PROMOTING SELF-ASSESSMENT SKILLS IN INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING (USING ENGLISH MATERIALS)

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Abstract
Promoting self-assessment skills in intermediate learners is an essential strategy for enhancing foreign language acquisition. Self-assessment allows learners to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement, fostering autonomy and motivation in the learning process. This article discusses practical approaches to implementing self-assessment in foreign language classrooms, particularly using English language materials. By introducing clear self-assessment criteria and tools such as rubrics and reflective questionnaires, teachers can help learners evaluate their speaking, writing, listening, and reading abilities. The article also highlights the contributions of various experts in the field, emphasizing the importance of self-regulation and self-assessment for developing cognitive skills and fostering learner independence. Additionally, integrating peer and teacher feedback further enhances the accuracy and effectiveness of self-assessment. The article concludes that self-assessment is a powerful tool for promoting successful language learning and should be a central aspect of language instruction.

Keywords: Self-assessment, evaluate, autonomy, self-regulation, feedback, motivate.

Introduction

The Importance of Self-Assessment in Language Learning

Self-assessment in language learning is the process in which learners evaluate their own language abilities and progress. This technique is linked to increased learner autonomy and better motivation, as it encourages reflection on learning strategies and outcomes. According to Rustamova (2023), self-assessment and self-regulation play a crucial role in language teaching, contributing significantly to cognitive thinking and fostering independence in students. [Crucial Specific Features of Self-Assessment and Self-Regulation in English Language Teaching Classes.]

Self-assessment allows intermediate learners to identify their strengths and weaknesses, which provides a roadmap for future language acquisition. As Liu and Brantmeier (2019) emphasize, when students take responsibility for evaluating their language skills, they are more likely to engage in purposeful practice and seek opportunities for improvement [Liu, H., & Brantmeier, C. (2019). "I know English": Self-Assessment of Foreign Language Reading and Writing

Abilities among Young Chinese Learners of English. System, 80, 60-72. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.10.013*]

Effective Implementation of Self-Assessment Tools

For self-assessment to be effective, the tools used must be both accessible and relevant to the learners' language proficiency level. It is recommended that teachers provide clear guidelines on how to use self-assessment tools and ensure that learners understand the criteria for evaluating their speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills. According to Tigchelaar (2018), one such tool can be rubrics, which give students concrete benchmarks to measure their performance against. Rubrics also help learners break down complex language tasks into manageable steps, increasing their ability to self-regulate their learning. [Tigchelaar, M. (2018). Exploring the Relationship between Self-Assessment and OPIC Ratings of Oral Proficiency in French. In P. Winke, & S. M. Gass (Eds.), Foreign Language Proficiency in Higher Education (pp. 153-173). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-01006-5_9]

Moreover, providing learners with opportunities for regular self-assessment, such as after completing a speaking or writing task, allows them to track their progress over time. Teachers can facilitate this process by encouraging reflective journaling, peer feedback, and self-evaluative quizzes.

The first linguist widely recognized for significant contributions to self-assessment and learner autonomy in language education is Henri Holec, often regarded as the "father of learner autonomy." His 1981 work, Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning, introduced the concept of learners taking responsibility for their own learning, including self-assessment as a critical component. Holec argued that self-assessment empowers students to reflect on their learning process, set goals, and evaluate their progress, ultimately fostering independence and motivation. His ideas have influenced modern educational practices and set the foundation for further research in the field. contributed significantly to the field of self-assessment, particularly in the context of language teaching. In his articles, he discussed the essential features of self-assessment and self-regulation, focusing on their impact on language learners' cognitive development. He argued that incorporating self-assessment in the classroom helps learners build a deeper understanding of their language learning process and make adjustments based on their reflections.

Practical Steps for Teachers

For teachers to successfully implement self-assessment in their classrooms, several practical steps should be followed: Introduce Self-Assessment and the concept of self-assessment at the beginning of the course, so students understand its importance in their learning process.

Use Clear and Simple Criteria: Provide students with specific criteria to assess their speaking, writing, listening, and reading abilities. This could include rubrics or reflective questionnaires tailored to their level.

Regular Feedback: Combine self-assessment with teacher feedback to provide students with a more balanced view of their progress. Research by Ünaldı (2016) supports the idea that the combination of self-assessment and teacher assessments leads to more accurate and holistic

evaluations of learners' language skills.   [Self and teacher assessment as predictors of proficiency levels of Turkish EFL learners

İ Ünaldı - Assessment & evaluation in higher education, 2016 - Taylor & Francis]

Peer Feedback: Encourage students to engage in peer assessments, as this can provide additional insights into their strengths and areas for improvement. Peer feedback promotes critical thinking and collaboration, as seen in studies by Kulasi, Y., (2020) [Kulasi, Y., (2020) "Using peer feedback to help develop critical thinking skills", New Vistas 6(1), 20-24. doi: https://doi.org/10.36828/newvistas.108]

Conclusion

By fostering self-assessment skills, teachers can help intermediate learners develop more effective learning strategies, increase motivation, and improve their foreign language proficiency. Rustamova's work, along with insights from other researchers, highlights the importance of clear self-assessment criteria, regular reflection, and the integration of both teacher and peer feedback in the learning process. In doing so, learners become active participants in their education, leading to more successful language acquisition.

For further reading, you can access Rustamova's article (2023) Crucial Specific Features of Self-Assessment and Self-Regulation in English Language Teaching Classes. PINDUS Journal of Culture, Literature, and ELT, 3 (11). pp. 1-4. ISSN 2792 – 1883 [Rustamova, S. (2024). Model of Development of Students' Self-Assessment Skills Through Speaking and Writing Competencies in Foreign Language Teaching. Conference Proceedings: Fostering Your Research Spirit, 755-759. https://doi.org/10.2024/z131dw98]

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