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Assessment Techniques for School Teachers

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Abstract: ***Employing a range of assessment methods gives students more latitude to demonstrate their knowledge and skills across a variety of contexts. Many people already teach and assess large (and diverse) numbers of scholars as we know growing student numbers are firmly on the horizon. Assessment is also distributed in various ways, depending upon the depth of data and nature of what is being assessed. Assessing Prior Knowledge, Recall, and Understanding the goal of teaching. During teaching, teachers not only need to communicate the knowledge they planned but also to continuously monitor the students' learning and motivation so as to see whether modifications must be made The new teachers find this harder than experienced teachers thanks to the complex cognitive skills required to improvise and be awake to the students' needs while simultaneously keeping in mind the goals and plans of the lesson. The informal assessment strategies teachers most frequently use during instruction are observation and questioning.***

Keywords: Knowledge, Recall, Understanding, Cognitive Skills)

1. Introduction

During teaching, teachers not only need to communicate the knowledge they planned but also continuously monitor the students' learning and motivation so as to work out whether modifications need to be made (Airasian, 2005). Beginning teachers find this tougher than experienced teachers due to the complex cognitive skills required to improvise and be conscious of the students' needs while simultaneously keeping in mind the goals and plans of the lesson (Borko& Livingston, 1989). The informal assessment strategies teachers most frequently use during instruction are observation and questioning.

One of the challenges for the new teachers is to pick and use appropriate assessment techniques. In this section we summarize the big variety of forms of assessments that classroom teachers use. Employing a range of assessment methods gives the students more latitude to demonstrate their knowledge and skills across a spread of contexts. Many folks already teach and assess large (and diverse) numbers of scholars as well as we know student numbers are growing firmly on the horizon. Assessments could also be administrated in many alternative ways, depending upon the depth of knowledge and nature of what is being assessed. The assessment methods are also categorized into both direct and indirect assessments. Assessing Prior Knowledge, Recall, and Understanding the final aim of teaching is to check and evaluate grasping of learners.

1.1 Direct Assessment Methods

Direct assessment methods are "direct" because they give the impression of being at the actual place of work of the student to see whether the scholars have learned what the college wants them to be told. Among the direct methods, the most typically used are the following:

a) Portfolios:
Student portfolios could also be collected from the time that students enter a program until they graduate or could also be collected for narrower time frames. Students are answerable for gathering the data that the school wants them to collect. A very valuable component of the student portfolios is the reflective essay, during which the co - ed student reflects back upon her or his growth in scholarship or creative efforts and draws conclusions about his or her strengths and weaknesses at the time the portfolio is compiled.

b) Embedded Assessments:
Embedded assessments make use of the students' work produced in specific classes. As a result, the scholars don't even have to know that their work is being employed for assessment purposes. Additionally, therubric used for assessment is produced within the traditional workload of both faculty and students. As such, embedded assessments provide a sensible source of knowledge about the students' work. In departments that use examinations to gauge students, sometimes only some of the examination items are literally designed for assessment purposes. The information provided by embedded assessments should be reviewed by faculty beyond the course instructor, perhaps employing a rubric of key characteristics to guide the assessments.

1.2 Indirect Assessment Methods

Indirect assessment methods require that faculty infer actual student abilities, knowledge, and values instead of observing them through direct methods. The following are among indirect methods:

a) Surveys:
Student surveys or surveys of employers provide impressions from survey respondents. These impressions may change over time (for example, will a senior value the identical thing as an alumnus who has been working for several years?). Respondents may respond with what they think those conducting the survey want to listen to, instead of what they really believe. Surveys are easy to administer, but often don't lead to responses from everyone surveyed. They may, however, provide clues to what should be assessed directly and that they could also to gather information from alumni, employers, or school faculty.

b) Exit Interviews and Focus Groups:
Exit interviews and focus groups allow faculty to ask specific questions face - to - face with students. Their limitations are that the scholars might not respond honestly or fully, while their answers could also be, like surveys, impressions which will change over time.

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c) Inventories of syllabi and assignments:

Inventories of syllabi and assignments may take place of information about the curriculum that's not evident until the particular inventory is conducted. Inventory doesn't indicate what students have learned, but it does provide a fast way of knowing and checking how much they know.

