

## STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Simona GAVRILAŞ

Faculty of Food Engineering, Tourism and Environmental Protection, "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania, 2 Elena Drăgoi, Arad 310330, Romania  
Corresponding author email: simona2213@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** Grading reflects the students training level. Its rate, the correlation between the objectives of the course and the student's preparation can be determined by an efficient assessment system. Based on these information, different approaches of the educational model can be followed. The evaluation has three important functions: **classification** and **selection**, ranking students, by providing them indirect recommendations to society, in order to choose and occupy positions in production; **educational**, aspect considered by many researchers, and which influences the mental and intellectual development of learners, forms the principles and skills, acts on the affective-emotional-motivational side; **social**, regarding the influence of society on the results. Students thus know the school requirements. Learn to self-appreciate, to self-evaluate. Evaluation by grading becomes an instrument of their conduct for a certain period. The correct appreciation is stimulating. Evaluation exerts educational influence on students' aspirations and interests and at the same time on the teacher, by regulating and self-regulating the pedagogical behaviour. The evaluation brings the element of novelty, being related to certain criteria. It must be done in relation to the pedagogical objectives of learning, forming a continuous cycle: from it one starts, to it one returns. In modern pedagogy this idea become a fundament. In relation to what is pursued, the learning contents, the means, the forms of development of the educational activities and those of evaluation are established.

**Keywords:** performance, education, success, objectives

### INTRODUCTION

The evaluation problem appeared as a necessity with the advent of the education system. Its importance led to the research orientation of pedagogues, psychologists, sociologists, and resulted in the emergence of a new pedagogical branch, *docimology*, the science of evaluating<sup>1</sup>. The term came from Greek, *dokime*, meaning *test*, and *logos* science. Over time this term has been extended, defining the science that investigates examination and grading in various evaluation tests, with the aim of improving them<sup>2</sup>. Didactic evaluation is presented as a feedback process. The educator transmits information to the student, he must decode it and depending on his way of understanding it, retransmit a response to the initiator. Depending on the answer received, he can adjust the way of communicate the initial information or send another one. The feedback process permanently regulates the interaction between the student and the teacher, in order to adopt the appropriate informational shape to the learner understanding level.

Evaluation includes measurement and appreciation but has a more comprehensive idea than these. It refers to the whole concept of

quantification and estimation of the results, completing it by establishing the successful and critical elements, as a basis for improving the verified activity.

In relation to the educational objectives, the evaluation must allow the educator to determine *the moment in which the student can move to another academic objective* but also the *moment of school failure*. Fixing the educational objectives at which most students do not obtain school performance will contribute to the self-control of the teaching processes. It will contribute to improve the teaching methods used, to the way of organizing and carrying out the specific activities.

To estimate what have been achieved during the lesson is necessary to use proper measurement instruments. The suitable techniques to determine the performance achieved are established in the same time with the lesson objective and the content. They will provide qualitative and quantitative objective data about the results obtained. This approach offers the possibility to appreciate what has been appropriated learnt during the studding activity, the registered yield, as well as the adoption of measures to improve the educational process. To

claim that an evaluation of the teaching results can be undertaken without well-developed measuring elements is a serious mistake.

The measuring instruments can take a variety of forms such as: *oral tests*, *written tests*: questions that are expected either answers built by students or choice answers based on those suggested by the teacher, essays, exercises and problems, completions of lacunar texts, schemes, or tables, translations in drawings or schemes of some knowledge; *tests of knowledge* (non-standardized) composed by the teacher, *diagnostic tests*-highlighting gaps and mistakes; *aptitude test*, *performing technical operations* and *measurements*, *making objects* and *other types of tests*.

Regardless of which measurement procedures will be used, it will be developed in terms of criteria that will allow the comparison of the results obtained with the proposed objectives. Based on these analogies the teacher will be able to determine if the results are or not satisfying, if they meet the expectations in terms of school performance. Proceeding in this way the educator can decide whether or not the objectives of the lecture are achieved, if the lesson has succeeded in its entirety.

*To appreciate* means to be able to establish *till* what level the obtained results correspond to the criteria taken into account. This will return the student's degree of understanding the topic. The feedback through the medium of evaluation may also generate other teaching approaches of the considered subject, by using another auxiliary learning aids.

In the views of modern didactics, the evaluation is made by reference to the objectives of the lecture considered at the same time "*success criteria*". The clearer and more precisely they will be defined, the more objective and conclusive the evaluation will be. So, when we set the objectives, we also have the assessment criteria. A specific characteristic of the performance evaluation must be the development of some appropriate standards<sup>3</sup>. Establishing the reference points for the educational activity gives an objective overview of all the process. Such an approach will help determine the extent to which the objectives planned reach the proposed target and what changes need to be made in order to increase the

positive aspects appointed and to limit until total elimination the observed deficiencies<sup>4</sup>.

