

## Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation

Arti Dwivedi \*

We all are aware about the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act, 2009), implemented since April 2010. It says, “Every child of the age group of 6-14 years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education.” With the implementation of Act, every child has the right to get quality education. The Act demands that CCE should be implemented for each child till the completion of elementary schooling. The field experiences and interactions with teachers suggested that teachers are facing problems in implementation of CCE. Teachers are largely engaged in compiling the data and keeping the records of children’s test results rather than implementing CCE during the teaching-learning process. CCE is generally considered by them as an external activity to be conducted after the teaching. Most of the teachers are

not confident about implementing CCE.

**The Background:** The Kothari Commission Report (1966) had stated that “the internal assessment or evaluation conducted by schools is of greater significance and should be given increasing importance. It should be comprehensive, evaluating all those aspects of students’ growth that are measured by the external examination and also those personality traits, interest and attitudes which cannot be assessed by it.” (9.84).

National Policy on Education-1986 had also stated that “continuous and comprehensive evaluation should incorporate both scholastic and non-scholastic aspects of evaluation spread over the total span of instructional time” (8.24 (iii)).

*The National Curriculum Framework-2005* also proposed examination reforms. Its position paper on Aims of Education says: School based CCE

\* Junior Project Fellow, Department of Elementary Education, NCERT, New Delhi

system should be established to... reduce stress on children; make evaluation comprehensive and regular; provide space for the teacher for creative teaching; provide a tool of diagnosis and remediation; produce learners with greater skills.

On 27 August 2009, Government of India adopted a new act “Right to Free and Compulsory Education for Children between 6-14 Years of Age (RTE Act)”. This law came into force for the entire country (except Kashmir) w.e.f. 1 April 2010. It states that students up to Class VIII should not be made to appear for any board examination. From the year 2010-11, a scheme of continuous and comprehensive evaluation was implemented for Classes I to VIII.

### **Meaning of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation**

There are misconceptions related to various terms used under CCE scheme. ‘Continuous’ is generally considered by teachers as a regular conduct of ‘tests’. Many schools are practising weekly/monthly tests in all subjects under continuous evaluation. ‘Comprehensive’ is considered, adding various aspects of child’s behaviour, personal social qualities (empathy, co-operation, self-discipline, taking initiatives, etc.). ‘Evaluation’ is equated as record keeping exercise. Teachers are engaged in compiling the data of CCE during the teaching-learning time. This has resulted in a loss of opportunity time of learning for children.

Broadly, the term ‘Continuous and Comprehensive’ means that evaluation should be treated as an integral part of teaching-learning process rather than as an event which follows after the completion of teaching the syllabus. It refers to the fact that the teaching-learning should be continuously guided by the child’s response and her/his participation in classroom activities. In other words, assessment should be seen as a process whereby the teacher learns about the child in order to be able to teach better.

Comprehensive evaluation means taking into account child’s development, i.e., cognitive, connative and psychomotor. During the teaching-learning process, the teacher should create learning condition such as asking/probing questions, peer group interaction/discussions, providing enriching material, opportunities for sharing learning experiences. With the above mentioned processes, children would reflect, discuss, listen to others’ responses and generate knowledge.

### **Purpose of Assessment**

*Assessment for learning:* When assessment is used as an in-built part of teaching-learning process and is an inseparable component of this process, its purpose is to improve learning rather than to judge what they have learnt. Assessment for learning is used by the teacher through various ways such as asking questions, creating situations for discussion, peer interactions and sharing, written or

oral activities or many other ways. This assessment provides opportunities to teachers to get information/data about children's progress of learning. This kind of assessment has a formative purpose and is the most effective way to improve children's learning. In this assessment process, teachers create learning situations (assessment tasks) to assess what children know already, and can do, and use those insights to design the next steps for learning. In this assessment process, expectation is not to make comparative judgements among children but to highlight their strengths and diagnose learning gaps. This process facilitates teachers to provide timely feedback that will further enhance their learning. This kind of assessment (Assessment for Learning) happens during teaching-learning process, often more than once, rather than at the end.

