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ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE SKILLS OF STUDENTS

Qualification work

5141400-Foreign language and literature(English)

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Assessment of Language Skills of Students

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Introduction

Higher Education in Uzbekistan initiated a major reform by implementing use of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages -learning, teaching and assessment (CEFR) - and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in the country.

The implementation of Presidential Decree Number 1875 of December 2012 enhanced the teaching and learning of foreign languages and strengthen the communication skills and international effect of future Uzbekistan specialists in all fields.

Here in Uzbekistan the Uzbekistan State World Languages University is the main partner in implementing the use of the CEFR for General English, Medical English, English for Agriculture and other instances of English for Specific Purposes.

However, this innovation brought the new way of learning, teaching and assessment in compulsory education for children from 7-19 years old and higher education for older youth, who are the intellectual potential of the country.

Therefore the Government of Uzbekistan has been instructed by the Presidential Decree 1875 of December 2012 to analyze the situation and realize an important project on this issue, together with international organizations and partners.

Uzbekistan aligned the educational system with the new internationally-recognized framework described by the CEFR in learning, teaching, assessment, with a national content. This was aligned to international standards in the following divisions by level:

A1 - Elementary Schools, General English, Part I

A2 - Secondary Educations, General English, Part II

B1 - Vocational In 2012 Uzbekistan accepted the CEFR as a nation-wide educational standard of reference for learning, teaching and assessment of foreign languages. As

English is the key language in economy, society, education, and industry, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Education of Uzbekistan has undertaken an initiative to align English Language programs nationwide with the CEFR.
Schools and High Schools, English for Specific Purposes, including language programs
B2 - Higher Education non-language programs and High School language programs
C1 - Language programs, Masters, Doctorate

According to the decree, starting from 2013/2014 school year foreign languages, mainly English, gradually throughout the country is taught from the first year of schooling in the first form of lesson-games and speaking games, continuing to learning the alphabet, reading and spelling in the second year (grade).

This document serves as an important guideline in development of the new textbooks for teaching foreign languages, introduction of advanced teaching methods using modern pedagogical and information-communication technologies, education of new generation to foreign languages, cardinal improvement of the system of training specialists, fluent in these languages, creation of conditions and opportunities for wide use of information recourses by students. [1]

Long before the first day of class or a program is proposed we must decide how we intend to measure outcomes and consider what role an assessment will play in instruction. Assessment is how we identify our students' needs, document their progress and determine how we are doing as teachers and planners. Assessment occurs in many contexts and is done for a variety of reasons. [30:136]

Language teachers are often faced with the responsibility of selecting or developing language tests for their classrooms and programs. However, deciding which testing alternatives are the most appropriate for a particular language, education context can be daunting, especially given the increasing variety instruments, procedures, and practices available for language testing. Such alternatives include not

only test types with long traditions of use, such as multiple choice, matching, true-false and fill-in-the blank tests; close and dictation procedures, essay exams, interviews, but also tests differing in scope and structure from these well-known options. For example, technological developments have led a number of new language testing formats, including computer-based and computer-adaptive tests (Brown,1997;), audiotape-based oral proficiency interviews (Stransfield and Kenyon,1992), and web-based testing (Roever,1998).

Classroom assessments are those developed or selected by teachers for use during their day-to-day instruction. They are different from standardized tests which are conducted annually to gauge student achievement and are most frequently used to serve formative purposes, that is to help students learn.

However, classroom assessment also can be used in summative way to determine a student's report credit card. Standardized tests, on the other hand, tend to be considered summative assessments, as they are used to judge student progress over an extended period of time.

According to the above mentioned statements we can define the **aim** of the present qualification work as to study theoretical and practical bases of assessment in teaching process of English.

The **tasks** of the research are:

-acquaint with the most important methods, means and organizational forms specific in teaching English;

-to study the bases of educational assessment and other terms associations;

-to get acquainted with the literature and sources connected with the assessment of language students;

-to define perspectives of "assessment" in foreign language learning;

-to underline the effectiveness of assessment procedures in teaching English in a classroom;

-to use the given methods, means and forms of teaching in practice.

The **object** of investigation is the process of assessment in foreign language learning.

The **subject** of the work is methods of teaching foreign language and the role of assessment in it.

The **theoretical value** of the research is that this sphere of study has been investigated by a number of Methodists, such as V.S.Setlin(1970), R.Lado(1969),J.Jalolov(2012) and others; this matter still attracts both skillful teachers and ordinary ones as well.

The **practical value** of the work is that the given information can be used as an additional material in lectures, seminars and practical lessons on the discipline as Teaching Foreign Language.

Methods of research are exploratory and constructive, which mean I identified the problem of assessment in the process of teaching language first and then developed the solution of it.

The qualification work consists of three parts, i.e. introduction, three chapters with conclusion to each one, general conclusion, summary, the list of used literature and appendices.

The first chapter discusses the bases of educational assessment, its types and functions.

The second chapter reveals through classroom assessment.

The third chapter has practical approach to the study, i.e. using different assessment means in teaching English through assessment tools and strategies and criteria for assessing students in English lessons.

The received results of the research are presented in conclusion and summary reflects the outline of the work.

The list of used literature represents main sources of the research.

Chapter I. BASES OF EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

1.1. Types and Methods of Assessment

There are many ways to approach the evaluation of student learning. The characteristics of good evidence of student learning include considerations of direct and indirect methods for gathering evidence of student learning, the appropriate use of quantitative and qualitative evidence, and other methodological considerations. First, however, it is important to understand the fundamental assessment concepts of formative and summative assessment and benchmarking.

Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative assessment is ongoing assessment that is intended to improve an individual student's performance, student learning outcomes at the course or program level, or overall institutional effectiveness. By its nature, formative assessment is used internally, primarily by those responsible for teaching a course or developing a program. Ideally, formative assessment allows a professor, professional staff member, or program director to act quickly to adjust the contents or approach of a course or program. For instance, a faculty member might revise his or her next unit after reviewing students' performance on an examination at the end of the first unit, rather than simply forging ahead with the pre-designated contents of the course.

Many instructors also solicit repeated brief evaluations of their teaching, and the data gleaned from these can be used to make adjustments that may improve learning, such as the introduction of more discussion into a class.

In contrast, summative assessment occurs at the end of a unit, course, or program. The purposes of this type of assessment are to determine whether or not

overall goals have been achieved and to provide information on performance for an individual student or statistics about a course or program for internal or external accountability purposes.

Grades are the most common form of summative assessment. Goals for student learning will be expressed in summative way when faculty members are describing what they expect students to be able to do or what skills they expect students to achieve when they complete a course or a program or when they graduate from the institution. Formative and summative assessment work together to improve learning. They should be central components of assessment at the course level, and where appropriate, at the program level.

Benchmarking

The term benchmarking is now common in assessment plans and conversations about assessment. Originally, benchmarking was a term used in the corporate environment to define a set of external standards against which an organization could measure itself. The organization identifies comparable, peer, or "reach" organizations and systematically compares its practices or achievements against those of the other organization. In higher education settings, a university might use benchmarking techniques to define its comparison group—its peer institutions—and to compare its own outcomes to theirs.

This benchmarking could be based, for example, on retention rates, five-year graduation rates, admissions yield data (the number of enrollees as a function of the number of students accepted), employment and graduate school placement rates, and performance on national or professional examinations.

Theoretically, any outcome for which there are data from peer institutions and programs can be compared in a benchmarking study. Two other related forms of benchmarking are used in higher education settings. A college or university can

compare itself to a national norm by reviewing the data from a published test or survey such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

Alternatively or in addition, an institution can set for itself the goals or benchmarks that it hopes to achieve within a specified time period (e.g., to increase job placement rates from 70% to 90% in five years).

The benefit of inter-institutional comparison is that it can flag problem areas to investigate the causes of results that differ from the norm. For example ,two comparable liberal arts colleges with similar selectivity, similar student preparedness, similar socioeconomic profiles for their students, and similar science curricula, may discover that proportionately more students are accepted to medical schools from one institution than from another.

Further investigation may reveal that the excelling college requires a hospital internship for all of its pre-med students. The discovery that an institution's students are below the norm on a national metric (e.g., amount of time devoted to school work outside the classroom) challenges the institution to determine the reason for this result.

Similarly, an institution that sets its own internal benchmarks must design and implement a program to achieve its goals. Before beginning to articulate goals for student learning, program faculty and leaders of institutional assessment should consider how the use of benchmarks could enhance their institution's ability to achieve its goals and whether useful measures from comparable peer institutions are available.

Direct and Indirect Methods for Assessing Student Learning

The concepts of direct and indirect methods of valuating student learning are often confused with each other and with quantitative and qualitative forms of information. Each of these has its merits and drawbacks.

Direct and indirect methods of evaluating learning relate to whether or not the method provides evidence in the form of student products or performances. Such evidence demonstrates that *actual learning* has occurred relating to a specific content or skill. Indirect methods reveal characteristics associated with learning, but they only imply that learning has occurred.

These characteristics may relate to the student, such as perceptions of student learning, or they may relate to the institution, such as graduation rates. When a student completes a calculus problem correctly and shows her work, learning is demonstrated *directly*. When the same student describes her own calculus abilities as excellent, she is demonstrating *indirectly* that she has learned calculus. Both of these pieces of information about the student's performance are important. For example, a student's perception that she is doing poorly in calculus when she is actually doing well would provide important information to both the student and the professor.

