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CARE AND NECESSARY ACTIONS FOR THE SELECTION AND PREPARATION OF EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

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Abstract: The selection and elaboration of the instrument that will be used in the classroom is one of the great challenges that the teacher faces when evaluating the learning of his students. For this, you need to have clear, among other information, the purpose, the criteria that will be adopted and especially what to do with the information that will be collected in the evaluation process. For this reason, it is an activity that demands time and efficient planning in order to achieve the projected objectives and make the assessment fulfill its function, which is to contribute to the improvement of the teaching and learning process. The present study is an excerpt of the Master's Project in development, belonging to the Postgraduate Program in Teaching at the University of Vale do Taquari - UNIVATES/RS. It aims to know the conceptions and practices of teachers who work in the early years of elementary school on learning assessment. The methodological procedure used is qualitative/interpretative, through a case study, with the participation of six teachers from a public school; data collection will be carried out through Interview and Documentary Research techniques; data analysis will be carried out through content analysis. As for the results, we hope that the teacher realizes that the learning assessment is a guiding tool in the teaching and learning process, so some care is needed in the selection and elaboration.

Keywords: Educational assessment, Learning assessment, Evaluative instrument, Education.

INTRODUCTION

In today's educational context, the topic of learning assessment is one of the great challenges for educational theorists and professionals. It has aroused many discussions and research, with the aim of highlighting its main function of contributing to the improvement of the quality of the teaching and learning process, insofar as it provides the student with information about their learning and the teacher, elements to analyze their pedagogical practice in order to improve it.

For this reason, it is always necessary to question its objectives and purposes to understand that the selection process of the evaluative instrument is part of the educational process as a whole, as such, it cannot be developed in isolation or at random, because, the way in which the instruments are selected and elaborated can interfere in the students' learning and in the teacher's pedagogical actions.

It is also necessary to emphasize that the evaluation practices need to be diversified, always considering the intentions of its use, that is, it is necessary to plan and use the instrument according to the objectives and that makes it possible to give concrete information about the teaching process and also of learning, with a view to offering possibilities for overcoming possible existing obstacles.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND TASKS FOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

One of the biggest challenges that teachers face when evaluating their students is to select the instrument they will use. Depresbiteris and Tavares (2009) recommend that teachers think about the answers to these questions: i) what are the purposes of the evaluation I am proposing? ii) What will be evaluated? iii) What criteria will I use? iv) How much time do I have available for this activity? v) How to ensure the quality of the instrument? vi) What uses will I make of the information collected by the instrument?

Learning assessment is an action that requires time to be spent on its planning, in the same way as time is spent on teaching planning. It is configured as a privileged

moment for being a process that encompasses a set of actions necessary to achieve the intended objectives. It is the guide that guides teaching and learning assessment, so the instrument must preserve in its structure what was defined in the planning (LUCKESI, 2011).

Arredondo and Diago (2013) suggest the planning of an action plan, that is, a reference that the teacher can use in their daily assessment action. For the authors, every evaluation process goes through three phases that begin with the preparation to evaluate, followed by the collection of data and, finally, the formulation and judgments for decision making. In each of these phases, subsequent steps are taken:

1. Preparation phase:

Step 1: Specify the judgments to be issued and the decisions to be taken.

Step 2: Describe the required information.

Step 3: Locate the necessary information.

Step 4: Decide when and how to get the information necessary.

Step 5: Build (or select) the information collection instruments available to the teacher.

2. Data collection phase:

Step 6: Get the necessary information.

Step 7: Analyze and record the information.

3. Judgment formulation phase:

Step 8: Formulate judgments.

4. Decision-making phase:

Step 9: Make decisions

5. Information phase:

Step 10: Summarize and present the results of the evaluation (ARREDONDO; DIAGO, 2013, p. 216).

Arredondo and Diago (2013) present a distinction between technique and assessment instruments, with technique being a broader concept that can include and use different instruments that bring into play various procedures to obtain the necessary information about student learning.

