ASSESSING MOTIVATION AND LEARNING

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Abstract

Why are we as teachers concerned with evaluating how well students are doing? One answer that comes to our minds immediately is that students expect to receive grades. Most of the time students ask “What do I have to do to receive an A?” or “Is this assignment going to be graded?” Therefore, as teachers we are worried that without bribes (As) and threats (Fs), students would have no reason to do the work assigned.

However, it is also true that grades tend to reduce students’ interest in the learning itself. Grades might affect the quality of students’ thinking, as students will try to stay at their comfort zone and avoid trying new things. Grades can even encourage students to cheat especially when they are mainly concerned about getting high grades. Grades might even spoil teachers’ relationship with students, which might have a negative effect on the learning environment.

This means we need to develop opportunities for our students to think about their work and take responsibilities for their own learning. We also need to show them that learning is more important than the grades by rewarding their efforts during their studies even if the accomplished work does not match to the standards 100%.

In this presentation, Meltem Bizim will be presenting some techniques she has used at Sabanci University Freshman English course to motivate her students while grading them. She will be sharing the results of the study she carried out on this issue.

Keywords: Assessment learning motivation.