

TITLE

Combining formative and summative assessment

VISION (ASPIRATION AND AIMS)

- to combine elements of formative and summative assessment
- to use feedback and technology to enhance teaching and learning

BACKGROUND MOTIVATION STATEMENT

In response to evidence that formative assessment can greatly enhance learning alongside the demands of a national summative assessment system, teachers can use feedback from technology to combine formative and summative assessment. Additionally, teachers enhance their own professional development by developing formative assessment techniques and using the supporting role of technology.

NARRATIVE

I am a science teacher who wants to combine elements of formative and summative assessment to enhance my teaching and my students' learning. First of all I choose a topic from the curriculum and I prepare a test to assess my students' understanding and knowledge of this topic using a classroom response system. With this information I begin to develop a class wiki with headings based on the outcomes of my students' knowledge and the areas that they are struggling with.

Students are organised into teams (mixed or similar ability or a combination of both) and must complete assigned sections of the wiki based on the data from the classroom response assessment and other observations and evaluations I have made during the teaching of this topic and class. In the next lesson the class build the wiki using the headings as a framework, carrying out research, and using the web and other traditional resources like textbooks.

I directly moderate the teams working on the 'misconceptions' area of the wiki, providing them with personalised support. I encourage the students to support each other in identifying and addressing common misconceptions. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the topic by composing tests using the classroom response systems. Regular opportunities to reassess learning are available. For some of the more challenging topics support also comes from a "people bank". Some of those in this network of teachers, experts and other classrooms have agreed to act as moderators of the "advanced" section of the wiki, as well as evaluators of the quality of the knowledge produced by the students. Depending on the feedback gathered, students progress to more advanced sections of the wiki, and more sections are added to accommodate the progression of the class.

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TREND/S

Formative assessment has come of age

Most educators nowadays agree about the effectiveness of formative assessment, that is, assessment used on a daily basis for diagnostic purposes and to dynamically adapt teaching, rather than for grading. At the same time, it is now become clear that this type of assessment requires a deep re-think of the traditional roles of teachers and students, which takes time and support.

A new professionalism

There has been lately a great emphasis on teacher professionalism. It appears that many education systems have come to the conclusion that the quality of teachers is the most important factor to improve learning. This is leading to incentives for those teachers deemed to be good, to tighter recruitment of graduates, and stricter controls on the quality of teaching.

Personalisation in times of crisis

Teachers are expected to personalise teaching and learning, and due to the economic crisis the cost-saving opportunities offered by technology have become even more relevant. In these times of crisis, using technology to personalise teaching is less about being “innovative” and more about “getting the job done”, saving time and money.

KEY CONCEPTS

Formative, personalisation, wiki, adaptive teaching, experts

ENVIRONMENT

- classroom
- wiki space
- learning management system (LMS)

PEOPLE & ROLES

- teacher as the main planner, facilitator and organiser of content
- students as researchers
- key role of “experts” (and the “people bank”) in supporting the teacher allowing a higher level of personalisation

INTERACTIONS (INCL. PEDAGOGIES)

- formative assessment
- collaborative learning
- personalised support supported by technology
- experts as moderators (these could even be teachers from other schools)

ACTIVITIES

- adaptive teaching
- classroom dialogue based on feedback
- collaborative writing on the wiki
- formative/summative use of tests
- peer mentoring

RESOURCES (INCL. TECHNOLOGIES)

- classroom response system
- wiki-based platform
- “people bank”: a network of teachers, experts and classrooms, always on and easily customisable and expandable