However, indirect evidence—in this case, a perception—is less meaningful without the associated direct and tangible evidence of learning.

Direct Methods

Direct methods of evaluating student learning are those that provide evidence of whether or not a student has command of a specific subject or content area, can perform a certain task, exhibits a particular skill, demonstrates a certain quality in his or her work (e.g., creativity, analysis, synthesis, or objectivity), or holds a particular value. Direct methods can be used at the course level, the program level, and, theoretically, at the institutional level.

Course Level.

Most familiar are direct evaluations of learning that are applied at the course level. Examinations,3 regardless of format, are designed to be direct evaluations of student learning. Similarly, evaluations of writing samples,

presentations, artistic performances, and exhibits provide direct evidence of student learning, as do evaluations of student performance in internships, research projects, field work, or service learning settings. As discussed later, grading linked to clear learning goals is a valid and useful form of direct measurement of student learning.

Program Level.

At the program level, examinations also are used frequently as direct measures of student learning. Such examinations would be more comprehensive than those embedded within a course and would be designed
to evaluate cumulative, aggregate, or holistic learning after the conclusion of a program or during the course of the program. For example, a writing examination might be given after the first two years of a general education program, with the goal of determining whether students' writing was enhanced as a function of the program.

Standardized tests of disciplinary content might be administered to students after they have completed all program requirements for the major (e.g., American Chemical Society examinations). Honors theses, senior theses, or senior projects are other sources of direct evidence of student learning within a program. Ratings by internship supervisors of how well interns are demonstrating key learning outcomes are important, direct program-level evidence of student learning.

Institutional Level.

Direct evaluations at the institutional level are used less frequently and are much more likely to take the form of an examination. An institution may wish to demonstrate that certain goals expressed in its mission were achieved through exposure to the entirety of its curriculum and co-curricular experiences. For example, it may wish to show that regardless of program or major, which co-curricular activities students have participated in, and whether students were residents or

commuters, they exhibit cultural sensitivity and global cultural and geographical awareness. It could design an evaluation process to determine the degree to which graduating students exhibited these qualities (e.g., a rubric for reviewing an examination or portfolio). It may appear that such qualities are abstract and, therefore, that the measurement of learning was not direct, but in fact that is not the case. In this example, the goal was to have students learn, through curricular and co-curricular programs, to be good global citizens, broadly speaking, and the hypothetical examination was designed to measure the degree to which this goal was achieved.

General education knowledge, competencies, and skills gained across the curriculum might be evaluated over the entire student experience, whether before or after graduation.

Indirect Methods

Indirect methods of evaluating student learning involve data that are *related to* the act of learning, such as factors that predict or mediate learning or perceptions about learning but do not reflect learning itself. Indirect evidence often is acquired through the use of self-report format surveys, questionnaires, and interviews. Indirect evidence also is provided in the form of "demographic" statistics about the student population of an institution, such as overall GPA, student retention rates, graduation rates, and job placement rates.

Qualitative information about graduates, such as names of employers, graduate schools attended, and alumni achievements are also common forms of indirect evidence.

Course Level.

The most familiar indirect assessment of student learning is the course and teaching evaluation given at the end of the semester. These instruments usually have a quantitative section in a Likert (numerically-scaled) format, in which the student rates

the quality of teaching and of the course, as well as a narrative section in which the student offers additional qualitative comments. An instructor who regularly reviews his or her teaching evaluations and who changes the course as a result of those evaluations is engaging in improvement based on hypotheses derived from the indirect assessment of student learning. The same instructor can use this indirect method in conjunction with direct methods to improve student learning in the course.

For example, students might use the narrative portion of the evaluation to request more time for class discussion and might give the professor only moderate ratings for "engagement with the course material." The instructor decides to introduce more discussion into his or her class and subsequently students praise the use of discussion and give high ratings for the instructor's "engagement with course material."

Most importantly, the instructor notices that student grades on quizzes or exams and work on assignments are higher in the semester after he made the change. This simple illustration of how indirect evidence can be used in conjunction with direct evidence can be applied in more complicated situations.

Program Level.

At the program level, student satisfaction surveys may reveal that students want more one-on-one contact with faculty members. Upon reflection, faculty members may decide to offer more independent study experiences; consequently, scores on Graduate Record Examination subject area exams improve (direct evidence of student learning), as do graduate school admission rates (indirect evidence of student learning).

Institutional Level.

Indirect means of evaluating student learning are important at the institutional level as well. National surveys, such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), provide benchmarking opportunities for the institutions to gauge the qualities

of their student populations relative to other institutions so that they can determine whether changes in programming affect students' perceptions and behavior inside and outside the classroom. Ultimately, such assessments can affect performance in the classroom.

For instance, if an institution finds that its students spend less time studying than the national average for study time, it might introduce curricular changes that link student evaluation (i.e., grades) more directly to the amount of time studied, perhaps by providing assignments that demand more out-of-class time and by using class examinations which test areas that are not learned simply by attending class. The greater engagement that these changes create might serve to improve student performance on direct measures of student learning. Indirect evidence often focuses on the learning *process* and the learning *environment.*

1.2. Influence of Assessment on Students Motivation and Success

What is the purpose of classroom assessment in our schools? Baxter (1999) claims that, "the purpose of assessment may be grading people to decide their suitability or readiness for something (such as a job, or the award of a qualification) or it may be to give feedback on their development."

For instance, students may be tested to determine if they are prepared to advance to the next grade level or to ascertain their ability in a particular content area. Richard Stiggins defines an assessment broadly to include all activities that teachers and students undertake to get information that can be used analytically to alter teaching and learning.(2005)

This definition considers assessment as an involved practice. Richard Stiggins describes classroom assessment as "the process of gathering evidence of student learning to inform instructional decisions" (2005, p. 5). He also states that for assessment to be effectively utilized, accurate information must be acquired and the

assessment should not only reflect student achievement but also enrich student motivation and improve student success (Stiggins, 2005).

The diverse nature of classroom assessment creates a challenge in knowledge, in preparation and in effective use by teachers.

Teachers have a professional responsibility to the students to learn and to employ current and best practices in all facets of teaching, including assessment. Taken from the previous, collective definitions from current research, assessment proves to be a multifaceted classroom tool.

Teachers must discover, accept and apply this new understanding of classroom assessment to continue to describe achievement and contribute to learning and motivation.

Teachers want their students to learn, to succeed and to achieve. And yet, for many students the learning goals and content of assessments remain vague. Some teachers mistakenly believe that they must keep their assessments secret.

Clouded in ambiguity, students find difficulty reaching for uncertain targets, making achievement a guessing game.

One way to minimize the blind search for success, assessments should reflect the knowledge and skills that is taught in class, and this correlation will help students realize that assessments are reasonable evaluation . Informing students of detailed expectations and specific learning objectives from the beginning of a unit or lesson creates clear, focused goals for students to pursue and jumpstarts them on their way to success.

In order for assessment to be considered fair and ethical, students must know the format of the assessments before lessons begin; they must know what will be tested, how it will be graded, scoring criteria, anchors, exemplars, and examples of performance. In addition to providing this information, teachers can prepare students for assessments by giving them opportunities to practice with the format of the assessments.

For example, if students will be taking a written essay exam, the teacher can provide the students with sample questions that reflect the quality of exam questions. Furthermore, upon completion of the practice questions, students may be involved with determining grading criteria and applying those criteria to their own work or the work of their peers. By applying these techniques, teachers can take an active role in setting their students up for success.

Assessment Triggers the Motivation-Success Cycle

In addition to sharing learning targets and assessments with students, teachers can enhance student achievement through assessment by providing proof of the student's success. As soon as pupils realize their own success: What begins to grow in them is a sense of hopefulness and an expectation of more success in the future. This in turn fuels enthusiasm and the motivation to try hard, which fuels even more success.

The basis of this upward spiral is the evidence of their own achievement, which students receive from their teachers based on ongoing classroom assessments. Thus, classroom assessment information is the essential fuel that powers the learning system for students.

Unfortunately, if the students experience failure they are likely to get caught in a descending spiral, which can lead to feelings of disappointment and despair. This cycle of repeated failure becomes part of a shared belief between such students and their teacher. Obviously, the teacher's goal is to initiate the cycle of motivation and success.

Involving Students in Assessment

One method teachers can instigate this positive motivation-success cycle is to

involve students in the process of assessment. Countless ways exist from which teachers can choose to include students in assessment. One instance is presented in the determination of learning or achievement targets. The bulk of responsibility for creating these targets rests in the hands of the teacher, usually guided by school, district and state standards.

As mentioned previously, communicating these goals is one practical way of enhancing achievement. In addition, students can collaborate with the teacher to develop some additional desired outcomes of learning. For instance, the teacher may include goals directed toward student interests. "If students play even a small role in setting the (learning achievement) target…we can gain considerable motivational and therefore achievement, benefits" (Stiggins, 2005, p.244). By becoming involved with the desired outcomes of learning, students gain motivation to learn.

Another technique that can be used to engage students in assessment and to increase motivation is to "help students learn to reflect on and see their own improvement as achievers" (Stiggins, 2005, p. 322). Keeping learning logs or receiving frequent updates from the teacher can raise student awareness of progress. When students and teachers engage in conversation about assessment, this encourages students to consider their own cognition, which aids in the learning process.