Alternative Classroom Assessment Techniques

Alternative classroom assessment techniques are generally simple, non - graded, anonymous, in - class activities designed to give you and your students useful feedback on the teaching - learning process as it is happening. The alternative classroom assessment techniques focus on assessing declarative learning – the content of a particular subject.

1) The *Background Knowledge Probe* is a short, simple questionnaire given to students at the start of a course, or before the introduction of a new unit, lesson or topic. It is designed to uncover the students' pre - conceptions. Short, simple questionnaires prepared by instructors for use at the beginning of a course or at the start of new units or topics can serve as a pretest.
2) The *Minute Paper* tests how students are gaining knowledge, or not. The instructor ends class by asking students to write a brief response to the following questions: "What was the most important thing you learned during this class?" and "What important question remains unanswered?
3) The *Muddiest Point*: Considered by many as the simplest CAT; students respond to the question "What was the most unclear or confusing point in (lecture, homework, discussion) ?" It is one of the simplest techniques to help assess where students are having difficulties. The technique consists of asking students to jot down a quick response to one question: "What was the muddiest point in [the lecture, discussion, homework assignment, film, etc.]?" The term "muddiest" means "most unclear" or "most confusing. "
4) *Alternative Classroom Assessment Techniques* are useful in courses requiring problem - solving. After students figure out what type of problem they are dealing with, they often must decide what principle (s) to apply in order to solve the problem. It provides students with a few problems and asks them to state the principle that best applies to each problem.
5) *Focused Listing:* Focuses students' attention on a single important term, name, or concept from a lesson or class session and directs students to list ideas related to the "focus".
6) *Misconception/Preconception Check:* Intended to uncover prior knowledge or beliefs that may hinder or block new learning; can be designed to uncover incorrect or incomplete knowledge, attitudes, or values.
7) *Empty Outlines:* In a limited amount of time, the students complete an empty or partially completed outline of an in - class presentation or homework assignment.
8) *Memory Matrix:* Students complete a table about course content in which row and column headings are complete but cells are empty. Give your students the handout and have them use the matrix to identify which characteristics belong to each of the two concepts. Collect their responses, and you'll quickly find out which characteristics are giving your students the most trouble.
9) *Categorizing Grid:* Student complete a grid containing 2 or 3 overarching concepts and a variety of related subordinate elements associated with the larger concepts.
10) *Pro and Con Grid:* Students list pros/cons, costs/benefits, advantages/disadvantages of an issue, question, or value of competing claims.
11) *Content, Form, and Function Outlines:* In an outline form, students analyze the "what" (content), "how" (form), and "why" (function) of a particular message (e. g. Poem, newspaper story, critical essay); also called "What, How, & Why Outlines".
12) *Analytic Memos:* Students write a one - or two - page analysis of a specific problem or issue to help inform a decision - maker.
13) *One - Sentence Summary:* Students answer the questions "Who does what to whom, when, where, how, and why?" - about a given topic and then create a single informative, grammatical, and long summary sentence.
14) *Word Journal:* Involves a 2 - part response; 1st, the student summarizes a short text in a single word and, 2nd, the student writes 1 - 2 paragraphs explaining the word choice.
15) *Invented Dialogues:* Students synthesize their knowledge of issues, personalities, and historical periods into the form of a carefully - structured illustrative conversation; students can select and weave quotes from primary sources or invent reasonable quotes that fit characters and context.
16) *Annotated Portfolios:* Students assemble a very limited number of examples of creative work and supplement them with their own commentary on the significance of examples.
17) *Problem Recognition Tasks:* Students recognize and identify particular problem types.
18) *Directed Paraphrasing:* Students paraphrase part of a lesson for a specific audience demonstrating ability to translate highly - specialized information into language the clients or customers can understand.
19) *Application Cards:* Students generate examples of real - world applications for important principles, generalizations, theories, or procedures.
20) *Student - Generated Test Questions:* Students generate test questions and model answers for critical areas of learning.

