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The Importance of Continuous Assessment in Improving ESP Students' Performance

Case study: Industrial Maintenance Students at the National Institute for Vocational Training in Hassi Messaoud

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family. A special Feeling of gratitude to my loved mother whose words of encouragement have always pushed me for doing better, to my father's soul and to my dear brothers and sisters.

I also dedicate this dissertation to all my friends who have supported me throughout the process especially Amina, Akila, Farida, Fatima, Hafsa, Nadjet, Radja for their help and the twine Aicha and Amina, Iman.

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Abstract

The study aims at exploring the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance; the study is conducted in the National Institute for Vocational Training in Hassi Messaoud, taking the case study of students of Industrial maintenance in the third and the fourth semester.

In this study, we use descriptive research because it is the most appropriate one. The study describes the current situation of continuous assessment in Industrial Maintenance class; also we utilize quantitative approach for collecting data through questionnaire administered for students. All data obtained from the questionnaire are analyzed, interpreted and represented in form of figures and tables. In conclusion, we present some findings of the study; one of them is that the National Institute for Vocational Training uses different types of continuous assessment strategies such as recap exercises, oral and written tests which are commonly used while projects are never used. Also, the study reveals that tests are the most strategies used by teachers to assess students' performance and their progress.

Introduction

This chapter is the introduction of our research work. We introduce the background, statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. Our concern in this chapter is to highlight the scope of our work. The structure of the study is also explained.

1.1 Background of the Study

English for specific purposes (ESP) is an approach that has grown to become an important part of English language teaching. This approach has created a new generation of learners who are aware specifically why they are learning a language; therefore, there is a need for assessing ESP students who need proficiency in both language skills and their area of the study; thus, ESP focuses on the ability to perform particular communicative tasks. Thereby assessment becomes one of the prominent aspects in ESP approach.

Dudley-Evans and John (1998) argue that assessment occupies a prominent place in the ESP process, giving an ESP teacher a wealth of information on the effectiveness and quality of learning and teaching. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that any language course has needs to assess student performance at strategic point in the course especially in communicative competence, because the ESP approach is concerned with the ability to perform particular communicative tasks. Dudley-Evan and John (1998) mention that assessment is a process of measuring students progress, they mention the reasons for using assessment are giving feedback to the students, the second reason is to improve learning encompasses benefits such as reinforcement and confidence building.

The terms assessment, test and evaluation are interchangeably refer to the same activity of collecting information for making decisions about the students through observation, self report and tests in order to improve their learning process; therefore, assessment plays a great role in identifying the

student's   areas   of   strength   and   weaknesses.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996) state that term of authentic assessment use to describe a variety form of assessment that reflect students learning process, achievement and attitudes in classroom.

Kellaghan and Greancy (2001) state that term assessment in educational setting refers to any procedure or activity that is designed to collect information about the knowledge, attitudes, or skills of learner or group of learners.

Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from different sources in order to improve the level and the knowledge of the learners. In addition to that, assessment is the process by which an individual's work or performance is judged. Richardas and Renandya (2002) argue that

assessment has come to be termed alternative assessment, authentic assessment, or informal assessment, all of those varieties of assessment focus on measuring learners' ability to use language in real life situations and it carried out continuously over a period of time. Bachman (2004) describes assessment as the process of collecting information about something that we are interested in. Sarosdy *et al* (2006) argue that assessment focuses on testing, measuring or judging the progress and the achievement or the language proficiency of the learners. Bachman and Palmer (2010) state that assessment is used to provide a description of the progress of individuals such as language use.

There is also continuous assessment that refers to formative evaluation that helps the teacher to find out what the student has learned and help teacher to evaluate the student's performance in a systematic manner. Continuous assessment takes the shape of specific tasks that are given to the students based on what has been taught. The teacher observes students doing these tasks and then makes a judgment on how well they are doing.

Plessiss and Prouty (2007) state that continuous assessment refer to collecting information and making observations about students periodically to find out what students know, understand, and can do.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Assessment is one essential component of curriculum practice that has great contribution for effective curriculum operation and implementation. Assessment is process for obtaining information in order to make decision about students learning. Also, assessment evaluates the progress of learners and improves their performance and it helps in determining if the student has completed the required grade or course successfully.

This study attempts to answer the following questions to pin point the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance.

1/ Does continuous assessment have an effect on ESP learners' performance?
2/ What are the appropriate methods of assessment for ESP students?   3/ What are the main strategies of continuous assessment used by ESP teachers?

1.3 Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to show the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance. Also, our work aims to establish to which extent there is relationship between the continuous assessment and ESP student's performance.

Furthermore, our main objective is to know what is the effect of continuous assessment on improving ESP students' performance.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study on the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance will cover the National Institute for Vocational Training in Hassi Messouad, in particular, the students of Industrial Maintenance class. This institute provides the specialized professional knowledge and skills. It can be seen as doing activities designed in order to transmit theoretical knowledge to professional skills.

1.5 Structure of the Study

The present work is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is a general introduction that includes the background, the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem and the scope of the study. The second chapter focuses on literature review related to the study; the main themes which include the nature of continuous assessment, the effect of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance. Also, this chapter represents the areas of assessment of ESP students, as well as the methods and the strategies of continuous assessment used in the classroom.

The third chapter is the practical part and encompasses the design of the study, the sample selection and data collection methods. The last two chapters encompass the empirical part of the study. The fourth chapter focuses on the analysis of data collected from student's responses. While the last chapter which is the general conclusion provides the discussion of the results, and the recommendations that help in developing skills of using for continuous assessment strategies.

 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have dealt with background of continuous assessment .We exposed the problem to be investigated in this study. Also we stated the purpose of our work, as well as we have mentioned the scope of the study and the structure of our work is explained. The next chapter discusses the literature review of our research work.

Chapter Two: Continuous Assessment

Introduction

This chapter is the literature review of this study. We introduce the definition, the nature and the effect of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance. Our concern is also to tackle the areas of assessment of   ESP students (writing, reading and speaking and listening). In this chapter, our focus is on the methods of continuous assessment that are used in classroom.

2.1 The Definition of Continuous Assessment

Nowadays, specific purposes assessment is primarily concerned with facilitate students to perform particular communicative tasks, providing feedback on learning, and confirming what students have mastered and highlighting those skills needed. In addition, any ESP assessment can be classified as performance assessment assessing the skills needed to perform in the language successfully.

The Ministry of basic education and culture of republic Namibia (1999) states that continuous assessment refers to the process of gathering information about the level of students on regular and continuous basis in order to improve learning and it helps the teaching learning process. Dudley-Evan and John (1998) argue that continuous assessment is important because it provides teachers and learners with the feedback and grades of the activities done in the classroom or as homework.

In addition, continuous assessment is the periodic and systematic method of assessing and evaluating a person's progress. Also, information collected from continuous assessment of students will help the teacher to better understand their strengths and weaknesses, in addition to providing a comprehensive picture of each student over a period of time by using certain strategies. Godfrey (2011) argues that continuous assessment refers to practice of continuously checking on learner's attainments with an aim of building an assessment profile. The shape of assessment takes the form of working through learning activities; learners demonstrate their capacities in developing their level.

Garrison and Ehrighaus (2007) mention that formative assessment is any assessment made during the class year that mean to improve learning process, and provides the

information needed to adjust teaching and learning while they are happening, also helps teachers in determining next steps during the learning process.

