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ANALYSIS OF THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF STUDENT ESSAY WRITING BASED ON A SURVEY OF TEACHERS

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The article is devoted to the definition of the main criteria for assessing the quality of essay writing and monitoring the formation of basic functional literacy in students such as communicative, reflexive, information technological, subject, intellectual, personal competencies in pedagogical practice, since essay writing is an effective method of assessing a student's knowledge. The article examines international and domestic

experience in applying the criteria for assessing the quality of essay writing in pedagogical practice. The effectiveness of applying criterion-based assessment for evaluating essay writing quality in the daily practice of teachers and in students' educational activities was assessed through a sociological survey conducted among university faculty and students. As part of the study conducted at the Department of foreign languages and teaching methods of Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau State University and the Department of theory and practice of foreign languages at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, the primary criteria for evaluating the quality of essay writing – commonly employed by instructors to assess students' academic performance – were identified. Additionally, the study highlighted the most frequent errors made by students in the process of essay writing. Within the study, much attention is paid to theoretical and practical issues, the structure of the essay, the improvement of methods for assessing the quality of essay writing and the formation of the competence of assessing the quality of essay writing among teachers.

Key words: evaluation, criteria, method, competence, academic essay.

ОҚЫТУШЫЛАРДЫҢ САУАЛНАМАСЫ НЕГІЗІНДЕ СТУДЕНТТЕРДІҢ ЭССЕ ЖАЗУ САПАСЫН БАҒАЛАУ КРИТЕРИЙЛЕРІНЕ ТАЛДАУ

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Бұл мақала эссе жазу сапасын бағалаудың негізгі критерийлерін анықтауға және студенттердің негізгі функционалдық сауаттылығының – коммуникативтік, рефлексивтік, ақпараттық-технологиялық, пәндік, интеллектуалдық және тұлғалық құзыреттерінің қалыптасуын педагогикалық тәжірибе барысында бақылауға арналған. Өйткені эссе жазу студенттің білімін тексерудің тиімді әдісі болып табылады. Жұмыста эссе жазу сапасын бағалау критерийлерін педагогикалық тәжірибеде қолданудың халықаралық және отандық тәжірибесі зерттелген. Эссе жазу сапасын критериялды бағалауды қолданудың тиімділігі университет оқытушылары мен студенттері арасында әлеуметтік сауалнама әдісімен зерттелді, бұл әдіс оқытушылардың күнделікті практикалық қызметінде және студенттердің оқу іс-әрекетінде қолданылды. Зерттеу барысында Ш.Уәлиханов атындағы Көкшетау мемлекеттік университетінің ағылшын тілі және оқыту әістемесі кафедрасы мен Л. Гумилев атындағы Еуразия ұлттық университетінің шетел тілдерінің теориясы мен тәжірибесі кафедрасында оқытушылар студенттердің оқу қызметін бағалау үшін қолданатын эссе жазу сапасын бағалаудың негізгі критерийлері анықталып, эссе жазу кезінде студенттердің жиі жіберетін негізгі қателіктері көрсетілді. Зерттеу аясында теориялық және практикалық мәселелерге, эссе құрылымына, эссе жазу сапасын бағалау әдістерін жетілдіруге және оқытушылар арасында эссе жазу сапасын бағалау құзыреттілігін қалыптастыруға көп көңіл бөлінді.

Түйінді сөздер: баға, критерий, әдістеме, құзыреттілік, академиялық эссе.

