Предлагаемая модель международного образовательного исследовательского кластера дает системное обобщенное представление о механизмах взаимодействия нескольких организаций на основе двусторонних договоров о партнерстве между его членами с целью решения образовательных и исследовательских задач, а именно: проведения работ в области профессионального образования, повышения квалификации и переподготовки кадров, организации совместных научных исследований.

Производственные организации и научно-исследовательские институты, входящие в состав кластера, являются базами практик и принимают участие в формировании специалиста, используя собственную научно-учебную базу, исходя из своих потребностей и перспектив развития.

Модель включает в себя содержательные компоненты — блоки, которые определяют содержание деятельности на определенном этапе, а также конкретизируют методическое сопровождение данных процессов, и реализация которых в совокупности направлена на достижение поставленных целей: организационно-управленческий, координационно-консультативный; учебно-образовательный; научно-образовательный; научно-исследовательский; результативно-рефлексивный.

Партнеры кластера — образовательные, научно-исследовательские и производственные организации имеют структурные компоненты: подразделения, отделы, центры, сотрудники и т. д., которые выполняют деятельность, специфичную для каждого блока, их взаимодействие друг с другом обеспечивает целостность системы партнерской организации.

Проведенное исследование позволяет утверждать, что участие в международных образовательных исследовательских кластерах позволяет вузам оформиться в качестве инновационных научно-образовательных организаций и поднять качество образования на новый уровень за счет ряда оптимизирующих факторов (консолидации ресурсов, информационного трансфера, повышения квалификации, академической мобильности и т. д.). В то же время анализ специальной литературы и опыта реализации сетевого взаимодействия российскими и зарубежными вузами обнаружил необходимость дальнейшего исследования темы международных кластеров и решения ряда насущных проблем, среди которых: разработка нормативно-правовой базы для совместной деятельности в образовании, финансирование, реформирование научно-образовательной среды вузов, привлечение работодателей, грантовые программы и т. д.

GRADING STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

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Grading in written and oral examinations — subjectivity

As teachers we have become used to accepting grading as a core component of our teaching activities and over time have developed our own practical approach to assessing students' work. Grading oral and written work requires different sets of criteria. This applies irrespective of whether we are dealing with integral parts of course work or with end of term or year assessments. The challenge we all have to rise up to is to ensure that students' work is evaluated with the highest possible degree of fairness and that our judgment is devoid of subjectivity and inconsistency.

Written tests involving active and independent language production in the discussion of problems, the interpretation of thoughts found in exam materials as well as the development of concepts and ideas by the examinee are highly demanding for the examiner in that both the quality of the content (approach to the topic, the logic and consistency of the arguments, their goal-oriented linear structure, the use of the student's knowledge base, the validity of the conclusions drawn) and the linguistic performance (appropriateness and correctness of language, style, grammar, syntax, degree of lexical complexity) need to be assessed. A balance has to be struck between the intellectual input and linguistic performance.

In contrast to written tests, oral forms of testing, often referred to as «viva voce»-tests unless recorded, are over and therefore unreproducible after the allotted time and as a result require immediate assessment based on the examiner's (and possibly the co-examiner's) memory and notes. Both memory and notes are deficient to some extent for three reasons.

1. Note-taking for very practical reasons never records every word uttered, but at the most key words and/or half sentences of both the questions and the examinee's answers.

2. The examiner's attention is focused on the student's reply (comprehensiveness and correctness of the answer, the intellectual complexity of the student's approach to the problem and, in our capacity as foreign-language teachers, also the linguistic performance).

3. It has been shown that, partly because of the complexity of the examiner's task, the examinee's answers are often not remembered in sufficient detail to allow for fair and substantiated assessment. A reliable comparison with other examinees' performances is impossible therefore.

What follows from the above is that we must reckon with a certain degree of unintentional subjectivity on the part of the examiner.

Needless to say that with examinations in foreign languages the problem of transferring ideas into another linguistic system (in terms of grammar and lexical base, style, patterns of expression) is a hurdle that has to be taken into account in the assessment of an examinee's overall performance. A balance must be defined therefore between content and linguistic adequacy.