As well as, Sarosdy *et al* (2004) argue that formative assessment has many purposes which are used to monitor students' progress during the course and to check how much they have learned of what they should have learned. It can be carried out the form of informal tests and quizzes and it is the basis for feedback to the students. Hyland (2006) states that formative assessment refers to the way used to evaluate information about the learners, allowing the teacher to advice students, monitor learning process.

Continuous assessment is an assessment approach which involves the use of a variety of assessment instruments to measure learners' performance, and check various components of learning; it will take place over a period of time.

2.2 The Effect of Continuous Assessment in Improving ESP Students' Performance

The purpose of assessment is conveying student's expectations about what is important to learn, providing information about the students' progress and helping students to judge their own learning. Also the performance is defined in term of results.

Plessis and prouty (2003) mention that there are many reasons for using continuous assessment, Some of them are to find out what students know and can do and to provide all the students with opportunities to show what they know, to improve teaching because it tells the teacher whether what they taught was effective and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of learners. Kellaghan and Greany

(2003) argue that continuous assessment has important consequences attached to performance; they are likely to impact directly on teaching and learning process.

Alausa (2004) argues that the expected advantages of continuous assessment lie in its being guidance oriented. Since it will involve data gathering over a long period of time. This could play a vital role in diagnosing and remediating areas of learners' weaknesses. Continuous assessment is an approach that would capture the full range of learners' performance.

Quanash (2005) argues that the major purposes of continuous assessment are to improve the results of pupils' performance on tests and exercises, and to help pupils to develop effective learning and work habit.

Hyland (2006) argues that there are many reasons for evaluating and assessing students which are identifying students' strengths and weakness areas, to enable learners to demonstrate the progress they made in a course and to indicate students' ability to perform target academic tasks and to assess general competence for certification or university study.

2.3 The Areas of Assessment of ESP Students

2.3.1 Speaking Assessment

In present day, speaking is considered to be the essential skills of real life. Sarosdy *et al* (2006) state that Speaking belong to the out stage of language teaching process, when students are working on their language production they are operating toward the communicative competence.   Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) assume that speaking is the most difficult skills to acquire since it requires commands of both listening comprehension and speech production sub skills in unpredictable.

Speaking skill is the ability to communicate to each other and involves the negotiation of the meaning between two or more persons and it is the interaction between people. Speaking assessment of English language learners aims to capture a student's ability to communicate for both basic communicative and academic purposes. In addition, O'Malley and Pierce(1996) argue that speaking assessment should focus on a students' ability to interpret and convey meaning for authentic purposes in interactive context and should assessing speaking interaction and should include both accuracy and fluency, so the teacher have to use assessment activities that are as authentic as possible in educational setting by using certain activities such as using authentic language in listening and speaking activities

because listening and speaking are interdependent oral language processes and need to be taught and assessed in an integrated manner; organize real –world activities eg: giving direction, giving opinions, also another important task which is giving a students opportunities to use language in situations based on everyday life .Teacher should asses authentic language use in context ,both communicative and academic language functions, the ability to communicate meaningful, this assessment take various forms of activities such as oral interview, information gab, oral report and debates and conversation classes that are very common at advanced level , it is the best way to improve oral fluency .

In addition to that, Sàrosdy *et al* (2006) mention that there are great varieties of tasks that are employed to assess oral production. There are tasks that can be found at different language proficiency examinations such as reading aloud, role play, interview and discussion of topics.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mention that we should assess oral language at least twice for each student during each quarter or semester. This provides baseline data as well as information on improvement of language proficiency on a continuous basis.

2.3.2 Reading Assessment

Reading is a private complex process; it means that you are not face to face interaction. Also, reading is task reconstruction we are trying to get the meaning by the writer.
Celce-Mercia and Olshtain (2000) argue that reading is the process of trying to understand a written text. The reader has to perform a number of simultaneous tasks: decode the message by recognizing the written signs, interpret the message by assigning meaning to the string of words, and finally, understand what the author's intention was. In addition, reading is producing literal comprehension. In reading comprehension, readers construct new knowledge from the interaction between texts and their own background knowledge.
Any assessment requires planning and organization. O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mention that Assessment of reading must begin with the purposes of the assessment which are monitoring student progress, obtaining information not available from other sources, studying, evaluating or diagnosing reading behavior. In assessing reading skills, first teachers identify learners' needs, also teachers need to assess both reading strategies and comprehension level of reading by identifying tasks and activities used in the class that serve for assessment, it means that teachers must provide a choice of

reading selections and ensure that students are reading text, encourage them to reread the texts, and allow students to discuss what they read with the others to encourage social negotiation of meaning.

Moreover, teacher is responsible for how to collect information about the reading process taking into consideration the number of the students he teach and the time for assessment and monitoring their own learning, in order to monitor student progress in reading teacher should collect information at least twice or several time during the semester because the more collect information the better the teacher will be able to adjust the instructional goal to meet the students' need. Also teacher should provide students with feedback in systematic manner.

In addition, students can assess themselves; this method helps both students and teachers become aware of students' attitudes, strengths and weaknesses in reading. It also encourages students become independent learners and it can take various formats such as checklists and question/answer.

Moreover, students can also assess each other (peer assessment); teachers can ask them to rate their peers' reading comprehension and attitudes toward reading.

2.3.3 Writing Assessment

Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) state that writing is the production of the written word that results in a text but the text must be read and comprehend in order for communication to take place.

Writing is production language skill that enables a language user to express ideas and communicate with each other. Writing assessment can be used for a variety of appropriate purposes which monitor what students actually do while writing and providing feedback to students on specific aspects of their writing and providing assistance to students, also it is useful primarily as means of improving teaching and learning by using multiple assessment of writing activities including written summaries and written letters.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mention that in assessing writing skills, first teacher should evaluate more aspects of writing which are the knowledge of the context, the procedural knowledge to organize the content and the knowledge of the convention of writing rather than grammar .Second, writing assessment

should capture some of the complexity involved in writing so that teachers can know in which aspects of writing students are having difficulty.

As well as, students can assess themselves because self- assessment encourages students to think about their purposes in writing and to reflect on what and how much they are learning, also students can evaluate each other's writing through peer assessment, this involves the students in evaluation of writing of each student, it is not necessary to rate or grade everything. Each student produces but it want to ensure that students receive some form of regular feedback.

Writing assessment play an important role in identifying student weakness and strengths, educational needs and determine what works most effectively for each student.

2.4 The Methods of Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment has certain methods to evaluate students. Teachers should have a sound knowledge about appropriate methods for assessing their students that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge, skills. Moreover, assessment methods relate to the procedures the teacher wishes to follow in order to assess the students, these procedures include self and peer assessment which are key strategies to involve students in taking more responsibility for their own learning and involve them in monitoring and making judgment about aspects of their own and peer's learning. Miker (2010) argue that when the students participate in peer and self assessment it helps to involve student to explicit what is implicit, not just checking for error or weakness.

2.4.1 Self-Assessment

Self assessment is process of involving students in assessing their own performance and students are guided to take responsibility of their own learning. Harris (1997) mentions that self-assessment seen as one of the pillars of learner autonomy one of the fundamental elements of self-directed language learning is the opportunity for learners to assess their own learning. O'Malley and pierce (1996) argue that self assessment is an effective assessment which involves students and enables them to see their possibility for redirection of their own learning efforts. In addition, the primary objective for self assessment is to improve the capacity of the individuals to understand and what and how they are learning and take responsibility for their own learning, also increase the understanding of the students of the subject matter being studied.

Through self-assessment method students can learn from their previous mistakes, identify their strengths and weakness and monitor their progress.

