



ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING AND NEEDS-BASED LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY: PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. The Concept of AFL
3. The Prerequisites for Implementing AFL
4. Strategies of AFL Practice
5. Implementation Issues of AFL
6. Practical Recommendation

INTRODUCTION

1. Previous studies show that assessment for learning (AFL) is found to give a profound impact on student academic performance, especially when meaningful feedback strategies are adopted.
2. However, in some Asian countries, AFL remains under-practiced particularly in prescribed-mandated curriculum practices where teachers are considered as curriculum transmitters, and exercise-and-test based instruction are still pedagogical rituals in classrooms (Leong, Ismail, Costa, Tan, 2018).
3. In this presentation, I would like to explore AFL as a new avenue of creating needs-based language pedagogy. I would like to focus my presentation upon how AFL could maximize student learning beyond the mandated language curriculum territory. I would also like to propose what teachers need to know about AFL in order to help students enhance their academic achievements.

THE CONCEPT OF AFL

Assessment for Learning (AFL) is part of everyday practice by students, teachers and peers that seeks, reflects upon and responds to information from dialogue, demonstration and observation in ways that enhance ongoing learning (Klenowski, 2009, p. 264).

1. **‘everyday practice’** refers to teaching and learning activities. The emphasis is on the interactive, dialogic, contingent relationships of teaching and learning.
2. **‘by students, teachers and peers’**: AFL should be student centred. All AFL practices carried out by teachers -- such as giving feedback, clarifying criteria, rich questioning -- can eventually be ‘given away’ to students so that they take on these practices to help themselves become autonomous learners.

3. **‘seeks, reflects upon and responds to’**
emphasise the nature of AFL as an enquiry process involving the active search for evidence of capability and understanding, making sense of such evidence, and exercising judgement for wise decision-making about next steps for students and teachers.
4. **‘in ways that enhance ongoing learning’:**
Sources of evidence are formative if students and teachers use the information they provide to enhance learning. Providing students with the help they need to know what to do next is vital; it is not sufficient to tell them only that they need to do better.

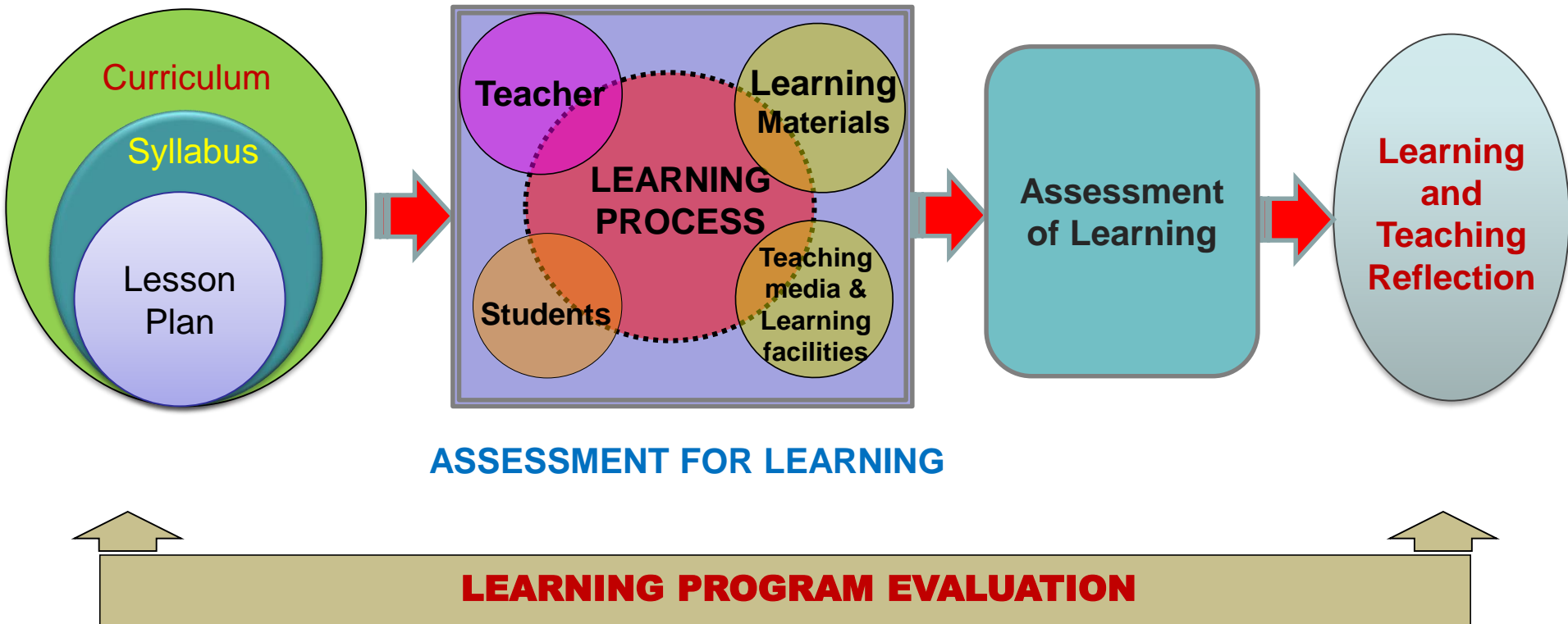
A COMPREHENSIVE TEACHING-LEARNING SYSTEM