The motivation-success cycle will continue if students witness and reflect on their growth toward learning goals. Students may also learn to recognize and track their improvement by participating in self-assessment. Understanding how to evaluate one's work can initiate students' understanding of the connections between evaluation and achievement and can strengthen student performance.

Through careful,teacher guidance and practice students can become effective judges of their own work.

Further research shows that when students understand and apply self-assessment skills their achievement increases and that self-assessments play a

significant role in increasing students' motivation to learn . (Broadfoot,1996) Through self-evaluation, students directly observe their own improvement and therefore are more motivated to achieve.

By involving students in the assessment process, teachers encourage students to create a sense of internal responsibility for their achievement. Stiggins remarks that students "must take responsibility for developing their own sense of control over their success" (2005, p. 296). This in turn leads to greater motivation and greater academic success. "If learners do not also develop the capability of directing their own learning and acting on the world around them, they will be only partially educated, and limited in what they can do" .

In order for students to be fully absorbed in learning the student and teacher must create a partnership in accomplishing learning goals. Stiggins gives an example of how teachers can support students in this process: You (teacher) would share decision-making power to bring students into their learning as full partners, teaching them how to gauge their own success. In short, you would strive to establish in your students an internal locus of control over their own academic well-being. If they participate, they benefit, and they know this is going on (2005, p. 288)

The greater responsibility a student feels toward his or her achievement, the stronger the desire will be to put forth the effort needed to reach learning targets. Students also perform with greater conviction and with an anticipation of achievement if they feel accountable for their own learning. This reinforces the idea that student engagement in assessment fuels the drive towards achievement.

In addition to involving students in assessment, teachers boost student success by creating authentic, quality assessments. Teachers and students can only gain accurate knowledge of achievement through quality assessments. Valid and reliable assessments will clearly show the teacher and student what knowledge and skills have been learned.

From these results further learning can be initiated, whether that means re-teaching or setting new learning goals.

Quality assessment are "tasks to be justified in terms of the learning aims that they serve, and they can work well only if opportunities for pupils to communicate their evolving understanding are built into the planning"(McMillan,2004).

By determining exactly what students have learned and not learned, assessments benefit both teachers and students.

Teachers' classroom assessments become an integral part of the instructional process and a central ingredient in their efforts to help students learn, the benefits of assessment for both students and teachers are boundless, it discusses the importance of a teacher's ability to integrate assessment and classroom instruction claiming that it gives the teachers clues as to what lessons and level of teaching that may be appropriate. In order for teachers to take full advantage of assessments they must be open and willing to view them as achievement gauges, student motivators, and instructional guides.

Communicating Results/Feedback

The results of these quality assessments must then be effectively communicated to the student in order for continued success. Simply returning a test to a student with a letter grade on top does not give the student any indication on what improvements need to be made or what concepts may be misunderstood.

Here assessment is viewed as a self-reflective learning tool for students and an opportunity for teachers to present experiences for learning improvement. The feedback to any learner should be about the particular qualities of his or her work, with advice on what he or she can do to improve, and should avoid comparisons with other ones." Through communication of assessment results, teachers can take the opportunity to show sensitivity toward the students. The teacher can also encourage the students to further their development and challenge themselves to gain greater understanding.

Assessment should no longer be viewed as merely a device to determine learning achievement. A variety of options exist within the process of assessment that can influence student motivation and achievement. When students and teachers enter into an assessment partnership, they become a team with clearly defined, mutual learning goals and specific assessment tasks. As teachers begin to implement new strategies for using assessment as an instructional device, they will recognize the ability of students to take control of their own success and accept responsibility for their own learning.

These empowering feelings will inspire and motivate students toward greater achievement.

Conclusion to Chapter I

The assessment of learning and skills is an important part of the learning process. The assessment itself should provide a possibility for learning. The assessment has a greater influence than any other factors on how and what the students learn. The assessment defines the learning and the planning of teaching. Those participating in the assessment must be aware of the assessment criteria. The assessment should support and facilitate the ability of self-assessment.

The assessment also tells the future employer what the student knows, understands and can do having completed a certain study unit, academic year and the entire degree.

The feedback is an effective booster of learning; it helps the student to understand, how to develop the skills being assessed. Criticizing and critical feedback probably is the most effective inhibitor of creativeness.

The assessment method should be designed so that they fit the learning outcomes and the environment in which the skills van be recognized. The assessment method are chosen so that they assess what is supposed to be assessed.

The assessment methods and processes are reliable and consistent. They guarantee the greatest similarity possible of circumstances and criteria for all students and independence of assessment decisions of time and assessor.

The assessment should not only reflect student achievement but also enrich student motivation and improve student success.

Chapter II. CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

2.1 A Selection of Techniques

The process of classroom assessment can serve an important role in enhancing student motivation and achievement. Teachers can help enhance student performance by sharing clearly defined learning goals Through student involvement in the assessment process, students learn to take responsibility for their own learning. This feeling of accountability and control may increase the students' intrinsic motivation to learn and can heighten success. Also, teachers have the opportunity to help students succeed through the implementation and communication of quality assessments.

Classroom Assessment" is a formative rather than a summative approach to assessment. Its purpose is to improve the quality of student learning, not to provide evidence for evaluating or grading students. It provides faculty with feedback about their effectiveness as teachers, and it gives students a measure of their progress as learners. The aim of classroom assessments is to provide faculty with information on what, how much, and how well students are learning. Such assessments are created, administered, and analyzed by teachers themselves.

The Advantages of Using Classroom Assessment Techniques

They are formative in nature. Unlike final exams or major term papers, CATs provide faculty with feedback on student learning while the teaching/learning relationship is still intact, so that faculty can intervene during the semester (as opposed to the next semester) to help students learn more completely. They are speedy. They often consume just a few minutes of classroom time to administer, and can be read easily and quickly by faculty.

They are flexible. They can be tailored to the unique and specific concerns of the instructor.

They can be anonymous for students (although they need not be). The aim of classroom assessment is not necessarily to grade individual student work or to provide individual students with feedback on their performance; rather, the aim is to provide the instructor with feedback on student learning. Anonymity may prove useful in freeing students to express not only what they do understand but also what they do not understand.

The Benefits of Using Classroom Assessment Techniques

Classroom Assessment helps faculty to focus on student learning. By determining what students have learned and what is unclear, instructors can focus the class more effectively to meet the learning needs of that group. This may mean reviewing some areas, or spending less time in other areas. Unlike student evaluation surveys [summative evaluation] which are typically given at the end of the semester, Classroom Assessment provides an on-going formative evaluation. The instructor can find out what can be changed immediately to help students to learn.

Benefits to Students

Students may be hesitant to ask questions during class. Classroom Assessments give students opportunities to provide anonymous feedback to their instructor about their learning. Students often discover, as the instructor reviews the feedback, that others in the class had similar questions. (Theirs was not a "dumb question" after all).

Classroom assessment activities can themselves be positive learning activities for students; they can be developed both to promote (and not just measure) writing skills or critical thinking skills, and to increase student motivation to take themselves and their learning more seriously.

In addition, students may become more involved in their learning when they find that others in the class learned some interesting things that they had not picked up from the class session. Through greater involvement, students are likely to become

more self-directed learners, and may be more motivated to successfully complete the class (Angelo, Thomas A. and Cross, K. Patricia (1993).

Classroom Assessment Techniques Usage

Classroom Assessment Techniques may be used in any type of class. Some techniques are for use in small groups; some are designed to check students' immediate understanding; others are for application and critical thinking.

These techniques are not new -- effective teachers have been using various methods for years to find out what students are learning or not learning. However, research on (including the evaluation of) effective techniques to measure both student learning and teaching dates back to 1988, with the Classroom Research Project funded by the Ford Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts. Since 1988 a number of articles have been published on the subject and hundreds of workshops have been conducted nationally, regionally, and locally. The Classroom Research Project has also sponsored a series of workshops and conferences at the University of California, Berkeley. The American Association for Higher Education [AAHE] has established a Classroom Research Community Action group (which enables classroom researchers to meet annually at the AAHE national conference) and sponsors conference sessions concerned with Classroom Research.

Research about the impact of Classroom Assessment indicates the following:

• Student Involvement in Learning: Students believe that Classroom Assessment contributes to greater involvement in learning because they are forced to think about what they have learned.

• Faculty Development: Classroom Assessment has helped many faculty re-think how they teach their classes. Classroom Assessment provides the input needed to learn more about what is working and what needs to be changed in their classes.

Some faculties ask students to respond to a question at the end of every class meeting; some faculties integrate the assessments throughout each class

meeting. Others use Classroom Assessments at the most critical points in the course, e.g., before a major exam or project. Some use assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of class activities or tests. Still others have used Classroom Assessment to help students to evaluate their own learning progress. The frequency and types of assessments used depend on the class, the teacher, and the reasons for assessing students' learning progress.

Anonymous feedback results in responses that are more candid. However, if the assessments are used in the form of homework assignments or small group activities within the class, anonymity is not possible. It is best to ask learner-centered questions ("What have you learned?") rather than teacher-centered questions ("How do you like my teaching?"). The learner centered questions will show clearly whether or not the teaching is effective. Questions should be asked only if you really want to know the answer and are willing to respond to the feedback to meet student needs.