Moreover, self-assessment can help learner to locate their own strengths and weakness and then get them to think about what have to do in order to improve their level. Through self –assessment method, students become more effective independent and confident learners.

2.4.2 Peer Assessment

Peer assessment refers to the process of involving students in assessing the performance of their other colleagues. It is a form of innovation assessment which aims to improve the quality of learning and empower of learners, peer assessment helps students to making judgments on the work of the other students. Orsmond (2004) mentions that peer assessment can be useful in helping students to develop their ability to make judgment on the performance of the other students. Miker (2010) argues that peer assessment is an important component in assessment that helps to realize curricular targets for students' learning.   In addition, peer assessment is a process that involves students grading or giving feedback on their students' work, and making judgment on what they made. Peer assessment is an effective process in developing students' critical thinking, and communication among the other students.   Through peer assessment method, students are encouraged to involve in assessing students and be responsible for learning, encourage students to reflect on their role and contribution to the process of the group work. Peer assessment focuses on the development of the student's judgment skills, also providing more relevant feedback to students. In addition to that, self assessment encourages students to help each other in peer activities.

2.5 Strategies of Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment includes a range of different assessment strategies and techniques which are used in classroom in order to gather information about students' learning and used to measure students' performance or achievement. O'Malley and Pierce (1996) mention that different strategies of assessment can be selected by teachers to meet specific purposes and students' needs but when teachers do not use it in a formal way they cannot provide systematic information about the students' learning.

In addition, the teacher needs to have strategies and activities for ESP students in the same class in order to differentiate between the levels of the students by engaging them in project work. Miker (2010)

argues that different assessment procedures must be used by the teacher in any educational setting to help students attain learning targets in the course curriculum. In addition, good assessment strategies provide students with opportunities to show what they have learned.

Therefore; there are many different kinds of assessment strategies that can be given to the student to find out what they know and can do.

2.5.1 Oral Presentation

Oral presentation is a way for learners to practice speaking and interacting with the teacher and peer. So, students call upon to present a project in form of an oral presentation, it offer a real-life speaking and giving students opportunities to use language in situations based on everyday life.

Oral presentation can be used to develop the public speaking skills of the speaker as well as to provide practice to listeners in asking questions and discussion. Oral presentation requires preparation by students, interaction and discussion between learners and use of language functions: describing, explaining and giving information. As well as, oral presentation focus on student's ability to interpret and convey meaning for authentic purposes.

Through this strategy students are able to communicate for basic communicative and academic purposes. So, we can say that strategy is authentic because it involves language use in interactive context.

2.5.2 The Written Test

The written test is an activity designed to test and measure the knowledge, skills and ability of test –takers. There are two types of questions are often used in written tests first multiple –choice questions in which candidates are given a set answers for each question, and the candidate must choose which answer is correct but there are different forms multiple-choice question. Second, essay question and written

exercises, candidates answer on form of essay, the test should specify the time students will have to complete the writing.

Written tests have many purposes which are evaluating; diagnosing writing behavior, information and knowledge of the students, also it helps in monitoring students' progress and to check progress of the students.

2.5.3 Project

Project is an activity undertaken over a period of time and includes both individual and group work and it is often presented through an oral or written report. Project focuses mostly on learners' ability to recall and comprehend the material they have studied. Project is generally longer and more complex than the usual kind of classroom activities.

Projects help students to practice and extend their language skills for real purposes, incorporate students' previous knowledge and personal experience and also motivate students to work better.

Projects have an important purpose which is providing a context for collaboration and shared learning among students; also, project stimulate students' creativity and imagination. In addition, projects give students a sense of achievement and self –esteem by providing them with the opportunity to produce something which they can show to others. Projects are thus considered as a practical and vital strategy of continuous assessment.

2.5.4 Take-home Assignment

 Ministry of basic education and culture of republic of Namibia (1999) mentions that take home assignment is a way for learners to practice what they have studied. It reinforces their learning; the primary purpose of home assignment is to teach, i.e. to help students to develop their English language skills. It is also considered as an opportunity for gathering information about class's learning and to assess students' progress in achieving the learning outcome for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Take home assignment is generally more suited to assessment of reading and writing although it can be used as a preparation for classroom activities involving speaking and listening. Therefore, the teacher should take steps to ensure that any homework used for assessment purposes is the work of the individual concerned, or at least that any collaboration which has taken place.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have dealt with various aspects concerning the continuous assessment .We describe the nature of continuous assessment as the process of gathering and discussing information from different sources in order to improve the level and the knowledge of the learners. So, we discussed its effect on improving ESP students' performance. We mentioned the areas of assessment which are reading, writing and speaking skills. Continuous assessment has certain methods for assessing students

and involving them in taking more responsibility for their own learning which are self assessment and peer assessment. In addition, we have dealt with the strategies of assessment used in classroom in order to measure students' performance. The next chapter discusses the practical part utilized in this study.

Chapter Three: The practical part

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, we presented the literature review of the study. This chapter discusses the practical part. First, we present the research design used in our work . The sample selection and data collection method are also highlighted. Finally, we present the data analysis.

3.1 The Research Design

The main aim of this work as stated in chapter one is to show the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance and to cast light on the strong relationship between the two variables.

The sample of the study is the Industrial Maintenance class at the National Institute for Vocational Training in Hassi Messaoud. The choice of design was influenced by the need to collect the most appropriate data that would help to achieve the aim of the work and answer the following research questions:

1/ Does continuous assessment have an effect on ESP learners' performance?

2/ What are the appropriate methods of assessment for ESP students?

3/ What are the main strategies of continuous assessment used by ESP teachers?

In our work, we have used a descriptive research design utilizing quantitative approach. Marczuk *et al* (2005) state that descriptive research refers to the process of defining, classifying or categorizing the subject and it is useful because it can provide important information regarding the average number of the group.

Kothari (2004) argues that descriptive research refers to the study which deals with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or a group. In addition, descriptive research studies deal with collecting data and testing hypotheses or answering questions concerning the current status of the subject.

Therefore, this research design is seen a appropriate one because the study describes the current situation in the Industrial maintenance class in terms of the effect of continuous assessment in improving the students' performance.

Quantitative approach in this study is the appropriate, involving the collection of quantitative data to be translated into statistical format. Quantitative methods designs provide accurate possible answers research questions. Quantitative methods collect data to be translated into statistical format. The

responses of respondents of the questionnaire are recorded in coded format, presented in frequency tables and graphs; quantitative data collection and analysis seem to be the appropriate method for this study. We use in quantitative approaches surveys and questionnaires for collecting data.

3.2. The Sample selection

Tayie (2005) argues that a sample is a subset of the population which is all individuals of interest to the research that is taken to be representative of the entire population.

This study involved the sample of students of Industrial maintenance class in the National Institute for Vocational Training in Hassi Messaoud which was randomly selected because it was the only one that teaches ESP module. Also, the students of Industrial maintenance class, third semester level and fourth semester level, were randomly chosen (35 students). The choice of students was based on the consideration that they study English for technicians (occupational purposes). Furthermore, we assume that they have studied this module in the previous semester.

3.3 The Data Collection Methods

Data collection is an integral part of the research design and it is an important aspect of any type of research study. Data collection refers to the process of collecting data from the sample of the study using different methods such as questionnaires and interviews. In this study, we use one of the data collection methods which are the questionnaire that is administered to the target students.