АНАЛИЗ КРИТЕРИЕВ ОЦЕНКИ КАЧЕСТВА НАПИСАНИЯ ЭССЕ СТУДЕНТАМИ НА ОСНОВЕ АНКЕТИРОВАНИЯ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ

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Статья посвящена определению основных критериев оценки качества написания эссе и мониторингу сформированности основной функциональной грамотности студентов, такой как коммуникативной, рефлексивной, информационно-технологической, предметной, интеллектуальной, а также личностных компетенций в педагогической практике, поскольку написание эссе является эффективным методом проверки знаний студента. В работе изучен международный и отечественный опыт применения критериев оценки качества написания эссе в педагогической практике. Проведена оценка эффективности применения критериальной оценки качества написания эссе в ежедневной практической деятельности преподавателей и учебной деятельности

студентов с применением метода социологического опроса преподавателей и студентов ВУЗа. В ходе исследования на кафедре иностранных языков и методики преподавания Кокшетауского Государственного Университета имени Ш. Уалиханова и на кафедре теории и практики иностранных языков Евразийского Национального университета имени Л.Н. Гумилева были выявлены основные критерии оценки качества написания эссе, которые применяются преподавателями для оценивания учебной деятельности студентов и основные ошибки, допускаемые студентами при написании эссе. В рамках исследования большое внимание уделяется теоретическим и практическим проблемам, совершенствованию методов оценки качества написания эссе и формированию компетенции оценки качества написания эссе у преподавателей.

Ключевые слова: оценка, критерий, методика, компетенция, академическое эссе.

Introduction. Current trends in educational practices, in conjunction with the legislative and regulatory measures pertaining to the implementation of the State Program for the Development of Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the principles stipulated in the Bologna Declaration, necessitate the augmentation of innovative activities with a view to enhancing, structuring and accentuating the significance of students' independent work. The implementation of these initiatives is predicated on effective monitoring [1, p. 328], [2].

The primary objective of higher education should be the cultivation of each student's creative potential as an individual, equipped with a foreign language proficiency and a comprehensive understanding of culture, science, and society. Of course, one of the important tasks of improving the teaching of foreign languages is to increase the effectiveness of classes, which is achieved by using various methods and techniques, one of which is essay writing. In turn, the essay is a tool for assessing analytical and critical thinking [3].

The necessity for this article arises from the prevalence of inadequate essay writing skills among a lot of students and the requirement for advanced training in this domain. Moreover, unfortunately, the widespread use of essays as an assessment tool in pedagogical disciplines has not yet been fully realized. It is important that teachers have the necessary competencies to assess the quality of essay writing. Thus, the need to develop clear essay assessment criteria is an important task for improving the educational process.

This work has not been deeply studied in Kazakhstan, but foreign and Russian authors have made their contribution. They emphasize the importance of this work for improving educational methods and enhancing the quality of education. Essay quality assessment is of paramount importance for developing students' analytical and critical thinking abilities. Shakirov R. and Burkitova A. emphasize the need for clear criteria to ensure impartial assessment and identify learning gaps [4].

Chaitanya Ramineni in his article "Validating automated essay scoring for online writing placement" considers automated essay scoring (AES) as a tool for improving the objectivity and efficiency of essay assessment, emphasizing the need for accurate criteria [5, p. 41].

Dolores Perin and Mark Lauterbach in their study "Assessing Text-Based Writing of Low-Skilled College Students" analyze automated essay scoring systems to predict students' essay writing skills, identifying key deficiencies in their writing. These studies confirm the importance of clear criteria and effective essay scoring models for improving the educational process [6, pp.57-60].

Goals and objectives. The aim of the present study is to find out the most effective criteria for assessing the quality of essay writing in pedagogical practice, as well as to identify the attitude of students and teachers to the existing essay assessment system.

In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives must be completed:

- A thorough review of international and domestic experiences in the utilisation of essay assessment criteria in pedagogical contexts must be conducted;
- A comprehensive sociological study must be undertaken among university teachers in Kazakhstan and students to ascertain the predominant criteria employed for essay evaluation;
- The principal challenges encountered during essay assessment in university settings must be identified.