There are such of kind of techniques in teaching English:

• Assessing Prior Knowledge, Recall, Understanding

• Assessing Skill in Synthesis and Creative Thinking

• Assessing Skill in Application and Performance

• Assessing Skill in Analysis and Critical Thinking

It is recommended new users of Classroom Assessment Techniques [CATs] will be most successful if:

• They use only those techniques that appeal to their intuition and professional judgment;

• They start with techniques that are quick and easy to use in a classroom setting in which the faculty member and the students are comfortable;

• They only use CATs that they have previously tried on themselves;

• They allow more time to complete the task the first time than might seem necessary; and,

• They "close the loop" by reporting back to students what they, as faculty, have learned from student feedback and how that information can be used to improve student learning.

The ten techniques described below, represent a sampling of ideas, as starting points, i.e., ideas to be adapted and improved upon. All ten are techniques for assessing Course-related Knowledge and Skills (Angelo and Cross's book includes a total of 27 in that category). Their book also includes techniques for assessing Learner Attitudes, Values and Self-awareness, as well as techniques for assessing Learner Reactions to instruction, class activities, assignments, and materials. Each described technique includes examples of questions or questionnaires used in various disciplines, as well as step-by-step procedures.

Techniques Which Assess Prior Knowledge, Recall, and Understanding:

Background Knowledge Probe; The One Minute Paper; The Muddiest Point.

1. Background Knowledge Probe (Assessing Prior Knowledge, Recall, and Understanding).

Description: This technique is designed to collect specific and useful feedback on students' prior learning.

"Background Knowledge Probes" are short, simple questionnaires prepared by instructors at the beginning of a course (e.g., the instructor requests that students list courses they have already taken in the relevant field), at the start of a new unit or lesson, or prior to introducing an important new topic. Such "probes" may require students to write short answers, to circle the correct responses to multiple-choice questions, or both.

They can be used as both pre- and post- assessments: before instruction, to find out the students' "baseline" knowledge level; and immediately after, to get a rough sense of how much and how well they have e learned the material.

Purpose: This technique is meant to help teachers determine the most effective starting point for a given lesson and the most appropriate level at which to begin instruction.

By sampling the students' background knowledge before formal instruction on that topic begins, these probes also provide feedback on the range of preparation among students in a particular class.

Suggestions for Use: It can be used as early as the first class meeting. It works well in classes of any size.

To assess changes in students' knowledge and concision in responding, the same or similar questions can be used at the midpoint and at the end of the lesson, unit, or term.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: For fast analysis responses can be sorted into "prepared" and "not prepared" piles. For a detailed analysis answers can be classified into the following categories:

[-1] = erroneous background knowledge; [0] = no relevant background knowledge; [+1] = some relevant background knowledge; [+2] = significant background knowledge.

By summing the individual numerical ratings for each question, the instructor can find out whether the class as a whole has more knowledge about some topics than about others.

2. The One-Minute Paper (Assessing Prior Knowledge, Recall, and Understanding)

Description: The instructor stops the class two or three minutes early and asks students to respond briefly in writing to some variation of the following two questions: "What was the most important thing you learned during this class (today)"? " What important question remains unanswered?" (Or, "What are you still confused about?")

Purpose: This technique allows faculty to assess the match between their instructional goals and students' perceptions of these goals and their own learning. Further, because

the instructor learns what students perceive to be their own learning problems, the likelihood that the students will receive answers to those questions during the next class period is enhanced. The task asks students to evaluate information and to engage in recall.

Suggestions for Use: The task works well in small and large classes. It can be used frequently in courses that present students with large amounts of new information on a regular basis.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: Often it is sufficient for the instructor simply to tabulate the responses, making note of any especially useful comments.

3. The Muddiest Point (Assessing Prior Knowledge, Recall, and Understanding)

Description: The instructor asks students to jot down a quick response to the following question: "What was the muddiest point in [the lecture, the homework assignment, the reading, the film, etc.]"?

Purpose: This technique provides speedy feedback on what students find least clear or most confusing.

Presumably, this information helps faculty decide what to emphasize (more) and how much time to spend on topics. Students must also quickly assess what they do not understand and must be able to articulate their confusion (which is itself a complex and useful skill).

Suggestions for Use: This technique can be used frequently in courses that present students with large amounts of new information on a regular basis, and it should be presented at the end of a lecture/assignment. The task should be used sparingly in classes that emphasize integrating, synthesizing, and evaluating information.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: Often it is sufficient to group responses according to the particular muddy point. An alternative is to group points according to whether they involve facts, concepts, principles, and so forth.

Techniques Which Assess Skill in Synthesis and Creative Thinking:

4. The One-Sentence Summary (Assessing Skill in Synthesis and Creative Thinking)

Description: The instructor asks students to answer the questions about a given topic: "Who does what to whom, when, where, how, and why"? Then the student is asked to transform responses to those questions into a single, grammatical sentence.

Purpose: Faculty gauge the extent to which students can summarize a large amount of information concisely and completely. Students are constrained by the rules of sentence construction and must also think creatively about the content learned. Students practice the ability to condense information into smaller, interrelated bits that are more easily processed and recalled.

Suggestions for Use: The task works well when there is information that can be summarized in declarative form, including historical events, political processes, the plots of stories and novels, chemical reactions, mechanical processes.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: Assess answers to each of the initial questions separately.

Often it is easiest to grade responses to each of the questions as "inadequate" (incorrect), "adequate", and "more than adequate". A matrix with the questions as the columns and the three grading categories as the rows can quickly alert the faculty member to whether students are more proficient at the whos and whats rather than the hows and whys.

Techniques Which Assess Skill in Application and Performance:

Directed Paraphrasing; Application Cards; Student-generated Test Questions; Paper or Project Prospectus.

5.Directed Paraphrasing (Assessing Skill in Application and Performance)

Description: The instructor asks students to paraphrase part of a lesson for a specific audience and purpose, using their own words. This is especially useful for pre-professional students who will be asked in their careers to translate specialized information into language that clients or customers can understand.

Purpose: This technique allows faculty to examine students' understanding of information and their ability to transform it into a form that can be meaningful to specific audiences other than the student and instructor. This task is more complex than simple paraphrasing (or summary) in that the faculty member directs the student to speak/write to a particular audience and purpose.

Suggestions for Use: The task works well when students are learning topics or concepts that they will later be expected to communicate to others. When this is not the case (perhaps in general education classes in the humanities), the faculty member might want to ask students to write to other students in the class or to other freshmen on campus.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: Answers can be grouped into four sets -- confused, minimal, adequate, and excellent. Then examine responses within and across the four evaluative categories for accuracy, suitability for the intended audience, and effectiveness in fulfilling the assigned purpose. An alternative is to circle the clearest (best) point made by each student and the worst (muddiest) point.

Then the responses from students can be grouped to find patterns of clarity and confusion.

6. Application Cards (Assessing Skill in Application and Performance)

Description: After students have been introduced to some principle, generalization, theory, or procedure, the instructor passes out index cards and asks students to write down at least one possible, real-world application for what they have just learned.

Purpose: This technique allows faculty to determine quickly whether students understand the applications of what they have learned. Students are forced to link new information with prior knowledge. They may also have an increased interest in the material covered if they are asked to speak immediately to the ways in which this new material can be applied in real world settings.

Suggestions for Use: Most classes cover material that can/should be applied. The technique is often used in the social sciences, in technical fields, and in pre-professional courses.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: Answers can be separated into four groups -- great, acceptable, marginal, and not acceptable. Responses might be discussed in the next class, with some attention given to factors that argue for and against sets of responses.

7. Student-generated Test Questions (Assessing Skill in Application and Performance)

Description: Students are asked to prepare two or three potential test questions and accompanying correct (or A+) responses.

Purpose: This techniques assesses at least three aspects of student learning: Instructors see what their students consider the most important or memorable content, what they understand as fair and useful test questions, and how well they can answer the questions they have posed.

This information not only provides direction for teaching but can also alert the teacher when students have inaccurate expectations about upcoming tests. Responding to this technique helps students assess how well they know the material, and receiving feedback can refocus their studying.

Suggestions for Use: It can be used in any course in which students take tests. It is best administered two or three weeks before a major test, such as midterm or final examination, to allow time for feedback and for appropriate adjustments in teaching and studying.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: A form or checklist could be used to sort the types and range of the questions (the level of questions, relevance of the topics, clarity of responses): Make a rough tally of the types of questions students propose (e.g., how many require only a knowledge of facts and principles? how many require synthesis or analysis?); then take a quick look at the range of topics the

questions span (Are some important topics left out?). A few questions selected from the students' responses can be used as examples in giving feedback.

8. Paper or Project Prospectus (Assessing Skill in Application and Performance)

Description: The term "prospectus" is used here to denote a brief, structured first-draft plan for a term paper or term project. The "Paper Prospectus" prompts students to think through elements of the assignment such as the topics, purpose, intended audience, major questions to be answered, basic organization, and time and resources required. The "Project Prospectus" may focus on tasks to be accomplished, skills to be improved, and products to be developed.

Purpose: This technique assesses students' skill at synthesizing what they have already learned about a topic or field as they plan their own learning projects. The technique can also give the instructor useful information about the students' understanding of both the assignment and the topic -- as well as their planning skills -- before it is too late in the semester to make suggestions and shape direction.