The instrument is a tool used through a specific technique to collect data in a systematic and objective way in relation to some clearly delineated aspect.

In planning the assessment of learning, the teacher needs to make use of a certain technique that is consistent with the functions he performs and the purposes he aims to achieve and the instruments, with the resources or specific means used to obtain it. Arredondo and Diago (2013) suggest that instruments and techniques must meet some important requirements such as:

a) Be multiple and varied;
b) Provide valid information about what is intended to be known;
c) Use different forms of expression (oral, written, graphic, etc);
d) Be applicable in usual school situations;
e) Allow proof of transfer of learning;
f) Can be used in different situations and assessment modalities; hetero-assessment, self-assessment or co-assessment (Id., Ibid., p. 265)

The diversification of instruments and their selection depends on the established assumptions. The choice process has a direct relationship with the role of assessment in the teaching and learning process, the intention and the theoretical basis that guides the assessment practice. For this reason, the discussion about the option for evaluation instruments is not an eminently "[...] technical discussion, instruments are not debated in themselves, but based on a variety of pedagogical, political and epistemological issues (SILVA, 2006, p. 74).

For the author, there are three fundamental criteria that need to be considered when proposing an evaluation instrument: feasibility,

usefulness and relevance. The feasibility of an instrument is related to the identification of instruments that can be used. The second criterion corresponds to its usefulness, whether the activity is relevant to the development of student learning and whether it allows the teacher to gather information about their practice. For this reason, "the contents of the assessment instruments need to be related to the objectives, criteria and socio-cognitive levels of the learners and to provoke the students' reflective reasoning" (SILVA, 2006, p. 77).

Relevance helps to question whether the assessment instruments are suitable for the teaching process and planning. This criterion helps to observe whether there is fragmentation in the pedagogical work in a regulatory and articulated way. It requires care with the statements, avoiding the emergence of doubts, so as not to become "[...] traps but paths for the construction of knowledge and skills. The questions and procedures contained in the assessment instruments need to be clear and relevant to the learning process and, therefore, to effective teaching" (Id., Ibid., p. 78).

An important issue pointed out by Haydt (2011) that must be considered in the selection of techniques and instruments is the need to adapt the assessment resources to the objectives that were foreseen in the planning, to the established contents and the activities that were proposed to conduct the project. teaching and learning process.

Regarding the content that will be charged in the instrument, it cannot be outside the contours of what was taught so as not to distort the data of the students' learning reality and thus harm the analysis of the final results (LUCKESI, 2011).

What is considered essential must be selected, so that, looking at its evaluation, the teacher sees the reflection of what is really significant. However, the teacher must be aware that there is no mismatch between what he thinks is most important and what he is truly proposing to evaluate (VASCONCELLOS, 2003).

As for the level of content contained in the instrument,

> "[...] the way content was treated in the classroom is the way learning must be evaluated: if content is treated in a simple way, the instrument must operate at the same level; if the contents were approached in a complex way, the instrument must also operate in a complex way" (LUCKESI, 2011, p. 324).

Attention to the level of content avoids proposing requests in an instrument that may be beyond or below what was explored in the classroom. Whatever the situation, it will be difficult to verify whether or not the desired learning has taken place.

Based on studies by Zabala (1998), on conceptual, procedural and attitudinal contents, Arredondo and Diago (2013) recommend that when choosing techniques and instruments, the type of content to be evaluated must be considered.

To assess the mastery of conceptual content, instruments must be used that inform the student's level of mastery of this content: ensuring that the student is able to identify, recognize, classify, compare, explain, etc. They are verbs that indicate the actions in which students must demonstrate in learning a concept, a fact or a principle.

In order to assess the knowledge of procedural contents, the teacher must use instruments that allow verifying how the student is acquiring certain agility: demonstrating that the student is capable of handling, manipulating, building, using, rebuilding, testing, executing, moving, simulating, etc. They are verbs referring to the activities that the student manifests the domain he has reached in the field of

procedural contents.

