

The Effects of Formative Assessment on Algerian Secondary School Pupils' Text Comprehension

Amina BOUMEDIENE

English Language and Education
English Department, Faculty of Literature and Foreign Languages
University of Tlemcen, Algeria

Hafida HAMZAOUI - ELACHACHI

English Language and Education
English Department, Faculty of Literature and Foreign Languages
University of Tlemcen, Algeria

Abstract

Formative assessment has proved its potential in improving the learning outcomes of EFL learners. However, its use is quite restricted in the Algerian secondary school. Thus, instead of playing a formative role, the assessment found in the Algerian EFL classroom is of a summative nature. Accordingly, the purpose behind the current research is to shed light on the importance of formative assessment in the teaching and learning processes by highlighting its effect on text comprehension, as the latter may be an obstacle to effective language learning and academic achievement among Algerian secondary school pupils. To reach this end, the present research attempts to investigate the impact of formative assessment on pupils' text comprehension as well as their achievement and attitudes through answering the following research questions: (1) how does formative assessment develop pupils' text comprehension? (2) What changes can the experiment bring in terms of students' achievements and attitudes towards text comprehension? This research is based on a quasi-experimental design delivered to sixteen third year secondary school pupils as the latter are required to sit for the 'Baccalaureate' exam in which text comprehension is of crucial importance. A pretest, a posttest, an intervention which lasted five weeks and a questionnaire were used to find out the impact of formative assessment on the development of pupil's text comprehension. The results obtained showed a significant progress in pupils' outcomes in the four language competences: grammatical, textual, functional and sociolinguistic and namely in grammatical and textual competences. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that formative assessment should be an integral part of the teaching process.

Key words: formative assessment, functional competence, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic knowledge, textual knowledge, text comprehension

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