



PRE-LEARNING ASSESSMENT OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

Pre-learning assessment is a crucial component in education that aims to understand students' initial knowledge, skills and attitudes before the start of the learning process. It provides an overview of students' initial competencies, enabling teachers to adjust teaching strategies effectively. In the context of Indonesian language skills, pre-learning assessment includes the evaluation of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The methods used, such as diagnostic tests, questionnaires, observations, group discussions and portfolios, provide comprehensive data on students' abilities. Implementation of these assessment results involves analyzing the data, adjusting the teaching plan and continuous monitoring to improve learning outcomes. By utilizing constructivist theories from Piaget and Vygotsky as well as current research, pre-learning assessment assists in designing teaching that better suits students' needs, thus significantly improving their Indonesian language skills.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language learning in schools is an important aspect of the national education curriculum, as this language is the nation's main means of communication and cultural identity. Good Indonesian language skills are essential for achieving academic success and future professional life. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the Indonesian language learning process takes place effectively and efficiently. One way to achieve this is through pre-learning assessment, which aims to understand the initial level of students' abilities before starting the learning process (Fawzi, 2023).

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Pre-learning assessment is an evaluation process conducted before the start of teaching-learning activities to determine students' knowledge, skills, and needs. Pre-learning assessment helps in identifying students' initial abilities and designing appropriate teaching strategies (Gagné et al., 1992). This is especially important in the context of language learning, where language skills vary widely among students.

Constructivist theory emphasizes the importance of understanding what students already know as the basis for building new knowledge (Piaget & Inhelder, 2000; Veraksa, 2018; Vygotskij & Cole, 1981). Piaget stated that learning is an active process in which students construct knowledge based on their experiences. Vygotsky added that the most effective learning occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where students are given tasks that are slightly more difficult than their current abilities but can be completed with assistance.

This article discusses (a) the nature, (b) objectives, (c) methods, and (d) implementation of the results of Indonesian pre-learning assessment.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

UNDERSTANDING OF PRE-LEARNING ASSESSMENT OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS

Pre-learning assessment is an important part of the educational process that aims to understand students' prior knowledge, skills and attitudes before starting a learning program. Pre-learning assessment is "an assessment conducted before learning activities begin to find out what students already know and what abilities they already have" (Gagné et al., 1992). It provides an overview of students' initial competencies and allows teachers to adjust their teaching approach accordingly. Through this assessment, educators can identify students' learning needs and design more effective and appropriate teaching strategies. Pre-learning assessment is "an assessment conducted before learning activities begin to find out what students already know and what abilities they already have."

Pre-learning assessment in Indonesian language skills is an assessment process carried out before starting learning activities to understand students' initial abilities in various aspects of language, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This assessment is very important because it can help teachers design effective learning strategies that suit students' needs.

Each of these aspects requires a different assessment approach to comprehensively measure students' abilities. Listening skills can be assessed through listening comprehension tests that include questions about the content of a conversation or spoken text. Speaking skills can be assessed through individual or group speaking tasks, where students are asked to express their opinions or recount their experiences. Reading skills can be assessed through reading comprehension tests that include questions about the content of written texts. Writing skills can be assessed through writing tasks, such as writing essays or reports, which are then graded based on certain criteria.

PURPOSE OF PRE-LEARNING ASSESSMENT OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS

The pre-learning assessment of Indonesian language skills is an attempt to assess students' initial abilities in various aspects of language before starting the formal learning process. This includes reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. The main purpose of this assessment is to provide a comprehensive picture of students' language competence, so that teachers can design more effective teaching strategies that suit individual needs.

Identifying Students' Initial Ability: The pre-learning assessment aims to find out the extent of students' initial ability in Indonesian language. According to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, knowing students' initial abilities helps teachers to provide appropriate assistance so that students can reach their maximum potential (Veraksa, 2018; Vygotskij & Cole, 1981).

Adjusting Teaching Strategies: The results of pre-learning assessments allow teachers to adjust teaching methods and materials according to students' ability levels. Piaget's constructivist theory emphasizes the importance of learning that builds on students' prior knowledge and experience (Piaget & Inhelder, 2000).

Detecting Knowledge Gaps: These assessments help in identifying areas where students have difficulty or lack understanding. Using assessments to identify knowledge gaps and adjust teaching can significantly improve learning outcomes (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Forming Study Groups: By knowing students' initial abilities, teachers can

group students based on their ability levels. This allows for more focused and personalized teaching.

Motivating Students: Pre-learning assessment can also serve as a motivational tool for students. Understanding their strengths and weaknesses can encourage students to try harder to improve their skills (Dweck, 2008).

Effective assessment in language learning can provide valuable insights into students' strengths and needs, which can then be used to improve instruction (García et al., 1994). In addition, assessments focusing on initial language proficiency can help in designing more effective teaching programs for bilingual students (Genesee & Hamayan, 1980).