A questionnaire is a set of questions dealing with a specific topic given to the selected sample of the study in order to gather data about the related topic. Kothari (2004) states that questionnaire consists of number of questions in definite order given to the individuals concerned with the request to answer the questions and return the questionnaire. Blaxter *et al* (2006) state that questionnaire is one of the most widely used social research techniques, they have the form of written questions for those whose opinions or experience they are interested in, and then tried to interpret the responses, the questionnaire is distributed to the students.

In addition, a questionnaire is a set of questions dealing with some topics given to sample selection of individuals in order to gather data about a certain problem for the purpose of analyzing data and interpretation. Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2007) argue that the questionnaire is an instrument for collecting data about the problem of statement from the respondents. Dawson (2002) states that questionnaire is the most appropriate data collection method for the research for gathering information required in the study from the respondents.

The aim of the questionnaire is to obtain information from students about the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance.

The questionnaire is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the biographical information of the respondents, gender and the level. It consists of four questions. The second section deals with continuous assessment strategies consists of four questions; the respondents have to answer questions and on the continuous assessment strategies used in classroom, and about the time of assessment. The third section consists of eight questions related to the effect of CA in improving ESP students' performance (See the appendix).

3.4 Data Analysis

All data are obtained through the data collection method in this study and all the information from the questionnaire is entered into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Microsoft Excel program is used to generate descriptive statistics, graphics, tables and charts and also provides percentages that reflect the number of the responses to certain questions in relation to the total number of responses. The interpretation of descriptive

statistics made it possible to make appropriate inferences in terms of determine the influence of continuous assessment on the students' performance.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed the practical part and the issues of choosing the appropriate methods of the study. In addition, we have given a justification for using quantitative methods, and we have also described the sample of the study and the instrument for data collection. In the following chapter, the data obtained from the completed questionnaire will be analyzed.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

This chapter presents date presentation, analysis and interpretation. The data is collected from the questionnaire which will be analyzed and interpreted to draw conclusion about the subject. The questionnaire is conducted on the sample of 35 students. The students' responses represent biographic information, the strategies of continuous assessment used in the classroom and also their perception about the effect of continuous assessment on their performance.

4.1 Section A: Biographic information In this section, the following tables provide the biographic information of the respondents who participated in the questionnaire.

4.1.1 Gender of the Respondents Table 4.1: Distribution according to the Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Count	Percent
Male	35	100%
Female	0	0%
Total	35	100%

Table 4.1 shows that all of the respondents (100%) are male. It means that male- students dominated sample population because the research involved only students of the National Institute for Vocational Training. Generally, males are out-numbering than females because girls stay on school longer than males. Besides, the research sample involved students of industrial maintenance class, because males are more interested in technical and occupational study than females. That is why males are more than females.

4.1.2 Level of the respondents

Table 4.2: Distribution according to the Level of the Respondents

Current class	Count	Percent
Semester 3	13	37%
Semester 4	22	62%

Table 4.2 shows that students of the fourth semester are (62%) from total the number while students of third semester are (37%). This is because of the absence of the students of third semester while the students of fourth semester always attend the course of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Also another reason is the number of the students fourth semester; they are more than third semester.

4.1.3 Studying ESP Module   **Table 4.3 Students' Responses on Studying ESP Module in all Semesters**

Responses	Count	Percent
Yes	35	100%
No	0	0%

The table 4.3 shows that all of the respondents (100%) study ESP module in all semesters because the curriculum of the National Institute for Vocational Training involve the ESP module in all semesters. Hutchinson and Water (1987) argue that there was unprecedented expansion in technical, scientific and economic activities; this expansion creates a new world dominated by two forces which are technology and commerce; that is why this progress has generated a demand for an international language. In addition to that, teaching ESP module is interesting because English is the key to international currencies of the technology and commerce. Also, teaching ESP has been considered as a sign of a well- rounded education, and generates learners who know specifically why they are learning another language.

4.2 Section B: Continuous Assessment Strategies

In this section, the following tables and figures provide us with the continuous assessment strategies used in classroom.   **Figure 4.4**

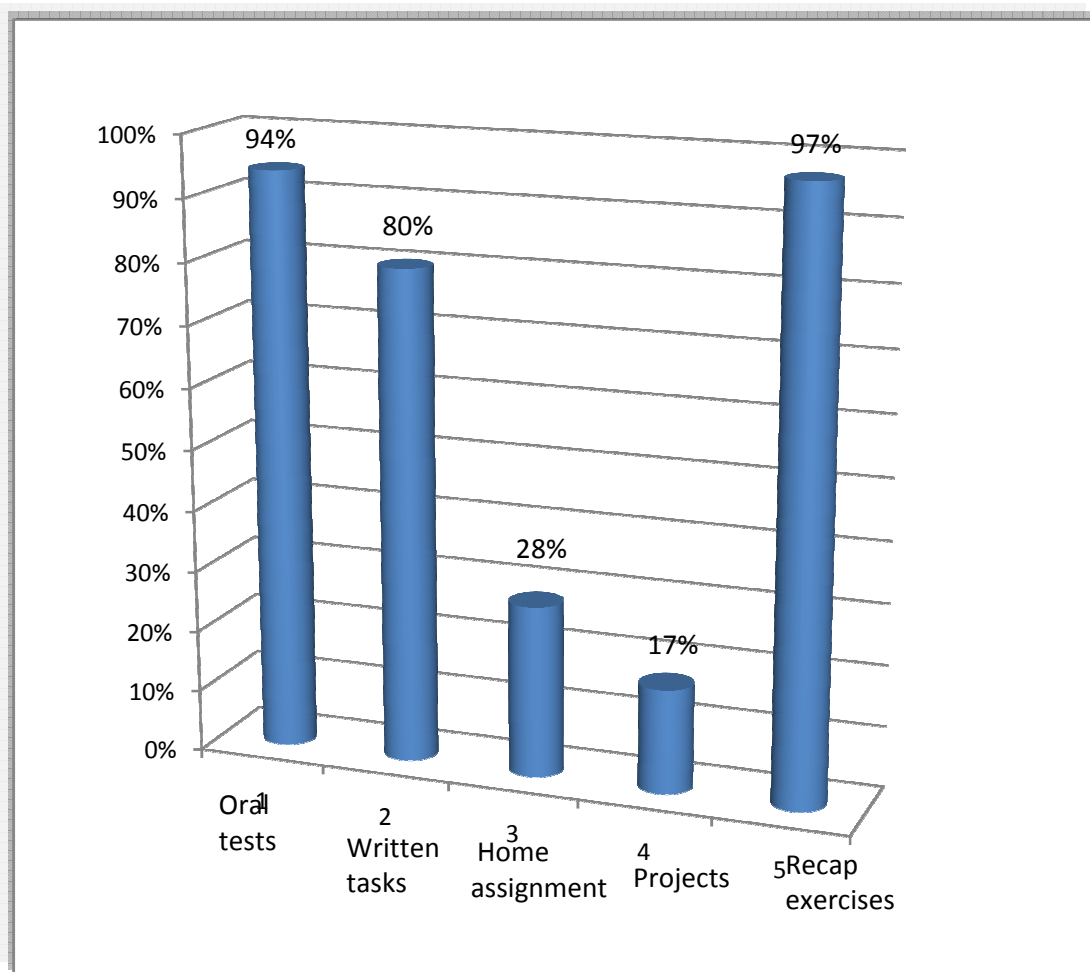**Students' Responses on How Teachers Assess Students' Work**

Figure 4.4 shows that recap exercise (97%), oral tests (94%) and written tasks   (80%) dominated the teacher's continuous assessment strategies because recap exercises have great effect on helping students to develop their English language skills. Also, they are helpful way that increases the concentration and attention of the students in classroom and builds their self-confidence. The oral tests, it is a way to practice speaking and interact with teachers and other students; it offers a real life speaking and gives students opportunities to use the target language. Whereas oral tests focus on student's ability to interpret and convey meaning with the others; oral tests are an authentic strategy because they involve

language use in an interactive context. Written tasks, teachers use this strategy in order to measure the knowledge and the skills of the students and it helps in monitoring students' progress. On other hand, projects are a less used strategy (17%); this National Institute does not focus on projects because students have already practiced the practical part in different companies.