Materials and methods. The present study was based on research conducted at two universities: Sh. Ualikhanov Kokshetau State University (Ualikhanov University) in Kokshetau, and L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (ENU) in Astana. The subject of the present study was the application of criteria for evaluating the quality of essay writing in practical lessons at universities. The object of the study wasteachers and students of these educational institutions. The materials used were surveys administered to students and teaching staff, curricula of academic disciplines focusing on essay writing, methodological recommendations concerning the evaluation of written works, articles and books on methods of teaching writing, MS Excel software for statistical analysis.

The selection of the research base is predicated on the existence of faculties of philology and pedagogy at Kokshetau State University (KSU) and the Eurasian National University (ENU), with departments of English language and teaching methods, foreign languages, foreign philology, and theory and practice of foreign languages.

In order to identify the current state of the use of the criterion method in evaluating essay writing in practice at the Pedagogical Institute of Kokshetau State University named after Sh. Ualikhanov and the Faculty of Philology of the L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University conducted a sociological survey was conducted to determine the attitude of teachers and students of the educational process to the criterion method of evaluating essay writing.

The sociological survey of staff, teachers and students was conducted at the beginning of the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year (January-February). The following research methods were employed in this article:

- general theoretical methods (synthesis, analysis, systems approach and so on);
- sociological method (survey, quantitative analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis);
- psychological and pedagogical method.

Results and discussion. The survey of students comprised 64 respondents (See Figure 1), representing students enrolled in 1-4 courses, constituting 30% of the faculty's student body during the specified period. Of these respondents, 28% (or 18 individuals) were First-year students constituted, 28% (or 18 individuals) were second-year students constituted, third-year students constituted 19% (or 12 individuals), and fourth-year students constituted 25% (16 people) (Table 1).

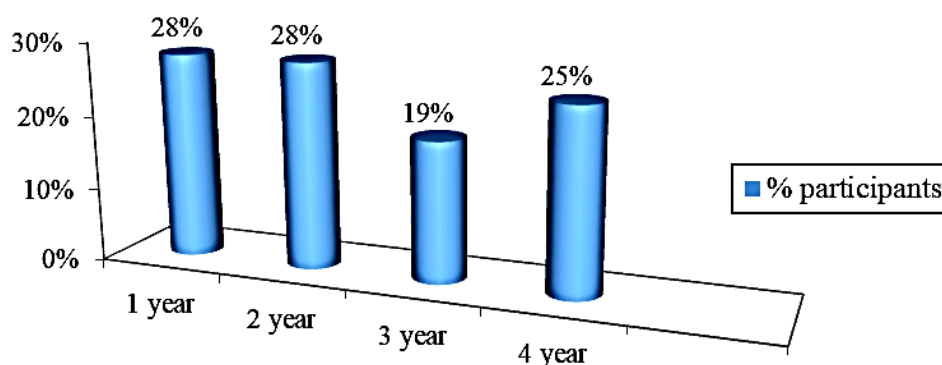


Figure 1 — Percentage of survey participants (students)

Table 1 – The composition of the participants involved in the survey among students

Year	The total number of individuals who participated in the survey	The percentage of students from a specific course who participated in the survey
1	18	28%
2	18	28%
3	12	19%
4	16	25%

A total of 43 people took part in the survey of teachers. 18 people (out of 22) working at Ualikhanov University (KSU) at the Department of English and teaching methods of the Pedagogical institute, which is 81.8% of teachers, and 25 people (out of 31), which is 80.6% of teachers at Eurasian National University (ENU) at the Department of Theory and Practice of Foreign Languages in the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. All teachers are full-time employees and all of them 100% female.