Pre-learning assessment of Indonesian language skills is an important step in the educational process that helps teachers understand students' initial abilities and design more appropriate instruction. By utilizing educational theories such as Vygotsky's ZPD and Piaget's constructivism, as well as current research, teachers can use assessment results to improve teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

INDONESIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS PRE-LEARNING ASSESSMENT METHOD

The pre-learning assessment of Indonesian language skills aims to evaluate students' initial abilities in reading, writing, listening and speaking. The methods used should be appropriate for this purpose, so that the results can be used as a basis for designing effective teaching strategies. Here are some frequently used pre-learning assessment methods, along with research results and examples of their implementation.

Diagnostic Tests

Diagnostic tests are assessment tools designed to measure students' knowledge and skills before learning begins. They usually cover various aspects of language, such as grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing skills. Diagnostic tests are effective in identifying students' areas of weakness, allowing teachers to adjust their teaching to focus more on students' needs (Alderson, 2005).

An Indonesian teacher developed a diagnostic test that included multiple-

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choice questions on grammar and vocabulary, as well as a short essay writing task. Students were asked to complete this test on the first day of class. The test results showed that many students had difficulty in using the correct verbs in complex sentences. Based on this finding, the teacher then focused instruction on improving these grammar skills.

Questionnaires and Surveys

Questionnaires and surveys were used to collect data on students' experiences, attitudes and perceptions towards Indonesian language learning. This method can provide insight into students' motivation and their views on their own language ability. Students' motivation and attitude have a significant impact on language learning success (Gardner, 1972). Questionnaires and surveys can uncover these factors, which can then be used to tailor teaching approaches.

The teacher devised a questionnaire that included questions about previous Indonesian language learning experiences, difficulties often encountered, and personal goals in learning the language. After collecting the data, the teacher found that many students lacked confidence in public speaking. In response, the teacher organized smaller group speaking activities to boost students' confidence.

Observation

Observation involves directly observing students as they engage in language activities, such as group discussions or presentations. Observation can provide information about students' practical ability to use language in real contexts. Observation is effective in identifying language abilities in interactive contexts, allowing teachers to assess skills that may not be detected through written tests (Genesee & Hamayan, 1980).

The teacher observes students during group discussion activities on a specific topic. During the observation, the teacher notes students' ability to express ideas, use correct grammar, and interact with their peers. The observation results show that some students have difficulty in constructing coherent sentences. The teacher then provides additional practice in forming good and correct sentences.

Group Discussion

Group discussion involves students in a structured conversation on a specific topic. This method is used to assess students' speaking and listening skills, as well as their ability to cooperate and communicate with others. Group discussions can improve students' speaking and listening skills by providing opportunities to practice language in a social context (Long & Porter, 1985).

The teacher divides students into small groups and provides them with discussion topics relevant to the subject matter. During the discussion, the teacher observes and records students' abilities in expressing opinions, listening, and responding to arguments. Based on the observation, the teacher found that some students were less active in the discussion. To address this, the teacher designed more structured activities to ensure all students had equal opportunities to participate.

Portfolios

A portfolio is a collection of students' work that shows their development in language skills. This method provides a more comprehensive picture of students' abilities in various aspects of language. Portfolios are an effective assessment tool as they allow for continuous evaluation and students' self-reflection on their progress (Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000).

Teachers ask students to collect samples of their writing, recordings of oral presentations, and personal reflection notes over the course of a semester. These portfolios are then used to assess the development of students' language skills over time. Teachers and students can discuss areas for improvement and set specific learning goals.

Pre-learning assessment of Indonesian language skills is an important step in understanding students' initial abilities and designing effective teaching. Various methods such as diagnostic tests, questionnaires, observations, group discussions and portfolios can be used to evaluate students' skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking aspects. The results of these assessments provide valuable information that enables teachers to adjust their teaching strategies to be more responsive to students' individual needs.

By integrating current research results and relevant educational theories, such as constructivist theories from Piaget and Vygotsky, as well as research by Alderson, Gardner and Lambert, Genesee and Hamayan, Long and Porter, and Hamp-Lyons and Condon, teachers can implement effective assessment methods to improve student learning outcomes in Indonesian language skills.

IMPLEMENTATION OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE SKILLS PRE-LEARNING ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Assessments used to inform teaching can significantly improve student learning outcomes (Black & Wiliam, 1998). They found that when teachers used assessment results to adjust their teaching, students showed improvements in academic achievement.

Pre-learning assessments of Indonesian language skills provide important data on students' initial abilities. Implementing these assessment results involves using this information to design and adjust teaching strategies, identify students' individual needs, and develop effective lesson plans. Here are some steps for implementing pre-learning assessment results, accompanied by relevant research results and concrete examples.

