

Effective Teaching, Learning Event and Assessment

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Abstract: This article produces a narrative description of a teaching and learning event (a lesson, a debate, a field trip, a round table discussion, a lecture, etc) that It has been facilitated recently. This article talks about the event in relation to how learner focused it is, how inclusive the event is, how learner encouraged deep approach to learning, the assessment purpose, the principles that the class introduced on this article follow while assessing, how inclusive the assessment is, how students-focused the assessment is. This article contributes to the following learning outcomes. Critically evaluate their own professional practice in the light of the broad notions of teaching, learning and assessment theory and plan and design inclusive methods of teaching, supporting learning and assessment to enable students' active learning. Critically evaluate their own assessment practices in the light of the broad notions of assessment approaches, discuss a variety of ways to evaluate and reflect on specific teachers TLA(teaching and learning assessment) practices, reflect on the teachers own practice, rationalise amendments and articulate CPD(Continuing Professional Development) needs. The classes introduced in this article based on the following

assessment criteria (AC). AC 1 is have presented, discussed, rationalised and critically evaluated a learning/teaching event and observation feedback from personal practice making references to relevant theory. AC 2 is have presented, discussed, rationalised and critically evaluated an assessment method from personal practice making references to relevant theory. AC 3 is having identified ways of evaluation and have discussed those used in personal teaching practice as well as observation feedback and have made references to the relevant literature.

Key words: active learning, student centred learning, inclusive class, deep approach learning, assessment's purpose and types, formative assessment, summative assessment, principles of assessments.

Introduction:

This article will talk about the general English lesson for young students (they have studied English for 2 years) that was planned by teachers. The class was delivered in No.3 school in Tashkent by two women teachers. This specific class had been continued for two months. This teaching practice gave the teachers who made the class described on this article a great chance to learn about the students and to apply the knowledge gained at the UCSSTL (University Certificate of Special Study in Teaching and Learning).

Active Learning

Here, first description is the stages of the students' learning and then will be analysed the event(class) against the criteria in the task above. Appropriated literatures will be referred where possible.

The lesson lasted for 45 minutes during which students studied the present continuous tense. There were 17 beginner students aged 9. At the very first lesson, the students were tested to assess their level of spoken and written English. They spoke about themselves and wrote

some basic sentences with their names, family members, numerals. After observing the students for four lessons, the result of the test showed that 90% of the students have kinaesthetic learning style. The rest of the students preferred auditory learning style. When given a hand-on interactive task, most of the students were excitedly involved which shows it was interesting for them.

On the opposite, the tasks with some passive learning like reading and writing mostly bored them which teachers could see by their face expressions and low participation in answering the questions. Taking these observations and the students wishes into account, the teachers decided to plan a lesson that would include more active tinkering tasks.

The lesson started with splitting the students into groups of 4. A pack with English letters was given to each table to construct two words related to the day, date and the weather. This was a warm up activity aiming to develop students' organisational ability and to check their spelling skills. Then, the students were asked about the date and day of week. The teachers elicited the relevant vocabulary. With the help of the entire class the date and day were finally written on the white board. Then, the students were given 15 minutes for hand on work with clay. Each table had a box of clay of 3 colours, and tiny decoration materials. A mission card on each table said how and what to do with the materials. It was a pair-work, so there were exactly two teams at every table. The mission card would say who your pair partner is and what your pair has to do.

Every mission card had one of the four verbs "sleep", "eat", "read", "stand", usually related with the student's routine life. At a result of this task, each group was supposed to make a sleeping, reading, eating and standing person. In a previous teaching experience of the teachers, when students are given a group work, some passive students are

reluctant to be involved in group work without being given certain responsibility.

Therefore, the teachers made sure that each student at a desk had his/her specific task to do. This kinaesthetic activity helped to tune students to learn about present continuous with the student's own movements. It was kind of prelude before the students have a grammar explanation from the teachers.

