Assessment as a key competence of foreign language teachers

Óscar Soler Canela
Instituto Cervantes

Nicosia
1st / 11 / 2014
TEACHERS COMPETENCE IN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

01/11/2014
Reflection involves:
• Thinking
• Analyzing

Reflection allows us:
• to adapt general guidelines on how to teach
  – to different contexts
  – to different teaching preferences
• Goal > improve our teaching practice
A REFLECTIVE APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It allows teachers:
• to consciously develop their own repertoire of strategies and techniques to draw upon in their teaching,
• to take informed actions,
• to adjust their teaching to respond to issues and problems.

(Brookfield, 1995)
BENEFITS OF A REFLECTIVE APPROACH

Teachers can benefit from a reflective approach if:
• they are stimulated to reflect on their own classroom experiences on the basis of their personal concerns.
• reflection follows a systematic structure, and if this structure is made explicit.
• this structure is introduced gradually.
• meta-reflection is promoted.
• peer-assisted reflective learning is being promoted.

(Korthagen, 2010)
Assessment as a key competence of foreign language teachers

MODEL OF CORE REFLECTION (KORTHAGEN AND VASALOS, 2005)

Actualisation of core qualities

*How can these core qualities be mobilised?*

Awareness of core qualities

*What core quality is needed to realise the ideal situation and overcome the limitations?*

Experimenting with new behaviour

Experience / problematic situation

*What problems did you encounter (or are you still encountering)?*

a. Awareness of ideal situation
   *What do/did you want to achieve or create?*

b. Awareness of limitations
   (limiting behaviour, feelings, images, beliefs)
   *How were/are you refraining yourself from achieving this?*
MODEL OF CORE REFLECTION (KORTHAGEN AND VASALOS, 2005)

Useful questions:
• 1. What is the ideal situation -the situation which the teacher wants to bring about?
• 2. What are the limiting factors preventing the achievement of that ideal?
EUROPEAN CONTEXT

- Studies on foreign language teachers training needs.
- Guidelines (EALTA)
- Descriptions of teachers competences (British Council, European Profile Grid, Instituto Cervantes)
ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

• Level 1: Incorporates assessment into lessons and courses.
• Level 2: Uses a varied and appropriate range of approaches to assess learner performance.
• Level 3: Demonstrates a clear understanding of assessment principles and is able to plan and incorporate effective assessment procedures into courses and lessons. Shares knowledge with others.

(British Council, 2008: Organisational skills profile for teachers)
PROJECTS

- The European Profiling Grid
- The key competences of foreign and second language teachers (Instituto Cervantes)
EUROPEAN PROFILING GRID
Assessment as a key competence of foreign language teachers

EUROPEAN PROFILE GRID PARTNERS

[Logos of various educational institutions]
EUROPEAN PROFILING GRID

- Describes the competences of language teachers.
- Available in nine languages.
- List of categories of teacher competence.
- Six ‘phases of development’ (from novice teacher to experienced and expert teacher).
EUROPEAN PROFILING GRID

It is intended to:

• assist self-assessment and mapping of a range of current language teaching skills and competences;
• help to identify development needs and training programmes.
THE REFLECTION PRINCIPLE

• “If they reflect on the results of self-assessment teachers are less likely to overestimate or underestimate their capabilities. They become more aware of their specific needs and areas for development. Using the EPG descriptors is a powerful stimulus for reflection and action planning.”
THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLE

“The EPG assumes the existence of - or stimulates the establishment of - a culture of self-assessment in the language teaching institution. Teachers are empowered to judge their own performance in a more informed and objective way. They become motivated to carry out self-assessment in order to monitor and enhance their own development.”
Assessment as a key competence of foreign language teachers

**STRUCTURE**

- Training and qualifications
- Key teaching competences
- Enabling competences
- Professionalism
STRUCTURE

Key teaching competences:
• Methodology: knowledge and skills
• **Assessment**
• Lesson planning
• Interaction management and monitoring
KEY COMPETENCES OF FOREIGN AND SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS
KEY COMPETENCES (INSTITUTO CERVANTES)

- Ensure quality of the teaching in the IC network
- Based on previous research done at the IC.
- Description of competences of a good teacher at the IC.
STRUCTURE

- 8 Key Competences
- 32 Specific Competences
KEY COMPETENCE: ASSESSING STUDENTS’ LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

It refers to teachers’ ability to assess students' communicative competence as well as their progress in learning the language in accordance with ethical principles in assessment.

This implies that the teacher:
• integrates assessment in the learning process;
• makes use of tools and procedures appropriate for the assessment purpose, the context and the student;
• uses assessment to improve students’ learning, promoting constructive feedback;
• and involves students in assessing their own learning and that of their peers.