

In the MFL classroom, we can use questions and conversation to establish what students have learned and where the gaps in knowledge and skills are. When using questioning and conversation in MFL, we might plan questions for:

- Teacher/student
- Student/teacher
- Student/student.

## Feedback

How we give feedback to our students has an impact on how well they use it to improve their learning. To increase its efficacy, feedback should:

- Relate to the agreed success criteria
- Elaborate student successes; focusing on the task rather than on the student
- Give students clear guidance on what & how to improve
- Be immediately actionable.

Feedback can be provided in many formats depending on the learning context:

- Written
- Oral; to an individual, pair, group or class-group & voice recorded
- Teacher to student
- Student(s) to student(s)
- Self-assessment.

Some useful strategies when providing feedback:

- Use a formative marking code
- Use comment only marking
- Mark a third and have students fix & look for similar mistakes in remaining portion
- Have students act on feedback in a specific & easily recognisable colour, e.g. orange

To maximise the benefit of feedback to students, we plan for it to be clear and understandable, thus engaging them. When we give effective feedback, we also help to foster and develop peer & self-assessment skills in our students by modelling how to provide good feedback that progresses learning. Above all, we should aim for feedback that is manageable and implementable for our students.

## Students as Resources for Each Other

Students' engagement, motivation and attainment increase when they collaborate in meaningful ways. There are inexhaustible ways in which students of MFL can support and assist each other in their learning. Some strategies are:

- Collaboration in pair & group work
- Share successful learning practices
- Create & share content, resources & notes
- Peer correction and feedback
- Co-operative learning strategies.

## Students as Owners of Their Learning

Increased voice and choice in their own learning journey will increase engagement and motivation in students of MFL. Some strategies to support student voice and choice are:

- Develop in students an awareness of what works for them
- Include students in the teaching & learning conversation
- Ensure content, tasks & activities tap into students' interests
- Afford students choice in how they access content
- Afford students choice in how they demonstrate their learning, where possible.



An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí

# JuniorCYCLE

for teachers



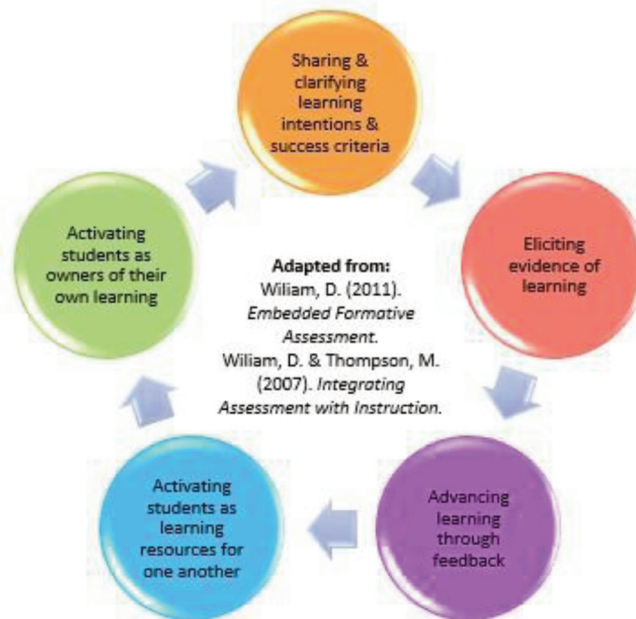
# Formative Assessment in Modern Foreign Languages

## Formative Assessment

*“Assessment is formative when either formal or informal procedures are used to gather evidence of learning during the learning process and used to adapt teaching to meet the needs of students. The process supports teachers and students in collecting information about student progress and, where necessary, to make adjustments to the teacher’s approach to instruction and the student’s approach to learning.”*

(NCCA, 2020)

Formative assessment is considered to be constituted of five elements, as illustrated in the graphic. It is an integrated system and is at its most effective when all parts are consistently activated across the teaching and learning experience.



All members of the classroom are active agents in the learning process and the more we include students in teaching and learning processes, the greater their motivation and engagement.

*“The Junior Cycle will be underpinned by the further integration of formative assessment as a normal part of teaching and learning in classrooms.”*

(Framework for Junior Cycle 2015, p. 29)

## Learning Intentions & Success Criteria

Learning intentions and success criteria provide students with a clear roadmap of what they are working on, how to go about achieving the learning and what success looks like. When students are clear about what they are learning and what success looks like, they can be given choice in how they may demonstrate that learning. This choice increases student engagement and motivation. To be effective, learning intentions should:

- Be clear, concise & in simple language
- Be linked to learning outcomes
- Clarify what students will know, understand and be able to do.

Success criteria complement learning intentions by clarifying what success will look like. This supports students to experience success and to achieve the learning to their potential. To be effective, success criteria should:

- Connect with the learning intentions
- Highlight the essence of what is to be learned in student-friendly language
- Elucidate how learning will be assessed.

In clarifying for students what is expected, success criteria can be used to:

- Develop the skill of peer assessment
- Support self-assessment
- Provide a benchmark for feedback.

## Elicit Evidence of Learning

To give students feedback that responds to and moves their learning forward, we need to establish what they know, understand and are able to do. We should exploit evidence of learning elicited from both the teaching and learning process and summative moments for this.

In MFL, we use a wide range of active teaching methodologies, such as oral presentations, pair & group work, learning activities, tasks and role plays, to promote deeper learning and to elicit evidence of learning. The agreed success criteria tell the student what the teacher is looking for and where to focus their efforts. Clarity about where to focus their energy and efforts to demonstrate learning can increase engagement and motivation. From student work, we can:

- Determine what they know & can do well
- Judge what gaps there are in their knowledge, understanding & skills
- Determine if they are ready to progress or require further support
- Give feedback that responds to the learning & identifies the next steps.

We might consider the following strategies for class work to increase student engagement and further elicit evidence of learning:

- Graded in difficulty to engage & challenge
- No hands up
- Sufficient ‘wait time’ for all students to have time to think
- Think/Pair/Share before answering
- Use strategies to include & engage all students, e.g. mini-whiteboards, pair & group work, digital tools
- Exploit answers for teaching.