International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Golden Research Thoughts

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING : TEACHER AS LEARNING MANAGER

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Abstract:-School is a social system in which teacher is involved in classroom management. Classroom management refers to the combined attributes of discipline, teaching strategies and organizational skills. Learning itself includes teaching. Managing learning is the key responsibility of teachers. For any teacher, skill of assessment for learning is the initial step because total teaching learning process is based on assessment. From, assessment only, a teacher makes further decisions how to plan, teach and manage. Teachers should act like learning managers for maximum output and should be competent in assessment of learning by using factual assessment approach. Therefore, pupil teachers should be trained for purposeful and factual assessment for learning and progress.

In the present paper, skills associated with assessment of learning have been discussed and new techniques of assessment are described. The main objective of this research was to find out, how the pupil teachers of today are being trained for factual assessment for learning or as managers of learning.

Keywords: Pupil teachers, factual assessment, learning, manager, reporting,

INTRODUCTION:

It is acknowledged that teachers play a critical role in facilitating student learning and achievement. There are also 'high needs' students in the classrooms and teachers have to balance the needs of these students against the collective needs of the class. Teachers have high expectations for the learning of all students and understand that the student is at the centre of all teaching and learning.

The different ways to teach are often referred to as the teacher's pedagogy. Teachers align their planning, teaching, assessment and reporting to the curriculum to maximize the learning of all their students. As students have different learning needs, levels of readiness, interests and preferences, teachers work to ensure that all students are engaged and challenged in learning. The teacher should also be able to deal with students having different abilities and also to the learning disabilities. This occurs by using a range of teaching strategies and learning activities both in part of student and teacher in different contexts.

The quality of teaching and learning in schools directly affects how students view themselves as learners. Teaching and learning must result in the development or practice of a desired learning skill and it must contribute to the maintenance or development of a student's emotional well-being (Traynor, 2002). Another crucial assumption regarding the nature of the learner concerns the level and source of motivation for learning. According to Von Glasersfeld (1989) sustaining motivation to learn is strongly dependent on the learner's confidence in his or her potential for learning.

Experiential learning theory defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience"(Kolb, 1984). Often assessment is viewed as being somehow separate from the learning process, something that is done to students 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. Assessment for learning

Assessment of student skills and knowledge is essential to guide learning and provide feedback to students, teachers and parents on how well students are achieving the set standards. The problem is, however, using the same assessment process for all can disadvantage the candidates because every student has individual strengths and weaknesses. By using a variety of assessment methods, teacher can assess a range of skills, get more reliable and balanced results and hopefully produce more. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to assessment is required.

Assessment for learning is designed to give teachers information to modify and differentiate teaching and learning activities. It acknowledges that individual students learn in individual ways, but it also recognizes that there are expected patterns

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Golden Research Thoughts | Volume 3 | Issue 7 | Jan 2014 | Online & Print

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and pathways that many students follow. It requires careful design on the part of teachers so that they use the resulting information to determine not only what students know, but also to gain insights into how, when and whether students apply what they know. Teachers can also use this information to streamline and target instruction and resources and to provide feedback to students to help them advance their learning. The rationale of assessment is to enhance learning. Assessment, therefore, involves much more than testing and is an ongoing process that encompasses many formal and informal activities designed to monitor and improve teaching and learning.

Summative assessment is assessment that is used to signify competence or that contributes to student's grade 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. 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. 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 (Brown, 2001).

The methods of assessment are the approaches used to assess learning viz. peer, self and group 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, it is used to estimate worth of other students' work, and to give and receive feedback. This approach to assessment requires careful planning, agreement of criteria and use of common tools for analyzing marks. Peer assessment is becoming widely used as a means of giving feedback to students, arguably more feedback than a lecturer can normally provide. It should benefit both those giving the feedback as well as those receiving it. Critical and criterion-referencing judgments, a key skill involved in giving feedback, is an academically valuable one. Giving constructive feedback is a valuable skill. Students also learn how to receive and act on constructive criticism.

