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## Advantages and barriers of formative assessment in the teaching-learning activity

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### Abstract

Within the pedagogy works destined to evaluation, three forms of evaluation are analyzed: an initial evaluation, a formative evaluation and a summative evaluation. Each form of evaluation is used in a particular moment of the educational process; therefore, the initial one operates at the beginning, the formative one during the process and the summative one after the process has ended, in order to confirm the obtained results. In the case of formative evaluation, all experts agree that it is incorporated in the educational process and plays an important regulator role as it supplies important information concerning its development.

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### 1. Background

#### Definitions of the formative evaluation

The formative evaluation is, without a doubt, a very important form of evaluation and this is due exclusively to its consequences in the unfolding of the education learning process.

In order to emphasize its peculiarity, we consider it would be adequate to see the way in which this form of evaluation is defined by some authors who published important works in this field.

“It is accomplished through the measurement and appreciation of the results during a program, from the moment of its initialization to the one of its closure. It consists of the estimation of different phases, sequences of the process and the results that have been obtained, by accomplishing them using successive stages, analyzed in detail. Therefore, the formative evaluation presents itself as a continuous preoccupation of all the people involved in the evaluated activity to submit the effects of the action (feedback). If the bankable progress is not obtained, a diagnosis is assigned by stating the difficulties and the drawbacks, in order to perform the necessary remedies. Accordingly, the formative

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evaluation is involved in the process and aims at the early identification of the faults and the taking of the necessary steps in order to correct them.” [9]

“The formative evaluation aims at the advancement of the student, the acknowledgement of his difficult moments, their reason and the way to surpass them. This evaluation is not translated in grades and so much the less in scores; it is a matter of information, a feedback for both the student and the teacher”. [4]

Its purpose is to ensure an adjustment of the forming operation, namely to provide detailed information on the processes and/or on the results of the study made by students, aiming to allow a fitting of the study activities”. [2]

“During the flight of the rocket it is indispensable to determine its real trajectory, compare it to the ideal trajectory and to correct the eventual deviations.

In a similar way, during the educative process, it is useful to render evident the errors, evaluate their importance and origin and to apply the necessary corrections in order to go back to scheduled “educational trajectory”.

This evaluation is called formative evaluation. It takes place during the forming and it implies a feedback and intervention in real time. Happily, it tends to become more and more important in the educative actions”. [5]

The formative evaluation is the process used by designers in order to obtain information that can be utilized to revise the instruction, to make it more efficient and more productive.” [6]

“In its initial phase, the formative evaluation is yet little incorporated in the pedagogic process. This evaluation, practiced at certain points of the process, aims at informing the teacher on the level of expectation regarding the followed objectives in each of its phases, defined through a thematic unit. In this stage, the adjustment of study is retroactive and may become manifest through the achievement of some recovery sequences”. [11]

“In opposition to this evaluation over the diagnosis pattern that allows the study of the representations, formative evaluation allows the introduction of a didactics administration pattern. The evaluation then answers two orientations:

- Allows the teacher to better explain his pedagogic procedures and expectation (clearing up perspective);
- Allows him to take didactic decisions starting from the indicators sampled from the class performance. Here, the simple finding of the student acquisitions is over-passed in order to try and situate the obtained progress as recorded with the participation of students (adjustment perspective)”. [3]

“The evaluation aiming to inform the student, then the teacher, over the degree in which the objectives have been achieved”. [10]

## 2. Purpose of Study

In this study we intend to describe the characteristics and advantages of formative evaluation.

Just like other forms of evaluation, the formative evaluation distinguishes itself through a series of characteristics from which the most important are the following:

- a) Unlike the initial evaluation that operates at the beginning of a teaching program, or the

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