PLANNING

IMPLEMENTATION

ASSESSMENT

REFLECTION



AIM OF AFL

The main aim of AFL is to enhance student learning. The learners not only get knowledge and experiences, but also develop their metacognitive capabilities (learning how to learn), which lead them to be autonomous learners, where learners are responsible for their own learning (Black and William, 1998; Terry and Sabine, 2016; Miedijensky and Tal, 2016; and Kippers, Wilma B.; Wolterinck, Chritel H.D.; Scildkamp, Kim; Poortman, Cindy L.; and Visscher, Andre J.; 2018).

PREREQUISITES FOR IMPLEMENTING AFL

1. **The Assessment Category:** (1) Alignment between assessment and the curriculum, (2) assessment providing detailed feedback about student learning, (3) integration of assessment into classroom instruction, and (4) high quality of assessment
2. **The Teacher Category:** (1) Teachers' knowledge and skills to analyze and interpret evidence, (2) Teachers' knowledge and skills for adapting their instruction, (3) Teachers' knowledge and skills to use technology, (4) Teachers having a positive attitude towards the use of AFL

3. **The Learner Category:** (1) Learners' active involvement in their learning, (2) Learners' understanding of their learning goals, and (3) Learners' engagement in self- and peer assessment to develop critical awareness of what is required of them and to improve their work
4. **The Context Category:** (1) Facilitation and support from the school leader, (2) Motivation by the school leader, (3) School leaders' knowledge and skills to analyze and interpret evidence, (4) Teacher collaboration, (5) Internal and external support, (6) Access to technology
- (Lee and Coniam, 2013; Kippers, Wolterinck, Schildkamp, Poortman, Visscher, 2018: 201)

CONTEXT OF TEACHING

Learning-teaching programs are carried out in particular contexts, which are very diverse and complex. To be successful, teachers are required to analyze a number of factors (political, social, economic, or institutional) in the given contexts, identify their (positive or negative) potential effects on the programs, and tackle them appropriately and wisely (Richards, 2017).

INDONESIA



There are more or less 1.340 ethnic groups inhabiting more or less 13.000 islands in Indonesia.

SCHOOL BUILDING

TRADITIONAL



MODERN



CLASSROOM CONDITION

TRADITIONAL



MODERN



LEARNING EQUIPMENT

TRADITIONAL



MODERN



STUDENT ACTIVITY

PASSIVE



INTERACTIVE



NEEDS ANALYSIS

Before a teaching program is carried out, the teachers must first make an analysis of the situation as well as an analysis of the students' needs. The analysis is intended to identify the factors which are predicted will support and/or hinder the implementation of the language teaching program (Richards, 2017).

CONSIDERING THE ENVIRONMENT

“Environment analysis involves considering the factors of the situation in which the course will be used and determining how the course should take account of them. One way of approaching environment analysis is to work from a list of questions which focus on the nature of the learners, the teachers and the teaching situation”
(Nation and Macalister, 2010: 2)

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

“To shape the practice of teaching, teachers need to have a holistic understanding of what happens in their classroom. They need to systematically observe their teaching, interpret their classroom events, evaluate their outcomes, identify problems, find solutions, and try them out to see once again what works and what doesn't. In other words, they have to become strategic thinkers as well as strategic practitioners” (Kumaravadivelu, 2003: 2).

EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Westwood (2008: 56) argues that “teacher effectiveness is not concerned with any particular teaching method. Rather, it is concerned in a more general sense with the way in which teachers operate in their classroom – the decision they make, the actions they take, their interaction with students, their presentation skills, and the way they manage the group.”

TEACHING PRINCIPLES

(1) Engage all learners in the lesson, (2) Make the learners the focus of the lesson, (3) Provide maximum opportunities for student participation, (4) Develop learners' confidence, (5) Teach learning strategies, (6) Promote cooperation among learners, and (7) Address learners' needs and interests. (Richards and Rodgers, 2014: 353)

STRATEGIES OF AFL IN CLASSROOM PRACTICE

1. Teachers should share learning aims and success criteria with students. Learning aims are the contents the teacher wants the students to learn, and success criteria are used to check whether student learning activities were successful. If teachers share learning aims and success criteria with students during the lesson, they both know where the student is progressing towards and they both know how it will be assessed whether the students have learned what the teacher wanted them to learn.
2. Teachers can elicit evidence about student learning processes during everyday practice. They can use various formal and informal assessments as evidence to gather information about students' learning needs, such as student observations, classroom conversations, and homework assignments. If teachers elicit evidence, they gain insight into students prior learning, and where they are in their learning process.

3. Teachers can improve teaching and learning by using feedback, defined as information regarding aspects of student performance or understanding. For example, teachers can adapt teaching by using evidence from a classroom conversation with students as a form of feedback. Moreover, teachers can provide feedback to students to explain to them how to progress in their learning.
4. Teacher can let students conduct peer and self-assessment as a part of classroom practice. Peer and self-assessment represent students' ability to assess peers' learning or one's own learning, and relate these outcomes to learning goals to improve learning outcomes.

KEY FACTORS OF EFFECTIVE AFL

1. AFL requires committed and motivated participants -- teachers and students.
2. Trust is vital if students are to feel safe admitting the difficulties and uncertainties they are having, thus maximising the chance that others can help them to overcome those difficulties and uncertainties. Students need to feel that their teacher and their fellow students are on their side.
3. Students need to develop a good understanding of learning goals, criteria, and standard. This clarity about goals often can be facilitated by collaborative discussion and planning when the work is getting underway.

4. Developing students' self-assessment skills is very important, because self-assessment is a vital link between teacher assessments and students' actions to improve their work.
5. Effective feedback and help from teachers or peers requires insight into the difficulties each student is having, good timing, and excellent judgment in the choice of comments (including balance between comment on strengths and comment on weaknesses).

(Crooks, 2011: 72)

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES OF AFL IN ASIAN COUNTRIES

1. The greatest obstacle to the implementation of AFL appears to come from pressure of high-stake external examination. Teachers who believe in AFL are unable to carry these practices out because of the need to prepare students for these high-stakes examination
2. Students' narrow focus on examination is also seen as a hindrance when they do not see the link between what they learn and how it will help them in the exam;
3. Teachers have ultimate authority over knowledge in the classroom, with teachers still providing the correct answers most of the time, leaving little space for dialogic interaction;
4. Students are afraid to their misconceptions in the classroom for fear of losing the respect of their teacher and peers.

5. Some teachers believe in AFL as a good learning strategy for students, but are constrained by institutional value and school culture, as well as pressure from parents;
6. There is the belief, on the part of both students and teachers, that grading and scoring are still a 'valued part of learning', and that motivating students through test scores is an accepted way to make students responsible for improving their own learning;
7. It is difficult to dislodge the idea that examinations are inherently more fair and objective than AFL;
8. Teachers are limited by their knowledge and competency of AFL.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATION

1. Teachers need to promote their professional knowledge and skills of teaching and learning and their assessment.
2. Students are encouraged to become active and autonomous learners.
3. Schools need to create school culture which enables teachers and students to develop professionally.
4. The Government needs to develop practical standards for teaching and assessment.



THANK YOU

*Education is the most
powerful weapon which
you can use to change
the world*
(Nelson Mandela)