

## **Receiving Necessary Information for Students through Formative Assessment and Its Impact in Quality Learning**

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**Abstract:** *With all the changes that have been made in the educational system of Kosovo as a country in transition, one of the many challenges in the process of teaching and learning remains evaluation as useful process in the field of education. The study is based on the hypothesis: "Application Formative Assessment affects in controlling and improving student learning". Measurement of knowledge is done through the application of various techniques of assessment and providing timely results, as decision-making and responsibility by the teacher. This study aims to offer an analysis about the application of Formative Assessment by teachers in schools, the acquisition and improvement of student learning as well as cooperation with the family. It is based in interviews with teachers which analyze their work through Formative Assessment that they realize in class with students. The research is realized in two primary schools in which are included 25 teachers from "Yll Morina" school and 20 from "Mazllum Këpuska" school from I-V grade. From the results we conclude that within the school there should be organized different programs so that the main focus will be to raise the performance of students in the learning process. The application of Formative Assessment in the function of teaching and learning, lead teachers toward planning and re-planning in teaching and helps the student in the learning process.*

**Keywords:** *assessment, formative assessment, challenge, students.*

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Assessment as a useful process in the field of education in Kosova either today remains as one of the challenges and the responsibilities in the teaching and learning process. Assessment remains a balance of relationships between teacher and students, which directly reflects in the work, personality and success of students. Through the assessment teachers accomplish checking students' knowledge and collect from them information about a value judgment for a particular production. Through measurement, controlling and assessment of knowledge to us the situation in which there is a student or a group of students becomes clearer in achieving positive results and create positive energy to the students, since it requires a feedback from the teacher. From the achieved results students learn about their success respectively for their failure, who can manage to make positive change by strengthening cooperation with their teachers and parents in a systematic way.

In our schools there have been some changes that make a reality based on the training and retraining of teachers, their ongoing training and the implementation of the Kosovo Curriculum Framework. Documents which are used to increase the quality in learning process approved by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology are "Assessment Standards" and "Code of Ethics for student assessment" documents which are important for all of those who are involved in teaching process. Based on Standards of assessment there has been carried out a handbook for teachers "Formative Assessment", which includes theoretical aspects, planning activities related to Formative Assessment, which facilitates teachers work in the practical application of strategies in their classrooms and motivates the students for systematic work.

Planning and application of Formative Assessment (Assessment for Learning) in teaching is considered an achievement for successful learning in the learning process by checking and improving student learning. Through the use of various assessment techniques such as test assessment, essays, dictation, homework, self assessment we reach measuring students' knowledge that the teacher should give the results of their achievement in time.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is the importance of planning and application of Formative Assessment by the teachers in schools, acquisition and improvement of learning by the students as well as the cooperation with family.

