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ASSESSMENT METHODS IN THE VIETNAMESE SUBJECT ENSURE THE OBJECTIVES OF DEVELOPING QUALITIES AND COMPETENCIES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The article is based on issues related to the Vietnamese subject in primary education in the new general education program, such as objectives, content, and requirements for the qualities and competencies that students need to achieve in the Vietnamese subject. The article aims to establish principles and propose some assessment methods in the Vietnamese subject to ensure the objectives of developing qualities and competencies for primary school students. The research identifies and presents three groups of assessment methods in primary education, namely: the question-and-answer assessment method group, the writing assessment method group, and the observation method group. The findings reveal that application of these methods allows teachers to diversify forms of assessment, and the selection and use of these method groups align with lesson objectives, ensuring the development of qualities and competencies for primary school students.

KEYWORDS: Assessment, Vietnamese subject, quality, competency, primary school students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the tool of speech and thought. Teaching Vietnamese in primary school is primarily about equipping students with the ability to use this tool effectively in their learning and daily life. With its role as a subject within the domain of language education and literature, Vietnamese in primary school is a subject that emphasizes both utility and aesthetic-humanistic aspects. It helps students acquire means of communication, serves as a foundation for learning all subjects and other educational activities in school. Additionally, it is a crucial instrument for instilling in students high values related to culture, literature, and the language of the ethnic community. It aims to foster positive emotions, humanistic sentiments, and a compassionate way of life in students' development [4].

The objectives of the Vietnamese subject in primary education under the 2018 general education program [4] are defined to contribute to the development of qualities, general competencies, and specialized competencies (language and literary competencies). Accordingly, the goal of the skills

mentioned ultimately aims at developing the competency to use Vietnamese for learners (the competency to comprehend spoken language and the competency to produce spoken language). Teaching Vietnamese with a focus on developing competencies is the process of education aimed at forming and nurturing the abilities to use the Vietnamese language for learners in the learning environment and daily life according to their age group [7].

The article is based on issues related to the Vietnamese subject in primary education within the framework of the new general education program, focusing on objectives, content, and the required qualities and competencies for students in the Vietnamese language. It aims to establish principles and propose assessment methods in the Vietnamese subject to ensure the objectives of developing qualities and competencies for primary school students.

2. CONTENT

2.1. Some issues regarding the Vietnamese subject in primary education in the new general education program

2.1.1. Objectives and content of the Vietnamese subject in primary education

a. Objectives of the Vietnamese subject in primary education

In the 2018 General Education Program, the Vietnamese subject in primary education is considered one of the crucial subjects for primary school students. The objectives of the Vietnamese subject in primary education aim to contribute to the development of qualities, general competencies, and specialized skills (language competencies and literary competencies) [1], with specific objectives including: 1/ Cultivating and developing essential qualities in students with specific manifestations: love for nature, family, homeland; awareness of roots; appreciation for beauty, goodness, and healthy emotions; enthusiasm for learning and a liking for labor; honesty and straightforwardness in both academic and daily life; a sense of responsibility towards oneself, family, society, and the surrounding environment. 2/ Initial development of general competencies in students, fostering the language competency in all basic reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities: accurate and fluent reading; understanding the content and main information of texts; making connections and comparisons beyond the text; correct spelling and grammar in writing; writing short sentences, paragraphs, and essays (mainly narrative and descriptive essays); clear expression; understanding the speaker's opinions through listening. 3/ Developing the literary competency with the requirement to distinguish between poetry and prose, understand how to read poetry and prose; recognize the beauty of artistic language; possess imagination, understanding, and the ability to be moved by the beauty and goodness of humans and the world portrayed in literary texts [4].

b) Content of the Vietnamese Subject in Primary Education

The content of the Vietnamese subject in primary education is defined by two main components [4]:

- Language skills to be developed for primary school students include: 1/ Reading skills (reading techniques; reading comprehension of literary texts, reading comprehension of informational texts); 2/

Writing skills (writing techniques, writing text); 3/ Listening skills (speaking and presenting; listening; speaking-listening interaction).

- Knowledge of language, literature, and materials.

2.1.2. Requirements for Qualities and Competencies of Students in Vietnamese Subject

In the overall 2018 program, Literature subject plays a crucial role in shaping and developing important qualities and competencies in students, following specified levels of importance [3]. The requirements for qualities are outlined through the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, focusing on topics related to patriotism, humanitarianism, honesty and self-respect, a spirit of diligence in learning and working, self-awareness, and responsibility towards oneself and society, love for nature, and environmental protection consciousness. General competencies such as self-learning and autonomy, communication and collaboration, problem-solving, and creativity are developed through the construction of subject-specific competencies, especially linguistic competency. Learning methods include individual self-study, group learning, and problem-solving. Furthermore, literary competency, a specific aspect of the Vietnamese subject, are also developed by promoting language competency. This supports a deeper understanding of culture through language, enhancing reading comprehension, and creativity in the field of literature [1]. Thus, qualities, general competencies, and literary skills are all developed through the main development axis, which is linguistic competency, through learning reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

2.2. Some Assessment Methods in the Vietnamese Subject Ensuring the Objectives of Developing Qualities and Competencies for Primary School Students.