In terms of quality, success or failure is expressed by absolute appreciations: all or nothing, the presence or absence of quality. For example: *the definition of a specific term is known or not*; *the formula of a chemical compound is written correctly or not*; *the operation mode with a measuring instrument is known or not*.

In terms of quantity, the requirements vary in relation to the teaching situation, the progress of students and the complexity of tasks. Of course, not everything can be evaluated immediately, not all results are easy to notice and measure. For example, *the objectives regarding the formation of positive skills towards learning and work*, *collective spirit*, *intellectual curiosity* and *others* cannot be operationalized, specifying by what concrete behaviours of the students could be manifested in this sense. By observation, however, it can be monitored to some extent, whether or not some students show behaviours symptomatic of the attitude in question. The involvement in the learning specific activities will be much greater in the conditions in which the trust in the teacher is developed and strengthened<sup>5</sup>. Similar behaviour has been observed also in case of teamwork, the members ability to rely on each other knowledge and competence abilities contributes to develop novel work directions<sup>6</sup>.

School assessment is imposed as a necessity of the fact that it fulfils certain *functions*<sup>7</sup>:

- *control*, in order to ascertain the level of effectiveness of the teacher's activity;
- *classification* and *selection*, necessary to provide the companies with the right specialists for the different sectors of activity;
- *social*, through school evaluation ensuring the preparation of the student for fast and efficient integration in work and in life;
- *educational*, individual assessment contributes to self-knowledge;
- *didactic*, the evaluation can intervene in the regulation of one's own activity, by choosing at every moment the appropriate methods and procedures, adapting the forms of

organizing the educational process to the particularities of each group of students.

At the level of the lesson, the immediate results and performances are measured, it is true, but nevertheless cannot escape attention the more subtle, more imperceptible effects that accumulate in time, such as *changes of attitude, formation of beliefs, development of certain interests, opinion modelling, opinions* and others. Although we do not have adequate measuring instruments for these effects, the teacher's careful and tireless observation of students' behaviours and communication with them can favour some information and impressions useful for an evaluation, of course much more subjective than in the case of appreciation of knowledge or practical skills.

Different studies suggested the positive effect of the collegial student's assessment, underlining the importance of the informal support<sup>8</sup>.<sup>9</sup>. This approach contributes to improvement of student involvement in the learn process<sup>9</sup>.

The various measurement tests can be applied at the beginning, throughout or at the end of the lesson.

The paper aim is to emphasize some general aspect of the student assessment procedure. There are underlined some critical directions that should be considered during the evaluation criteria establishment: *which are the important points that may contribute to a successful learning activity from its perspective?* There are summarised a few examples of good practice models which have proved to be efficient and some factors that contributes learning improvement.

## METHODS

When the evaluation is made based on the comparison with the initial situation from which we started we are dealing with the *comparative evaluation*.

When the evaluation identifies only the changes that occurred within some directly targeted behaviours, we are dealing with the *absolute evaluation*.

As for the act of evaluation taken in all its aspects, as a *measurement* and *appreciation* at the same time, it has always been an essential aspect but also a difficult problem to solve<sup>10, 11</sup>.

*Traditional education* considered necessary to separate the moment of verification and evaluation from that of learning and teaching<sup>12</sup>. Currently, the changes in optics that have taken place in this matter tend to integrate assessment into the teaching and learning process itself, where it is more appropriate and natural to be placed and not considered as something outside the training process in which they are engaged constantly the teacher and the student. A challenging method could be represented by integration of the assessments bases into the student's system of knowledge. This approach won't be easy to apply in the traditional educational system, due to the fact that is based on collaboration and cooperation between all the parts implicated, student-teacher. From modern teaching perspective, the provocation can be determined especially by the high number of students, situation which limit the direct interaction time and the feedback<sup>13</sup>.

Attempts have been made lately to suppress the classic moment of verification at the beginning of the lesson, questions, questionnaires, other ways of verification. These will be normally integrated in the method itself after which the new lesson is taught, that is, the conduct of the lesson should inherently include continuous assessment<sup>14, 15</sup>. In this way more corrective techniques could be applied, to support students who encounter different learning difficulties. Everything must be done for the examination of previously acquired information's to be carried out during the active exploration of new knowledge. In this way it is possible to avoid the unproductive use of teaching time at the beginning of the activity, when only a few students are involved, the others being "tormented" by inactivity.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For evaluation to be effective, it must be based on certain principles:

- *continuous* and *consistent*, in order to be able to see through it, the evolution, the rhythm achieved by each student;
- to be *in accordance* with the general instructive-educational objective but also of each discipline;
- be *carried out* in the form of a system of evaluation techniques;

- to be *objective* and *main* to provide a real total of the student's level of preparation at a given time;
- to be based on a system of *unitary* and *consistent requirements*;
- *maintaining* the same evaluation criteria.