The objective of the questionnaire was to ascertain the attitudes of students and teachers towards the prioritised system of assessment of learning activities, with particular emphasis on the assessment of essays according to the criterion system. The survey delineated the evaluation functions and the principles that underpin them. Teachers and students were invited to assign these assessment functions a rank (from one to five) according to their perceived importance. The results are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – The key roles of standards and criteria in the system for assessing students' competence

Functions of grade						
	Accuracy	Consistency	Fairness	Educational development	Timeliness	Effectiveness
Student	1 / 30%	2 / 27%	5 / 2%	5 / 2%	3 / 21%	4 / 18%
	19 respondents	17 respondents	1 respondent	1 respondent	14 respondents	12 respondents
Teacher	1 / 25%	2 / 20%	4 / 15%	4 / 14%	3 / 16%	5 / 10%
	11 respondents	9 respondents	6 respondents	6 respondents	7 respondents	4 respondents

The grade functions in Table 2 were evaluated according to the following principles:

1. Accuracy – It is vital that assessments have clearly defined objectives and measurable outcomes that students can realistically achieve;
2. Consistency – Consistent standards must be maintained, with clearly outlined assessment criteria and monitoring conditions.
3. Fairness – It is essential that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed.
4. Educational development – It is crucial to provide students with feedback on their achievements and guidance on areas for improvement.
5. Timeliness – teachers should receive regular feedback and provide students with prompt information about their progress.
6. Effectiveness – An assessment should be characterized by its clarity and comprehensibility, accessibility for teachers and students, and minimal time requirements for administration and evaluation.

As shown in Table 2, students and teachers had similar opinions. Students involved in the education process agree that assessments are relevant to the course's objectives and that assessment criteria should be applied equally to all students. However, students also say that assessments are often not relevant, and sometimes they don't seem to be relevant at all (see Table 3).

Table 3 –The indicator of conformity of grades with the established criteria for assessing students

	Accuracy	Consistency	Fairness	Educational development	Timeliness
Fully meets the requirements	26% (17students)	2% (1 student)	30% (19 students)	19% (12 students)	42% (27 students)
Meets to a limited extent and does not meet the established requirements	69% (44 students)	50% (32 students)	64% (41 students)	66% (42 students)	34% (22 students)
Fails to fully meet or meet the necessary standards	5% (3 students)	48% (31 students)	6% (4 students)	15% (10 students)	24% (15 students)

The consistency and fairness of the assessment process are ensured by the creation of equal learning conditions for students throughout the academic year, and by the provision of equal opportunities to achieve results. To this end, the teaching staff shall reach a common agreement on the rules governing the management of control, the content of testing materials, the use of alternative control technologies and assessment criteria.

As illustrated in Table 3, a significant proportion of the student population, constituting 69% of the surveyed participants, harbours reservations concerning the validity of the assessment methods employed.

The respondents asserted that the objectives of instruction in various academic disciplines are not uniformly established by all educators. Typically, in their initial lessons, teachers offer a general overview of the subject matter to be studied; however, they are unable to demonstrate the students' actual knowledge and competencies. Consequently, students' achievements are largely constrained to the learning objectives delineated by the programs in specific subjects. However, students have expressed concerns that these goals do not align with the learning outcomes expected by teachers.

It has been asserted by students that the assessment criteria may be subject to alteration during the learning process. Teachers frequently report students' assessment criteria, and students perceive that their grades do not accurately reflect their academic achievement. At the conclusion of the survey, conducted to elucidate how students are aware of the criteria for evaluating the fulfilment of an essay assignment, 63% of respondents indicated that they became acquainted with the evaluation criteria only after completing the work. Furthermore, 20% of respondents noted that they were rarely informed of the criteria, while only 12% consistently had prior knowledge of them. It is noteworthy that 5% of students admitted to having no awareness of the assessment criteria whatsoever. (Table 4). This finding indicates that the absence of clearly and promptly communicated essay evaluation criteria has a direct impact on students' academic motivation. This absence of transparency engenders a sense of uncertainty among students, eroding their self-confidence and diminishing their intrinsic motivation to achieve academic objectives. In Deci's theory of self-determination, the fundamental condition for motivation is a sense of competence, which is predicated upon an understanding of expectations and criteria for success.

Table 4 – The level of students' awareness of the criteria for assessing essays before they start writing them.