2.2.1. Principles of Using Assessment Methods in the Vietnamese Subject to Ensure the Objectives of Developing Qualities and Competencies for Primary School Students

During the teaching process, assessment is a necessary activity to evaluate the effectiveness of the teacher and the qualities and competencies acquired by students after learning. There are numerous assessment methods in the Vietnamese subject. However, to ensure effective assessment, teachers need to select and use appropriate assessment methods while adhering to the following principles:

- Ensure value;
- Ensure comprehensiveness and flexibility;
- Ensure fairness and reliability;
- Ensure regularity and systematicity;
- Assessment should consider both outcomes and students' experiences to derive meaningful results;
- Assessment should be contextualized and contribute to the development of students;
- Assessment must be suitable for the characteristics of the subject [1].

2.2.2. Group of Question and Answer Methods

Question and answer is a teaching method in which teachers pose questions for students to answer, aiming to draw conclusions and acquire new knowledge that students need to comprehend and apply. This method is not only used in assessing learning outcomes during lessons but also applied in end-of-stage evaluations. In the assessment of learning outcomes in the Vietnamese subject, the forms of reinforcing questions and answers and regular question and answer assessments are commonly employed.

The regular question and answer assessment is utilized before, during, and after lessons to quickly and timely assess students' knowledge and skills. This provides teachers with feedback from students, allowing them to supplement or reinforce the newly learned knowledge and skills. For example:

Teachers use questions to consolidate students' knowledge about other purposes of questions:

- What is the purpose of the person who said: "Long live Vietnam's Independence, Freedom, and Happiness"?
- What is the purpose of the person who said: "No matter what, the Earth still rotates!"?

The question-and-answer method has advantages and limitations as follows: 1/ Advantages: Stimulates independent thinking in students; Develops students' verbal expression skills; Increases curiosity and exploration for students; Enables teachers to quickly receive feedback from students; Allows teachers to pay attention to both weaker and more proficient students. 2/ Limitations: Does not capture the attention of the entire class; Requires teachers to invest a significant amount of time and effort in preparing well-structured questions.

2.2.3. Group of Writing Assessment Methods

Writing test is an assessment method in which students write answers to questions and issues present in the curriculum [1]. This falls under the category of traditional assessment methods. The assessment technique through writing includes two common forms: 1/ Multiple-choice questions; 2/ Essay questions [2].

Multiple-choice questions:

Multiple-choice questions encompass the following types: multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and matching questions. These are closed-ended questions where students must select one answer from the provided options.

Multiple-choice questions: These questions have answer options provided, with only one correct or most correct answer. The remaining options are incorrect or distractors. Multiple-choice questions serve various purposes, including confirming academic achievements, providing feedback on teaching methods for teachers, and diagnosing students' misconceptions.

Example of a multiple-choice question:

1. Through stanza 1, when did the fishing boats set sail offshore. Circle the letter corresponding to the correct answer.

a. *Early morning.*

b. *Midday.*

c. *Sunset.*

d. *Late night.*

(Answer: c) [Source: [6], p. 27]

b) Couple matching questions (matching) have a structure consisting of two sets of information that need to be paired in a corresponding 1-1 manner. Typically, pairing questions with two equal sets of information are easier compared to those with unequal quantities. This type of matching question is not only easier to compose but also simpler to implement. However, if the intention is to create matching questions that measure a high level of knowledge, it may require more effort. For example:

2. Each person mentions their tasks in stanza 2 of the poem. Connect them correctly

(1) Aunt	(a) is busy singing the lullaby
(2) Uncle	(b) is busy planting rice
(3) Mother	(c) is busy fighting to the enemy
(4) Grandmother	(d) is busy feeding, sleeping, playing, crying, laughing, looking at the sunlight.
(5) Child	(e) is busy cooking

[Source: 5, p. 46]

c. True/False questions require students to evaluate a statement as True or False. This type of question is suitable for testing students' ability to recall information. The question writer needs to express the statement clearly so that students can assess it as either True or False. However, the difficulty lies in the fact that this type of question cannot accurately assess the depth of students' understanding, and there is a high probability of students guessing the answer (50% chance). For example:

Circle the letter T on the line with the correctly written word, and circle the letter F on the line with the incorrectly written word.

	T	F
1. quả xu xu (Chayote)		
2. rau sào (Fried vegetables)		
3. trè bưởi (grapefruit sweet soup)		

Certain strengths and weaknesses come with multiple-choice questions as a testing method.

Strengths:

This testing method is efficient and economically beneficial. Within a short period, students can answer numerous questions, covering a broad range of competency requirements in the subject. Grading these questions is quick, easy, and can be done by machine, ensuring objectivity in the grading process.

