

## RESEÑA "LA EVALUACIÓN FORMATIVA. ESTRATEGIAS EFICACES PARA REGULAR EL APRENDIZAJE"

## REVIEW "FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT. EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR REGULATING LEARNING".

Vicente Alcañiz Miñano.

Education inspector. Madrid.

**Mariana Morales  
Juan Fernández**

**La evaluación**  
  
**formativa**

Estrategias eficaces  
para regular el aprendizaje

Prólogo de **Neus Sanmartí**

BIBLIOTECA  
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### DATA SHEET

Publication: *La evaluación formativa. Estrategias eficaces para regular el aprendizaje* ("Formative assessment. Effective strategies to regulate learning").

Authors: Mariana Morales and Juan Fernández).

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Assessment is an essential tool to improve the process and achieve a higher quality education. Article 1 of Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, 2006, on Education (hereinafter, LOE), modified by Organic Law 3/2020, of December 29 (hereinafter, LOMLOE) establishes that among the principles of the Spanish educational system is "the assessment of the educational system as a whole, both in its programming and organization and in the teaching-learning processes and in its results".

As **María Antonia Casanova**<sup>1</sup> points out, assessment is the process characterized by the collection of rigorous and systematic data and information on that which is to be evaluated, through quantitative or qualitative instruments, in order to analyze such valid and reliable data, issue an assessment and make decisions, allowing to adjust or improve the evaluated fact. There is assessment when it is based on rigorous data and evidence, when the design, criteria, instruments and evaluating agents are rigorous and objective. Therefore, assessment is key, necessary, and obligatory in all areas of education. In the teaching-learning process, it is an essential element; what is not evaluated is not relevant. In **Arturo de la Orden's**<sup>2</sup> words, "assessment, by actually prescribing the objectives of education, determines to a large extent what students learn and how they learn it, what teachers teach and how they teach it, the contents and methods, in other words, the product and the process of education. Whether we like it or not, consciously, or unconsciously, the educational activity of students and teachers is to some degree channeled by the assessment of learning, by examinations, whether or not they respond to previously stipulated objectives and programs. This is a fact which, in itself, cannot be considered positive or negative, but whose consequences for the quality of education are evident".

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<sup>1</sup> Casanova, M. A. (1998). *La evaluación educativa*. México. Biblioteca para la Actualización del Maestro. SEP-Muralla.

<sup>2</sup> De la Orden, A. (1983). La investigación sobre la evaluación educativa. *Revista de investigación educativa (RIE)*, 2, 240-258.

Formative assessment regulates and directs the improvement of learning by identifying what can be improved. It is one of the nuclei on which the teaching task is centered. Assessment must be dynamic, continuous and systematic, focused on performance improvement. Assessment is essential to obtain objective, truthful, useful and timely information for the implementation of actions and activities that allow for adjustments in the methodologies used, the learning conditions and strategies, the modification of attitudes of those involved, etc.

Therefore, the assessment of the teaching-learning process is understood as a necessity for improvement, an assessment that must provoke a reflection on the processes. The education inspectorate is one of the agents involved in assessment, since one of the functions assigned to it is participation in the assessment of the education system, and of the elements that comprise it (article 151 c) of the LOE as modified by the LOMLOE), considering the professional training of education inspectors.

According to New Zealand researcher **John Hattie**<sup>3</sup>, formative assessment refers to any activity used as an assessment of learning progress before or during the learning process itself. In contrast to formative assessment, summative assessment evaluates what students know or have learned at the end of learning after all. John Hattie compiled in his book *El aprendizaje visible* (Visible Learning) a body of research and studies through meta-analysis, establishing the effect and influence on student learning of more than one hundred factors, where the great positive impact of feedback and formative assessment was evident.

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<sup>3</sup> Hattie, J. (2017). *Aprendizaje visible para maestros*. Paraninfo.

*La evaluación formativa: estrategias eficaces para regular el aprendizaje* ("Formative assessment: effective strategies to regulate learning") by Mariana Morales and Juan Fernández focuses on formative assessment, building a solid and attractive bridge that brings the evidence of the most rigorous educational research closer to educational practice, to carry out in the classroom what there is evidence about.

