

THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN PRIMARY CLASSES

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Abstract

This article examines the role, functions, and importance of assessment in the process of teaching a modern foreign language in primary classes. The types of assessment, the evolution of the assessment system, and effective assessment criteria that take into account the psychological characteristics of young learners are analyzed. Special attention is paid to formative and game-based assessment as effective tools for motivation and language development.

Key words: assessment, foreign language, primary school, modern education, formative assessment, game-based assessment.

Абстракт

В данной статье рассматривается роль, функции и значение оценивания в процессе обучения современному иностранному языку в начальной школе. Анализируются виды оценивания, эволюция системы оценивания и эффективные критерии оценивания, учитывающие психологические особенности юных учащихся. Особое внимание уделяется формирующему и игровому оцениванию как эффективным инструментам мотивации и развития языковых навыков.

Ключевые слова: оценивание, иностранный язык, начальная школа, современное образование, формирующее оценивание, оценивание на основе игр.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada boshlang'ich sinflarda zamonaviy chet tilini o'rgatish jarayonida baholashning o'rni, vazifalari va ahamiyati ko'rib chiqiladi. Yosh o'quvchilarning psixologik xususiyatlarini hisobga olgan holda baholash turlari, baholash tizimining evolyutsiyasi, samarali baholash mezonlari tahlil qilinadi. Motivatsiya va tilni rivojlantirishning samarali vositalari sifatida formativ va o'yinga asoslangan baholashga alohida e'tibor beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: baholash, chet tili, boshlang'ich maktab, zamonaviy ta'lim, formativ baholash, o'yin asosidagi baholash.

Introduction

Nowadays, learning foreign languages is considered one of the key directions of the education system. Teaching foreign languages from primary classes plays an important role in developing pupils' communication skills and interest in learning. At this stage, assessment has a special significance. In modern education, assessment is not only a tool for checking knowledge, but also a pedagogical process that supports pupils' development, motivation, and active participation in the learning process. In recent years, modern foreign language education has increasingly emphasized the importance of interactive and technology-supported assessment. One of the most effective approaches for primary school learners is play-based assessment. By incorporating games, puzzles, role plays, and group activities into assessment, teachers can evaluate pupils' language abilities in a relaxed and enjoyable environment. This method not only measures knowledge but also encourages active participation, communication, and creativity. For instance, vocabulary can be assessed through matching games, memory cards, or team competitions.[1] Grammar and sentence construction can be checked during short role-plays or collaborative storytelling activities. By turning assessment into a playful experience, pupils are less anxious, more motivated, and more willing to take risks in language use. Moreover, technology-enhanced assessment tools provide additional opportunities for individualized evaluation. Educational applications, interactive quizzes, and online portfolios allow teachers to track each pupil's progress in real time. Immediate feedback supports learning, and digital tools can adapt the difficulty of tasks according to the learner's performance. This combination of technology and formative assessment creates a dynamic learning environment suitable for primary school pupils. Importantly, both play-based and technology-assisted assessment align with differentiated instruction principles. Pupils who learn at different paces and have varying strengths can be evaluated according to their abilities. While some learners excel in oral communication, others may demonstrate strength in reading or writing. By diversifying assessment methods, teachers can identify each pupil's potential and foster their development in multiple dimensions.

In the modern education system, the assessment process should be organized by taking into account the individual characteristics of each pupil. Primary school learners differ from one another in terms of their abilities, learning pace, and psychological conditions. Therefore, assessment should not be carried out based on uniform criteria only, but rather through a differentiated approach, which is considered more effective.[2] In primary education, assessment is gradually shifting toward learner-centered and psychologically sensitive models. One innovative approach is the use of self-assessment and peer-assessment adapted for young learners. Even at an early age, pupils can reflect on their own progress through simple smiley scales, traffic-light

systems (green – I understand, yellow – I need help, red – I do not understand), and short reflection activities. This method develops responsibility and autonomy from an early stage. Another modern direction is emotional-friendly assessment. In primary foreign language classrooms, assessment is connected not only with knowledge but also with emotional comfort. Research in educational psychology shows that pupils learn foreign languages more effectively in low-anxiety environments. Therefore, assessment should reduce fear and increase positive emotions through praise, stickers, badges, and digital rewards.

