
Assessment Literacy: Reconceptualizing the process of perception

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Annotation *The following research was undertaken with the help of two data collection methods: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative method helped to identify the perception of teachers on student assessment. Quantitative method was used as test with authentic and contextualized scenarios. The research was conducted with 103 English as foreign language (EFL) teachers from three language universities in Uzbekistan. Through, conducted research methods we have found 1) the teachers LAL profile and 2) the need for stronger training in assessment practice than in theory. These two findings can be explained by the gap between subject matter knowledge and pedagogy of assessment. Findings of this study contribute to our understanding of LAL development in assessment training for language teachers in pre-service and in-service teacher programs. The consistency in developing teachers' language assessment literacy can be reached by well-developed assessment course in practicing classroom assessment.*

Keywords *Assessment literacy, teachers' knowledge, pedagogy in assessment, competence, skill, knowledge*

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Аннотация *Данное исследование проводилось с использованием двух методов сбора данных: качественного и количественного. Качественный метод помог выявить восприятие учителями оценивания учащихся. Количественный метод использовался в качестве теста с аутентичными и контекстуализированными сценариями. В исследовании приняли участие 103 преподавателя английского языка как иностранного (EFL) из трех языковых университетов Узбекистана. В результате проведенного исследования были выявлены: 1) профиль языковой грамотности учителей и 2) необходимость более интенсивной подготовки в области практики оценивания, чем в теории. Эти два вывода можно объяснить разрывом между предметными знаниями и педагогикой оценивания. Результаты данного исследования способствуют пониманию развития языковой грамотности в рамках подготовки учителей языка к оцениванию в рамках программ подготовки и повышения квалификации. Последовательность в развитии языковой грамотности учителей в области оценивания может быть достигнута за счет хорошо разработанного курса по практике оценивания в классе.*

Ключевые слова Грамотность в области оценивания, знания учителей, педагогика оценивания, компетентность, навыки, знания

Baholash kompetensiyasi: Idrok jarayonini qayta kontseptualizatsiya qilish

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Annotatsiya Quyidagi tadqiqot ikkita tadqiqot usullari yordamida amalga oshirildi: sifat va miqdor. Sifat usuli o'qituvchilarning talabalarni baholash jarayoni haqidagi malakalarini aniqlashga yordam berdi. Miqdoriy usul haqiqiy va kontekstualashtirilgan stsenariylar bilan sinov sifatida qo'llanildi. Tadqiqot O'zbekistondagi uchta til universitetidan 103 nafar chet tili sifatida ingliz tili (EFL) o'qituvchilari bilan o'tkazildi. O'tkazilgan tadqiqot usullari orqali biz 1) o'qituvchilarning LAL profilini va 2) baholash amaliyotida nazariyaga qaraganda kuchliroq tayyorgarlikka ehtiyoj borligini aniqladik. Mazkur xulosalarni fan bilimlari va baholash pedagogikasi o'rtasidagi tafovut bilan izohlash mumkin. Ushbu tadqiqot natijalari pedagogik jarayon va malaka oshirayotgan o'qituvchilar dasturlarida til o'qituvchilari uchun baholash mashg'ulotlarida LAL rivojlanishiga hissa qo'shadi. O'qituvchilarning tilni baholash kompetensiyasini (savodxonligini) takomillashtirishda amaliyotda izchil ishlab chiqilgan hamda zarur komponentlar bilan integratsiya qilingan baholash kursi orqali erishish mumkin.

Kalit so'zlar Baholash kompetensiyasi (savodxonligi), o'qituvchilarning bilimi, baholashda pedagogika, kompetensiya, ko'nikma, bilim

Introduction

Popham (2004) once labeled teachers' lack of appropriate training in assessment as "professional suicide". The discussions on the role of teachers in the assessment process and their competence in this area brought to the emergence of one of the concepts that we call "assessment literacy". This term was invented by Stiggins (1991), which requires teachers to know "what they are assessing, why they are doing it, how best to assess the skill, knowledge of interest, how to generate good examples of students' performance, what can potentially go wrong with the assessment, and how to prevent that from happening". The development and practical implementation of the language test is a complex process (Pill & Harding, 2013). The impact of the test is, nevertheless, real and

possibly far-reaching, not only for test takers, but also for a wide range of stakeholder groups. Those groups who use language test scores for further decisions, and are not actively involved in the construction of the test materials, may come to assumptions about tests, testing process and outcomes that are at odds with what is intended or can be endorsed by the language testing community. Such misconceptions may have serious consequences for decision making based on the test scores but have seldom been explored and, indeed, are rarely available for scrutiny (Pill & Harding, 2013).