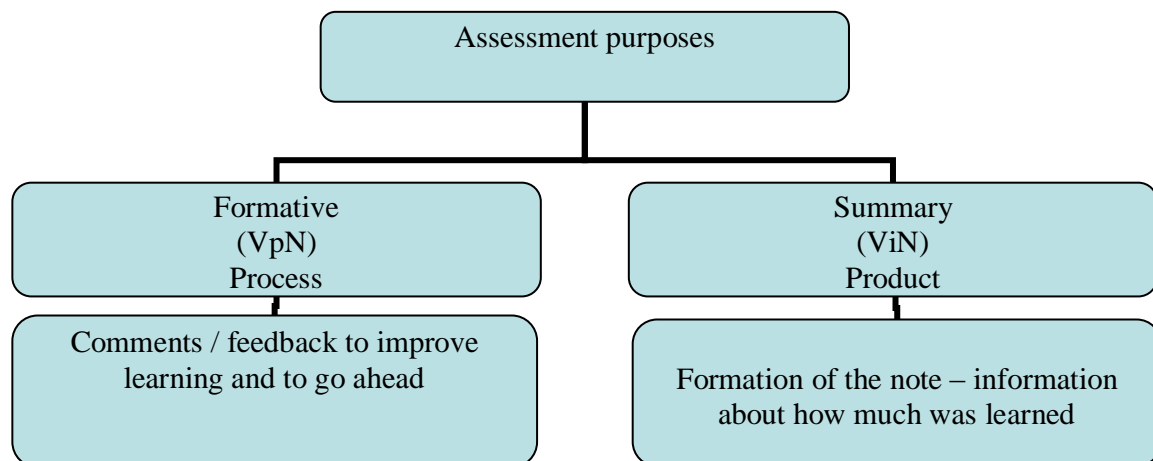
## 3. SCHOOL CHANGE PERSPECTIVES

Schools should initiate what changes are necessary to made in it in order to achieve raising the results of student in learning process. Application of Formative Assessment and criteria planning by the teachers in schools affects students' motivation for qualitative learning though not very applicable in our schools. "Through application of Formative Assessment the level of achievement at grade level, county and state level has to be improved continuously (Damian Murchan, Gerry Shiel and Eda Vula, 2011).

As objectives that should be aimed to be achieved through the application of this kind of assessment is to recognize student success rate, planning criteria of success, good communication and cooperation with parents that helps the student to increase the quality of learning process, and Re - Planning by teachers for a successful teaching.

## 4. THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Based on the information that the teacher have and those who gets as an observer during the learning process manages to bring a judgment to assess how much the learner has achieved. Formative Assessment is characterized by finding difficulties during students learning and improving their learning. Formative assessment is oriented to students' progress and is realized in a systematic way by setting several different but precise criteria by teachers in order to facilitate student learning and to inform their achievements in time.



(Damian Murchan, Gerry Shiel and Eda Vula, 2011) p.18

- From Natriello (1987) and Crooks (1988) and Black and William (1998) research it is sad that the basic learning is possible if the teachers in their teaching practice in the classroom apply Formative Assessment (Dylan William, Clare Lee, Christine Harrison & Paul Black, 2004). Formative Assessment goal is to motivate students for learning, to identify success respectively failure of students, to orientate students to be independent in their work, and the teacher feedback be ensured on time. Anne Macphail and John Halbert have seen the importance of the program, to apply Formative Assessment to the practice of physical education teachers in Ireland (Baird, 2010). By applying Formative Assessment the teacher can notice the difficulties which appears to students during learning process, to analyze it and together with students to achieve the solution completion of the problem.

## 5. TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS

For the application of Formative Assessment in Kosovo for all subjects took care Basic Education Program (BEP), which provided training for teachers who have realized the application of this type of assessment in 2011-2012 starting in 11 different schools of different municipality of Kosovo including "Yll Morina" school. BEP has trained teachers for the recognition and

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importance of the application of different forms of assessment, difference and significance between the two assessments - Summary and the Formative Assessment which reflects in planning and implementation of Formative Assessment in schools aiming the raising of quality in learning process.

### 6. METHODOLOGY

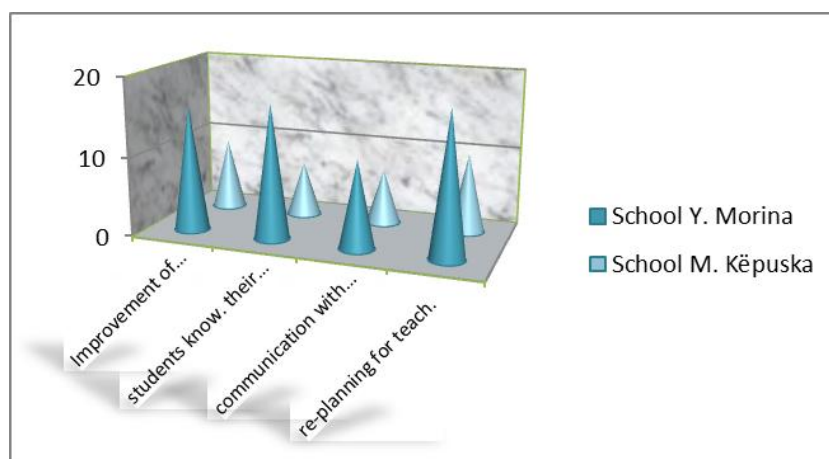
This study is qualitative and quantitative. It is realized to view commitment of teachers in the other schools, how much do they apply Formative Assessment and we chose to research two local schools. We got to share the focus of the study on pre- primary education from classes I – V. This research is based on the importance of application of Formative Assessment and success which can be achieved for raising the quality of learning. The sample is intentional, it includes 2 pre-primary Gjakova schools, 25 teaches of pre-primary “Yll Morina” school and 20 teachers of pre-primary “Mazllum Këpuska” school. The research instrument it’s a questionnaire with 7 questions, data from the filled questionnaire are analyzed in quantitative and qualitative form where we managed to get results what forms of assessment are applied more by teachers, techniques and instruments they use through learning process, in what does the Formative Assessment application affect, how the communication and cooperation is realized between parents and does that communication affect positively in the quality learning of students.