Digital tools also represent a contemporary innovation in assessment. Interactive platforms, educational applications, and short online quizzes allow teachers to track pupils' progress in real time. Digital formative assessment provides instant feedback and increases engagement, especially for young learners who are naturally attracted to technology. Within an individual-based assessment approach, the teacher monitors the personal development dynamics of each pupil. For example, one learner may be active in speaking skills, while another may be stronger in listening comprehension. [3] During the assessment process, it is important to identify and develop each pupil's strengths. In addition, differentiated assessment helps reduce learning anxiety and creates a supportive classroom atmosphere. When pupils feel that their individual progress is recognized, they become more confident and motivated to participate actively in lessons. This approach encourages continuous improvement rather than comparison with others. Moreover, individualized assessment allows teachers to adapt tasks and feedback according to pupils' needs. For instance, stronger learners may be given more challenging communicative tasks, while those who need additional support can receive simplified instructions or visual aids. Such flexibility ensures that every pupil has the opportunity to succeed.

As a result, assessment becomes not merely a tool for measuring achievement, but a strategy for guiding personal growth and fostering positive attitudes toward foreign language learning from an early age.

The Evolution of Assessment

Assessment has developed together with the education system. In the past, assessment was mainly focused on strict control and grading. Pupils' knowledge was evaluated through marks and tests, and little attention was paid to the learning process. Over time, pedagogical approaches changed, and assessment began to focus on supporting and developing learners. In modern education, assessment evaluates not only final results but also pupils' progress and learning process. Especially in primary classes, formative assessment is widely used to guide pupils, provide feedback, and encourage learning in a stress-free environment. Differentiated assessment plays a significant role in developing students' independent thinking skills. Since learners differ in their abilities, interests, and levels of comprehension, evaluating them using

the same criteria does not always lead to fair results. An individual approach allows teachers to consider each student's personal learning progress and developmental pace.[4]

In foreign language teaching, differentiated assessment is especially effective in forming communicative competence. Some students may demonstrate stronger speaking skills, while others achieve better results in writing tasks. Therefore, it is appropriate to use various assessment methods and formats. This approach helps identify students' strengths and provides opportunities to enhance them further. In addition, the motivational aspect of assessment should not be underestimated. When students feel that their efforts are recognized and valued, their intrinsic motivation increases. As a result, they become more responsible in their learning process and set new academic goals. This positively influences both their intellectual and social development.[5]

Types of Assessment and Their Importance

Several types of assessment are used in teaching foreign languages in primary classes. The most common types are formative assessment, summative assessment, and game-based assessment. Each type plays a specific role in the teaching and learning process.[6]

Diagram: Types of Assessment in Primary Foreign Language Teaching

Assessment Type	Examples
Formative Assessment	Oral feedback, teacher observation, short questions, checking homework, encouragement
Summative Assessment	Tests, quizzes, end-of-unit exams, written tasks
Game-based Assessment	Vocabulary games, role plays, matching games, picture-based activities, group competitions

The diagram shows the main types of assessment used in teaching foreign languages in primary classes. Formative assessment supports continuous learning, summative assessment measures final results, while game-based assessment increases motivation and engagement through interactive activities suitable for young learners.[7]

The Role of Assessment in Primary Classes

Primary school pupils are sensitive and require special attention. Therefore, assessment should be encouraging rather than punitive. Properly organized assessment helps pupils gain confidence, develop interest in foreign languages, and participate

actively in lessons. Assessment also allows teachers to adapt teaching methods according to pupils' abilities and needs.

Assessment Criteria in Teaching Foreign Languages

In primary classes, assessment in foreign language teaching is based on four main language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Assessment criteria should be clear, age-appropriate, and easy for pupils to understand. Simple tasks, visuals, and oral feedback are recommended to ensure effective assessment.[8]

Conclusion

In conclusion, assessment is an essential part of teaching modern foreign languages in primary classes. Effective assessment not only measures pupils' knowledge but also supports their personal and language development. The use of formative and game-based assessment helps create a positive learning environment and improves the overall quality of foreign language education.

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