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" (Boud, 1991). According to him, 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, and so on, but it is believed to be more valuable when students assess work that is personal in nature, like a portfolio (Race, 2001). 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 also apply to self- 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, assessing fairly is a difficult task. In a strategic outcomes assessment, teachers have a clear perspective about what a student knows and don't know and can differentiate learning experiences accordingly.

Holt and Willard-Holt (2000) emphasize the concept of dynamic assessment, which is a way of assessing the true potential of learners that differs significantly from conventional tests. Here the essentially interactive nature of learning is extended to the process of assessment. Rather than viewing assessment as a process carried out by one person, such as a teacher, it is seen as a two-way process involving interaction between both teacher and learner. The role of the assessor becomes one of entering into dialogue with the persons being assessed to find out their current level of performance on any task and sharing with them possible ways in which that performance might be improved on a subsequent occasion. Thus, assessment and learning are seen as inextricably linked and not separate processes. According to this viewpoint, teachers should see assessment as a continuous and interactive process that measures the achievement of the learner, the quality of the learning experience. The feedback created by the assessment process serves as a direct foundation for further development. 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. A factual assessment is an assessment strategy which is mainly based on assessment for learning through involving the learners. This factual assessment strategy instills a more student-centred approach in learning and assessment. Students played a larger role in the process where each of them is responsible for their own learning. In this type of settings, students constructed and shared knowledge between peers involved in active learning and went through various forms of knowledge evaluation techniques. (Tai and Yuen, 2007). Timely feedback or reporting 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.

Reporting is a method of communicating the information gained from assessing the students learning. Without it, any assessment loses much of its credibility. The purpose of reporting is to support teaching and learning by providing feedback to students, parents and teachers about students achievement and progress and to indicate areas for further development.

The fundamental purpose of reporting is to enable parents and students to understand the student's performance at a specific point in time and to decide what is required for future progress. More complex forms of classroom assessment require new ways of reporting. These new ways need to include both a frame of reference and sufficient information, so that one can make sense of the information. Suggestions should be included about how the information could be used to help make reasoned judgments. General remarks tell little about the progress of the child. The reports should clearly state purpose and learning outcomes and should present an accurate profile of a student in relation to these. Wiggins (1998) suggests that reporting be outcome-based, honest yet fair, rich in context and user friendly. This kind of reporting explicitly identifies the purpose of the

assessment, provides sufficient context and points of reference to make interpretation reasonable, uses a variety of descriptors and symbols (e.g., letter or percent grades) that have clear, agreed-upon, and stable meaning, provides rich, detailed information and evidence (not just a single grade). Principles of effective and informative reporting are that it should:

Be valid, neat and fair,
Project children's strengths as well as weaknesses,
Be student centered i.e. Students should participate in the negotiation of learning tasks and actively monitor and reflect upon their achievements and progress.
Support students' learning and enhance their motivation and commitment to learning.
Recognize individual achievement and progress. Should be providing honest and constructive feedback.
Actively involves parents. Teachers should ensure full participation by parents in the continuing development and review of the reporting processes.
Conveys meaningful and useful information and feedback so that students' future learning developments can be planned. Student achievement and progress can be reported by comparing students' work against a standards framework of learning outcomes and by comparing their prior and current learning achievements.

MANAGING LEARNING OF STUDENTS

Management in any organizational activities is the act of coordinating the efforts of people to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources efficiently and effectively. Classroom Management Plans explicitly detail the strategies and educational adjustments that a teacher uses in his classroom with regard to the needs of the students. It involves manipulating practice domains to create a safe, secure and supportive learning environment. It incorporates Physical environment, learning experiences, inside outside arrangements, teaching & learning aids, preparation, effective relationships, cooperation, questioning, listening, content, Methodology, time management, assessment and reporting. Classroom management is interactive and involves activities for practicing skills in working with all students including the challenging ones. Factors influencing classroom management are understanding students' basic psychological needs, establishment of positive teacher-student relationships and creating positive peer relationships. For enriched learning among the students, it is important to develop a positive engaged classroom community, establishing a favorable climate for cooperation, establishing cooperative relationships, working with individual differences among students, conducting and monitoring engaging learning activities. So, for managing learning of students, teachers should design various learning and assessment strategies for assessment for learning.