But sometimes it's easier to talk than to teach, as we all know, especially when we need to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time. We hope students will understand, if not now, then before test time, and we keep our fingers crossed that their results will indicate we've done our job. The problem is, we often rely on tests to judge learning or understanding, and then we move on. There isn't always time to address weaknesses and misunderstandings after the tests have been graded, and the time to help students learn through asking questions is gone.

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1.3 Simple Assessment Strategies

1) *Open - ended question (writing/talking).*
Avoid yes/no questions and phrases like "Does this make sense?" In response to those questions, students usually answer 'yes. ' So, of course, it's surprising when several students later admit that they're lost.

2) *Ask the students to reflect on the lesson.*
The last five minutes of checking the knowledge of students to ask the students to reflect on the lesson and write down what they've learned.

3) *Use quizzes.*

4) *Ask the students to summarize.*
Have the students summarize or paraphrase important concepts and lessons. This could be done orally, visually, or otherwise.

5) *Hand signals.*
Hand signals are wont to rate or indicate the students' understanding of the content. Students can show anywhere from five fingers to signal maximum understanding to at least one finger to signal minimal understanding.

6) *Response cards.*
Index cards, signs, whiteboards, magnetic boards, or other items are simultaneously displayed by all students at school to point their response to a matter or problem presented by the teacher. Using response devices, the teacher can easily note the responses of individual students while teaching the entire group.

7) *Four Corners.*
A quick and simple snapshot of student understanding, Four Corners provides a chance for student movement while permitting the teacher to watch and assess understanding.

8) *Think - - pair - - share.*
Students take some minutes to give some thought to the question or prompt. Next, they pair with a delegated partner to match thoughts before sharing with the entire class.

9) *Choral reading.*
Students mark text to spot a specific concept and reading the marked text aloud in unison with the teacher. This strategy helps students develop fluency; differentiate between the reading of statements and questions; and practice phrasing, pacing, and reading dialogues.

10) *One - question quiz.*
Ask one focused question with a selected goal that may be answered within a second or two. You'll quickly scan the written responses to assess student understanding.

11) *Socratic seminar.*
The students ask questions to one another about a vital question, topic, or selected text. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and extra questions. The students learn to formulate questions that address issues to facilitate their own discussion and gain a brand - new understanding.

12) *3 - 2 - 1.*
The students consider what they need to learn by responding to the subsequent prompt at the top of the lesson: 3) things they learned from your lesson; 2) things they require to understand more about; and 1) question that they need.

13) *Ticket out the door.*
The students write in response to a particular prompt for a brief period of your time. The teachers collect their responses as a "ticket out the door" to test for the students' understanding of an idea taught. This exercise quickly generates multiple ideas that would become longer pieces of writing at a later date.

14) *Journal reflections*
The students write their reflections on a lesson, like what they learned, what caused them difficulty, strategies they found helpful, or other lesson - related topics. They can reflect on and process lessons by reading the students' work.

15) *Formative pencil–paper assessment.*
The students respond individually to short, pencil–paper formative assessments of skills and knowledge taught within the lesson. The teachers may elect to possess the students' self - corrections. The teacher collects assessment results to watch individual student progress and to give future instructions. Both the students and the teachers can quickly assess whether the co - ed acquired the intended knowledge and skills. This is often a formative assessment, so a grade isn't the intended purpose.

16) *Misconception check.*
Present the students with common or predictable misconceptions on a few concepts that you're covering. Ask them whether or not they agree or disagree and to elucidate why.

17) *Analogy prompt.*
Teaching with analogies is often powerful. Periodically, present the students with an analogy prompt: "the concept being covered is like thunder because ____. "

18) *Practice frequency.*
Check for understanding a lesson thrice for a minimum.

19) *Use variety.*
Teachers should use enough different individual - and whole group techniques to test and understand that they accurately know what all students know. Quite likely, this suggests that during one class, identical technique shouldn't be repeated.

20) *Make it useful.*
The true test is whether or not you'll be able to adjust your course or continue as planned. Support the data received in each check. Must one stop and begin over? Should you pull some students aside for 3 minutes to re - teach? Or move on?

21) *Peer instruction.*
Perhaps the foremost accurate means to check for understanding among the students is to have one student attempt to teach another student what he/she has learned. If he/she tries this successfully, it is clear that he/she has understood your lesson.

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