To assess the development of attitudinal content, the teacher needs to explore observation instruments that allow him to estimate the student's evolution in relation to aspects of behavior and attitudes, observing how the student is creating habits such as respect, tolerance, sharing, acceptance, sensitization, etc. These are some verbs that help to identify the behaviors that students must demonstrate learning attitudes and values that are part of the attitudinal contents.

Knowing clearly what you want to evaluate, the selection of the instrument must be done according to the characteristics of the level and the curricular component that you want to use. However, this moment cannot be reduced to the verification of results, it must serve to inform the student about their learning and the teacher must provide sufficient elements to analyze their teaching practice.

From this perspective, Luckesi (2011) infers that the instrument will be considered technically, ethically and pedagogically well-designed, to the extent that it manages to effectively capture what was taught, what the student learned and whether it was useful to express the diagnosis of reality, so that, if necessary, take some form of intervention to correct the course of the process. The author presents some recommendations to be considered in the elaboration of an instrument:

> 1º) they must cover all the essential contents worked in teaching;
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> 2) they must have the same level of difficulty as the contents taught: neither easier nor more difficult;
>
> 3rd) they must present different levels of difficulty within the same content, in such a way that the student can reveal that he has learned from the simplest to the most complex components of that content;
>
> 4th) they must use the same level of complexity of the contents worked in teaching. One must not teach something at a simple level and then ask the student to perform at a complex level and vice versa;
>
> 5th) they must use the same methodological perspectives adopted in the teaching of contents. Use one methodology in teaching and another in the elaboration of questions that demand from the student an approach that we do not teach;
>
> 6) must be constructed in clear and understandable language. Incomprehensible questions make adequate answers impossible. Without understanding what is being asked, hardly anyone will be able to answer something adequately [...]"
>
> 7) must contain different levels of difficulty [...] It is worth noting that, in each content, the levels of difficulty depend on the tasks to be learned through teaching [...]
>
> 8) must be accurate. The learner must understand well the contours of the answer that we expect to be adequate to the question asked by us. The questions and terms used must have a delimited connotation. They cannot lead to misunderstandings [...]
>
> 9) must be valid and reliable, in the collection of data, for the purpose of what you want to describe.
>
> 10) must help the student to deepen their knowledge and skills. It is worth bearing in mind that we can and must elaborate questions and problem situations that, when answered, help the student to learn more [...] (LUCKESI, 2011, p. 363-364).

As it is a planned action, the elaboration of the evaluation instrument is an intentional action that defines the directions of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Therefore, it cannot be chosen and prepared at random so as not to make both the diagnosis and the decisions that need to be made unfeasible.

Thus, if the teacher is evaluating the student's ability to summarize a text, the

instrument must help the teacher observe the data that demonstrates whether the student has achieved this skill. If the teacher's interest is to assess the student's degree of understanding of the text, critically analyze ideas or establish relationships between the concepts present in the text, the option for an objective proof of true-false can hardly help to obtain the expected result (SALINAS, 2004).

This care will allow the teacher to make a more accurate analysis of reality and will have a parameter to qualify it and compare it with the criterion that was established for the evaluation. However, this will only be possible if the instrument is "[...] structured exclusively to capture the performance of the students, in such a way that it reveals what needs to be revealed – did they learn or not what they must have learned as a subsidy for the its development" (LUCKESI, 2011, p. 341).

The teacher must be concerned with the most appropriate choice possible of the type of instrument that allows the student to express what he wants to know if he has learned and at what level he has learned. Each type of question will allow you to diagnose different mental operations, skills or behaviors. Therefore, the teacher needs to be clear if the question he is asking safely allows him to collect data that he intends to diagnose. For this reason, Luckesi (2011) recommends that it is always valid to be careful with questions such as "true/false", "multiple choice", "column matching", "column filling", what are the operations, ability to and conducts that allow diagnosis?