When they finished, The teachers asked the students to show their clay works and explain what their clay person was doing. The student's answers were "the clay person is sleeping/eating/reading/standing." Then, the teachers wrote the verbs "is, am, are" and "-ing" verb on the white board and explained the grammar structure of the present continuous tense. The students were given a grammar work sheet. It was a gap-filling task with 10 present continuous sentences. The early finisher could help their group members, which we encouraged as being a peer-teaching experience. At the end of the lesson, the students played a game about present continuous tense. The teachers prepared 5 sets of present continuous sentences (one - correct, another one - incorrect) and each sentence was written on A4 paper. The teachers would hold up a paper with one sentence-correct, another-incorrect use of present continuous. After reading the papers, the students had to go and stand in front of the correct answer.

As the game was a mobile activity, it helped kinaesthetic and visual learners. It also helped the teachers to assess the student's learning during class time. The teachers also gave the students differentiated homework which was designed according to the student's level of English. From here on, the event against the 3 criteria in the task above will be analysed.

Student Centred Learning

The first criterion is about student-centred learning during the class. The classes was conducted the group work with a hand-on activity in which the students could collaborate with other classmates in small groups. The teachers arranged the desks in classroom in groups to create easy and comfortable environment for these small groups. Student centred learning could be created by collaborative works with other people (Di Napoli, 2004).

When the students were doing the group work and worksheet activity, designed according to their different learning styles, teachers could see that all the students were involved in the activities enthusiastically and that they tried their best to fully complete the task. When teachers conduct a student-centred class upon consideration of students' learning styles it would be very motivated and interested for students (Weimer, 2011), (Brooks& Brooks, 1993) accordingly their involvement in the class could be increased.

The teachers always stood or sat near the students and helped in their activities, sometimes giving relevant and needed feedback on their works. It posters students' learning rather than standing in front of them, giving instructions and only observing their works. "In a student-centred class, the teacher is a member of the class as a participant in the learning process and the teacher's role is more that of a facilitator than instructor" (Jones, 2007).

At the end of the lesson, the students played a game related to the learning topic. When they were playing the game, the teachers could see that the students were actively involved in the activity and applied what they had just learned to make a right choice of the sentences. keeping students motivated is regarded one of the strategies to make student-centred learning (Paul Bogdan, 2011). And Hansen (1994) says that "games are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can make students focus on learning". All the activities conducted in the class

addressed various learning styles therefore the lesson provided student-centred learning.

Inclusive Class

Speaking about the second criterion, making an inclusive class. The teachers purposefully utilized the hand-on-work with clay for the students who have kinaesthetic learning style and the work sheet activity was mostly addressed to those who learn visually. While they were working on these tasks, the students had a chance to discuss and debate their opinions with groupmates, which was very effective for the students with auditory learning styles. This activity also facilitated verbal communication between the students. To design a class with different activities accommodating students learning styles is effective to make inclusive class (Tomlinson, 2011).

The students in the class sat by groups and they discussed and cooperated to do the group works. In inclusive class, students are seated by small groups and the grouping students can access to various opinions by talking and collaboration during group works. (Eredics, 2015). My classroom was equipped with a big white board and the walls of the classroom were decorated with pictures, charts and posters which were related to the students' learning topics. The grammar structure of present continuous was explained on the white board. Instructions about other learning activities were also explained on the white board.

When the students were asked about previous learning to make an interaction with current learning topic, they could take a look at the decorated walls with learning topics and find the answer about the question. When teachers use appropriate visual aids during class it is very effective to make inclusive class. "Visual aides are, undoubtedly, very important items in the inclusive class" (Eredics, 2014).

The teachers specially designed the worksheet with pictures to help the students clearly understand and focus on the worksheet activity.

Worksheet is a type of handouts which is regarded as a visual aid (Hermanoczki, 2006). Above mentioned authors' opinions support how much all the activities in my class were student-centred learning.