Table 4.5 Students' Responses on Most Strategy are Used by Teacher to Asses Their performance

Strategy	Count	Percent
Projects	0	0%
Tests	35	100%
Assignment	0	0%
Other activities	0	0%

Table 4.5 shows that all respondents (100%) select tests as the most used strategy by teachers to assess the students' performance, because tests are the most appropriate strategy to evaluate and check student's progress and help teachers to know the strengths and weaknesses of the learners. Also, tests help students to improve their level. Koretz (2008) argues that standardized tests are designed to help teachers to compare the performance of the students in an efficient way. Staff (2008) states that teachers use tests to gauge student's academic strengths and weaknesses. This strategy can help students to improve their performance.

Table 4.6 Students' Responses on How Often Their Teachers Used Different Continuous Assessment Strategies

Strategies	Very often	Often	Not often	Never
Oral tests	71.42%	20%	2.85%	2.85%
Written tests	20%	48.57%	25.71%	5.71%
Take-home assignment	2.85%	11.42%	77.14%	8.57%
Projects	0%	0%	20%	82%
Recap exercises	40%	48.57%	11.42%	0%

Table 4.6 shows that(71.42%) of the respondents are frequently given oral tests very often because the curriculum of the Institute focuses on the communicative competence and the use of language in an interactive context while written tests and recap exercises are less frequent. Take- home assignments

are rarely used, while projects are never used because the students of the Institute are trained on the practical part in companies.

Table 4.7 Students' Responses on When Does Their Teachers Use Different Continuous Assessment Strategies

Period	Oral tests	Written tests	Take-home assignment	Projects	Recap exercises
Daily	88.57%	11.42%	0%	0%	42.85%
Weekly	5.71%	54.28%	60%	5.71%	42.85%
Monthly	5.71%	25.71%	28.57%	20%	8.57%
Termly	0%	5.71%	5.71%	17.14%	5.71%

The table 4.7 shows that (88.57%) of the respondents have daily oral tests given by teachers while take-home assignments, written tests and recap exercises are weekly used than the rest of strategies. However, the projects are not used.

4.3 Section C: Continuous Assessment strategies and ESP students' performance

In this section, the following tables and figures provide us with the effects of continuous assessment on ESP students' performance.

Table 4.8 Students' Responses on the Effects of Continuous Assessment on Students' Performance

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
1. CA improves my understanding and identifies the strengths and the weaknesses of students.	65.71%	34.28%	0%
2. CA helps students to assess themselves.	34.28%	60%	5.71%
3. CA enables students to demonstrate the progress they have made in the course.	34.28%	57.14%	8.57%

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4. When teacher gives a quick feedback, students devise ways of working better.	31.42%	45.71%	25.71%
5. CA helps students to interact with each other and with the teacher.	48.57%	45.71%	2.85%
6. CA improves the communicative competence.	34.28%	60%	5.71%
7. CA helps students in answering technique and question approach methods to get ready for the final exam.	71.42%	28.57%	0%
8. CA improves the results of students' performance on final exam.	54.28%	40%	2.85%

The table 4.8 shows that the majority of the respondents have positive perception about the effect of continuous assessment on students' performance. The following graphs show the percentage responses to each statement of the questionnaire.

Figure 4.9 Responses of Statement 1:" CA improves the understanding and identifies the strengths and weakness of students."
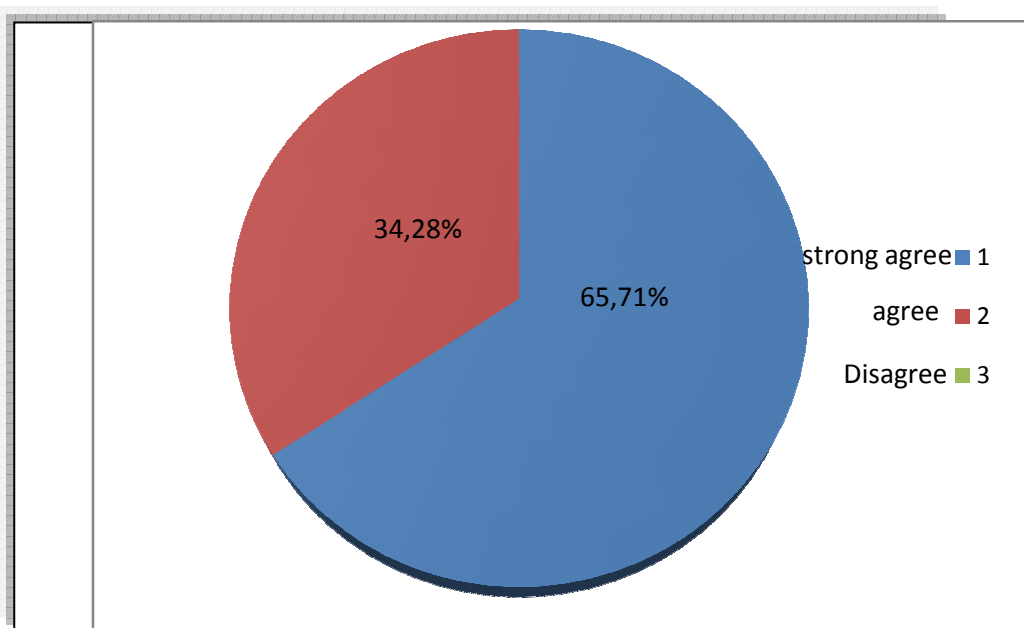
The figure 4.9 shows that (65.71%) of the respondents strongly agree that CA improves the understanding and identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the students. O'malley and Pierce (2005) state that there are main reasons for evaluating learners; one of them is to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. It means when the students know their assessment results, they will be able to identify where their strengths and weaknesses.

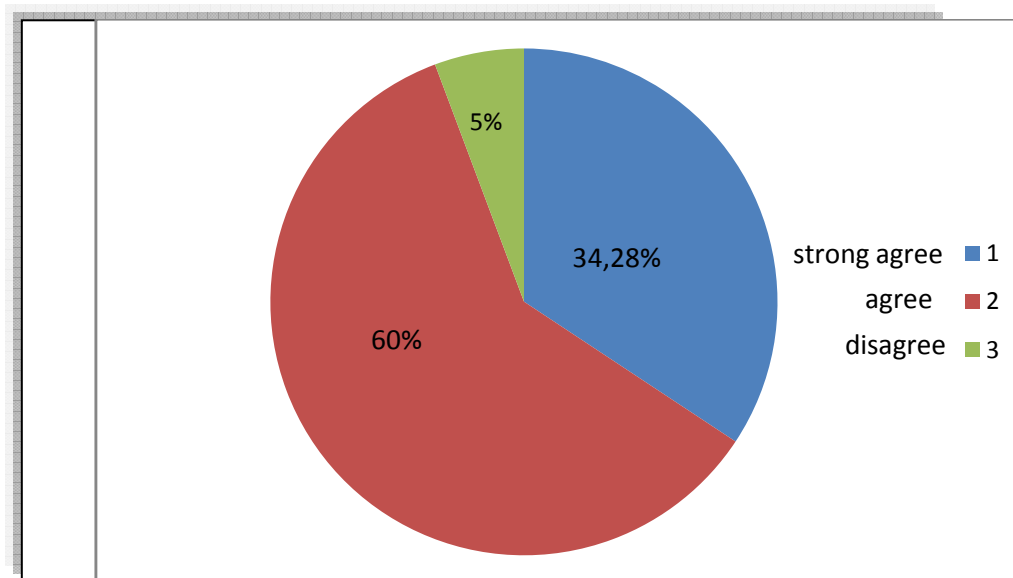**Figure 4.10 Responses of Statement 2: "CA helps students to assess themselves."**

Figure 4.10 shows that(60%) of the respondents agree that continuous assessment helps students to assess themselves. It means when the students get their assessment results, they know their weaknesses, i.e. students can assess themselves by highlighting those skills. They also try to develop their competence, so that they can judge their own learning.