By learning, we mean the development of attitudes, the improvement of skills or the gaining of knowledge, in a certain area. It might be better to state it ASK and it happens that asking, rather than telling, is perhaps the main difference between a teacher and a manager of learning. Teacher asks, because may be the learner already knows. Maybe they know but haven't realized that it applies in this situation or maybe they don't know. So, the teacher asks the students first. This asking comprises the first of the four steps of manager of learning. A combination of attitudes, skills and knowledge are usually needed to operate successfully in any specific area. Attitudes are the most important and are the most difficult to acquire. Often a new attitude must replace an old attitude before skills or knowledge can be used. The manager of learning must be able to detect this situation and know how to effect the change. For acquiring desirable attitude, motivation can play significant role. Further, enhancing students' motivation to learn is the key Issues in learning management. There are two additional methods for enhancing students' motivation to learn i.e. cooperative learning and peer tutoring.

Manager of learning is not simply a teacher. Teaching connotes activities too typically require a lecture and a large number of passive individuals. In the phrase manager of learning, the emphasis is on learning, not on what the teacher teaches. Managers of learning are different from "teachers". They know that people learn as individuals, not as a class or group. They know each individual is important, therefore, each individual must learn. Whoever accepts the responsibility for managing learning, must use unusual techniques to get unusual results. One of them is to empower students to assess and learn themselves. Empower students to develop their own learning plans and assessments so they can learn and assess independently i.e. factual assessment. After all, they are the ones who own the learning.

The Managing learning is ensuring all teachers, have a range of high quality professional competencies and training programs. Extend their knowledge about providing adjustments for all learners. Engage with their teams in discussions about curriculum components of planning, teaching, assessment, reporting, environment and resources, explore values and beliefs about supporting students with disabilities and access disability-specific information and resources. The learning environment should also be designed to support and challenge the learner's thinking (Di Vesta, 1987).

In our globally connected world, it is no longer acceptable for teachers to teach the way they were taught. Managing learning is based on the principles of the social constructivism approach, where teachers have to adapt to the role of facilitators and not teachers (Bauersfeld, 1995). Whereas a teacher gives a didactic lecture that covers the subject matter, a facilitator helps the learner to get to his or her own understanding of the content. In the former scenario the learner plays a passive role and in the latter scenario the learner plays an active role in the learning process. The emphasis thus turns away from the teacher and the content towards the learner (Gamoran, Secada, & Marrett, 1998). This dramatic change of role implies that a facilitator needs to display a totally different set of skills than a teacher (Brownstein 2001). A teacher tells, a facilitator asks; a teacher lectures from the front, a facilitator supports from the back; a teacher gives answers according to a set curriculum, a facilitator provides guidelines and creates the environment for the learner to arrive at his or her own conclusions. A further characteristic of the role of

the facilitator in the social constructivist viewpoint is that the teacher and the learners are equally involved in learning from each other as well (Holt and Willard-Holt 2000). The social constructivist model thus emphasizes the importance of the relationship between the student and the teacher in the learning process. Furthermore, it is argued that the responsibility of learning should reside increasingly with the learner (Glasersfeld, 1989). It is the skill of teacher to assess learning through involvement of learner is very significant. Managing learning is directly associated with assessment for learning. It incorporates teaching skills, learning skills, understanding of assessment, various types of assessment, their methods and benefits, new strategies of assessment and reporting of assessment.