*Assessment as learning:* During teaching-learning process children also get opportunities to reflect on learning processes to assess themselves. In this process the learners become assessors themselves. This is called assessment as learning. It is natural and automatic where learners oversee their own progress; assess their own strengths and gaps in learning. With this, children get the insights for future attempts and scaffolding on their own to remove the learning gaps. Assessment as learning provides opportunities for the student to develop abilities for lifelong learning, which is one of the prime goals of education. It is a simultaneous activity

in the process of assessment for learning. If teachers provide regular opportunities to children for self-assessment and peer assessment, this kind of learning will be encouraged. Classroom learning must provide opportunities and space to students to monitor their own learning so as to critically assess/reflect and analyse their own work during teaching-learning process. Let students identify their strengths and gaps. The student may be asked first to identify, if there are mistakes, and if so what are those before providing feedback. Assessment for learning prepares students for assessment of learning and assessment as learning. If the student is unable to do so herself/himself the teachers may help. Students may be encouraged to assess themselves many times during the process of learning. Opportunities may be provided to students to assess and reflect on peer and group work. After identifying their strengths and gaps in learning, they themselves plan and make efforts to look for the suitable resources to seek further knowledge in order to address the gaps to enhance their learning.

*Assessment of learning:* When assessment is used by the teacher to know what have they learnt, it occurs after completion of transaction process. This is termed assessment of learning. This kind of assessment provides comprehensive information/data about the extent of student learning vis-à-vis curricular objectives on all aspects of curriculum including skills (academic, interpersonal) interests,

attitudes and motivation. Assessment of learning does not imply that the grades of all subjects may be aggregated. As the objectives of each subject may vary as per its nature and summing the grades will defeat the objective of assessment. It is based on evidences collected using multiple methods/techniques of assessment such as paper-pencil tests, oral tests, performance of tasks, portfolios, experiments, project work etc. Each task may be assessed on the basis of the objectives and indicators of that particular subject. The indicators may be decided at the teacher/school level to make a judgement on the extent of student learning with reference to curricular objectives of each class.

In order to implement assessment and evaluation in correct perspective of various subjects the following steps need to be followed by the teachers:

### **Implementing CCE**

#### ***Step I: Identifying expected learning***

The first step of your teaching-learning plan is to identify expected learning from the lesson. Expected learning can be drawn substantively from the objectives of learning for that subject area. The expected learning helps in a number of ways by:

- focusing on understanding of children's learning on a continuum of learning, as a continuous process;
- providing a reference point for parents, children and others to understand the progress of every child in a simple way and;

- providing a framework for monitoring, learning and reporting progress about the child.

#### ***Step II: Identifying existing learning level of children***

Whenever we initiate any teaching-learning process in classroom, we need to relate it with children's previous learning experiences. Teacher visualises and creates the learning situation before initiating the new learning. This situation she/he could create keeping in view the context of the children. For example, if she/he plans to provide learning experiences related to diversity in plants, such as leaves, flowers, trunk, fruits, she/he may initiate discussion on the plants, which they have seen in their immediate environment. This informal discussion/interaction is a kind of assessment of children's prior learning. With this interaction she/he can also judge the involvement of children in the discussion/interaction. This experience about plants would help her/him think the course of action to build further on the desired learning that she/he intended to take up. Thus, in this way children relate with the previous experiences and move forward in a spiral way.

#### ***Step III: What kind of methods to be used for assessment?***

No single assessment tool or method is capable of providing information about a child's progress of learning in different areas. While organising teaching-learning process, you would have realised that a lot can be understood from observing, listening to them, discussing informally with

their peers and parents as well as talking to other teachers, reviewing written work (class work and home work) and other articles/learning material made by children. In such situations teachers can know various ways in which children learn. Teachers need to provide different kinds of situation to assess learners.