An important issue that the teacher needs to consider in the selection of questions or problem-situations are those that somehow present a certain challenge to the student to manifest what he has learned in terms of information, skills and behaviors. Challenge not in the sense of building barriers or demanding beyond what was explored in the classroom and classroom, but in the sense of

always projecting the development of better performances, creating different possibilities and alternatives.

The elaboration of the instrument must be produced with great zeal so that a reliable monitoring of the student can be carried out. The more constant and significant the records made by the teacher and the student, the better the conditions that the teacher will have to adjust educational practices to the real possibilities of each class and each student. In addition, the most effective task elaboration and registration will only be possible to the extent that the purpose of its use is clear.

Faced with the available options, the teacher must know not only the potential but also the limitations of the instruments. In this sense, Depresbiteris and Tavares (2009) emphasize that the selection of the instrument must be based on:

> • adequacy to what you want to evaluate and to the principles of the evaluation itself;
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> • possibility of adapting to different situations;
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> • potential in terms of student development and the teaching and learning process;
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> • ability to encompass what you want to assess;
>
> • articulation of what will be assessed with what has been taught;
>
> • known theoretical foundation; (DEPRESBITERIS; TAVARES, 2009, p. 71)

When referring to the difficulties in the elaboration of instruments Depresbiteris and Tavares (2009), postulate that sometimes, the programs present objectives that cover a wide variety of cognitive skills and the instruments applied only explore the memorization and understanding of some contents. It is also common for the commands and instructions for solving the questions to present confusing essays, incomplete questions, which contributes to the emergence of answers that

do not correspond to what was expected by the teacher.

Another problem mentioned by the authors is when the characteristics of the instrument when the teacher's intention about its objectives is not adequate. Despite the teacher's interest in verifying the student's mastery of problem-solving analysis, when elaborating an evaluative question, he only checks the contents that the student must master to solve the problem and not the strategies that would make it possible to solve the problem. resolution.

For this reason, he recommends the establishment of criteria to be used in the elaboration of the instruments. The criteria are "[...] parameters, norms and rules that serve as a basis and reference for the analysis and interpretation of results" (DEPESBITERIS; TAVARES, 2009, p. 64). It concerns the principles to be used as a reference for the judgment on the quality of the performances, helping to define what the teacher must expect from what he is evaluating. They are also considered as the starting point for the qualification of the value of the objectives, the contents, the methodology, and the very expectation that one has about the student's learning. Therefore, they must precisely clarify the actions that will be carried out by the student, defining the levels of development that he must reach.

To establish a criterion, Depresbiteris and Tavares (2009) indicate that the following steps must be followed:

- Identify the performance or task to be evaluated and carry it out, or in the last case imagine how it would be developed by the student;

- List important aspects of expected performance as a final product;

- Try to limit the number of performance criteria, so that they can be effectively observed;

- Seek to ensure that other teachers are in agreement with the list of criteria developed;

- Writing the performance criteria in objective terms so that they can be understood by all;

- Arrange the criteria in the order in which they are likely to be observed; (Id., Ibid., 2009, p. 70)

When the teacher does not make the criteria evident or establishes it far beyond the possibilities of the students, it influences the results and the student's own motivation for learning. On the other hand, when students get used to the establishment of criteria effectively elaborated, they start to consider them as if they were the rules of the game that must be observed very carefully. Therefore, there must always be concern on the part of the teacher so that the criteria are very clear and must not be constantly modified so as not to cause insecurity in the student.

In this perspective, when the evaluation criteria are defined in a transparent way, through a dialogic relationship between teacher and student, the authoritarian and monopolizing practice, present in the evaluation process of some schools, is avoided.