Suggestions for Use: It is appropriate for any course that requires students to write term papers or to carry out substantial projects. The timely feedback is given well before they begin substantive work on the papers or projects they have been assigned. In fields such as social work, education, and counseling psychology, instructors can employ the prospectus to help students plan internship and fieldwork projects.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: The range of topics and approaches are noted as well as to what degree the prospectuses are related to the content and skills on which the course is focused. A short summary list of suggestions is offered to the class as a whole, including suggestions about strengths they can build on and elements that need work.

Techniques Which Assess Skill in Analysis and Critical Thinking:

Pro and Con Grid; Analytic Memo.

9. Pro and Con Grid (Assessing Skill in Analysis and Critical Thinking)

Description: Students are asked to jot down a quick list of pros and cons on a particular topic or issue.

Purpose: The grid gives faculty a quick overview of a class's analysis of the pros and cons, costs and benefits, or advantages and disadvantages on an issue of mutual concern. This assessment forces students to go beyond their first reactions, t o search for at least two sides to the issue in question, and to weigh the value of competing claims. The grid provides important information on the students' depth and breadth of their analyses and on their capacity for objectivity.

Suggestions for Use: This technique can be used in any course where questions of value are an implicit part of the syllabus. This assessment works well in many humanities, social sciences, and public policy courses.

It can also be used to assess students' awareness of potential costs and benefits or of alternate technical solutions to the same problem. Used in these ways, this technique can be applied in many science and mathematics courses.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: The instructor starts by listing the points that students have put forth as pros and as cons and by doing a simple frequency count. Which points are most often mentioned? The instructor then compares the students' grid with his/hers: Have they omitted some points that are considered extraneous? How balanced are the two "sides" of the grid? These are possible matters to report on and to discuss in class when the students are given feedback.

10. Analytic Memo (Assessing Skill in Analysis and Critical Thinking)

Description: The analytic memo is basically a simulation exercise. It requires students to write a one- or two-page analysis of a specific problem or issue. The person for whom the memo is being written is usually identified as an employer, a client, or a stakeholder who needs the student's analysis to inform decision making.

Purpose: This technique assesses students' ability to analyze assigned problems by using the discipline specific approaches, methods, and techniques they are learning. In addition, it assesses students' skill at communicating their analyses in a clear and concise manner.

Suggestions for Use: Because preparing and assessing the analytic memos takes quite a bit of time and effort, this technique is best suited to seminars and small classes. It is particularly useful in disciplines that clearly relate to public policy or management, such as political science, economics, criminal justice, social work, education, environmental studies, management, and public health. It works best when used early in the term, as means to help students prepare for later graded memo-writing assignments.

Turning Collected Data into Useful Information: The goal (and challenge) is to extract useful information while severely limiting the amount of time and energy spent. A short list of three or four major points to look for in each memo allows for systematic and quick readings of the memos.

The list might include "content" (breadth of the analysis and quality of the information), "skill" (were relevant tools or methods used in the analysis?), and "writing" (clarity, conciseness, appropriateness of format). Make up a simple grid on which you can check off "Well done," "Acceptable," or "Needs work" for each of the major points.

For example, if more memos need work on analytic "skill" than on "writing quality", the next lesson could focus on the former.

2.2. Principles of Assessment and Evaluation in Learning Foreign Language

Many lecturers bemoan students‟ preoccupation with assessment possibly because it seems to represent a strategic, minimalist approach rather than an

engagement with learning for its own sake. This attitude to assessment perhaps also springs from a fairly limited perception of the purposes and nature of assessment, a view which is primarily focused on notions of testing and grading.

By contrast with this narrow conception, assessment tasks can offer rich teaching and learning opportunities for both teachers and learners. The simple oppositions of assessment-driven learning and the vision of learning for its own sake are unhelpful and limit our potential to maximize the learning opportunities offered by assessment. Consider the following:

- For many students, the initial process of engagement with an assessment task may be strategic, but a carefully designed assessment task that is linked to course learning outcomes can engage students more deeply than previously and in unexpected ways.
- Teachers can develop assessment tasks to help students practice core course learning skills.
- Teachers can use assessment tasks to give the students an opportunity to manage and apply course concepts.
- Teachers can use assessment tasks to develop other important learning attributes, such as collaborative learning, self-evaluation and communication skills.
- Assessment also provides important ongoing feedback to the lecturer on the progress of students" learning in relation to course learning outcomes. The lecturer can then provide appropriate feedback, help and support or adjust the teaching accordingly.
- Students can learn from teachers" feedback and feed-forward on formative assessment as to what they need to do to bring their performance closer to paper expectations.
- Correspondingly, assessment tasks provide lecturers with the opportunity to coach and guide students towards the attainment of paper learning outcomes. Additionally

teachers can use feedback and feed-forward to encourage students to evaluate their own performance in relation to course learning outcomes.

However, the teacher also uses assessment to evaluate and measure students' performance and may be influenced by beliefs about power, authority and relationships in the classroom.

Additionally, the teacher has to evaluate student performance on behalf of the institution. Assessment is simultaneously a core teaching and learning tool and a way of meeting institutional requirements. The challenge for teachers is to make sure that the goal of promoting quality learning always has primacy in assessment decisions and that the assessment process becomes more of a collaborative process between teachers and learners than an institutional imposition.

It is helpful to summarize the different functions of assessment:

For *students:*

- ***Diagnostic*** - to enable students to find out their level of competency/knowledge/understanding at the beginning of a course.
- ***Feedback*** - for students to ascertain their progress in relation to the learning outcomes of a course.
- ***Learning opportunities*** - to provide students with the opportunities to develop their mastery of ideas or/and practice skills and competencies through articulating them in writing/oral work or other forms of expression.
- ***Self-evaluation*** - to encourage students to make judgments about the quality of their own work.
- ***Motivation*** - assessment tasks can enhance student motivation by providing frameworks for developing, reviewing or extending their understanding (for example, in a piece of research or a collaborative investigation). For some students a series of manageable deadlines can also help them to keep engaged with the subject.

 Preparation for longer term learning -formative assessment can be used to help students develop the capacity to self-evaluate, an important component for any future occupation.

For *teachers:*

 Diagnostic- teachers can use assessment tasks to ascertain what students bring into a course so as to make the teaching and learning responsive to students" needs and build on existing knowledge

 Feedback - teachers can gain feedback on students" learning, detect misunderstandings, assess the effectiveness of their teaching and make appropriate modifications and adaptations.

 Teaching *and* learning - teachers can use assessment tasks as teaching and learning tools both through the nature of the tasks themselves and through formative feedback.

 Promoting **self-evaluation** - teachers can give feedback which encourages students to make judgments about the quality of their own work and prepare them for future participation in the workforce.

I*nstitutional and professional purposes*

Assessment is used to for the following institutional and professional purposes:

 To pass or fail

 To select for entry

 To select for future courses and programmes

 To grade

 To demonstrate institutional standards

 To select for employment

 To license for practice

 To accredit for professional occupations

Assessment and teacher beliefs

Assessment practices and attitudes provide insights into actual teacher beliefs as opposed to those we espouse. Many of the features of our assessments that do not match our espoused beliefs may reflect a mechanical and ritualistic approach to assessment and a failure to examine our underlying assumptions. Sometimes, it is just time pressures that lead us to use a quick and familiar assessment. Assessment has also influenced our own path as learners and has contributed to the positions we now hold.

Additionally, we are often resort to assessment tasks that seem relatively easy to measure. It is not only the tasks themselves that convey our beliefs about teaching and learning and our relationship with our students, it is also what we say and do in relation to assessment. The following suggest the beliefs that underpin these assessment approaches and beliefs:

- I do not tell my students where to focus their attention in preparing for exams. If I do this they will just „spot" and not learn everything.
- I devote class time to going through the assessment tasks with students and talking about them.
- I don t like group work because I don t believe it is a real test of a student s performance.
- I break up an assessment into a number of small parts and give formative feedback.
- Students have to submit a self evaluation of each assessment task using the criteria.
- I give students the departmental criteria, but they ignore them.
- I coach my students in editing before they write their first extended assessment.
- I give students the opportunity to mark samples of assessments using the criteria.
- I will not engage in discussion on assessment tasks-working them out is part of the test for the students.

□ I give my students written instructions on plagiarism and treat it very seriously if they get referencing wrong.

□ Many assessments types are superficial and cater to students low standards and lack the academic rigor of essays and exams.

□ The teacher needs to be in control of all aspects of assessment.

□ I incorporate peer assessment tasks wherever possible.

Once you have a first draft of your learning outcomes, you can start thinking about appropriate assessment tasks. You will find that you need to allow for time and reflection to move about between outcomes, assessment tasks and teaching approaches, making adjustments and refinements until you get congruence between them. Some people prefer to start with thinking about assessments; this helps them to clarify what they are planning for students to learn.

Conclusion to Chapter II

Classroom assessment is both a teaching approach and a set of techniques. The approach is that the more you know about what and how students are learning , the better you can plan learning activities to structure your teaching. The techniques are mostly simple, non-graded, anonymous, in-class activities that give both you and your students useful feedback on the teaching-learning process.

Classroom assessment differs from tests and other forms of student assessment in that it is aimed at course improvement, rather than at assigning grades. The primary goal is to better understand your students' learning and so to improve your teaching.