	Number of students	The percentage of all respondents who have knowledge of the essay evaluation criteria before writing
Criteria is always known	8	12%
Most often we are informed how the work will be checked	40	63%
Inform rarely	13	20%
Criteria is unknown	3	5%

In response to the question "Are there criteria for evaluating essays written on the programme of the discipline studied?" 60% of teachers answered that "all assessment criteria are taken into account in the program", only 5% of teachers note the absence of criteria for assessing essays in their program (Table 5).

Table 5 – Presence of assessment standards within the curriculum offerings

	The amount of teachers	Percentage of the entire participant pool
All the criteria are considered and included in the program	26	60
Criteria are specified for certain forms of assessment	12	27
The criteria are only provided for the final assessment, not for ongoing assessments	3	8
No, the criteria are not documented or registered	2	5

In addition, as can be seen from Figure 2, 43% of students answered positively to the question about the objectivity of grading by teachers when checking the quality of essay writing, and the majority of respondents believe that teachers give biased marks for writing essays. This finding indicates a contravention of the principle of fairness, which can result in diminished motivation among students. When students perceive the system to be biased, they may become disinterested in actively participating in the learning process.

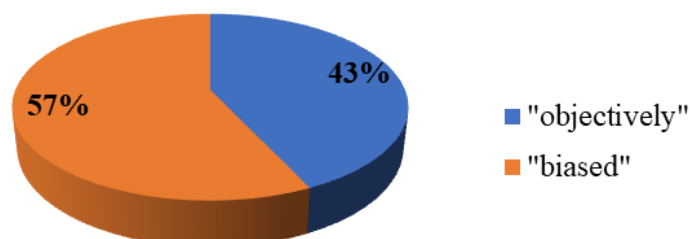


Figure 2 – objectivity of assessment by teachers when evaluating an essay in the opinion of students

It has been asserted by students that the grades they receive for essay writing "provide partial information" regarding their difficulties and assist them in comprehending which areas necessitate further attention. Thus, 34% of students partially agreed with this statement, 31% answered "agree", 12.5% "disagree" and "totally disagree" (Table 6).

Table 6 – Opinions on the influence of the obtained assessment on the identification of weaknesses of students

Rating Scale	The amount of students	Percentage of total participants
1- Totally disagree (0)	8	12,5%
2- Disagree (25)	8	12,5%
3- Partially agree (50)	22	34%
4- Agree (75)	20	31%
5- Absolutely agree (100)	6	9%

To the question "In your opinion, when evaluating a student's essay, does the teacher receive feedback?" 36% of students indicated their agreement, but partial, while 20% expressed their disagreement with this statement. On this question, students rated on a scale where 1 is totally disagree, 5 is absolutely agree. (Table 7). The absence of constructive feedback denies students the opportunity to rectify their work, thereby diminishing their engagement and conviction in the efficacy of their endeavors [7]. Students feel helpless when they don't have consistent information about what they need to do, and when they don't receive feedback. This makes them less motivated to do well in their studies. To solve this problem, we need to set out clear goals and provide regular feedback before the start of the assignment. This will help students to see how they are doing, keep up their interest in learning, and make sure they stay on track.

Table 7 – The perspectives of students on the importance and value of receiving feedback from teachers during the evaluation of essays

Rating Scale	The amount of students	Percentage of total participants
1- Totally disagree (0)	5	8%
2- Disagree (25)	13	20%
3- Partially agree (50)	23	36%
4- Agree (75)	17	27%
5- Absolutely agree (100)	6	9%

The study also sought to address the following question: "How frequently do teachers provide feedback on students' grades following the evaluation of essay assignments?" The responses to this question are presented in Table 8, which facilitates a comparison of the perspectives held by both students and teachers.