- *Individual assessment* – which focuses on one child while she/he is doing an activity/task and thus individual work and accomplishments.
- *Group assessment* – which focuses on the learning and progress of a group of children working on a task together with the objective of completing it. This method of organisation is found to be more useful in order to assess social skills, co-operative learning processes and other value related dimensions of a child's behaviour.
- *Self assessment* – refers to the child's own assessment of her/his learning and progress in knowledge, skills, processes, interests, attitudes etc.
- *Peer assessment* – refers to one child assessing other children. This can be conducted in pairs or in groups. These methods could be used during the process of teaching-learning (assessment for learning) for improving children's learning. All these methods may be used by the teacher individually or simultaneously as per her/his need. She/he uses these methods to improve their learning by using

various ways. After completing unit/lesson teacher would like to know the performance of each child. For this, summative assessment (assessment of learning) could be done.

**Step IV: What could be various sources for collecting information/data of child's learning?**

If we all accept and agree that every child learns differently and that learning does not take place only in schools. We need to collect information from a variety of sources:

- Each child is actually learning while going through a variety of experiences, activities and learning tasks doing in the classroom. Thus child is the prime source. The other sources could be:
  1. Parents – child's friends/peers/classmates
  2. Other teachers – community members
- Portfolio is a rich source of child performance. It should be used while assessing and reporting child's progress. Portfolios should *not contain only the best work but all kinds of work*, to show the growth and progress of the child over the entire school year. Such a collection shows to teachers and parents what the child has accomplished and is a record of the *actual work* done rather than just the 'test scores'.
- Child's home work, project work, other assignment etc., can provide useful assessment data.

### **Step V: Recording of Information**

Information to be recorded of two kinds:

- The information collected during the teaching process. This is for teacher's own record and used by teacher only for (assessment for learning and assessment as learning).
- The second kind of information is related with the data collected after completion of chapter/unit. This will be reported by teacher in one quarter called summative assessment (criteria based assessment) for this:
  - Assessing the child's work during an activity/when it is completed.
  - Making a special effort to write qualitative/descriptive statements of a child's work or any interesting incident.
  - Preparing a child's profile.
  - Keeping samples of a child's work in a portfolio.
  - Making a conscious effort to note down important changes, problems, and positives/strengths and learning evidences.

### **Step VI: Reporting Process**

Teacher assesses children during the teaching-learning process and accordingly she/he provides feedback and inputs to children through many ways. After the repeated use of such assessment and feedback/inputs to children as planned for any lesson/theme, teacher would like to know the learning levels of children. For this, she/

he would conduct assessment of learning. The purpose of this assessment (assessment of learning) is to know the extent of learning against the criteria decided by the teacher. This kind of assessment data need to be recorded by the teacher. Most of the time teachers conduct such assessment through paper-pencil tests only. This defeats the whole purpose, because we know children learn through many ways. Paper-pencil tests do not provide the true picture of the children's potential.

Another major issue is that schools generally conduct such kind of assessment once in one quarter or half yearly basis. This again is not a correct way of assessing children's progress.

The third major issue related with reporting is that school reports the child's progress in the form of 'grades' such as 'A', 'B', 'C' without giving any remarks. This kind of reporting is neither communicating to children about their strengths or area of interest nor communicating to parents/elders.

While preparing a report the teacher needs to communicate and share the feedback with the child and parents. This aspect is important and needs to be done carefully and in a constructive and positive manner. It would be better, if we could report assessment data in three quarters and it should be criterion based. While reporting child's progress following points need to be taken into account:

- using a collection of illustrations of a child's work to help understand at what level of learning she/he is;

- focusing on strength of a child what she/he can do, her/his interest areas;
- providing examples of the kind of work that has been done by the child; and
- also highlighting those aspects requiring further improvement.

A sample of such reporting could be Class III Subject

Learning Band II: Child's performance as per expected level.

Learning Band III: Child needs support to reach the expected level

One example is given in the table given on next page.