The prologue is written by **Neus Sanmartí**, who in her book *10 ideas clave: evaluar para aprender* ("10 key ideas: evaluating to learn") (Ed. Grao, 2007) emphasizes that assessment is the engine of learning. On it depends both what and how we teach, and what and how we learn. Its main purpose is regulation. It should serve to provide feedback and guide the teacher's action, identifying what can be improved. Assessment is a necessary condition to improve teaching. Assessment is the activity that most drives change, since it makes it possible to become aware of certain facts and to analyze their possible causes and solutions. Teachers need to know how to plan, analyze and interpret evidence of learning, provide feedback to students, and support them in their self-assessment.

Neus Sanmartí points out in the foreword the relevance of moving from a culture of compliance to a culture of trust, the importance of focusing on feedback and the use of modeling by teachers, as well as the need to rethink how to share with families the how and why of the change in the vision and purpose of assessment and the learning of their sons and daughters.

**The first section of the book, *Why evaluate?*** differentiates between formative and summative assessment. The authors point out that formative assessment aims to achieve greater or better learning by collecting evidence, analyzing it and making decisions, with time to implement them so that they make sense for the student. The information provided by the assessment instrument should allow for immediate subsequent action to change, for

example, what is to be worked on in class the following day or the action to be taken by the student. The aim is to monitor learners' understanding during lessons in order to respond accordingly.

**The second section of the book, *Formative assessment as a growth promoter***, establishes that, first of all, the purpose of the assessment must be identified, then the strategy and, finally, the instrument to be used. When the objective is to have an instrument to be able to grade a task at the time of its delivery, then the purpose is summative, not formative. The authors do not intend to offer closed answers, but rather to raise some questions and orientations, such as: What aspects of language favor reflection and learning by students? What type of final grading instruments help students to feel that they participate in their learning process and become more involved in it? What formative assessment strategies help students to recognize aspects in themselves and in their environment that they were unaware of and that make them grow? The authors emphasize the importance of not only having feedback in mind, but how to make it effective, being this feedback specific, minimal, and allowing the learner to think for himself. When the learner understands what they need to do and why they need to do it, they develop a sense of being in control of their own learning. They identify a number of points for reflection on change processes in the area of assessment from the perspective of an educational center, such as a long-term approach, the participation of all teachers, the development of a reflective practice approach via the creation and consolidation of a professional learning community, and very fluid communication about changes with students and families.

**The third block of the book, *A Compass for Learning***, captures the importance of learning objectives being clear and challenging, understood and made concrete through examples and models. The authors show that the use of examples and models of varying quality show students the right direction and

what is to be achieved. The authors explain the practice of evocation as an excellent tool for activating prior knowledge, incorporating examples and guidelines for developing it in a practical way in the classroom. They also focus on how to provide quality, qualitative feedback in the form of concrete comments on the task and how to gain efficiency through collective feedback, as well as using the strategy of conversation between teacher and student about their learning. They discuss the role of motivation and metacognition in formative assessment, as well as the practice of self-assessment that involves students in self-observation and the formulation of judgments about their work, which facilitates the development of habits and self-reflection skills; and strategies are established to carry out the practice of co-assessment, with the aim of helping the assessed individual to improve his or her learning. Finally, the meaning of summative assessment is explained, such as criteria-based assessment or criterial assessment and external standardized tests, which allow for a detailed analysis of how the teaching and learning processes are working. In addition, they analyze the possibility of transforming report cards into documents that provide more direct and clearer information on the evolution of learning and associated reflection. Four strategies that can be used to communicate learning as alternatives to report cards are described: qualitative reports, personal interviews, self-reports and public presentations.

**The appendix** contains ten proposals for personal or team reflection on the contents handled in the book, which are very useful as a diagnosis and starting point for teaching teams in schools considering the introduction of these formative assessment strategies.

Bringing teachers, management teams and education inspectors closer to the rigorous, evidence-based view of educational research offered in this publication can be very enriching and lead to reflections and debates with the aim of including continuous improvements in regulated and directed student

learning strategies and transforming the assessment culture of schools. Numerous practical examples are offered, clearly explained, with strategies for incorporation by teachers and their use in classes with students. Summative assessment is complementary to formative assessment, and both make sense in teaching and learning. Assessment is motivating if it provides criteria and instruments for understanding mistakes and recognizing successes. Techniques, procedures and instruments should be varied. Undoubtedly, this publication is a solidly built bridge that brings educational research on what works in formative assessment closer to education professionals in a simple way, with rigor and clarity, aimed at "those who wish to do their work better tomorrow than they did today"<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Morales, M y Fernández, J. (2022) *La evaluación formativa. Estrategias eficaces para regular el aprendizaje*. SM,

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