Data Analysis and Identification of Student Needs

The first step in implementing assessment results is to analyze the data obtained to identify student strengths and weaknesses. This involves reviewing the results of diagnostic tests, questionnaires, observations, group discussions, and portfolios. Proper analysis of assessment data can improve student learning outcomes as it allows for more focused and tailored teaching (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

The Indonesian teacher collected and analyzed the diagnostic test results which showed that most students had a good understanding of basic vocabulary, but many had difficulty with complex grammar. Based on this analysis, the teacher plans to allocate more time for grammar practice over the next few weeks.

Adjustment of the Teaching Plan

After identifying student needs, the next step is to adjust the teaching plan to meet those needs. This could include changes in teaching methods, learning materials and classroom activities. Differentiation in teaching, i.e. customizing teaching according to individual student needs, can increase student engagement and achievement (Tomlinson, 2001).

Teachers devised lesson plans that included more interactive activities such as grammar games and small group exercises to strengthen students' understanding of grammar. Teachers also add additional materials and exercises for more advanced students to keep them stimulated.

Development of Inclusive Teaching Strategies

Inclusive teaching strategies ensure that all students, including those with learning difficulties or different abilities, get equal opportunities to learn. The importance of instructional differentiation in creating an inclusive and effective learning environment (Tomlinson, 2001).

The teacher uses the survey results to understand that some students feel anxious about public speaking. To address this, teachers develop small group and pair speaking activities before moving on to presenting in front of the class. This gives students a chance to practice in a more supportive environment.

Providing Constructive Feedback

Constructive feedback based on assessment results helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback should be specific, actionable, and given regularly. Effective feedback can have a big impact on student achievement, especially when it is specific and directed at the learning process (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Teachers provide written feedback on students' writing assignments, pointing out grammatical errors and giving concrete suggestions on how to correct them. Teachers also hold individual conference sessions with students to discuss their progress and set subsequent learning goals.

Use of Technology-Based Learning Techniques

Technology can be used to support personalized learning and provide faster and more efficient feedback. The use of technology in language teaching can improve student motivation and learning outcomes (Warschauer & Healey, 1998).

Teachers use language learning apps to provide additional practice and automated feedback to students. The app is designed to adjust the level of difficulty based on student performance, ensuring that each student is challenged according to their ability.

Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of student progress allows teachers to assess the effectiveness of the teaching strategies that have been implemented and make necessary adjustments. Ongoing formative assessment can improve student engagement and achievement by providing the information needed to adjust instruction in real-time (Black & Black, 2009).

Teachers conduct weekly small tests and use learning journals to monitor students' progress continuously. The results of these formative assessments are used to identify areas for improvement and to plan subsequent lessons.

Collaborative Learning and Project-Based Approaches

Collaborative learning and project-based approaches provide students with opportunities to work together and apply their language skills in real contexts. Collaborative learning can improve students' social and academic skills (Johnson et al., 2008).

The teacher designed a group project where students had to make a presentation on the topic of Indonesian culture. The project involves research, writing, and oral presentation, all of which demand the use of Indonesian language skills. Students work in small groups, which encourages collaboration and the use of language in an authentic context.

The implementation of the results of the pre-learning assessment of Indonesian language skills involves a variety of interrelated steps, from data analysis to the adjustment of teaching plans and ongoing monitoring. By integrating findings from current research and relevant educational theories, teachers can

design teaching strategies that are more effective and responsive to students' needs.

Methods such as diagnostic tests, questionnaires, observations, group discussions and portfolios provide rich data on students' abilities, which can then be used to customize teaching. Constructive feedback, the use of technology and collaborative learning approaches also contribute to the improvement of students' language skills. With a planned and needs-focused approach, learning outcomes in Indonesian language skills can be significantly improved.

Pre-learning assessment is a critical tool in education that helps educators understand students' prior knowledge and learning needs. By utilizing constructivist theory and current research, teachers can design instruction that is more effective and responsive to students' needs, ultimately improving their learning outcomes.

CONCLUSIONS

Pre-learning assessment is an important step in education that aims to understand students' prior knowledge, skills and attitudes before starting learning. This assessment provides an overview of students' initial competencies, allowing teachers to customize a more effective teaching approach. In the context of Indonesian language skills, pre-learning assessment involves assessing reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Its main purpose is to identify students' initial abilities, adjust teaching strategies, detect knowledge gaps, form learning groups, and motivate students. The assessment methods used include diagnostic tests, questionnaires, observations, group discussions and portfolios. The implementation of these assessment results involves analyzing data to identify student needs, adjusting teaching plans, developing inclusive strategies, providing constructive feedback, using technology, continuous monitoring and collaborative learning. With this approach, teachers can significantly improve teaching quality and student learning outcomes.

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