While using Classroom Assessment Techniques you have to:

- Decide what you want to learn from a classroom assessment.
- Choose a Classroom Assessment Technique (CAT) that provides this feedback, is consistent with your teaching style, and can be easily implemented in your class.
- Explain the purpose of the activity to students, then conduct it.
- After class, review the results and decide what changes, if any, to make.
- Let your students know what you learned from the CAT and how you will use this information.

To be consistent with the learning principle, assessment should focus on understanding as well as procedural skills. Because different students show what they

know and can do in different ways, assessments should also be done in multiple ways, and teachers should look for a convergence of evidence from different sources.

Chapter III.USING DIFFERENT MEANS OF ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING ENGLISH

3.1 Assessment Tools and Strategies

One of the most common questions a lecturer hears from students is, "Will this be in the exams?" It is well recognized by educationalists that students are preoccupied with what constitutes the assessment in their chosen field, so like it or not, we need to accept that assessment usually drives student learning.

If students allow assessment define and prioritize what is important to learn, and ultimately how they spend their time learning it, then it is up to us as lecturers and assessors have to deal with this fact, and react accordingly. The methods and timing of our assessment sends messages to students. So when creating assessment plans, we need to think about these messages: We need to take care to prioritize the most important areas we want our students to learn from, create clear and upfront learning outcomes (see section two), and assess appropriately. We should also be aware of the differences between 'deep' and 'surface' learning, and use assessment to produce students who are deep rather than surface learners.

When devising your assessment plan, think about different skills you would like your students to achieve based on your learning outcomes. Assessment should help equip students with a wide range of transferable skills and competencies. For example, a well-devised essay question is a good way to measure and assess your students' analytic skills.

However, while it might be a wholly appropriate assessment method when testing for knowledge and evaluation of, say, "the theme of Irish tradition in contemporary reviews of 1930's art exhibitions", it would be less appropriate to set an essay to assess whether a student had mastered a particular brushstroke.

Both deep and surface learning have a place in assessment. Assessment can test memorizing, acquiring facts or skills, or methods that can be reproduced when and if required. However, it can also test making sense of, or abstracting meaning, or of interpreting or re-interpreting knowledge. The trick is to know what level of learning you are trying to achieve with your students and to assess accordingly. The level and type of skills and competencies imparted through assessment will depend on the level and type of course; the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland's (NQAI) guidelines will help direct you to this.

Summative assessment is assessment that is used to signify competence or that contributes to a student's grade in a course, module, level or degree. Formative assessment, on the other hand, is assessment strictly used to provide feedback to the student on their learning. It provides the student with advice on how to maintain and improve their progress, but should not form part of their summative grade or mark.

Continuous assessment usually involves a series of tasks that are individually assessed, though sometimes it is appropriate to add a final assessment to continuous assessment.

It is best used when there are several distinct module learning outcomes which are achieved at definable stages during the module.

Whereas unseen examinations can help eliminate plagiarism, they only give the student one chance to show their capabilities, tend to measure particular types of knowledge, and can

favour those who can withstand stress and have good recall skills.

Continuous assessment can provide a more reliable estimate of a student's capabilities and indirectly measure a student's capacity to manage time and handle

stress. With continuous assessment, the total assessment workload on both staff and students may seem greater that that experienced with one-off final assessment, but it is more evenly distributed. Timely feedback is an important part of continuous assessment as it informs the learner on how well students are progressing and how they can improve. If students are given feedback on each piece of continuously assessed work, then they can direct their future learning in relation to this feedback.

The most important principle of summative assessment is that it should determine whether, and to what extent, the student has attained the learning outcomes specified for that module, and should lead to a grade or mark that will affect the student's progression, result, or both. What students learn, how much effort they put into it, and the nature if their learning is often determined by the extent and nature of the summative assessment they expect to receive. However, formative assessment is essential to learning, and ideally curricula should be designed to maximize the amount of formative feedback students can receive on their work.

Good quality, comprehensive, timely feedback is a very important factor in driving student learning. Assessment should provide feedback to students on their progress towards the achievement of learning outcomes. Feedback will enable students to realize where they have done well and indicate what they could improve on, as well as justifying the grade/mark of summative assessments.

It is important that feedback is timely. If you provide feedback too soon, it may disrupt the student's reflective process. However, it is far more common that feedback is provided too late when it is no longer salient to the student. Feedback should not be held off until the end of a year/semester, as the student is unlikely to benefit from it once the task is complete and they have moved on to a new one. We'll explain more about the importance of formative feedback later in this guide.

The benefits of successful feedback set in the context of learning outcomes are many. For example, successful feedback will:

- build confidence in the students,

- motivate students to improve their learning;
- provide students with performance improvement information,
- correct errors, identify strengths and weaknesses

Often assessment is viewed as being somehow separate from the learning process, something that is done to students at the end of a module/course/semester to test what they know and what they don't know.

However, assessment is an integral part of the learning process and, ultimately, should aim to improve the quality of student learning.

When designing, running and assessing a module or course, it is vital to know and be able to clearly communicate to the student what that course or module is intended to achieve, what the student should be able to do upon completing it, and what they will have to demonstrate in order to pass it

Constructive Alignment is a theory of learning that begins with the premise that the learner *constructs* his or her own learning through relevant learning activities (Biggs, 1999). It is the teacher's responsibility to fashion a learning environment where the learning activities are wholly appropriate to achieving the desired learning outcomes. The key to achieving this goal is that all components in the teaching system (ie. teaching process from planning through assessing) are *aligned* to each other to facilitate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Thus, the curriculum and its intended aims and learning outcomes, the teaching methods and resources used to support learning, and the assessment tasks and criteria for evaluating it, are all aligned.

Alignment is central to effective assessment. Designing a course/module using a learning outcomes approach recognizes the need to plan assessment as part of a whole curriculum assessment.

Learning outcomes are statements that predict what learners will gain as a result of learning, so there should be a clear relationship between learning outcomes and assessment. It is possible to assess more than one learning outcome at once as long as

all assessment tasks are appropriate to, and in harmony with, the learning outcomes they are meant to assess. So remember:

- Ensure the assessment method tests the stated learning outcomes
- Ensure the assessment method does not test any significant learning outcomes that are not explicitly stated as such. Assessment should never go beyond the learning outcomes. For example, if the learning outcome states that the student should be able to "select an appropriate method", then the assessment task should not go beyond this limit by asking to "analyse the method".
- Ensure all major course or module outcomes are assessed, as if students are not going to be assessed on something it's unlikely that they will put time and effort into it. However, if you assess every minor learning outcome of every module, then you run the risk of over-assessing students.

A carefully thought-out learning outcome will give a solid indication to the lecturer of what kinds of assessment are appropriate, and of the skills and knowledge the learner will have to demonstrate to pass.

Finally, the clearer the learner outcome, the easier it will be to devise an appropriate assessment.

The Learning and Teaching Centre at DIT has produced a document on writing effective learning outcomes.

You may find that you often provide feedback on a module essay to a student as well as providing a grade for it that will count towards the student's summative profile of marks. Arguably, all summative assessment should give students feedback that has formative value. After all, if a student has to write a series of essays, each of which contributes to a final grade, then good improvement-centered feedback on each essays should help them enormously in subsequent ones.

However, setting a formative assessment task for summative purposes is not generally advised by experts in the field, who believe that these two assessment purposes are not mutually exclusive. This is because once a high stake assessment

(summative) is introduced, students are slower to disclose what they do not know, and the purpose of formative assessment is to find out what students have difficulty with in order to help them. With purely formative assessment the stakes are not so high for students, so they can be more open about their knowledge gaps, or areas of difficulty.

On the other hand, it is possible to use both summative and formative assessment for the same module. For example, you may set an assignment that has a series of questions on a course what will be assessed in summative way. But you may also ask the student to provide a summary of the course as a formative assessment of learning, where the student is clear that this summary is not being graded or will not influence their final assessment in any manner. The difference here is that the student is fully aware which part of their learning is being assessed summatively and which part is being assessed formatively.

As we've said earlier, students are generally most motivated by what is going to contribute to their final mark. However, even though formative assessment will not contribute directly to a summative mark, it does play a vital role in helping students improve their grades. And if students apply their energies to activities that earn them grades, then it is important to impress on them how they can improve their own grades through embracing formative assessment.

Formative assessment is essential to learning in its aim is to give appropriate and timely feedback to students on their learning, and to help them to improve their future work. This should be enough to motivate your students to take formative assessment seriously, but students will also be motivated if they clearly see the point of their work; how it relates to the course, the module, and their career goals; if it is inherently rewarding or interesting; or if they can see their skills and expertise advancing. Good quality formative assessment will exude all the qualities, and more.

All too often assessment is an end-product, a non-avoidable chore that is used to evaluate, measure and box students. But there is more to the process of assessment than this.

When referring to methods of assessment, we mean the approach used to assess learning. While there is some varied and innovative practice of assessment within higher level education, it must be said that many programmes and modules in higher education select assessment methods from a fairly narrow range.