Figure 4.11 Responses of Statement 3:" CA enables students to demonstrate their progress."
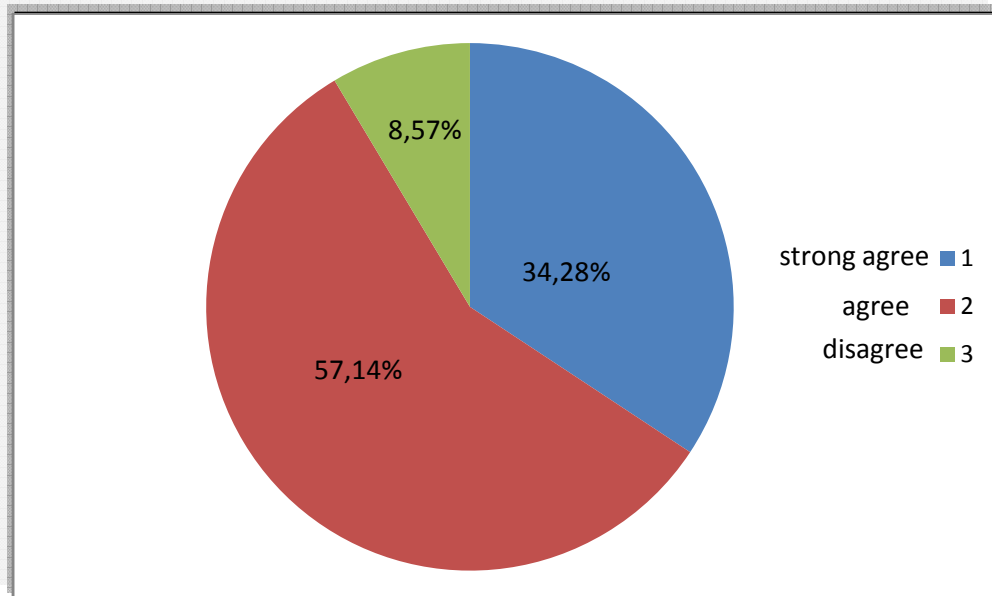
Figure 4.11 shows that (57.14%) of the respondents agree that continuous assessment enables students to demonstrate their progress in the course. O'Malley and Pierce (2005) state that assessment enables students to demonstrate the progress they have made in the course. Also, CA provides information about the students' progress in the learning process. Sarosdy *et al* (2004) state that formative assessment has many purposes which are used to monitor students' progress during the course.

Figure 4.12 Responses of Statement 4: "CA gives a quick feedback to the students."
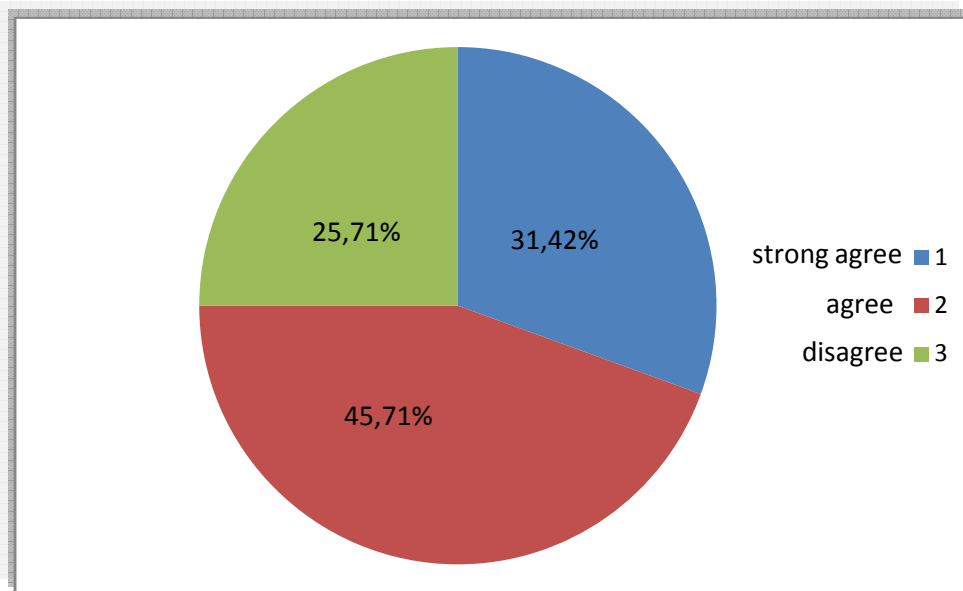
Figure 4.12 shows that (45.71%) of the respondents agree that CA gives a quick feedback to students in order to devise ways of working better. Evan and St John (1998) argue that continuous assessment is important because it provides teachers and learners with a feedback and grades of the activities done in the classroom. It means when the teacher gives a feedback to the students, he motivates them to improve their level and devise ways for working better.

Figure 4.13 Responses of Statement 5: "CA helps students to interact with each other."
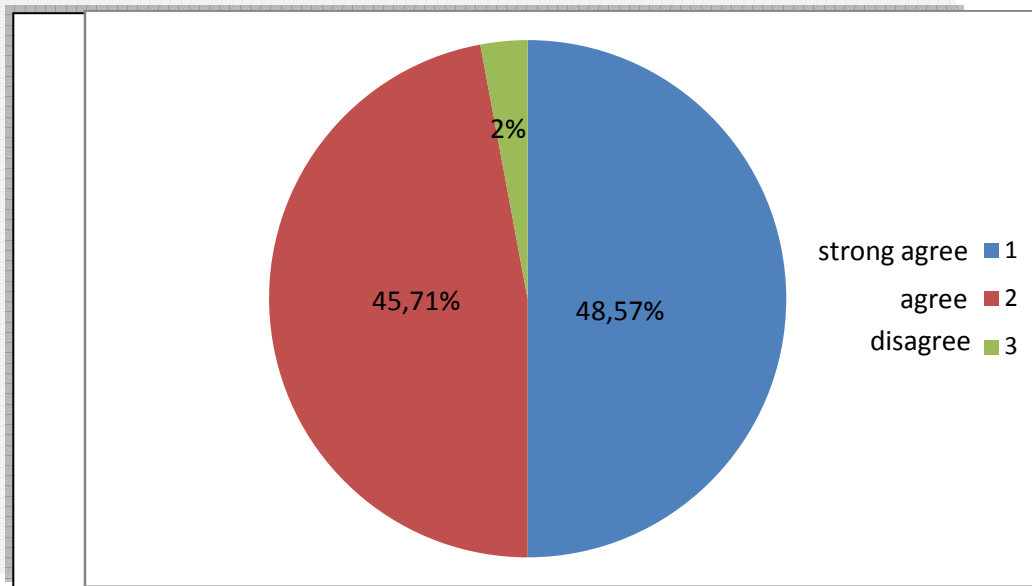
Figure 4.13 shows that (48.57%) of the respondents strongly agree that CA helps students to interact with each other and with teachers because when the students do the activities and assignments with each other, they interact with their colleagues; also, continuous assessment motivates learners to participate in the learning process.