There are different possibilities for evaluation<sup>16</sup>:

- *evaluation by reference to the norm* that provides us with information about the relative ranking of individuals, a hierarchy within the group ("upper"-above the class average, "middle", "below average"-weak);
- *evaluation by reference to the subject*, to the content of the programs;
- *evaluation by reference to criteria*, such as objectives.

The most common form of evaluation is grading. It can be group or individual. It must consider the possibilities of each individual student. This way of grading is used in the conditions in which the instructive-educational act is not carried out on classes but on groups of students, organized on the basis of the passive criterion of capacities.

Studies performed in domain of formative appreciation open the idea of a constructive path which might be followed. The approach is not easy to follow, it involves the active involvement of both students and teachers, in a constructive and reasoned dialogue<sup>17</sup>.

Importance for objective evaluation in higher education presents the development of formal criteria. The inclusion of assay criteria can contribute to the improvement of the obtained results<sup>18</sup>.

By evaluation the results are quantified receiving numerical values that possess the properties of real numbers of arithmetic and are expressed in notes from 10 to 1.

The school grade includes a large dose of subjectivity, its sources being related to the teacher, the field of education and the student. The analysis of these sources in relation to the school grade, as an evaluation tool, leads to the following findings that could also influence it<sup>19</sup>:

- the well-known *Oedipal effect* can sometimes be observed. This effect consists in the fact that some educators grade the student on

the basis of a conviction he has formed in connection with it.

- *individual error*, when the educator applies the same assessment criteria, but differently in relation to each learnable, or applies different criteria in relation to each student or discipline.

In students grading can be often observed the contrast effect. Subjectivity is generated by logical error. Some educators are willing to appreciate less the content, the quality of an answer and more the order, accuracy, effort made by the student. Subjectivity is also determined by the fact that for some objectives the grading can be done exactly, in others not, and also by the student's ability to formulate answers at a given time. It depends not only on the mode of assimilation but also on factors such as the state of the moment, the level of fatigue, the conditions of certain mental processes.

In general, the grading criterion is also based on the requirements of the curriculum, even if in some cases it may be considered insufficient or incomplete.

As signs of appreciation, the grades do not remain without echo in the students' consciousness, becoming educative from many points of view. For example, getting used to being rigorously graded, students begin gradually, gradually, to realize the university requirements, to become aware of the criteria according to which they are appreciated, to internalize the teacher's recognition. Over time, they will begin to relate to these criteria on their own, to appreciate themselves. The evaluation coming from outside will thus gradually turn into self-evaluation. The student's capacity of precise self-evaluation can help them to adopt the appropriate learning method<sup>20</sup>. The more objective and correct the assessment is, and less influenced by different arbitrary subjective factors, the more stimulating it will become and the more it will be able to energize the learning efforts.

With the communication of the assessment result, the student must be helped to become aware of the positive or negative aspects that justify it.

The evaluation tools include a diversity of forms, the examples appeared in the specialized

literature remaining indicative, the practice and the living experience of the teacher must always complete and update the forms of appreciation and measurement.

The tools used depends on the skill and training of the teacher in this regard, the group of students to which it applies and the topic or subject to which the knowledge assessment is made.

Another assessment approach, with significant good results regarding also the level of informational acquisitions is where students elaborated the own evaluation criteria<sup>21</sup>.

For an efficient evaluation the grading criterion must be correlated with other assessment criteria. Starting from the idea that work represents the decisive factor that created man, it means that it can and must be one of the criteria of appreciation, in its essence the fundamental form of learning.

The purpose of the instructive-educational process is to prepare the individual for himself and the society. An objective evaluation correlates the student effort regarding quality and quantity of personal involvement in the educational process. The same task can be accomplished at the same school level, but through different effort. Neglecting such aspect can have negative impact on student subsequent implication degree in learning activities.

## CONCLUSIONS

The elaboration of some worksheets involves a certain methodology that obliges the teacher to ensure some essential qualities for any tests:

- to be adequate to the objectives and subjects studied;
- to be effective and for this valid;
- to be accurate, meaning to really reflect the knowledge degree;
- be practical, meaning easily applicable;
- the expected score to depend on how well the student knows, not how fast he responds.

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