Here is a summary of assessment methods described in Brown's, "Assessment: A Guide for Lecturers" (2001), a useful starting point to consider the variety of assessment possible:

Cases and open problems	An intensive analysis of a specific example.
Computer-based assessment	The use of computers to support assessments.
Essays	Written work in which students try out ideas and arguments supported by evidence.
Learning logs/ diaries	Wide variety of formats ranging from an unstructured account of each day to a structured form based on tasks.
Mini-practicals	A series off short practical examinations undertaken under timed conditions. Assessment of practical skills in an authentic setting.
Modified Essay Questions (MEQs)	A sequence of questions based on a case study. After students have answered one question, further information and a question are given.
Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)	Select the correct answers.
Orals	Verbal interaction between assessor and assessed .
Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)	Candidates measured under examination conditions on their reaction to a series of short,

	practical, real-life situations.
Portfolios	Systematic collections of educational or work products that are typically collected over time. Wide variety of types from a collection of assignments to reflections upon critical incidents.
Poster sessions	Display of results from an investigative project
Presentations	Oral reports on projects or other investigative activities.
Problems	Measures application, analysis and problem solving strategies.
Group Projects and Dissertations	Assessment by a tutor/lecturer of the products of student group work.
Questionnaires and report forms	One or more questions presented and answered together.
Reflective Practice Assignments	Measures capacity to analyse and evaluate experience in the light of theories and research evidence.
Reports on Practicals	Methodically written account of a practical investigation
Self-assessed questions based on open learning(distance learning materials and computer-based approaches)	Strictly speaking, a method of learning not of assessment. A process by which an assessment instrument is self-administered for the specific purpose of providing performance feedback, diagnosis and prescription recommendations rather than a pass/fail decision.
Short answer questions	Brief answers that can measure analysis, application of knowledge, problem-solving and evaluative skills..
Simulated interviews	Useful for assessing oral communication skills.
Single Essay Examination	Usually three hours on prepared topic.
Work based Assessment	Variety of methods possible including learning logs, portfolios, projects, structured reports from

supervisors or mentors.

How much time should be spent on assessment?

As lecturers and course designers we should make reasoned and conscious decisions on how much time we should spend setting and correcting assessment, and giving feedback. Obviously, with economies of time, assessment needs to be efficient as well as productive, and should achieve its various purposes (returning reliable marks, giving feedback, generating appropriate student activity, and motivating learning) in a way that makes best use of staff and student time, and other resources. Assessment can consume a large amount of staff and student resources, so it needs to yield a high return in order to be efficient.

Co-ordinate with other lecturers on your program

All too often, assessment is something that lecturers do in a vacuum. It is thus important that we realize that our students are attending other lectures and possibly have other assessments to carry out at the same time. To avoid undue burden place on students by having to complete numerous assessments at certain times during the year, consult with other lecturers on your program as to the nature and scheduling details of their assessments, and co-ordinate your assessments accordingly.

Involve others in the assessment process

Traditionally, the role of the assessor usually falls to the lecturer/tutor. However, it is often worthwhile to consider involving others in the assessment process. For example, Industry experts can be a valuable resource when creating and marking assessments. Or consider involving students in their own assessment. Effective and appropriate use of involving others in the assessment practice can enhance the learning experience, enrich the teaching experience, and reduce the marking burden placed on staff.

It worth remembering that giving informed, meaningful feedback can be an effective use of class teaching time. One way of increasing the efficiency of assessment is to allow students play a role in assessing themselves or each other. This

is called self assessment or peer assessment, two sources of assessment that can be used with a variety of methods of assessment.

Peer Assessment

Peer assessment may be defined as the assessment of the work of others of equal status and power. In the context of student learning, peer assessment is used to estimate worth of other students' work, and to give and receive feedback. With appropriate training and close moderation, it is possible that students can play a role in summative assessment, but generally peer assessment works best in formative assessment where students give each other feedback on each other's work.

This approach to assessment requires careful planning, agreement of criteria and use of common tools for analyzing marks. Further, you may need to encourage your students to take this practice seriously, and developing the necessary skills does need time and support. But the benefits of peer assessment are many:

- Peer assessment is becoming widely used as a means of giving feedback to students, arguably more feedback than a lecturer can normally provide.
- Peer assessment should benefit both those giving the feedback as well as those receiving it. Giving constructive feedback is a valuable skill. To acquire this skill the student will learn how to study marking/grading schemes or assessment criteria, construct sentences that impart effective comments, and be able to defend their feedback.
- Critical reflection, a key skill involved in giving feedback, is an academically valuable one. Students also learn diplomacy, how to receive and act on constructive criticism, as well as the more obvious skills of making explicit and criterion-referencing judgements. In studies carried out, students have reported real benefits in retention of knowledge, enhanced creativity, greater resourcefulness and increased motivation. There are also reported gains in specific deeper knowledge in the subject area itself.

- Peer assessment can deepen the student learning experience as students can learn a great deal about their own work from assessing other students' attempts at a similar task. They will also learn about the assessment culture of the Institute, become autonomous learners, and develop skills of life long learning.

Self assessment

With self assessment, students check their work, revisit assignment drafts and texts, and research and reflect upon their past practice. Care is needed to teach the student to make judgments on what was actually achieved rather than what was 'meant'. But once mastered, in addition to judging one's own work, the concept of self-assessment develops skills in self awareness and critical reflection. Many of the benefits of peer assessment apply to self- assessment.

Self assessment has been defined as "the involvement of students in identifying standards and/or criteria to apply to their work and making judgments about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards". There are two parts to this process: the development of criteria, and the application to a particular task.

Assessment decisions can be made by students on their own essays, reports, presentations, projects, dissertations and so on, but it is believed to be more valuable when students assess work that is personal in nature, like a learner log, portfolio etc.

Group assessment

Group assessment occurs when individuals work collaboratively to produce a piece of work. The advantage of group work for the assessor is often that the burden of marking many individual pieces of work is significantly reduced, but there is also the educational justification that collaboration is an important generic life skill that third level education should be developing in its students.

The biggest challenge when assessing group work is that it is rare that all group members will contribute equally; therefore, how can you assess fairly? There are various strategies to help deal with this:

1. Award a group mark, but allow for a "yellow card" if all the group members feel a member of the group is not pulling their weight. If the offending member changes his behavior before a certain date, the card will be rescinded. If not, a 5% penalty in their mark will be imposed. In a worst case scenario, a red card can be awarded where a student has to produce an individual piece of work instead.
2. Assign individual responsibilities and assess each member on the degree to which they have met their individual contracts.
3. Allow the group to divide the group mark depending on individual contributions. Thus, if the lecturer decides that the group project has received a total mark of 120, the group members decide how to allocate the figure. In practice, this is often challenging to execute, as group members have to reach agreement and be very clear in justifying their marks against the assessment criteria.
4. Peer-assess contributions. Instead of giving the group all the marks to allocate, only a certain percentage is allotted to this process. Thus the lecturer may allocate 80% of the project mark to the group her/himself, and the group may divide the remaining 20% among its individual members as they see fit.
5. Conduct a viva. A common group mark is awarded, and the remaining marks allotted by the lecturer after a group or individual viva, which should be able to throw insight on individual contributions.
6. Set a project exam. Again, a common mark is awarded to the group, but the module exam will have a compulsory question related to the project which individual students must answer.

Making feedback more effective

As an educator, there are many ways to improve the quality of your feedback to make it more effective for the learner. Simple things like not always using ticks to indicate a good point are recommended as students will be more motivated by short words or phrases such as "good work" or "true". Feedback should be specific – don't just say 'good', explain why, in what respects. It should also be constructive, encouraging, honest, and supportive; and where possible it should be frequent and substantial. Successful feedback should clearly indicate to the student:

1. What aspects of their assessed work are successful, and why
2. What aspects of their assessed work are less successful, and why
3. How the student could improve this particular piece of work
4. How the student could do more successful work in future.

Feedback is also timely, a fact we lecturers often overlook.

It should not be provided too soon, as it could prevent students reflecting on their work; neither should it be provided too late when it is no longer salient to the student.

How many times have students thought they were progressing just fine at interim assessment stages only to find out at the final assessment stage that their work was not up to the level the feedback they received led them to believe? Clear and appropriate assessment criteria, that are available to students before their assessment and can be consulted afterwards, go a long way in helping to address this problem.

Feedback can be time-consuming, but there are ways to make it more efficient.

• Consider the nature of the feedback students will need to master the concepts and skills for each assignment. How detailed does it have to be? Should it be individual or can it be group feedback? Can it be oral or does it have to be written?

• Use the track and edit tool in Word to speed up feedback and comments on student essays and reports.

• Consider using or creating generic feedback forms.

• Consider audio-taping feedback for learners.

• Provide more detailed solution sets to reveal the appropriate underlying reasoning, to identify potentially misunderstood concepts or principles, and to elaborate how common student errors followed from these misunderstandings.

Using Computer-Assisted Assessment (CAA)

Computer-Assisted Assessment is a fast and efficient way to provide immediate feedback to the learner, and to save time on tutor marking. Computer Assisted Assessment is typically formative, in that it helps students to discover whether they have learned what the educator intended.

Computer Assisted assessment is a broad term for the use of computers in the assessment of student learning.[1] Various other forms exist, such as Computer-Aided Assessment, Computerized Assessment, Computer Based Assessment (CBA) and Computer-Based Testing. Online Computer Based Assessment has existed for a long time in the form of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ's).[2] Computer Based

Assessment is commonly directly made via a computer, whereas Computer Assisted Assessment is used to manage or support the assessment process.

There are many resources available to help you learn more about CAA. DIT's Learning Technology Team is a good starting point for guidance in this area.