The another way of reporting could be that teacher records assessment on test, activities/written work/oral work (the ways through which child have

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<p><i>Observation, Recording</i></p> <p><i>Reporting, Narrating and Drawing; Picture Reading, Making Pictures, Tables and Maps</i></p>	<p>A child can observe fine details. For example, she can identify and list common plants and animals of her immediate environment (around home and school). She can report certain observable features of these animals (such as their colour, beaks, feathers, claws) and plants (such as shape, size, colour, texture of leaves, shape, colour of flowers). Given an opportunity, she draws leaves and floral patterns she has seen on several objects at home/school. If she is allowed to write freely in her own language, without being corrected for grammar or spellings, she can begin to write a short report—say, on a visit to a garden, organised by her school.</p>

Another way of reporting children's progress could be assigning the grades along with qualitative remarks. The learning grades/learning bands could be assigned against pre-determined criteria that may be decided at the school level to make judgement on the extent of children learning with reference to curricular objective.

These could be:

Learning Band I: Child's performance beyond the expected level

learnt in the respective lesson/theme. Teacher assigns grade on the quality of work. This reporting can be done once in one quarter.

### **A. Sharing with the Child on Regular Basis**

Most teachers provide informal feedback to the child while she/he is involved in a task/activity. Children also correct and improve themselves while observing the teacher, observing/

<b>Learning Band</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
I.	-----
II. Observation and reporting	Bisaniya observes fine details: When asked to look for objects with patterns of leaves and flowers, she observed floral patterns on many things at home – bed sheet, dresses, crockery, bathroom tiles, and she also recorded her observations in a table. She observed birds and animals around the trees in the school garden and wrote detailed reports.
III. Classification	She developed many categories about where we see birds, like in water, on tree, in the house and on the ground. However, she could not list similarities between different birds. She needs more opportunities to look for similarities and differences.
IV. Discussion	Bisaniya has original ideas, which she shares only when asked, and is hesitant to participate in group discussions. In the unit on Food she listened to her group members, but needed probing for examples about food items, which are eaten raw, fried and baked. It will help if family members involve her in discussions and decision-making.

working in pairs or groups. This kind of feedback monitors and improves child's learning during the teaching-learning processes. These feedbacks would not be reported in the report cards. More importantly, what needs to be encouraged through feedback is for the child to *compete with herself/himself rather than what others are doing*. It should be with reference to *Where was I yesterday or a week ago and where am I today?* Comparisons between/among children do not really help. By and large it leads to feelings of *I am no good* or if a child has done very well and got the highest marks, she/he is put under pressure to keep up the performance at school and by parents at home.

### **B. Sharing with Parents/Elders in Monthly Meetings**

Parents are likely to be most interested in knowing how their children are *doing* in school, what they have learnt, how are their children performing and what are the progress of their children over a given period of time. More often than not, teachers feel they have communicated effectively through comments made to parents such as – *can do better, good, poor, needs to put in more effort*. For a parent what do these statements mean? Do such statements provide any clear information of what their child can do or has learnt, etc. In order to enrich the feedback being communicated, it is suggested that you



focus in simple and easily understood language on:

- What the child can do and what are strengths of the child such as oral communication skill, level of confidence, team-spirit, habit of sharing material/food?
- What does a child like or not like to do?
- Qualitative statements observed by you with samples of the child's work. Parents always like to see what their children do in the school.
- How the child has learnt (processes) and where did she/ he face difficulty?
- Indicate areas of success and improvement.
- Talking on aspects such as cooperation, taking group responsibility, sensitivity towards others, interests, etc., with both the child and parents.
- Discuss with parents what does child does at home, what they have observed at home about the child.
- If some children, who are not performing well after making consistent efforts by you, ask parents what kind of behaviour child reflects at home. This will help you to identify personal problem of a child.

## REFERENCES

- NCERT. 2005. *National Curriculum Framework-2005*. NCERT. New Delhi.
- . 2008. *Source Book on Assessment for Classes 1-V*. NCERT. New Delhi.