A Deeper Approach to Learning (motivation)

The Third criterion is about how the teachers fostered a deeper approach to learning in their students. The teachers let the students who first finished the work sheet activity to help those who are still struggling with it. The students who were helped by early finisher to complete the work sheet activity were praised by the teachers on their effort in finishing the task completely. All the students were motivated and engaged in their learning. Biggs (2012) says, "Intrinsic motivation drives deep learning and the best academic work." And Cherry (2016) says, "Intrinsic motivation can be increased in situations where people gain satisfaction from helping others and when people are praised with their effort and process." Those theories prove that my class fostered a deeper approach to learning.

The teachers transformed the classroom into better learning space by posting students' works, having visual-aids displayed and providing images and pictures on the walls. The classroom outlook changed with every new unit to trigger students' inquiry.

Saga Briggs says (2013), "Change in the learning environment cultivates intrinsic motivation in students." In the class, the students were assessed informally during the game at the end of the class. The students had to apply their learning to find correct answers, and according to their answers the teachers could ascertain that how much the students understood about present continuous and which points were still confusing them. Deep approach to learning can be encouraged by assessments that ask students to apply what they have learned during class (Mentoring Minds, 2014). All the activities were utilized for deep approach to learning since this is supported by the authors' opinions.

Assessment's Purpose and Types

From here, assessments' purposes and principles will be described and written about how inclusive the class's assessment was and how students focused the teachers managed to make it with examples from their own teaching experience. Carefully planned assessments, thoroughly designed based on the assessments' purpose, are very helpful both for teachers and students. Teachers can define students' level of prior knowledge through diagnostic assessment. And in the process of the assessments, teachers can discover the specific aspects of students' learning process and learning styles which is referred to as formative assessment.

Students in turn can discover their strengths and weaknesses in learning and discuss with teachers how to improve their learning which is another benefit and one of the major principles of effective assessment practices. Assessments can serve many different purposes that define assessment's types. One purpose of assessments is a diagnostic assessment which is meant to determine students' prior knowledge and learning motivation. It is usually conducted at the beginning of a school year or learning course.

For example, the students were assessed for the level of English vocabulary and grammar. At the first lesson, they were given 5 questions to answer orally. The written diagnostic assessment was a test work sheet with 4 exercises.

Formative Assessment

The formative assessment is usually conducted sometime during the course of learning and is useful both for the teacher and her students (Biggs 2011) because it involves qualitative feedback and by the feedback from the teacher, the learners can improve their learning progress to have better results in their learning. The teacher can clarify learning topics that learners are struggling with, so that the clarification

can support the teacher in creating more effective instructional technics for the students.

For a formative assessment, the students were questioned by quizzes in the end of every class. The quizzes were usually not over 5 questions. For example, when the students were taught about how to call family members in English, the students were given an explanation about a family member's associated features and then after the explanation the students answered who the family member was. The students were also given 5 sentences including incorrect grammar or words on the white board as a formative assessment. For example, when they were taught about "be" verbs, I wrote wrong "be" verbs which did not fit for subject in the sentence. When the students found out the incorrect "be" verbs, they explained why it was wrong and what the correct one was.

Summative Assessment

The other assessment type is a summative assessment, that can take a form of essay, role-plays, exams or presentations. This assessment is conducted at the end of the learning course to evaluate learners learning progress and academic achievement. Summative assessment results are recorded into a learner's permanent academic record and it is kept in the learner's school or learning center for a very long time. By the learners' results of the summative assessment, teachers can evaluate whether their teaching materials, methods and strategies were effective to meet the intended learning outcomes of the learning program. In one of my class, the students were assessed with a math exam as summative assessment.

Principles of Assessments

There are many various principles of assessments that different teachers emphasize when designing their assessments. Below seven of them are presented and the teachers have selected them as they are

regarded the most principles for most of the academic assessments and which are also employed to assessments of the teachers.

Assessments should be reliable, authentic, manageable, motivating, fair, valid and feedback-oriented. A reliable assessment represents the consistency or stability of test performance. In a reliable assessment, a student has the same score no matter when or where he takes it even if he takes the assessment several times.