There are also some interesting web resources available.

There is a wealth of resources to explore here including workshop PowerPoint's, and presentations and articles, but see in particular The 'Blueprint for Computer-assisted Assessment', a 'comprehensive document addressing the pedagogical, operational, technological and strategic issues faced by those adopting CAA.' The Blueprint offers

a range of research based good practice, models and guidelines for the strategic implementation of CAA within departments, faculties and institutions.

Scoring grids are an example of timely, efficient assessment practice. They are used by markers to assess fairly and efficiently, can be used to develop and enhance student feedback, but should also be given to students to guide and inform their assessment preparation.

The level and type of skills and competencies imparted through assessment will depend on the level and type of course, and the NQAI guidelines will help direct you to this.

However, it is likely that assessment will generate some of the following achievable skills:

- Analytic skills
- Communication skills
- Contextualization
- Critical awareness
- Independent judgment
- Intellectual powers
- Interrelation of knowledge and understanding
- Intuitive powers
- Problem solving skills
- Vocational demonstration of skills

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (1956) is a well-known, detailed structured framework that helps identify and write appropriate learning outcomes.

This taxonomy identifies three domains of educational outcomes: cognitive, skills and affective. Bloom and a team of educational psychologists formulated a classification system for the cognitive and affective domains, although they did not

complete the system for the skills domain. (Other researchers have since developed such a system).

3.2 Criteria of Assessing Language Skills of Students

When designing and carrying out assessment it is important that both students are staff are clear on what students are expected to do, the circumstances in which they are asked to do it and how the marks are going to be awarded. In fact, students don't always know the assessment criteria or how assessors interpret them – it is often considered the property of examiners, but there is no reason for this secrecy. Be upfront with your criteria – it will help your students enormously to know what they are aiming for, or to see where they fell short, and consequently lead to much deeper learning. A criterion for assessment explains the relationship between how well a student answers the questions set or performs the task set, and the mark and grade which they are given. Whereas learning outcomes say what a student is expected to do, assessment criteria say how well they should be able to do it to obtain a particular grade.

One way is construct model answers or marking schemes which show how marks and grades will be awarded, though often the use of model answers and marking schemes is more appropriate in scientific or technical disciplines.

An assessment criteria, on the other hand describes as clearly as possible, the characteristics of what is acceptable, good, excellent etc. Of course, it is impossible to be always precise in describing what makes a piece of work 'very good', or 'excellent', but we should go as far as possible to try to write them, either individually or with other lecturers for a program, as they make life a lot easier for both the student and the assessors.

For an example of an assessment criteria, see appendix 1.

Of course, assessment should also help to improve teaching. When assessment and exam boards are over, there is a temptation for lecturers, a bit like there is for students, to breathe a sigh of relief and not to think about it until the following semester. However, even a fairly perfunctory assessment analysis will tell the lecturer if the students have difficulty in mastering one particular area of the course. The lecturer can accordingly devise extra learning experiences to address this problem, or fine tune their course where necessary.

When analyzing assessment tasks, you might ask the following:

- What types of questions did students do particularly well on? In what respects?
- What types of questions did they struggle with? In what respects?
- What kind of tasks was their a variety of responses to?
- Which assessment questions did students avoid?
- Which assessment questions were the most popular?
- What can this tell us about the teaching, learning, and assessment?

It is thus advisable to give a little time to analyzing the assessment experiences in order to contribute to continuous improvement of teaching and learning, and to refine practices and policies of assessment.

CEFR (Common Reference Level)

The CEFR is a framework, published by the Council of Europe in 2001, which describes language learners' ability in terms of speaking, reading, listening and writing at six reference levels.

These six levels are named as follows:

C2 Mastery C1 Effective Operational Proficiency } Proficient user

B2 Vantage B1 Threshold } Independent user

A2 Way stage A1 Breakthrough } Basic user

As well as these common reference levels, the CEFR provides a 'Descriptive Scheme' of definitions, categories and examples that language professionals can use to better understand and communicate their aims and objectives. The examples given are called 'illustrative descriptors' and these are presented as a series of scales with Can Do statements from levels A1 to C2. These scales can be used as a tool for comparing levels of ability amongst learners of foreign languages and also offer 'a means to map the progress' of learners.

Language teaching is most successful when it focuses on the useful outcomes of language learning –for example, on what exam grades mean in terms of specific skills and abilities rather than simply the grades themselves. Linking teaching to the CEFR is a very effective way of achieving this.

A clear proficiency framework provides a context for learning that can help learners to orient themselves and set goals. It is a basis for individualizing learning, as for each learner there is an optimal level at which they should be working. It allows teaching to focus on the strengths and weaknesses which are helping or hindering learners. It enables a shared understanding of levels, facilitating the setting of realistic learning targets for a group, and relating outcomes to what learners can do next – successfully perform a particular job, or pursue university studies using the language, and so on.

Focusing on tasks and interaction enables teachers to understand students' performance level as that level where they can tackle reasonably successfully tasks at a level of challenge appropriate to their ability. This is not the same as demonstrating perfect mastery of some element of language; a student can perform a task successfully but still make mistakes. When using the scales it is important to keep in mind that the CEFR is based on an action-oriented approach.

The CEFR views users and learners of a language as members of society who may wish to accomplish tasks in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action. These tasks are of course not exclusively language-related. While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning.

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of **competences,** both **general** and in particular **communicative language competences**. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various **contexts** under various **conditions** and under various **constraints** to engage in **language activities** involving **language processes** to produce and/or receive **texts** in relation to **themes** in specific **domains**, activating those **strategies** which seem most appropriate for carrying out the **tasks** to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences.

The scales of the CEFR refer to this theoretical model, but each separate scale refers to particular aspects, elements, contexts, processes, etc. distinguished within the model.

The structural overview of all CEFR scales are given in the appendices.

Conclusion

The assessment of learning and skills is an important part of the learning process. The assessment itself should provide a possibility for learning. The assessment has a greater influence than any other factors on how and what the students learn. The assessment defines the learning and the planning of teaching. Those participating in the assessment must be aware of the assessment criteria. The assessment should support and facilitate the ability of self-assessment.

The assessment also tells the future employer what the student knows, understands and can do having completed a certain study unit, academic year and the entire degree. Each of the four skills — listening, reading, writing and speaking — are distinct, and each contributes uniquely to an individual's overall communicative ability.

Moreover, assessment should be done in multiple ways — with different tests, different methods and different question formats.

Assessment should no longer be viewed as a device to determine learning achievement. A variety of options exist within the process of assessment that can

influence student motivation and achievement. When students and teachers enter into an assessment partnership, they become a team with clearly defined, mutual learning goals and specific assessment tasks. As teachers begin to implement new strategies for using assessment as an instructional device, they will recognize the ability of students to take control of their own success and accept responsibility for their own learning. These empowering feelings will inspire and motivate students toward greater achievement.

Summary

Assessment comes in various forms and addresses many purposes. One of the main reasons for teachers to assess students learning is to obtain feedback that will guide teaching and assist in making modifications to lesson planning and delivery to ensure student progress. Assessment allows teachers to monitor progress, diagnose individual or group difficulties and adjust teaching practices.

Assessment can support student motivation when students are provided with ongoing information about their progress and with opportunities to set further goals for learning, sharing the results of assessment with students, parents, other teachers and administrators provides them with an indication of students progress. All forms of assessment are done with purpose, involve professional decision making and support learning.

The assessment process informs teachers about what individual students know and what they are able to do in relation to learner outcomes. As a result, teachers can make decisions about which types of content and skill development need to be addressed further by the class as a whole or by individual students.

According to the above mentioned statements we can define the aim of the present qualification work as to study theoretical and practical bases of assessment in teaching English process.

The tasks of the research are:

- acquaint with the most important methods, means and organizational forms specific in teaching English language;
- to study the basics of educational assessment and other terms associations;
- to get acquaint with the literature and sources connected with the assessment of language learners;
- to define perspectives of "assessment" in foreign language learning;
- to underline the effectiveness of assessment procedures in teaching English as school;
- to use the given methods, means and forms of teaching in practice.

The object of the investigation is the process of assessment in foreign language learning. The subject of the work is methods of teaching foreign language and the roll of assessment in it.

The theoretical value of the research is that this sphere of study has been investigated by a number of Methodists such as V.S.Seltin (1970), R. Lado (1969), J.Jalolov (2012) and others; this matter still teachers and ordinary teachers as well.

The practical value of the work is the given information can be used as an additional material in lectures, seminars, and practical lessons on the discipline as Teaching Foreign Language.

Methods of research are exploratory and constructive, which means I first identified the problem of assessment in teaching foreign language process and then developed the solution of the problem.

The qualification paper consists of three parts, i.e., introduction, main part and conclusion.

The main part includes three chapters: basics of educational assessment, assessment techniques and using different assessment means in teaching English.

The first chapter discusses basics of educational assessment.

The second chapter reveals through classroom assessment.

The third chapter has practical approach to the study, i.e., using different assessment means in teaching English as foreign language through assessment tools and strategies and criteria for assessing students in English lessons on the example of CEFR.

The received results of the research presented in conclusion and summary reflect outline of the work.

List of used literature represents main sources of the investigation.

Appendices supplement the present qualification work.

Glossary presents definitions to testing terms.

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Appendices are enclosed.