### 7. RESULTS

Data helps us give the evaluation for the work of teachers that is realized with students of the 2 schools of Gjakova. Based on the result of data from the questionnaire realized with teachers we notice that the application of Formative Assessment creates a cooperation between teachers, there are used various assessment techniques and instruments, it relies on work of students, it affects in improvement of student learning, bears communication and cooperation with parents and teachers who accomplish making lesson re - planning to succeed a successful teaching and learning.

In the comparison between two schools, “Yll Morina” school which teachers are trained and “Mazllum Këpuska” school which teachers are not trained for application of Formative Assessment, we notice a difference between teachers in applying evaluation forms for students. In “Yll Morina” school from 25 trained teachers there are 21 teachers who applies Formative Assessment, whilst in “Mazllum Këpuska” school from 20 teachers who are researched only 8 teachers are answered positively that apply this kind of assessment.

By analyzing research results we notice that in “Yll Morina” school to realize Formative Assessment, teachers cooperate among themselves on purpose to plan and realize curriculum aiming qualitative learning. Comments for results obtained teachers present in students’ notebook when they write essays, commentary, dictation, control tasks, files and other tasks, whether to obtain sufficient data they are based on individual assessment of students who realize it systematically.

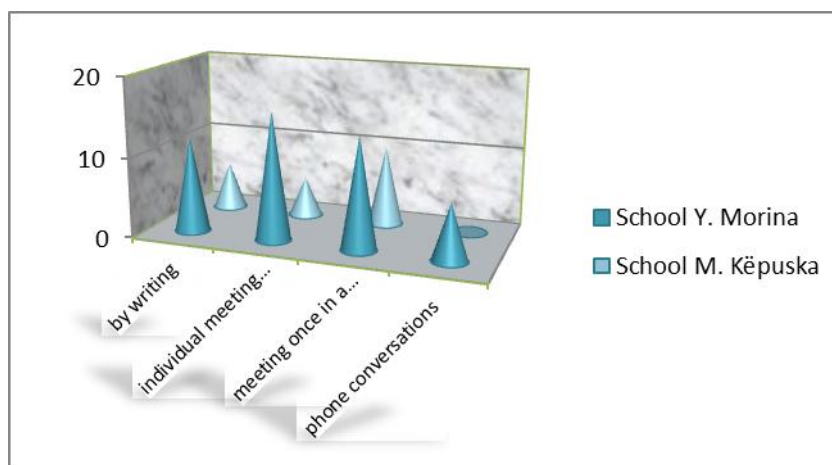


By asking does application of Formative Assessment affects in: improvement of learning, students knowing their success, communication with parents or re-planning for teaching - Teachers think that Formative Assessment affects positively in achieving qualitative learning, for

the student to become familiar with his work and success rating, while teachers re-plan in the right time.

Communication with parents is realized indirectly through comments in the student's notebook, and in individual contact with parents, a communication which affects improving students learning, finishing homework regularly, motivation of students for qualitative learning and cooperation between students.

Whether, analyzing research of "Mazllum Këpuska" school teachers mainly use Summary Assessment but they cooperate among themselves on purpose to plan and realize curriculum, applying various techniques of assessment and for solving different problems with students. They emphasize that comments for students' achieved results are presented in their notebooks when they write essays, commentary, dictation, control tasks, files and other tasks but in the same time they think that Formative Assessment should be made with tests and oral question at the blackboard. In the question: communication with parents for the assessment case is realized: by writing, individual meeting with parents, meeting once in a semester, or phone conversations – Teachers of "Mazllum Këpuska" school emphasize that they realize the communication once in a semester which falls in contradiction with the Formative Assessment in which there should be comments in writing, individual meetings with parents or phone conversations.