In the present paper, skills associated with assessment of learning and new techniques of assessment have been discussed. To study the knowledge and skill of pupil teachers towards assessment, the present research work was carried out. The main objective of the research was to investigate the percentage of assessment technique in training input.

METHODOLOGY

For the research work, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. To find the knowledge and skill of pupil teachers, a self made questionnaire was used including 32 statements related to assessment techniques. The statements of the questionnaire were related to both theoretical and practical knowledge in assessment for leaning of the students. The statements were categorized into 8 areas (table 1). There were two columns in the questionnaire, the pupil teachers were instructed to fill both the column of every statement in percentage from 0-100. After collection of the data, the pupil teachers were trained for some new techniques of assessing leaning and were encouraged to use these techniques in the classroom for manager of learning. A workshop was conducted for the teachers working in secondary schools and these techniques were discussed. Their opinions were collected through semi structured questionnaire (table 2). They were also motivated to use these techniques in concerned school and send their views through mail. It has been made clear to them that their views are very important for the research work.

Table 1: Training input in Pupil Teachers for Assessment

Theoretical/ Practical	Teaching skill	Learning skills	Concept of assessment	Assessment Types	Methods and merits	New techniques	Teacher as learning manager	Reporting
Theoretical	86 %	72 %	71 %	67 %	62 %	2 %	3 %	6 %
Practical	30 %	8 %	3 %	7 %	2 %	00	00	00

Table 1 depicts the theoretical and practical knowledge of pupil teachers related to assessment for learning. The results revealed that during the training period, sufficient inputs are being given theoretically to the teaching, learning skills and for concept of assessment, while moderate knowledge are provided theoretically for types, methods and merits of assessment. For new techniques of assessment, teachers as learning managers and reporting skills, they are not being given any input. However, it is very shocking that in relation to the practical experience, negligible experiences are being provided in the above area except in teaching skills. How one can think of today's teacher to be a learning manager when they are not being trained for the same. Realizing the importance of new techniques of assessment, a workshop was organized for the pupil teachers and teachers of secondary schools during which additional techniques, beneficial for assessment of learning were discussed.

Managing learning focuses on what teachers can do to create the best possible relationship with their students. By connecting with their students, teachers can create personal and safe environments that convey a sense of purpose and worth and engage students in learning. Learning assessment is the most significant part of teaching and it requires changes in pedagogical demands. Pupil teachers were trained for assessing learning in the following ways.

1.A variation of an essay test: Correcting mock answers

Prepare a test, in which children have to correct, expand or refute mock answers. Two weeks before the scheduled test date, distribute ten to twelve essay questions to the students and discuss the same with them in the class. For the actual test, select four from the discussed questions and prepare well-written but intellectually flawed answers for the children to edit, correct, expand and refute. The mock essay answers should contain common misunderstandings, correct but incomplete responses or meaningless concept. In some cases, the answer should have only one or two flaws. Children will enjoy this type of test more than traditional ones. They will develop the skills of comprehension, interpretation/judgment, editing, correcting and expression. This type will be more appropriate for pupil teachers because it is more than testing the knowledge.

2."Create-a-game" test. For one midterm, students can be asked to create either a board game, word game or an ins and outs game that covers the range of information relevant to curriculum. Students should also be asked to include the rules, norms, game board, game pieces and whatever else is needed for the game.

3.Take-home tests. These tests allow students to work at their own pace with access to books, materials and resources available on net. Take-home tests also permit longer and more involved questions, without sacrificing valuable class time for tests. Short answers and essays are the most appropriate kinds of take-home tests. A variation of a take-home test is to give the topics in advance but ask the students to write their answers in the class. Sufficient time can be permitted to them and can be directed to

write answers with the help of book.

4.Open-book tests. On an open-book test, as the name suggests, children have to write answers with the help of books. Children who are lacking basic knowledge may waste too much of their time consulting their references rather than writing. It appears to reduce stress as well as students' motivation to study.

