



Task

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

TASK - Teacher Assessing Key Competences in School: authentic task based evaluation methodology

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FOREWARD

In 2006 the European Union has identified and described 8 Key Competences for lifelong learning that allow everyone to adapt to changes in society and are important for self-realization, for working life, for studying and learning.

Many European countries have embedded the Key Competences in school curricula, and the schools are going to equip with tools for their certification.

The reforms in the education systems of European countries are designing a school increasingly competence-based, where the Key Competence framework will be adopted in all grades and kinds of schools; this requires a new approach to teaching, learning and assessment. As demonstrated by the most recent researches on the state of the art, there is a lack of systematic methodologies and tools for the assessment of Key Competences.

TASK project proposal aims to support teachers through the development of methodologies and tools for the assessment of Key Competences.

The starting point is an assessment model designed in a Grundtvig project of the Lifelong Learning Programme, tested by more than 100 adult learners in 5 European Countries, validated by the Leiden University, characterized as an authentic, self-reflective, proactive and anchored to the context assessment methodology for the self assessment of Key Competences in the Adult education: VINTAGE (Online tool for self eValuatIoN of key competences in adult AGE - 527349-LLP-1-2012-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP www.vintage.euproject.org)

A live demo of the online tool VINTAGE is available on www.learningcom.it/vintage, allowing to self-assess all the 8 key competences (1. Communication in the mother tongue, 2. Communication in a foreign language, 3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; 4. Digital competence; 5. Learning to learn; 6. Social and civic competences; 7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; 8. Cultural awareness and expression).

The TASK methodology integrates and adapts the VINTAGE framework

(<http://www.learningcom.it/public/Documenti/79.pdf>) to the lower/upper secondary school, developing a web application for the self-assessment and a set of didactic approaches and strategies for teachers aimed to support them in the application of the procedure and in the competence certification.

Also the project TASK will release a web tool supporting the assessment and certification of the key competences.

The TASK methodology is based on four mastery levels and on real tasks of increasing complexity correspondent to the mastery levels, to be performed in real life situations. The competences' descriptors origin from the European Référentiels (eg. DIGCOMP: A Framework for Developing and Understanding Digital Competence in Europe, Report EUR 26035 EN, <http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC83167.pdf> for the digital competence; CEFR - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf for the linguistic competences, etc.).

THE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

THE AUTHENTIC TASK

The performance and the observation of the execution of authentic tasks in real life situations are the basis of the TASK assessment framework.

The usual evaluation methods, based on written (tests, themes, summaries, researches, compositions, etc.) and oral (exposure of studied texts, research report or surveys, etc.) verifications, focus just on the linguistic-verbal and the logical-mathematical knowledge and skills. The authentic assessment put the competences to the test in realistic situations, carrying out tasks that require, in addition to the exercise of particular skills, a holistic overview.

In other words, a task we ask students to perform is considered authentic when:

- students are asked to construct their own responses rather than select from ones presented and
- the task replicates challenges faced in the real world.

That can show if the learner acquired a knowledge basis that allows him/her to making sense of his/hers own experiences, solve problems and take decisions. Authentic assessment includes a set of different tasks: making inquiries, writing, reviewing, debating, analysing, collaborating, etc.; it verifies if the student is able to product artefacts, answers and actions consciously, thoroughly and credibly.

The TASK framework proposes real situations and authentic tasks to be performed in contexts of increasing complexity in order to match the corresponding level of mastery. Since a competence is expressed by the performance of a compound behaviour in a given context, in order to observe a competence this is divided into sub-competences or domains.

The areas of competences and descriptors adopted in the TASK framework originate from the European Référentiels (as for example DIGCOMP: A Framework for Developing and Understanding Digital Competence in Europe, Report EUR 26035 EN, for Digital Competence; CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment for linguistic competences).

TASK framework provides a repertory of authentic tasks for each domain of a competence. Each domain of a competence can be performed at different levels of mastery.

Further references:

Mueller, J., 2011, *Authentic Assessment Toolbox* at
<http://jonathan.mueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/index.htm>

<http://jfmuller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/tasks.htm>

COMPETENCES AND AREAS OF COMPETENCES

Since a competence is expressed by the performance of a complex behaviour, in order to observe a competence this is divided into sub competences.

For example the Key Competence one 1 “Communication in the mother tongue” is articulated in the following sub competences:

- *listening*
- *reading*
- *writing*
- *speaking*
- *interaction*

The areas of competences, in the TASK framework, are selected on the basis of the European Référentiels (eg. DIGCOMP: A Framework for Developing and Understanding Digital Competence in Europe, Report EUR 26035 EN, <http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC83167.pdf> for the digital competence; CEFR - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf for the linguistic competences, etc.).

THE MASTERY LEVELS

Each area of a competence can be performed at different levels of mastery. According to the TASK framework the assessment is based on four mastery levels:

Level D - initial: the student, when guided, can perform simple tasks in known situations;

Level C - basic: the student can perform simple tasks also in unknown situations, showing a basic level of skills and knowledge applying rules and procedures.

Level B - intermediate: the student performs tasks and solves unknown problems, applying acquired knowledge and skills to new contexts.