Figure 4.14 Responses of Statement 6: "CA improves the communicative competence."
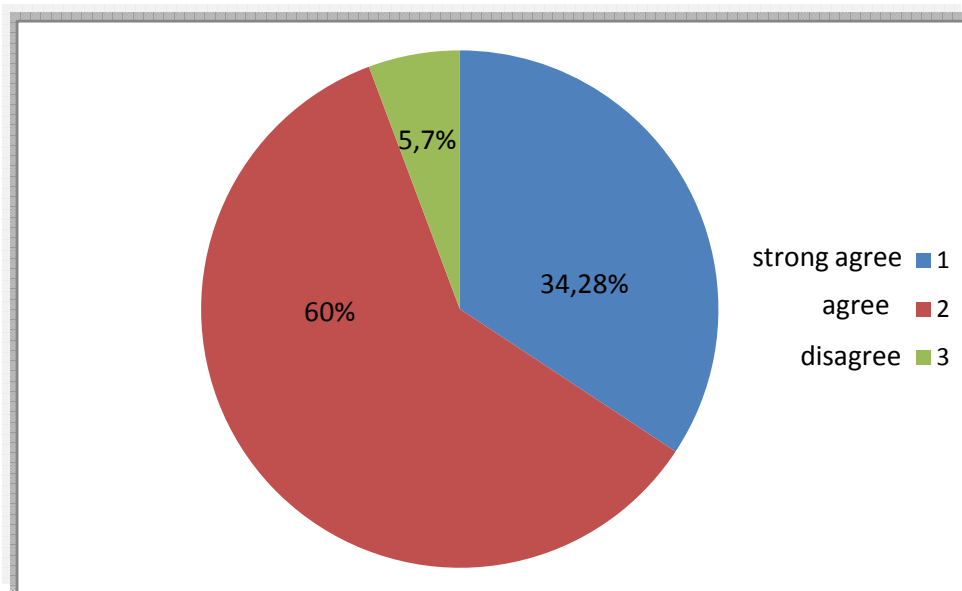

Figure 4.14 shows that (60%) of the respondents agree that continuous assessment improves the communicative competence because some of the strategies of CA which are oral tests and oral presentation offer a real life speaking and give students opportunities to use language in situations based

on everyday life. Also, the two strategies focus on students' ability to convey and communicate for basic communicative purposes.

Figure 4.15 Responses of Statement 7: "CA helps students in answering technique to get ready for exam."
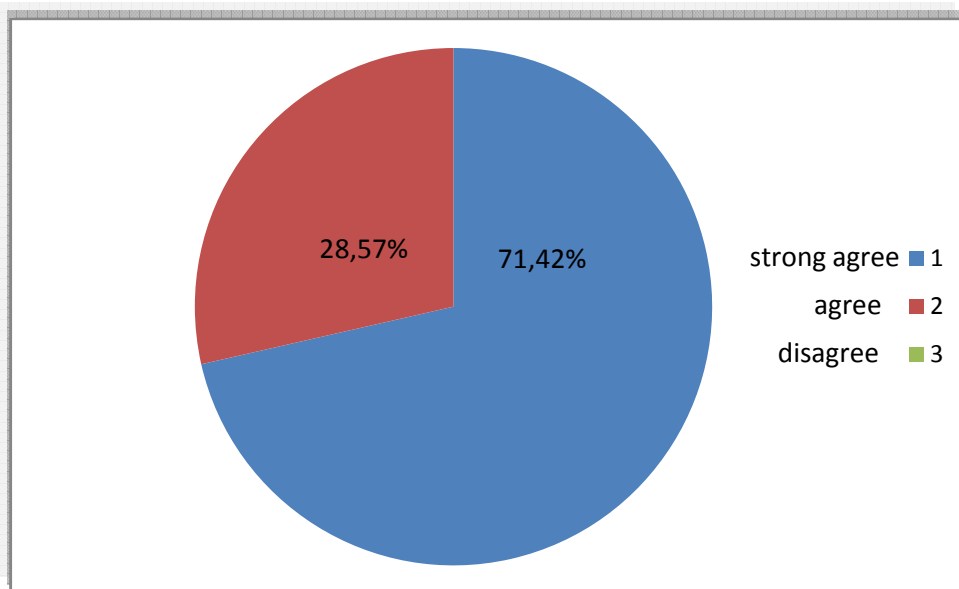
Figure 4.15 shows that (71.42%) of the respondents strongly agree that continuous assessment helps students in answering techniques and questions approach methods to get ready for final exams because CA strategies are valuable instruments for developing learners' skills, so students know very well how to answer in a correct way, the more we do activities the more we learn how to answer in a correct way.

Figure 4.16 Responses of Statement 8:" CA improves the results of the students' performance on the final exam."
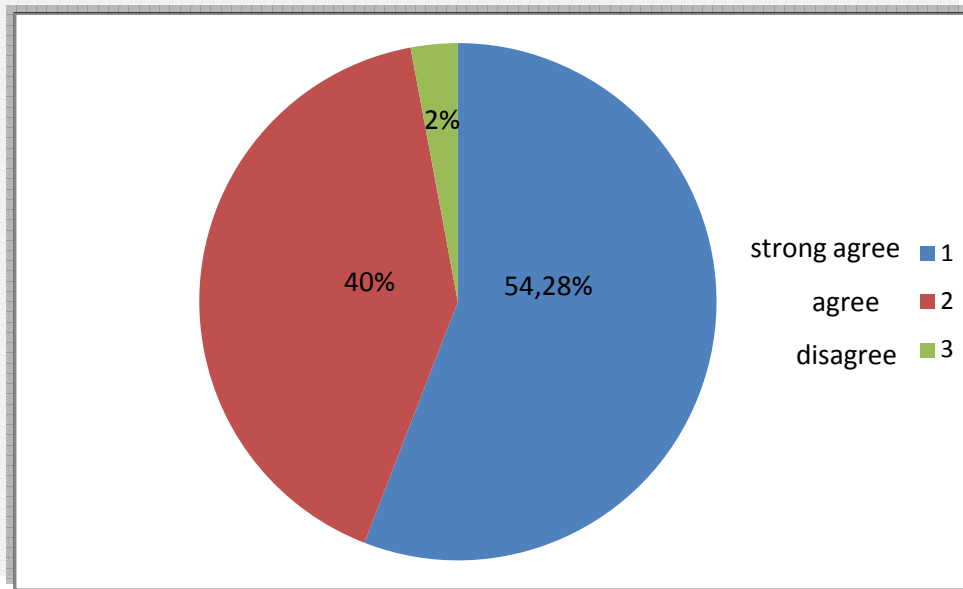
Figure 4.16 shows that (54.28%) of the respondents strong agree that CA improves the results of the student's performance in the final exam. Quanash (2005) argues that the major purpose of continuous assessment is to improve the results of pupils' performance on tests and exams.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a range of information provided by the respondents of the in their responses in the questionnaire. The responses are organized in tables and figures to simplify the interpretation of the data.   The next chapter will give a summary of the study and offer a number of recommendations.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Discussions

Introduction

This research has focused on investigating the importance of the continuous assessment in improving ESP learners' performance , in particular industrial maintenance class in National Institute for Vocational Training in Hassi Messouad.