Another important element in the organization of the instrument is the need to establish a parameter in the structure of the question. When it has the correct parameterization, the question presents in its wording the precise indication of the criteria for answer and correction. However, Moretto states that "this is a characteristic found in many tests and that leaves the student in the hands of the teacher. With the lack of definition of criteria for correction, whatever the teacher wants the student to have answered is valid" (MORETTO, 2001, p. 103). When the test is not clearly formulated, it makes the student ask the teacher what he wants in the question. The question expresses its concern to know what the teacher wants as an answer and not

the intention of interpreting the question itself.

The clarity and accuracy of an answer depends on how the question is structured on an exam. There are some words used in evaluative instrument commands, which do not have a precise meaning in the context. For example: comment, discourse, give your opinion, etc. It is not that the words must not be used, but they need to make sense to allow the correct parameterization of the question (MORETTO, 2001).

The author also mentions that the elaboration of an instrument requires the teacher to correctly contextualize the questions. When a question is contextualized "[...] it means that, in order to answer, the student must seek support in the wording of the question" (MORETTO, 2001, p. 110). In other words, contextualizing is not creating stories or using a text that is close to the subject worked on. It is necessary for the student to explore the information and data contained in the text and, based on them, answer the question.

The problem is not in the obligation to always propose a different task to the student, but in the effort to make an increasingly better interpretation of the activity and the record that is being done. The reflection on the answers given by the students in the proposed activities allows us to criticize whether they could have been structured in different ways and even at different times. When there is a good interpretation, it helps to improve the elaboration of instruments and the records that are made.

The continuous exercise of reflection will help the teacher to recognize the importance of establishing an open communication channel between him and the student. This practical action will help to reflect that

> stating that the student has reached a Regular concept in a task is not the same thing as pointing out to him, through notes, the aspects to improve in his answers, or registering in the class diary the notions of working with the student through new proposed situations (HOFFMANN, 2002, p. 181).

This demonstrates that it is no longer acceptable to follow the student's learning process only with the use of bureaucratic and classification records, through different numerical levels, behavioral record sheets, mechanical and standardized opinions. Or also, through the application of objective tests poorly prepared and corrected using a template. Therefore, the author emphasizes that "the best assessment tools are all the tasks and records made by the teacher that help him to rescue a significant memory of the process, allowing a comprehensive analysis of the student's development" (HOFFMANN, 2002, p. 181). -182).

In this chapter we discuss the minimum care necessary for the technical elaboration of the evaluation instruments to be used in the evaluation process. We verified that the selection and elaboration cannot be done randomly and it is important that before its use we are sure about its purpose, that the criteria are well defined and, mainly, what will be done with the information that was collected through of the assessment instrument.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

If we start from an evaluation concept, developed from a diagnostic perspective, the evaluation process can provide several valuable information about the pedagogical practice developed in the school space.

On the other hand, when the evaluative practice is not committed to a transforming vision of education, it is based on a practice of bureaucratic rituals, with poorly structured questions, which aim only at memorization and mechanical repetition of information and

data. This misguided practice uses the results inappropriately, becoming a tool of control, a demonstration of power, with a concern focused only on the final grade, with the purpose of classifying the student, as is still explored by some school institutions.

However, an evaluative practice with a reflective and questioning characteristic provides the identification and overcoming of learning difficulties, weaknesses and the evolution of students' potential. It also provides information to the teacher so that he can carry out some form of intervention in the process with a view to correcting the course of the process.

Certainly, greater concern is needed with the quality and type of instrument that are being proposed by some schools/teachers. It is necessary to question what is being done with the results achieved in these evaluation processes.

Therefore, it is essential to prioritize the use of an instrument that informs what was learned and at what level there was learning, in addition to always presenting a challenge to the student, with the intention of projecting performance with an increasing level, however, without requirement beyond what was explored in the classroom.

As each type of question allows diagnosing different mental operations, the teacher must know not only the potentialities but also the limitations of the instruments so that they can make the correct choice for the instrument they must use. The best instruments will always be those that help the teacher to make a more comprehensive analysis of the student's development and his/her own practice.

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