Literature review

There are many studies on language assessment literacy, taking the definition of assessment literacy as the root and focusing on

the competence of language teachers, there exist several definitions. They will include a range of skills related to the test production, test score analysis, and the roles/functions of assessment in education and society (Inbar-Lourie, 2013). According to Fulcher (Fulcher, 2012) "the knowledge, skills and abilities required to design, develop, maintain or evaluate large-scale standardized and/or classroom-based tests, familiarity with test processes, and awareness of principles and concepts that guide and underpin practice, including ethics and codes of practice. The ability to place knowledge, skills, processes, principles and concepts within wider historical, social, political and philosophical frameworks in order to understand why practices have arisen as they have, and to evaluate the role and impact of testing on society, institutions, and individuals". Taylor (2009), emphasizes language assessment literacy as "the level of knowledge, skills and understanding of assessment principles and practice that is increasingly required by other test stakeholder groups, depending on their needs and contexts". Malone (2013) also defined it as "language teachers' familiarity with testing definitions and application of this knowledge to classroom practices in general and specifically to issues related to assessing language". On the other hand, Scarino (2013) defined LAL as "the assessment of student achievements, teacher knowledge, understanding and practices of assessment". Finally, LAL may be regarded as additional competencies when compared to assessment literacy and added that it is the combination of assessment literacy skills and language specific skills (Inbar-Lourie, 2017).

Methodology

The present study is a mixed-methods study that comprises both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire represented qualitative part of the study administered in five Universities of Uzbekistan. The aim of the Qualitative method was to identify the perception of in-service and pre-service

language teacher candidates on student assessment. Quantitative method was used as test to identify the level of knowledge on LTA of pre-service language teacher candidates. The following research aimed to improve the language assessment literacy (LAL) of pre-service language teacher candidates in Uzbekistan and mitigate the barriers based on findings and provide useful recommendations.

The participants of the study included 103 EFL in-service teachers and 253 pre-service teacher candidates from five language universities of Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan State University of World Languages, Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages, Nukus State Pedagogical Institute, Jizzakh state pedagogical university and Gulistan state university. As Uzbekistan State University of World Languages is the state basic educational university, the major number of teachers was from this university. The teachers were selected from the same faculties thus, the number of participants depended on the engagement to the same faculty, Table 1. The universities were selected with the approval of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education.

Results

Data collection was undertaken from January to October 2020. Official letter was provided from the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education to the research institutions to gain the permission for research. The data for this study were collected in line with two research methods: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative method helped to identify the perception of teachers on language testing and assessment and generate the answers. The adopted version of the Fulcher's (2012) LAL survey was chosen as a qualitative method. This survey deals with the issue of "What are the assessment needs of language teachers?" (Fulcher, 2012).

The LAL survey for teachers includes three sections and can be found in Appendix A. The first part of the survey includes several statements where in-service teacher is asked to rate statements based on the scale. The rate

descriptors were organized in the following scale from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. Second part of the survey asked to rate the frequency with which teachers do the assessment dimensions. The rate descriptors were organized in the following scale from 1-never to 5-always. The third part of the survey includes 10 questions for semi-structured interview.

Conclusion

Research findings clearly indicate that there is a gap in language teachers' assessment literacy level, and the barrier to succeed in gaining the competence needed to be identified. The current study did a small effort in this direction. The qualitative and quantitative research analysis demonstrates that to bring the consistency in teachers' knowledge and pedagogy in assessment, there is a crucial need to develop courses that would fully be based on "teachers' competence in educational assessment of students". To make a cohesive bridge from knowledge on subject to pedagogy, the courses need to be developed hierarchically. Pre-service courses should cover the subject knowledge and in-service programs the pedagogy.

Improving the state standard of foreign language teaching in higher education based on best international practices. Standard should include mandatory requirements for the professional quality of specialists, assessment competence.

Revision and improvement of curricula and programs in the areas of pedagogical education and specialties on the basis of

advanced foreign experience. In other words, the study of the experience of foreign higher education institutions in the content of the curriculum and the improvement of curricula and programs in pedagogical areas and specialties based on the results of the analysis of their educational programs.

Improving the level of competence of pedagogical assessment requires the implementation of a number of tasks, including the development of requirements for quality indicators of pedagogical assessment. These indicators serve as a single criterion, in improving the quality of education and assessment of knowledge, skills and abilities of students, which in turn ensures that this process is carried out on the basis of a single requirement.

To bridge the theory and practice gap by pairing assessment course with practicum in year 3 and year 4 pre-service teacher candidate education context.

Implementing "Assessment Directors" or "Assessment Centers" will develop accreditation process to make sure the assessment tools are adequate and aligned to the course outcomes. "Assessment Director" will control and keep information in track. In particular, the center will have the right to study the best foreign practices and make changes in the curriculum, the process of assessing students. It also aims to develop and design, monitor, and analyze an effective comprehensive system for evaluating the effectiveness and appropriateness of students, educators, and programs.

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