5.Group test. Conducted either in the class or as take-home projects. Students generally respond positively to group tests. It is based on collaborative and cooperative learning among students. Students play the key role in encouraging learning in the collaborative setting (Neo, 2003). A variation of this can be, let the children first work on a test in groups outside the class, then asked to complete the test individually during the class time and obtain their own score. Some portion of the test items should be derived from the group test while the rest should be the new ones. Or let students know in advance that you will be asking them to justify a few of their responses. This will keep students from carelessly depending on their group work for all the answers.

6.Paired testing. Pairs of students work on a single essay test and the pair answers in single paper. Pairs can be self-selected or assigned. For example, pairing a student who is fast learner with the comparatively slow learners allows for some peer learning. Good children will most likely earn the same grade they would have working alone. A variation can be done by allowing the children to work in pairs with open books but submit individual answer sheets.

The test wise opinions of the teachers are interpreted below.

Table 2: Views of teachers on additional techniques for assessment of learning

S. N.	Test type	Views of Teachers
1.	Correcting mock answers	It will be very useful for clarifying the various concepts including the hard spots of the curriculum among the students. There will be real benefits in retention of knowledge. By using this method, a set of question/question bank will also be developed.
2.	Create a game	It will be very interesting for creative students and it will develop their imaginary power too. It will enhance creativity, greater resourcefulness and increase motivation.
3.	Take home test	It will be beneficial to challenge the students'. It will promote self learning strategy and searching power of the students. It will be beneficial in developing various skills among the students viz. information collection, organization of content, presentation and judgment. There will be gains in specific deeper knowledge in the subject area
4.	Open book tests	It will be helpful in reducing the examination phobia among the students. It will encourage learners for selecting the relevant and appropriate answers. Their progress will also be improved. Students can learn a great deal about their own work.
5.	Group test	It is based on the concept of cooperative learning. This will be beneficial to promote social values and develop coordination among the students. This type of test will demand deeper involvement of teachers and their sincerity. The students will learn in an interesting way, without feeling any burden and stress. They will be encouraged for learning/work, especially the comparatively slow learners will develop healthy competitive attitude.
6.	Paired testing	It is based on the concept of peer learning. This test will fill the gap between the fast, and comparatively the slow learners. In this type of testing, where the slow learners have the opportunity to learn from the peer, the fast learners have the feeling of satisfaction to assist their classmates.

DISCUSSION

Teachers assess individual students according to their instructional goals during teaching and learning interactions. Teachers conduct these assessments frequently and keep a systematic record of how individual children perform. They use this information to tailor and shape instruction to the needs of children in the class, as well as to measure their progress against instructional goals. When teachers are better informed of the learning progress and difficulties of their students, they can make better decisions about what a student needs to learn next and how to teach that material in a manner that will maximize the student's learning.

Involving the student in self-assessment develops a culture of reflection and critical analysis not only of their own work

but also of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria involved in their learning process. Assessment systems should be based on multiple measures of students' abilities and on their learning potential through involving them. Today, pupil teachers are not being trained in assessment for learning. More, practical knowledge are not being given to them. They are not being skilled for managers of learning during their training. They are not promoted to use new strategies of assessment. Training is required in how to learn in place of how to teach, how to manage learning involving students in the process and how to report for continuous progression. Factual assessments should be embedded in ongoing process in the classroom.

SUGGESTIONS

In light of today's greater student diversity, the teacher should be trained in practical ways to manage and help students' learning. The skills associated with assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation and reassessment processes needed for becoming learning managers should be inculcated and nurtured among the pupil teachers and teachers.

CONCLUSION

Assessment is very much surrounded in learning process. Practical knowledge should be given to the teachers during their training period for purposeful and factual assessment and reporting. They should be trained to manage learning of the students involving them. They should be made practical in using some new strategies of assessment for learning. The present work was hopefully helpful in facilitating reflection, spark some ideas among the teachers to change the current assessment practices and also enhance student learning.

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