Teaching French Through Dynamic Assessment:
The Case Of The First Year Undergraduate Students F.L.E

ABSTRACT:

It is well established that at the university, one forms the critical spirit, the spirit of analysis and the spirit of synthesis. What we advocate is a spirit of evaluation. The process we followed is part of a problematic of teaching French and especially in didactics of writing. We have implemented an experimental device in our teaching practice. This is the dynamic evaluation. This evaluation allows the measurement of the initial level of achievement of a written production. And also the introduction of elements likely to help the subject to modify his usual strategies involved in the realization of a failed written production. But above all the appreciation of the way new strategies are involved. It's a four-phase experience that lasted a whole year. We first put our sample audience to a pre-test, then with them we determined the teaching objectives, then we set up the training workshops for the dynamic assessment, and finally we closed the process with a final test of measurement and evaluation. Two questionnaires were used and an observation grid.

Key words: *dynamic assessment, learning potential, skills, transferable macrocompetence, strategies, mediation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

We are interested in the problem of mediation and the impact of evaluation tools on the activity of those who evaluate. The choice to work on these emanates from the fact that students and future teachers, who arrive at the university in first year are far from achieving in all writing situations a "correct" production in French. Indeed, there are many errors or more objectively dysfunctions that occur in the written productions of these learners and attest to their lack of scriptural competence. These errors affect both the formal and semantic rules of language as well as the rules of textual coherence and cohesion.

We consider that the dynamic evaluation integrated into a didactic sequence of the writing can not only considerably improve the competence of the oral of these students but especially their competence with the writing. According to Professor FEUERSTEIN (1979), effective mediation leads to change and alleviates dysfunctions. Mediation is nothing more than a quality of interaction between the mediator and the learner. This interaction so that it is of quality and can produce changes must meet specific criteria such as intentionality, transcendence and meaning. The mediator explains, identifies, and formulates the learner's difficulties, approves and encourages him to help him overcome his dysfunctions. It is the mediation of meaning.

The method of dynamic assessment of the potential of learning is based on the principles of the theory of modifiability and cognitive educability. LOARER (1998, p.121) gives cognitive education the following definition: for him, "we speak of cognitive education when we explicitly seek, through the implementation of a training process, to improve intellectual functioning of people ". In fact, it is a question of measuring, through the use of tests, the extent and quality of learning potential. It is a method of assessing thought processes, perception and problem solving. It highlights the subject's ability to develop his or her effectiveness in performing a task when he or she accepts mediation. The mediator, whether he is the teacher or the learner, makes the learner aware of the errors he may have made by responding to the instructions in the proposed matrix, particularly in writing. This complicity in diagnosing inadequacies allows the learner to evaluate for himself, to value himself and to improve himself. In general, the evaluation process implemented by the teacher (the expert) and the responsible, effective and meaningful participation of the trained (peers) in this process ensures this awareness and allows real learning. According to Laurier, Tousignat and Morissette (2005, p.37), "evaluation is a collective approach. In the same way that learning is a process that feeds on exchanges within the group, evaluation should also appeal to the group. "

2. METHODOLOGY
2.1 Research Protocol

To carry out our experiment, we used two research questionnaires in order to describe the teaching practices and the evaluation of the writing from the point of view of the 1st year FLE students. Our first research questionnaire included 28 questions, including 27 closed questions and an open question in Arabic as well.

Our second research questionnaire consisted of 23 questions, 22 closed and one open. The five questions that were removed from the first questionnaire related to the teaching and writing practices that students had experienced since entering high school. We consider that it was useless to ask these questions again in the second questionnaire since the data would not have changed in this one. With regard to the results of the questionnaires, we present the answers to some aspects of the questions (4 and 5) that appeared only in our first questionnaire. We then continue with the presentation of the results of the questions appearing in the two questionnaires (9 and 14) and comparing them. Finally, we present the results of question 28, an open question that is part of the two questionnaires.

We used a second data collection mode which is the observation grid. We present here the observations of three subjects that we compared during the first and the second presentation of their written productions. We present, first, the one who is in a situation of language insecurity learning (score = 5/20 in writing), then the subject in situation of language stability unstable learning (score = 10 / 20 in writing) and finally, one who is in a stable and easy learning situation (score obtained = 13/20 in writing) in this order. We analyze and interpret the results of these three subjects under the prism of linguistic, discursive and communicative competences.

2.2 THE EXPERIMENTATION:

We have adopted a four-phase approach

a- The survey

Two questionnaires were used (one at the beginning and the other at the end of the experiment)

b- The pre-test

A pre-test assessed the level of notional acquisition and scriptural abilities.

c- Mediation

It is a phase of training or mediated learning. The teacher (the expert) and the trained ones (the peers) play a very important role. Throughout the formative workshops, the didactic sequence takes all its meaning and the multiple interventions of the peers (the trained ones) in posture sometimes of evaluator and sometimes of evaluation of their written productions provide a certain number of aids, and guide the activity of the learner so that it solves itself the task previously failed.

d- The final test

A final test makes it possible to measure the acquired gain and its stability on a case by case basis.

3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

A- ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

3.1. UNCOMPARED RESULTS (QUESTIONS 4 AND 5):

Question 4:

In what ways did your French teachers teach you written communication? Students should determine how often they received each of the types of instruction listed in the questionnaire. The choices of the answers were never, rarely, often, always and I do not know.

The first type of education offered was giving you instructions (question 4.1). No student answered I do not know. Twenty-two students, more than half of all students, said they often received instruction in writing with instructions. Twelve students answered always having had a teaching of the writing by being given instructions. Four students responded rarely to being instructed and two students never responded.