Level A - advanced: the student performs complex tasks and solve complex problems, showing applying acquired knowledge and skills; express and supports his own opinions, takes decisions.

THE QUALITY OF THE PERFORMANCE

According to the TASK framework, in order to observe and evaluate the quality of the performance, it is necessary to collect evidences (pictures, video, artefacts, products, exercises, etc.) that allow to re-observe and analyse, in a second moment, the performed task. Some control questions guide the evaluation of the quality of the performance, focusing on four dimensions:

- **Reflective dimension:** attitude to reflect on actions while executing a procedure.
- **Autonomous dimension:** attitude to come up with new suggestions, inventing new actions/things.
- **Self-management dimension:** attitude to see opportunities, maintain motivation, come up with ideas.
- **Effectiveness dimension:** attitude to solve problems, overcoming obstacles, obtain results.

The evidences of the performances, that of course can be stored in a Portfolio, can be papered or digital according to the nature of the evidences. Teachers and students are expected to review the performance and answer the control questions that encourage a guided reflective process supporting the self assessment, also in a diachronic perspective. The TASK web application provides a digital support to this exercise.

THE ASSESSMENT STEP BY STEP

A competence is expressed through a complex and holistic behaviour. That is why the TASK assessment procedure starts from the general observation of the whole behaviour, corresponding to one of the four mastery levels, and just in a second stage shifts to the analytic observation of the performances in the single areas of sub competences. This analytic observation will allow checking if the mastery level initially assigned is suitable or not.

Step 1 – choice of the competence: the student is asked to choose the competence to be evaluated.

Step 2 – choice of the mastery level: the student is faced with four different situations, each one reflecting a different mastery level of the selected competence to be evaluated. S/he is asked to recognise him/herself in one of these proposed situations.

The mastery level chosen by the student reflects a first appraisal of a “tendency” to be checked through the assessment procedure in the next steps. At this stage the mastery level chosen by the student represents, metaphorically, a faded picture that will acquire clearer and focused outlines during the assessment procedure.

Step 3 – choice of the sub competence to be evaluated: for each sub areas of the selected competence the student is asked to perform an authentic task of a complexity correspondent to the selected mastery level.

Step 4 – authentic task execution: the teacher observes the student’s performance and collects evidences of the performed behaviour (pictures, video, artefacts, products, etc.). This collection will allow, both to the teacher and the student, to observe and re-observe the performance also in a second moment, and to evaluate the quality of the performance itself.

Step 5 – evaluation of the quality of the performance: a set of control questions, related to the efficacy, critical thinking, problem solving, management of feelings, guide the evaluation of the quality of the performance.

COMPETENCE PROFILE

The self-evaluation process, supported by the TASK web application, generates:

- a specific profile description per each quality dimension of the domain;
- a specific feedback per each quality dimension of the domain;
- a highlight about the compliance of the owned Mastery level compared to the Mastery level selected;
- a Competence profile description, once the evaluation of the all domains is completed, to be eventually sequentially included in the certification format.

The feedback and profile description reflect the steps of the evaluation process: the selected Key competence, the selected mastery, the score assigned on a five points scale (from 1 the lower to 5 the higher) to record the quality of the four dimensions (Reflectiveness, Autonomy, Self-management, Effectiveness), for the five domains of the Key competence.

The feedbacks and the Key competence profile description are based on the scores assigned to rate the quality of the performance for each domain. The feedback is generated per each domain of the evaluated competence and it is calculated on the basis of the assigned quality score to each dimension for that specific domain.

The Key competence profile is generated on the basis of the combined quality scores (mode) assigned to the different dimensions for all domains. The user, indeed, will obtain the Key competence profile just if s/he will have completed the self-evaluation process for all the domains of the selected competence.

An overall common message summarizes and introduces the result of the assessment.

BALANCE BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND SELF ASSESSMENT

TASK project supplies teachers with a methodology for the assessment and certification of Key Competences. The teachers, acting an official and formal role, are decisive in the TASK evaluation procedure implementation.

The students' role

According to the TASK methodology the student plays an active role. The student chose the mastery level to be faced with; together with the teacher is asked to observe and re-observe his/hers performance; guided by the teacher the student evaluates the quality of the performance. The process can involve just the teacher and the student, but also a little group of students or the whole class in a peer to peer evaluation procedure

The teachers' role

The teacher applies the TASK procedure to observe, evaluate and certificate the students' competences. An online tool, actually in progress, will support the teachers during the evaluation procedure, will offer a set of assessment items based on real tasks for each competence and sub area of competence, will provide a selection of indicators and descriptors useful to fill in the certification document, qualitative and quantitative feedbacks, suggestions to improve the quality of the performance of the student, a database (portfolio) to record the evidences collected in order to allow also a diachronic analysis of the performances.

Applying the procedure the teacher is asked to involve and guide the student in the choices necessary to fulfil the assessment procedure, inviting the student to reflect, to examine and comment the behaviours and the performances, analyzing the collected evidences, taking advantage of the control questions in order to reflect together on the quality of the performance.

When the process is completed the teacher can check and verify if the initial choice of the mastery level selected by the student was suitable or not, comment the results of the assessment with the student, highlight over or under estimation, give feedback to improve the quality of the performance.

Further info and project progresses are available on:

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