Weaknesses:

Teachers can only formulate questions assessing lower-order thinking skills (such as recognition, recall, etc.) and find it challenging to create questions evaluating higher-order thinking skills. Creating multiple-choice questions is complex and time-consuming, requiring thorough training for question writers. Conducting exams with multiple-choice questions requires measures to prevent cheating during the test.

c) Essay Questions

Essay questions require students to form their own answers. These questions allow students the freedom to express their opinions when presenting their responses to a problem. Essay questions evaluate the experience, understanding, analytical skills, reasoning, and writing skills of students. Using essay questions in exams has the advantage of assessing high-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creativity. This advantage of essay questions addresses the weaknesses of multiple-choice questions. The length of essay responses can vary significantly. Essay questions come in two forms: restricted essay questions and extended essay questions. Restricted essay questions limit the content and format of students' answers. For example:

Essay question for fourth-grade students: Write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) introducing your family, including the name of your school (or the school of your sibling), and the name of the institution or company where your parents (or other relatives) work. (Time allotted: 15 minutes)

Extended essay questions typically require students to write a text, which can take various forms such as work reports, activity programs, narrative essays, descriptive essays, or explanatory essays. The weakness of essay questions lies in their limited scope, as they only assess a narrow range of the curriculum, failing to evaluate the broader content of the program.

2.2.4. Observation Methods Group

Observation is a group of methods that teachers use to collect information for assessment purposes. Teacher observation focuses on: 1/ Student activities (reading aloud, speaking, listening, the process of writing an essay, preparing for a presentation, etc.); 2/ Products created by students, such as wall newspapers, individual or group study profiles, spelling notebooks created by students, etc [1].

There are three types of tools that teachers can use to gather observational information:

a) Daily Event Recording Notebook

This tool is created by teachers and is used to record events observed while interacting with students in the classroom. In this notebook, teachers allocate several pages for each student to record events involving multiple students, such as:

- Used only to assess a few students requiring special assistance from the teacher.
- Selected behaviors that cannot be assessed by other methods, such as students overreacting to different opinions, displaying uncooperative attitudes when invited to express opinions, etc.

When recording, teachers should focus on three contents: describing the event, teacher comments, and notes on the teacher's resolution.

The advantage of the Daily Event Recording Notebook is that it describes students' behaviors in natural situations, thereby revealing how students genuinely express themselves. Through these notes, teachers can identify students' weaknesses and positive or negative changes during the learning process. The limitation of this tool is that it requires teachers to spend a significant amount of time and effort continuously recording information over a sufficient period.

In the Vietnamese subject, the Daily Event Recording Notebook should be used to assess a few students who need help with reading aloud, interactive speaking and listening skills. This tool does not need to be used for the majority of students in the class.

b) Scale or Observation Sheet

Scale (also known as an observation sheet) is a tool that allows teachers to gather information to make assessments about students' learning outcomes based on clearly defined criteria. In Vietnamese subject, graphically described observation sheets are more commonly used (referred to as observation sheets).

For an observation sheet to be effective in assessment, it needs to: 1/ have criteria for observation that align with the required skills or competencies; 2/ provide descriptions that are observable evidence; 3/ define the levels of description clearly; 4/ include 3-5 levels of description (for primary school students).

c) Assessment Checklist

An assessment checklist (referred to as an assessment sheet) has a form and usage similar to an observation sheet. The difference between an assessment checklist and an observation sheet is that the

observation sheet indicates levels of a specific skill or behavior, whereas the assessment checklist requires answering Yes or No questions about the skill or behavior being measured. In the Vietnamese subject, an assessment checklist is used to evaluate students' products, such as a written essay, a study portfolio, or a small project. The assessment checklist is not only a tool for teachers to assess students' learning outcomes but also a tool for students to self-assess their learning outcomes and peer evaluation. For example:

An assessment checklist used for 4th-grade students to self-assess a paragraph introducing their family.

Mark a “+” in the empty box if you have done it, mark a “-” if you haven't.

- 1. *Before starting the task, did you read the instructions carefully?*
- 2. *Before starting the task, did you draft the key ideas needed for the paragraph?*
- 3. *Does your paragraph clearly identify the main topic and have a structured organization?*
- 4. *Does your paragraph have a defined structure?*
- 5. *Does your essay include sentences introducing family members?*

3. CONCLUSION

Developing the competency to use Vietnamese for learners - the competency to comprehend spoken language and produce spoken language for primary school students through Vietnamese subjects, is essentially the process of teaching aimed at forming and nurturing language skills within the learning environment and age-appropriate daily life. Based on considerations regarding objectives, content, and requirements related to the qualities and capabilities of students in the Vietnamese subject, the authors have proposed three groups of assessment methods: question-and-answer assessment, written assessment, and observational assessment. The research results affirm that applying these methods allows teachers to diversify assessment forms, make choices, and utilize these methods according to the lesson objectives, ensuring the development of qualities and capabilities for primary school students.

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