Student presentations — points to consider

Grading student presentations is particularly challenging as it entails the assessment of a rather complex and strongly interrelated array of criteria. In addition to the «viva-voce» character of the standard examination where examiner and examinee find themselves in a face-to-face situation with the additional element of quasi-privacy, the exam format of a presentation of a particular topic before an audience assigns a much more dominant role to the «personality» of the examinee. In a viva-voce situation the examinee's role is largely passive in the sense that they react to the examiner's questions who therefore is in full control of the proceedings throughout the examination. In the quasi-public performance as a presenter, however, the examinee assumes a highly active role not only in procedural matters by formally starting and ending the presentation and by guiding the audience through the questions and answers part. The presenter is also fully in charge of the structure, the development and, of course, the content of the presentation. The examiner's role on the other hand is entirely passive so much so that many examiners demonstrate that this change of roles makes them become part of and sit among the audience.

It goes without saying that the «text of the presentation» deserves careful attention. As with a student essay the text structure with its introduction to the topic, the main parts and the conclusion needs to be well-organised, coherent and convincing. A summary and/or a strong closer highlighting key issues and/or problems still to be looked at demonstrate the student's ability not only to cope with the task but also to progress beyond the immediate range of the topic.

In addition to the material content of the presentation itself a number of technical points need to be considered for which the examinee is fully responsible:

— dealing with and adequately using the media available for the presentation (flipchart, whiteboard, handout),

— procedural aspects (welcoming the audience, managing the discussion session),

— checking their time keeping.

Many aspects come into play that very strongly hinge on the personality of the presenter (liveliness, timidity, self-reliance, empathy, voice, experience with presentation situations etc.). That in itself, because of a perceived lack of suitable, reliable and measurable parameters, may entail some element of subjective or impression marking, among them:

— the presenter's performance before an audience (oral delivery: loud — soft, slow — fast; voice modulation, emphasis; complexity of language: syntax, technical language, jargon; use of oral communication patterns: repetition, broken syntax, innuendoes; free speech with or without notes),

— the presenter-audience interaction (welcome, questions and answers, attention getters, rhetorical devices and structure markers, eye contact),

— the presenter's general behaviour during the presentation (audience focus, creation of a congenial atmosphere),

— the presenter's body language (facial expressions, physical movements, use of hands),

— the presenter's self-discipline (dealing with nervousness, demonstration of being at ease).

The assessment of presentations is complicated further if visual elements need to be considered as well, i.e. when a PowerPoint file is used as a key element of the presentation. The collection of slides requires assessment with regard to their integration into the presentation itself: do they support the oral presentation (structure, visual input by photos, graphs and charts, key points, volume of text, reference materials) or are they a kind of slightly shortened version of the oral presentation? Apart from a sensible ratio of slides and spoken text in the allocated time, the slides themselves need to be judged in terms of layout (colour coding, font and font sizes, numbering, legibility), volume and arrangement of information.

The handout, if there is one, can be assessed with regard to content (comprehensiveness, copy of slides and perhaps additional information) and presentation (data relating to the event and to the presenter, table of contents, layout, binding/stapling).

Assessment sheet

Searching the internet (search words: grading student presentations, oral presentation scoring guide, scoring rubric for student presentations and similar) one will find a huge range of grading sheets with different levels of detail and all of them helpful in the sense that the key points mentioned above occur in most of them. The scoring schemes can also be used as a base for accommodating specific institutional requirements. In view of the large number of points to be covered it seems sensible to break down the single figure or letter grade that we tend to use for the assessment of students' performance. Obviously, it is up to the institution/teacher to define how relevant the following key areas are for the assessment of a presentation, i.e. content, organisation, delivery, verbal presentation (including foreign language competence), visuals. A points or percentage system can be used that creates a relevance relationship of the aspects to be considered in the assessment either by equal-weighting all sections or by weighting some elements of the presentation higher than others by using a percentage allocation for each section or, indeed, multipliers in a points system.

