
Strategies of formative assessment to improve reading comprehension: the evidence from the 8th grade learners

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Annotation *Reading comprehension is a critical skill that enables learners to comprehend, interpret, and analyze written materials. However, many middle school students struggle to understand complex literature. This article investigates the role of formative assessment procedures in enhancing reading comprehension among 8th-grade students. Formative assessment monitors students' learning during the teaching process and provides feedback to help them improve their comprehension. The study investigates at numerous formative assessment procedures used in the classroom, such as teacher feedback, questioning strategies, peer assessment, and self-assessment. These techniques enable pupils to think critically about what they read and become more engaged in the learning process. The study was undertaken with 8th-grade students to evaluate how different tactics influence their reading.*

Keywords *Formative assessment, reading comprehension, 8th grade learners, feedback strategies, peer assessment, self-assessment, classroom assessment, student engagement, middle school education*

O'qishni tushunishni yaxshilash uchun formativ baholash strategiyalari: 8-sinf o'quvchilarining dalillari

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Annotatsiya *O'qishni tushunish – bu o'quvchilarga yozma materiallarni idrok etish, talqin qilish va tahlil qilish imkonini beruvchi muhim ko'nikmadir. Biroq, ko'plab o'rta maktab o'quvchilari murakkab adabiyotni tushunishda qiyinchiliklarga duch keladi. Ushbu maqola formativ baholash tartib-qoidalarining 8-sinf o'quvchilarida o'qishni tushunishni yaxshilashdagi rolini o'rganadi. Formativ baholash o'qitish jarayonida o'quvchilarning o'zlashtirish darajasini kuzatib boradi va ularning matnni tushunishini yaxshilashga yordam beruvchi fikr-mulohazalar taqdim etadi. Tadqiqotda sinfda qo'llaniladigan bir qator formativ baholash tartiblari ko'rib chiqiladi, xususan: o'qituvchi tomonidan berilgan fikr-mulohazalar, savol berish strategiyalari, o'zaro baholash va o'z-o'zini baholash. Ushbu usullar o'quvchilarga*

o'qiganlarini tanqidiy tahlil qilish va o'quv jarayonida faolroq ishtirok etish imkonini beradi. Tadqiqot 8-sinf o'quvchilari orasida turli taktikalarning ularning matnni idrok etishiga qanday ta'sir ko'rsatishini baholash maqsadida o'tkazildi.

Kalit so'zlar *Formativ baholash, o'qishni tushunish, 8-sinf o'quvchilari, fikr-mulohaza strategiyalari, o'zaro baholash, o'z-o'zini baholash, sinf baholashi, o'quvchilarning faolligi, o'rta maktab ta'limi.*

Стратегии формирующего оценивания для улучшения понимания прочитанного: данные учащихся 8-классов

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Аннотация *Понимание прочитанного – это важнейший навык, который позволяет учащимся воспринимать, интерпретировать и анализировать письменные материалы. Однако многие ученики средней школы испытывают трудности с пониманием сложной литературы. В данной статье исследуется роль процедур формирующего оценивания в улучшении понимания прочитанного среди учащихся 8-го класса. Формирующее оценивание отслеживает успеваемость учеников в процессе обучения и предоставляет обратную связь, помогающую им улучшить понимание текста. В исследовании рассматривается ряд процедур формирующего оценивания, применяемых в классе, таких как обратная связь от учителя, стратегии постановки вопросов, взаимооценивание и самооценивание. Данные методы позволяют учащимся критически осмысливать прочитанное и более активно участвовать в учебном процессе. Исследование проводилось среди учащихся 8-го класса с целью оценки того, как различные тактики влияют на их восприятие текста.*

Ключевые слова *Формирующее оценивание, понимание прочитанного, учащиеся 8-го класса, стратегии обратной связи, взаимооценивание, самооценивание, классное оценивание, вовлечённость учащихся, образование в средней школе*

Introduction

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills in the learning process, as it enables students to understand, interpret,

and analyze written information across different subjects. In middle school education, particularly in the 8th grade, students are expected to engage with more complex texts

that require not only basic reading skills but also higher-order thinking abilities such as identifying main ideas, making inferences, evaluating arguments, and connecting information with prior knowledge. However, many students experience difficulties in understanding academic texts, which can negatively affect their overall learning outcomes and academic performance.