Assessment needs to be authentic. “An authentic assessment is form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills – “(Muellerm year). Authentic assessments support students’ analytical and critical skills or ability to integrate what they learn.

Assessments should motivate students, so that the students get encouraged to study spontaneously. When students have a motivating assessment, they get very interested in their learning to study further.

Assessments should be manageable since overloading students can frustrate learning. When teachers aim to make a manageable assessment, they should ask themselves how much time most students will have available for the assessment and then according to the answer of the question, they need to reduce or increase the amount of the assessment.

Students should have equal and fair opportunities to demonstrate their learning for an assessment. When an assessment provides equal and fair opportunities and when’s conditions for all students, the assessment could be regarded as a fair assessment.

Assessments need to be valid. If students can complete the assessment without that learning, the assessment is not valid measure of student learning. When students are assessed only about the learning topics which were taught by teachers during the class, it denotes that the students have a valid assessment.

As last, assessments should be feedback-oriented. When students have sufficient and understandable explanation about their result of assessments from teachers, the students have feedback-oriented assessments. Feedback-oriented assessments provide supportive instructions to students for making better result in the next assessment and improvements in their learning progress.

If the assessment accommodates various learning styles it is considered inclusive.

The students were given different types of assessments according to the purpose of the assessments and the students' learning styles. The students were assessed for their grammar skills through the grammar quizzes. For example, the teachers prepared 5 sets of present continuous sentences (one - correct, another one - incorrect) and each sentence was written on A4 paper. The teachers would hold up a paper with one sentence-correct, another-incorrect use of present continuous. After reading the papers, the students had to go and stand in front of the correct answer. As the quiz was a mobile activity, it helped kinaesthetic and visual learners. It also facilitated auditory learners since they were asked why the incorrect sentence was wrong and how it should be corrected orally. It was a formative assessment and given to the students feedback about their learning.

When the students were assessed for their reading comprehension skills, they were given a test sheet with 2 short texts and some questions about the texts. They could answer the questions in writing or drawing as they prefer.

For example, there was the text written about Temur's mum who works in a hospital. The question was "where does Temur's mum work?" The students answered the question in writing "hospital" or drawing a hospital. The teachers purposefully asked the students about the text orally so the students with auditory learning approach could demonstrate their learning.

When the students were assessed for their speaking skills, the students were given several pictures to choose. After choosing one picture, the students described the picture at least with 5 sentences. To develop kinesthetic learning the students could draw their pictures and then describe it. Facilitated assessments as above mentioned prove that the assessments were inclusive since inclusive assessment accommodates various learning styles of students and supports each student to make same learning outcome (Dr Val Chapman, 2015).

Talking about student-centered assessment. The teacher ensure that their assessment was student-centered because their students were clearly notified about what and when the summative assessment would take place and how to prepare for the assessment. In the class, the teachers draw the students' attention to items which can be questioned in assessments to ensure the principle of transparency.

When students are given clear directions for an assessment and well explained about purpose of the assessment, the assessment is regarded as one of the student-centered assessments (Stiggins, 2014). When the teachers designed a summative assessment, their students expressed that how many short writing questions were appropriate for them and which learning topic should be covered in the assessment. The students opinion was considered to create the assessment. It also proves that the teachers assessment was student-centered. When students are given a chance to participate in creating an assessment, it shows that the assessment is a student-centered assessment (Duncan, 2011).

Conclusion

In conclusion, It can be said that students can focus on the learning if teachers show positive behaviour and provide interactive games related to the topic. A mind warm-up activity is particularly affective in getting students' brains ready to learn and focus on the subject. Designing differentiated tasks for students with different

learning styles is a way to make an inclusive class. When students are taught in a well decorated classroom with learning topics and given a chance to help others during class, their intrinsic motivation can be developed further and it can encourage the students to get deeper approach to learning. In the other words, intrinsic motivation, facilitated by peer teaching and well-prepared learning environment, develops deeper approach to learning. Properly designed assessment tailored for its purpose and principles is very effective for students to make good results in the assessment and improvement for their learning process.

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