To obtain sufficient data for students they rely in the assessment which they realize systematically, group assessment and less the individual one of students. Teachers think that Formative Assessment affects more in communication and cooperation with parents than qualitative learning. Communication with parents is realized through parents' meeting in quarterly and sometimes through writing comments in student notebook, and that this communication affect positively in improving learning of students and motivation of students for qualitative learning. Teachers' responses sometimes are contrary with each-other because at the first response teachers tell that they do not apply Formative Assessment, whether at the other questions they answer generally about what this type of assessment affects.

From the obtained results in "Yil Morina" school we notice that through Formative Assessment application a success for positive results and raise of quality in learning process is achieved. This success for students it's achieved through collecting sufficient data and systematically by the teachers. Also, we notice that for the work and achieved rate of success by the students, the constant communication and qualitative cooperation realized with parents is affective too. Whether, from the obtained results in "Mazllum Këpuska" we notice that even if teachers realize a great job with students they do not have enough information for planning and applying Formative Assessment.

Changes within the school should be organized through various programs on purpose to be organized trainings for teachers for the recognition of Formative Assessment importance and its application in learning process.

For a qualitative learning it is needed the application of various forms of assessment and especially application of different Formative Assessment techniques which aims collecting data,

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estimation and their use for due purposes as an fair, correct, believable and systematic assessment for students, parents and for teachers also.

### 8. DISCUSSION

In the last few years there have been enough changes within schools, starting from planning, teaching, students learning and also in the students' assessment before, during and after the learning process. It is important that positive changes in school start from the school itself. From the studies made we arrive at the conclusion that how much the application of various forms of assessment in class is important including Formative Assessment for raising learning quality in the learning process of students.

“Assessment for learning enables: **students**, to participate actively for understanding how and what to do... to move forward; **teachers**, judge correctly about students' achievements and use those judgments for making extra plans; **principals**, to apply a structured assessment system which is manageable and useful; **parents** and caretakers, to be informed that how are they children making process, what should they do... how can they support them and their teachers” (Damian Murchan, Gerry Shiel and Eda Vula, 2011b).

In the last few years there are changes in students' assessment where each students work is checked, respected and evaluated, the students are in the spotlight of learning process and they commit even to assess their own work, whether the teacher role is as a director of learning process.

For a successful teaching except planning curriculum the teacher should plan assessment too as a main part and with responsibility in his work. The teacher achieves being successful in the time of planning assessment criteria that students should achieve, he applies Formative Assessment that happens after learning and informs by writing in notebook that what's been reached in his class on purpose of improving students work, re - planning his work for achieving great results in class.

### 9. CONCLUSIONS

Although there is spoken and done enough for changes according to 21 century requests it is still necessary for more changes and supplements in school to raise the education level of teachers and students. Formative Assessment is considered as one of the most useful and affective forms of assessment in teaching process and qualitative learning. It is an important part in the learning process too which considers students' thinking and expression. (Beverly Bell and Bronwen Cowie, 2002) By the research done we conclude that applying as many different forms of assessment affects in filling potential gaps that one or another assessment brings.

Since many teachers and parents do not have correct information for Formative Assessment and his application in learning process they cannot wait tight - handed that it comes in future, but activate and apply it with students as soon as possible in their classes today.

Therefore, teachers should recognize all forms of assessment and realize their application through learning process to facilitate their work and students work especially to parents.

Teachers should self - assess their work through Formative Assessment while supporting in student achievements for their success or failure.

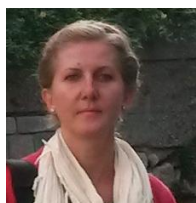
From the presented results there's issued a statement that in schools there are needed achievable changes so, application of Formative Assessment by the teachers so that students achieve good results through good teaching and systematic assessment.

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