response association, reinforcement, and operant learning of learners. The principle of the following theory is behavior. The result of this theory may be positive and negative, so; positive leads to an increase in the behavior and negative consequence leads to a decrease in the behavior. Assessment associated with behaviourist views of learning aims to test whether the learners have met the requirements as set. A judgement will be made by comparing the planned learning targets and the ultimate performance of the learner. This kind of assessment represents **Assessment OF Learning (AoF)**. [2] Assessment of learning assists teachers in using evidence of student learning to assess achievement against outcomes and standards. Sometimes referred to as 'summative assessment', it usually occurs at defined key points during a unit of work or at the end of a unit, term or semester, and may be used to rank or grade students. The effectiveness of assessment of learning for grading or ranking depends on the validity and reliability of activities. Its effectiveness as an opportunity for learning depends on the nature and quality of the feedback. Assessment of learning is used for planning learning goals of learners and provides evidence of achievement to the wider community.

The Influence of Constructivism on Assessment

Behaviorism ignores some contributing factors in learning, which are connected with

cognitive and psychological aspects (internal factors). Thus, the following shortcoming of behaviorism made theorists to look for alternatives. Constructivists, in comparison to behaviorists, admit learners' active role, and suggest that learners are able to establish their own learning. To be more specific, human beings are compared to scientists who constantly construct hypotheses, carry out their own personal experiments, and actively seek to confirm or disprove in the process of

knowledge. Step by step, they build up their own concepts about the world which they come into contact with, and create their own understanding of things (Berry, 1998). The main principle of constructivism is that learners construct the knowledge by themselves, by facing their own experiences, so constructivist pays a great attention to social interaction. Thus, social interaction shapes a certain role in developing human's experience.

Assessment associated with constructivist views of learning aims to

understand how the learner learns, what the learner can do or cannot do, and makes some deliberations and decisions on how to help the learner learn. This view, which is more closely linked to contemporary theories of learning, places more emphasis on the process of learning. Theorists usually call this kind of assessment Assessment FOR Learning (AfL).

Assessment for learning is any assessment where the initial purpose is to improve learning and teaching in order to raise students' achievement. It is based on the idea that students will improve most if they understand the goals of their learning, where they are in relation to these goals and how they can close the gap between their current and desired achievement. The term AfL, is often used interchangeably with formative assessment.[3] Assessment for learning involves teachers using evidence about students' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching. Assessment for learning often involves tasks that are for formative assessment, during the teaching and learning process. It enables students to learn better rather than to get better mark.[4]

The influence of Cognitive Science on Assessment

Recent efforts in the area of cognitive science have lead to attention being given to metacognition as an important component of assessment. Metacognition is a term used in information processing theory to indicate an executive function (Brown, 1994). The theory compares human learning to the ways that computers process information. This entails a four stage encoding process of selecting, comprehending, storing and retrieving information. Metacognitive strategies involve

planning, monitoring, and evaluating in the learning processes. They are the measures that learners use to organize and manage their learning. Metacognitive strategies also include an awareness of what one is doing and the strategies one is employing. In other words, learners will have to have metacognitive knowledge to recognize the demands of a particular task and identify which strategies are most appropriate during any given tasks. This demands self-regulation on the oart of learners. Learners will have to self-monitor, self-evaluate, and self-assess their learning process. They think backward and forward and make plans for their learning. Learners became engaged users of the information that assessment can produce. They can use assessment to take responsibility for and improve their own learning. In this sense, self-assessment is part of the learning process. It should be noted that metacognitive skills must be developed, and many learners will not develop these skills without explicit guidance from teachers. Cognitive science, as informed by Snow and Lohman (1993), provides a powerful tool to understand mental processes underlying good or bad performance. Besides its relevance to assessment as learning, it is relevant to the approach of assessment for learning.

...assessment associated with metacognitive aims to enable learners to become autonomous learners. It requires that learners be aware of what is required from them and monitor and assess their own learning during the learning process. With the information obtained, they can regulate their learning to meet the goals they set earlier. This view of assessment stresses the learner's active role in learning. This kind of assessment is referred to as Assessment AS Learning (AaL).

To conclude the above mentioned, we may state that the three approaches to assessment (AoL, AfL, and AaL) accentuate different focuses of learning conceptions or paradigms. AoL, being closer to behaviorism, represents the "assessment as measurement" paradigm. In this paradigm, judgments of performances are taken at the end of learning. Both AfL and AaL have a strong connection with constructivism and cognitive science. They both treat learning as an internal event, both emphasize the importance of feedback to learning, and both focus on formative assessment as key to learning. Where they differ is their primary

focus. For AfL, the focus is largely on the role the teacher plays in promoting learning, and could be said to reflect an "assessment in support of learning" paradigm. AaL places special emphasis on the role of the learner and highlights the use of assessment to increase learners' ability to control their own learning. AaL could be said to be an "assessment as learning to learn paradigm". Although the three assessment paradigms have their own distinctive characteristics, they should be viewed as complimentary to one another in carrying out the educational purposes.

References

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ОЦЕНКА ДЛЯ, КАК И ОБУЧЕНИЯ; ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ ОБУЧЕНИЯ, ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И ОЦЕНКИ

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***Аннотация.** Следующая научная статья помогает дифференцировать различные термины, связанные с оценкой. Кроме того, она сравнивает и противопоставляет три взгляда на обучение: бихевиоризм, конструктивизм и когнитивную науку и описывает как каждый из них употребляется в оценочной деятельности.*

***Ключевые слова:** оценивание, оценочная деятельность, оценка для обучения, оценка как обучения, оценка обучения, бихевиоризм, конструктивизм, когнитивная наука.*