Here are just two examples to demonstrate this.

The above cannot be but templates that need to be adapted to local requirements to take into account the purposes of the presentation. Furthermore, the situation of a foreign-language student poses particular problems especially with regard to the mastery of a particular language in combination with the demanding task of giving a presentation. This can be reflected in the weighting of the different components of the assessment sheet. It is quite clear that any grading system developed on the basis of the examples shown here must ultimately return to the single letter or figure that is normally used for the assessment of a student's performance.

Conclusion

It is quite obvious that the grading should be done, at least provisionally, immediately after the student's performance; it may be finalised at a later stage when all the presentations have been made. Admittedly, it may be argued that a comprehensive assessment sheet such as these is impractical because of the time it takes to assess the student performance in so much detail, to carefully reflect on what one has heard and seen and subsequently fill in a form with so many categories. On the other hand it is quite obvious that any assessor should have a very precise idea of what they are looking for in their assessment work. Templates such as these or simplified versions help the assessor to focus their minds on most if not all the relevant aspects of the assessment process. There may be points which might have escaped the assessor's attention or have been underrated, especially when the assessor's expectations may not have been met. And yet there may be aspects in a presentation that deserve praise due to their originality, the clarity of thought or the strategy in the argumentation, to mention but a few aspects.

Such assessment sheets provide a well-balanced structure and beyond that are eminently useful for assessment tasks involving several presentations within a short space of time. They facilitate reliable comparisons and allow the assessor to recollect the individual performance more easily when the grades are finalised. The perception of the student's work is more clearly focused and the evaluation is likely to be more objective and much more reliable. And this is what grading students' work is about.

Assessment sheet Name: _____ Topic: _____ _____	Rating scale					Points total
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Average	Poor	
1 Content	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Appropriate for audience (listeners' attention maintained, appropriate level)					
B	Knowledge of topic (depth, well-researched)					
C	Support and reasoning (supporting details, relevant literature, logical & coherent)					
D	Pros and cons presented & discussed (biases, controversies, methodological issues; real life relevance)					
E	Professional & thorough discussion (poses questions, appropriate comments)					
II Organisation	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Development of the topic, clarity of purpose					
B	Clear progression from introduction to conclusion					
C	Logical sequence, flow of ideas (good transitions, easy to follow)					
D	Relevant details & examples					
III Delivery — Slides & Language	5	4	3	2	1	
A	General appearance (background, design, colour coding, spacing, layout)					
B	Text (size, font, spacing)					
C	Graphics (relevant, informative, appealing)					
D	Appropriate language (concise & appropriate wording, grammar, syntax, style)					
IV Oral presentation	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Speech (volume, speed & intonation; monotony, interjections)					
B	Body language (posture, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact)					
C	Personal appearance (appropriate dress, hygiene)					
D	Enthusiasm for topic					
E	Familiarity with the text (prepared/rehearsed)					

Comments:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Total number of points:

Grade:

Assessment sheet Name:_____ Topic: _____ _____	Rating scale					Points total
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Adequate	Poor	
Presence	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Body language & eye contact					
B	Contact with the audience					
C	Self-confidence / nervousness					
D	Physical organisation					
Language	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Correct usage (oral communication)					
B	Appropriate vocabulary & grammar					
C	Understandable (rhythm, intonation, accent)					
D	Loud and clear, proper speed					
Organisation of the text	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Clear objectives					
B	Logical structure (introduction, body, conclusion)					
C	Signposting					
Familiarity with the subject	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Knowledge of subject matter					
B	Depth of commentary					
C	Spoken, not read					
D	Ability to answer questions					
E	Critical attitude					
Visual aids	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Slides (organisation, layout, «technical» features)					
B	Handout (adequacy, presentation)					
C	Other media (whiteboard, flipchart, audio, video)					
Overall impression	5	4	3	2	1	
A	Interesting / boring					
B	Pleasant / unpleasant to listen to					
C	Good communication					
Total score						
Grade:						