The purpose of this study was to show the effect of continuous Assessment in improving ESP students' performance and also to find out whether there is relationship between continuous assessment and ESP students' performance.

In this work, we have used a descriptive research design, utilizing quantative approach. Also we have used in this study a questionnaire as a research instrument to obtain information concerning students' perceptions about the effects of continuous assessment in improving ESP student's performance, and then we have analyzed data of the questionnaire.

In this chapter, we discuss the findings of each aspect of the questionnaire, and we present some recommendations.

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The study has showed that National Institute for Vocational Training uses different types of continuous assessment strategies, recap exercises, oral tests and written tests that are commonly used while projects are never used. Also, the study has revealed that tests are most used strategies by teachers to assess the students' performance and their progress.

The study has showed that National Institute frequently uses oral tests while take-assignments are rarely used but projects are never used. Most of the respondents (65,71%) in the research sample strongly agree that continuous assessment improves their understanding and identifies their strengths and weaknesses.

Most of the respondents (60%) indicate that continuous assessment helps students to assess themselves because when students get their assessment results, they know their weaknesses and will be able to highlight the needed skills. Also, the larger percentage

(57, 14%) agree that Continuous Assessment enables students to demonstrate their progress in the learning process.

Most of respondents (45, 71%) said that continuous assessment gives a quick feedback to them in order to devise ways of working better because when teachers give a feedback to their learners, they motivate them to improve their level and devise ways for working better. Moreover, nearly half (48, 57%) of the respondents strongly agree that continuous assessment helps students to interact with each other because CA strategies motivate learners to participate in the learning process.

Most of the respondents (60%) indicate that continuous assessment improves the communicative competence because oral tests focus on their ability to convey and communicate for basic communicative purposes.

In addition, the majority of respondents (71, 42%) acknowledge that continuous assessment helps students in answering techniques to get ready for exam because CA strategies are valuable tools in order to develop learners' skills. (54,28%) of the respondents strongly agree that continuous assessment improves the results of the students' performance in the final exam because CA strategies have a great role in improving their results of the exams.

5.2 Recommendation

≺ Students benefit from the classroom assessment and its strategies. In this case, teachers are responsible for providing a feedback that students need. For this, teachers should get trained about classroom assessment and focus on how teachers can carry out CA in the teaching and learning process.

≺ Teachers in the classroom must use a variety of assessment procedures to help students attain the learning targets stipulated in the course. they should not restricted in conventional pencil and paper achievement tests, rather they must use another strategies (assignment, presentation, projects and collaborative work) which are more practical in every day's classroom context.

≺ Teachers should teach their students the habits and the skills of collaboration in peer assessment because the latter helps students in improving the quality of learning and empowers the learners.

≺ Teacher should provide students with fruitful feedback and comments because students need to develop their weaknesses.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have provided a summary of our research work. Through the study and students' perception, we have found that continuous assessment has great effects on improving ESP

students' performance and we have showed the National Institute for Vocational Training use different strategies to assess learners. In addition, we have discussed the findings of the study, and we have given some recommendation may be taken into consideration in order to assist in the successful implementation of continuous assessment.

Appendix

Appendix A: Students' questionnaire.

Dear student,

The following questionnaire aims at finding out student's opinions about the importance of continuous assessment in improving ESP students' performance.

I would be grateful if you could answer this questionnaire as frankly and truthfully as you can.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

SECTION A: Introduction

1) Sex: Male ☐   female ☐
2) What is your level? ………………………………………………….
3) How many years have you spent studying this specialty? ……………..
4) Do you study ESP module in all semesters? Yes ☐   No ☐

SECTION B: Continuous Assessment Strategies

5) How does your teacher check /assess your work? (Tick those that apply on you.)

Oral tests	
Written tasks	
Take- home Assignment	
Projects	
Recap exercises	

6) What does your teacher use **most** to assess your performance?

A/ Projects.   B/ Tests.

C/ Assignments.   D/

Other activities…………………………….

7) How often does your teacher carry out each of the following strategies to check your progress?

(Tick ✓ the most appropriate).

Strategies	Very often	Often	Not often	never
Oral tests				
Written tests				
Take-home assignment				
Projects				
Recap exercises				

8) When does your teacher give you the following tasks? (Tick ✓ the most appropriate answer.)

Period	Oral tests	Written tests	Take-home assignment	Projects	Recap exercises
Daily					
Weekly					
Monthly					
Termly					

SECTION C: Continuous Assessment Strategies and ESP Students' Performance

9) Do daily tests, assignments, recap exercises and projects improve your performance in the
following ways? (Tick ✓ the most appropriate.)

statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
1. CA improves my understanding and identifies the strengths and the weaknesses of students.			
2. CA helps students to assess themselves.			
3. CA enables students to demonstrate the progress they have made in the course.			
4. When teacher gives a quick feedback, students devise ways of working better.			
5. CA helps students to interact with each other and with the teacher.			
6. CA improves the communicative competence.			
7. CA helps students in answering techniques and question approach methods to get ready for the final exam.			
8. CA improves the results of students' performance on final exam.			

Thank you for your time!

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الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تبيان أهمية التقويم المستمر في تحسين وتطوير أداء طلبة انجليزية التخصص, ومن جهة أخرى تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تبيان إلى أي مدى يوجد رابط بين المراقبة المستمرة و أداء الطالب و تأثيرها في تحسين مستواه. تشمل هذه الدراسة طلبة

الأمن الصناعي بالمعهد الوطني لتكوين المهني بحاسي مسعود . إذ تركز هذه الدراسة على أثار التقويم المستمر على تحسين مستوى وأداء الطالب والطرق المناسبة لتقييمه ,و كذلك على استراتجيات التقويم المستمرة التي يقوم بها الأساتذة.

اعتمدنا في هذه الدراسة على استعمال استبيان موجه للطلبة الأمن الصناعي لسبر أرائهم حول أهمية التقويم المستمرة في تحسين أداء طلبة انجليزية التخصص. من خلال الاستبيان, اظهرت النتائج أن التقويم المستمر لها دور فعال في تحسين أداء الطالب وتطوير مستواه.

الكلمات المفتاحية :التقويم المستمر, اداء الطالب ,استراتجيات التقويم المستمر .

Résumé

Le but de cette étude donne une importance à cette évaluation continuité pour le développement la performance des étudiants d'Anglaise spécifique. Cette étude d'une vision coordonne le contrôle et la performance du niveau de l'étudiant. Cette étude comprend également les étudiants de filière de maintenance industrielle du center national de la formation Professional de Hassi Messaoud. Cette étude se concentre sur les effets de l'évaluation continue afin d'améliorer le rendement des étudiants et les méthodes appropriées pour évaluer les étudiants, et aussi les stratégies d'évaluation continue qui réalisée par les professeurs.

Nous avons adopté dans cette étude un questionnaire pour les étudiants de maintenance industrielle pour voir leurs points du vue sur l'importance d'évaluation et améliore la performance des étudiants d'Anglaise spécifique. Les résultats ont montré que l'évaluation continue contribué à améliorer le rendement des étudiants.

Les mots clé : évalution continuité, la performance des étudiants, les stratégies d' évaluation continue