In recent years, educators and researchers have paid increasing attention to the role of assessment in supporting learning rather than simply measuring it. Formative assessment has emerged as an effective instructional approach that helps teachers monitor students' learning progress during the educational process. Unlike traditional summative assessment, which focuses on evaluating students' knowledge at the end of a learning period, formative assessment is integrated into daily classroom activities and provides continuous feedback that guides both teaching and learning. Formative assessment includes a variety of strategies such as teacher questioning, classroom discussions, peer assessment, self-assessment, feedback on students' work, and short diagnostic tasks. These strategies allow teachers to identify students' strengths and learning gaps in reading comprehension and adjust instructional methods accordingly. At the same time, formative assessment encourages students to become active participants in their own learning by reflecting on their progress, recognizing their mistakes, and developing strategies to improve their understanding of texts.

Research in educational pedagogy suggests that the consistent use of formative assessment can significantly enhance students' engagement, motivation, and comprehension abilities. When students receive timely and constructive feedback, they are better able to understand the purpose of reading tasks and develop effective reading strategies such as predicting, questioning, summarizing, and clarifying information from texts.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to examine the impact of formative assessment strategies on the development of reading comprehension skills among 8th grade learners. The study analyzes how different formative assessment practices can support students' understanding of texts, improve their reading performance, and create a more interactive and supportive classroom learning environment. The findings of this research aim to contribute to the improvement of teaching practices and provide practical recommendations for teachers who seek to enhance students' reading comprehension through formative assessment.

The Concept and Importance of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is considered one of the most essential skills in the learning process, as it enables students to understand, interpret, analyze, and evaluate written texts. It is not limited to recognizing words or sentences but involves constructing meaning from the text by combining linguistic knowledge, cognitive skills, and prior experience. According to Catherine Snow (2002), reading comprehension is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language." This definition emphasizes that comprehension is an active and dynamic process in which readers interact with the text in order to build understanding.

Scholars in the field of language education emphasize that reading comprehension includes several cognitive and metacognitive processes. David Nunan (2003) explains that successful readers use different strategies while reading, such as predicting the content of the text, identifying key ideas, making inferences, and monitoring their own understanding. These strategies help learners process information more effectively and allow them to interpret both explicit and implicit meanings within a text.

Similarly, Anderson (1999) states that reading comprehension is a complex

interaction between the reader, the text, and the context in which the reading occurs. Readers bring their background knowledge, language competence, and experiences to the reading process, which influences how they interpret and understand the information presented in the text. When students lack sufficient vocabulary or background knowledge, their comprehension may become limited, which highlights the importance of effective instructional support.

The development of reading comprehension is particularly important in foreign language learning. Jeremy Harmer (2007) notes that reading provides learners with exposure to authentic language, vocabulary development, and grammatical structures. Through reading, students encounter different writing styles, text structures, and ideas, which contribute to their overall language competence. In addition, reading activities help learners improve other language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening.

Another important perspective is presented by Françoise Grellet (1981), who emphasizes that reading comprehension requires the use of specific reading strategies. She identifies several important strategies, including skimming for general understanding, scanning for specific information, and intensive reading for detailed comprehension. Teaching these strategies enables students to approach texts more effectively and develop independence in reading.

The importance of reading comprehension becomes even more significant at the middle school level. At the 8th grade stage, students are expected to work with more complex and informative texts in different subjects. They must be able to analyze arguments, identify the author's purpose, compare information, and draw logical conclusions. According to Grabe and Stoller (2011), strong reading comprehension skills allow learners to access academic knowledge, develop critical thinking, and

participate more actively in the learning process.

Therefore, developing reading comprehension is a key objective in modern education. Effective teaching methods, appropriate reading materials, and the integration of supportive instructional strategies can significantly improve students' ability to understand and interpret texts. Strengthening these skills at the middle school level prepares learners for higher academic demands and helps them become more confident and independent readers.

The concept of assessment in education

In education, assessment is a methodical procedure that collects, evaluates, and interprets data regarding students' knowledge, abilities, and comprehension. Its main goals are to drive instructional decisions, highlight areas for development, and give teachers, students, and stakeholders insights into the learning process. Assessment is a technique to facilitate learning and improve educational results; it is not just about ranking or evaluating students. Assessment is essential to learning since it gives students feedback that can help them identify their strengths and limitations, according to Black and Wiliam (1998). They stress that good evaluation encourages a culture of ongoing development and contemplation, enabling students to take an active role in their learning process. In a similar vein, Stiggins (2005) emphasizes that assessment need to be utilized as a learning-oriented procedure, emphasizing the growth of abilities and information as opposed to just rating performance.

