



Assessment

Chapter 7 MNC

Melissa Marzullo

Annette Wozniczka

CIEP 472/Fall 2008



Key Premises to Consider

- Premise 1-Active Learning.
- Premise 7-Transitions and redesignations.
- Premise 8-Instructional assessment.
- Premise 9-Parents and community.
- Premise 12-Teachers as decision makers.

Decision Making: Ask Yourself

- What do we want students to know and value?
- What types of assessment truly inform instruction and also provide accountability data?
- What assessment practices accurately measure the entry level of linguistically diverse students, the progress of students in both their primary and second languages, and the readiness for formal reading in the second language?
- How can quality assessment practices avoid the tracking of linguistically diverse students within low levels of instruction and/or at beginning levels of a dual language program?

Perspectives on Assessment

- Traditional instruction and assessment focus on the parts rather than on the whole.
- Students are expected to learn in prescribed sequences regardless of age, socioeconomic background, learning styles, linguistic differences, or disabilities.
- Expectations are built into the system that students will reach these prescribed levels at predetermined times.

Perspectives on Assessment

- Standardized, norm-referenced tests are often used to sort and track students with long-term consequences for student achievement.
- These assessments tend to focus on right and wrong answers, and test very limited levels of thinking and language.
- When instruction is organized to accommodate these tests, what often results is a superficial curriculum and a tendency to “teach to the test.”

Perspectives on Assessment

- Instructional decision making should be based on understanding what students comprehend and can do with what they have learned.
- This requires forms of assessment that are very different from the traditional norm-referenced and mastery tests used today.
- Based on Premise 1, learning is a process of development that is constructivist in nature.
- Students should be active participants in the learning and assessment process.

Perspectives on Assessment

- The learner is the center of the process and is held accountable.
- Standards for achievement are apparent to students at all times.
- Instructional programs and assessments should be student-centered.
- Authentic assessments should be used-they should focus on what students know and can do in a real and meaningful situation.
- It is these types of assessments that should be the focus of decision making.

Issues Across Program Categories

- Placement of students
- Accountability for student performance
- Developing an authentic process
- Measuring school effectiveness

Placement of Students

- ELL students enter schools at all ages, from all socioeconomic levels, with varying educational backgrounds, and with linguistic capacities ranging from monolingual to being able to use either language effectively across domains.
- Low-level English language proficiency is NOT an indicator of ability, or even of achievement.
- Where these students are originally placed academically should not be a fixed placement. They should be regarded as having the capacity to achieve high standards in both languages given the appropriate access and the opportunity to learn.

Accountability for Student Performance

- The national movement towards standards-based education has largely ignored the elements that are fundamental to providing effective instruction for linguistically diverse students.
- The process of accountability should be conducted by an entire school community (staff, parents, and other community members).
- The decision-making process encompasses several steps: establishing standards and learner outcomes, developing an assessment

Accountability for Student Performance

- The standards in all content areas are the same for all students, but the **outcome** may vary for different types of learners.
- Since ELL students are not native English language speakers, they cannot be asked to perform the same tasks and be assessed by the same criteria as native speakers.
- Their English language development is following a different, second language path, and therefore, assessments will be unreliable and will not give accurate information.

Accountability for Student Performance

- Using native English-speaker criteria will yield little information on second language learners' actual academic progress.
- Outcomes and assessments should be designed to advance the specific learning needs and development of second language learners.
- It is these factors that should form the basis for determining exit from primary or second language services to all-English instruction.

Developing an Authentic Process

- A constructivist framework requires forms of assessment that produce a portrait of learning outcomes and learning processes which are often referred to as “authentic” assessments.
- These authentic assessments enable the viewers of the work to see what students are capable of doing and how they think, work, and develop.
- Authentic assessments are especially important for students who are learning in more than one language, since they allow for

Developing an Authentic Process:

Portfolio Assessment

- Portfolios are a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievement in one or more areas.
- The process of collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, and evidence of student self-reflection.
- A collection of student work that demonstrates progress over time and reflects thinking, learning style, and problem-solving ability provides significant information about

Developing an Authentic Process:

Developing Criteria

- Teachers need to develop criteria for assessing student performance, such as rubrics.
- A rubric provides a detailed description of what work that meets the standards should look like over time.
- Even though rubrics are developed by staff, they include student input, and students should be made fully aware of the expectations.

Developing an Authentic Process:

Using the Data

- As essential part of the assessment process in primary and second language programs is the adjustment of instruction to the needs of changing student proficiency and shifting curricular demands.
- Using school wide assessment practices to make continuous adjustments calls for a purposeful system designed specifically to monitor the progress of students.
- This requires schools to establish procedures to regularly review second language learners' progress.

Developing an Authentic Process:

Using the Data

- It is important to note that a school wide assessment system needs to be created before reliable and valid data can be extrapolated from performance-based assessment results (portfolios).

Developing an Authentic Process:

Informing Parents

- Informing parents about student progress is integral to the internal process of accountability.
- Intensive effort must be made to ensure that parents are involved in the assessment process, that they attend conferences, and communication about student progress is available in their language.
- It is only through the experience of following the process with their own child that parents will be able to embrace this new practice.

Measuring School Effectiveness

- Ultimately the effectiveness of school reform rests on the results of students' academic achievement and the school's ability to respond to the needs of its total community.
- With regard to programs for linguistically diverse students, indicators of how effective the school has been in involving the cultures of the community in the curriculum also are needed.
- Staffs should spend time analyzing the results from the standardized tests and linking this data to the performance-based data for an