Summative and formative are the two fundamental classifications into which assessment can be divided. At the conclusion of a unit, course, or term, summative assessment analyzes student learning and provides a measure of achievement, frequently in the form of grades or results from standardized tests. On the other hand, formative assessment takes place during the

learning process and gives students instant feedback to assist them modify their learning tactics. Formative evaluation is especially useful since it actively encourages students to reflect on their development and comprehension, which can result in better learning outcomes, according to Hattie and Timperley (2007). Furthermore, evaluation in school accomplishes more than just assessing knowledge. Nitko and Brookhart (2014) claim that it supports educators in lesson planning, learning activity design, and the development of tailored interventions for struggling students. Additionally, assessment inspires students, promotes self-control, and cultivates a sense of accountability for their own education. In conclusion, evaluation is an essential part of contemporary education. When used well, it not only assesses student performance but also facilitates learning, guides instructional tactics, and fosters an engaged and contemplative learning environment. The idea of evaluation has developed from just evaluating student performance to actively improving the learning process, making it a crucial instrument for accomplishing educational objectives.

Pedagogical value of formative assessment

Formative assessment is an important element of the teaching and learning process because it helps teachers monitor students' progress and improve instruction during the learning process. Unlike traditional assessment that measures final results, formative assessment focuses on supporting learning through continuous feedback and classroom interaction. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), formative assessment significantly improves students' academic achievement because it helps teachers identify learning difficulties and adjust their teaching strategies. Regular feedback allows students to understand their mistakes and improve their performance. Another pedagogical advantage of formative assessment is increased student engagement. Sadler (1989) explains that

students learn more effectively when they clearly understand learning goals and receive feedback that helps them improve their work. Classroom questioning, discussions, and short tasks encourage students to participate actively in the learning process. Formative assessment also develops students' self-regulation and critical thinking skills. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) state that feedback and self-assessment help students reflect on their learning and identify areas that need improvement. As a result, learners become more independent and responsible for their own progress.

In addition, formative assessment allows teachers to adapt their instruction according to students' needs. Heritage (2010) notes that this flexibility improves teaching effectiveness and creates a more supportive learning environment.

Overall, formative assessment has strong pedagogical value because it improves teaching quality, increases student engagement, and supports continuous learning.

Formative assessment techniques in reading instruction

Formative assessment techniques play an important role in improving students' reading comprehension by allowing teachers to monitor understanding and provide immediate feedback during the learning process. These techniques help identify students' difficulties and support the development of effective reading strategies. One common technique in reading instruction is teacher questioning. According to Harmer (2007), asking different types of questions before, during, and after reading helps teachers evaluate students' comprehension and encourages them to think critically about the text. Questions about the main idea, supporting details, and the author's purpose help students analyze the text more deeply.

Another effective technique is think-pair-share activities, where students first reflect on a reading task individually, then discuss their

ideas with a partner, and finally share their responses with the class. Nunan (2003) notes that such collaborative activities allow students to clarify their understanding and learn from each other. Self-assessment is also widely used in formative assessment. Students evaluate their own comprehension by reflecting on questions such as whether they understood the main ideas or which parts of the text were difficult. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), self-assessment helps learners become more aware of their learning progress and encourages responsibility for their own improvement. Peer assessment is another useful strategy in reading instruction. Students review and comment on each other's answers to comprehension questions or summaries of texts. This process promotes discussion and helps students develop analytical thinking skills. Teachers also use short formative tasks, such as reading journals, exit tickets, and quick comprehension quizzes. These activities provide immediate information about students' understanding and allow teachers to adjust instruction if necessary. Overall, formative assessment techniques support effective reading instruction by providing continuous feedback, encouraging student participation, and helping teachers adapt their teaching methods to improve students' reading comprehension.

Conclusion

Reading comprehension is an essential ability for pupils' academic growth. As previously noted in this article, understanding written texts involves not just fundamental

reading skills but also higher-level cognitive abilities such as information analysis, key concept identification, and conclusion making. diverse academics' theoretical approaches emphasize that reading comprehension is an active process in which students interact with the text and use diverse tactics to generate meaning. The study also underlines the value of assessment in education as a means of monitoring and encouraging students' learning. Assessment is used not simply to evaluate academic performance, but also to drive teaching techniques and improve learning outcomes. In this setting, formative assessment is especially useful because it focuses on the learning process and gives constant feedback to both teachers and students. Furthermore, the educational usefulness of formative assessment stems from its potential to increase student involvement, foster reflection, and promote the development of independent learning skills. Teachers can improve student outcomes by recognizing learning gaps and offering timely feedback. Finally, including formative assessment strategies into reading teaching, such as instructor questioning, peer assessment, self-assessment, and brief classroom assignments, helps to improve students' reading comprehension. These tactics encourage active engagement and help students acquire excellent reading abilities. Overall, including formative evaluation into reading instruction can improve students' understanding and foster a more effective and supportive learning environment.

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