Table 8 – Teachers' comments after student assessment

	Student	Teacher
Always provide comments	12% (8 respondents)	52% (22 respondents)
Sometimes provide comments	59% (38 respondents)	36% (16 respondents)
Rarely provide comments	27% (17 respondents)	12% (5 respondents)
Don't provide comments	2% (1 respondent)	0% (nobody)

As demonstrated in the table, a discrepancy exists between the perspectives of students and teachers on this matter. Students have expressed their desire for teachers to provide feedback on their essay writing results, as indicated by the following statements from the students' questionnaires. As indicated by the students' questionnaires, the following comments were made: "Following the evaluation of work, it is important to be able to revise the work in order to personally discuss any errors and comments with the teacher. In addition, it is necessary that the teacher not only states that a mistake has been made, but also provides an explanation as to why it is incorrect and how it should be corrected."

To the question "Is an essay an effective method of monitoring and testing students' knowledge?" 80% of teachers answered "yes", which indicates the high efficiency of using essays as a tool for assessing the level of students' knowledge.

It was found that when evaluating an essay, teachers primarily consider the content of the essay more important than grammar. So, 66.7% of teachers of KSU and ENU pay attention to the content, while 33.3% chose both "content" and "grammar".

To the question "is the number of words in an essay a criterion for assessing its quality of writing" 55.5% of teachers answered positively. Among them, 50% believe that to get the highest score, an essay should contain "400 or more words", 40% – "200 words", 10% – "600 or more".

According to educators, the prevalent errors (Figure 3) observed in students' essay writing can be categorized as follows: 77.8% – "inadequate inclusion of specific information", 38.9% – "insufficient self-review by students", 27.8% – "excessive wordiness", 22.2% – "tedious introductions", and 16.7% – "prolonged sentences".

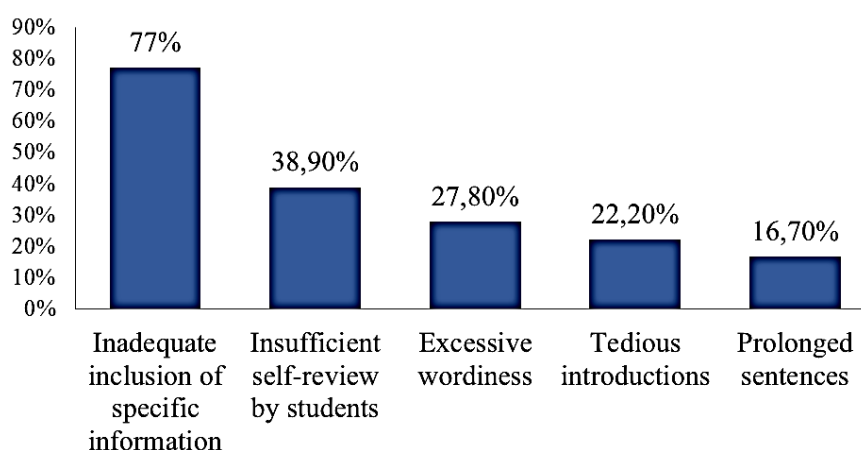


Figure 3 – Typical mistakes of students make while writing an essay

Concurrently, in response to the open-ended query "What errors do students most frequently make when composing essays?", 29 of the 43 surveyed teachers (66.6%) provided a response (see Table 9). It was revealed that, according to the personal opinion of teachers, in most cases students make mistakes in the structure of the essay (58.3%), in 50% there was a lack of critical thinking, in 25% of cases "vague ideas", "inconsistency with the topic", "lack of conclusions" were noted. These data indicate, that we can conclude that these errors can be attributed to the most commonly used criteria for evaluating essay writing by teachers of this university.

Table 9 – Teachers' personal perspectives regarding students' errors in essay writing (self-generated response to an open-ended query)

Mistakes made by students	The amount of teachers	Percentage of the total participant pool
Ignorance of essay structure	7	58,3%
Lack of critical thinking	6	50%
Vague ideas and arguments	3	25%
Off topic	3	25%
Lack of conclusions	3	25%
Word order and misuse of words	2	16,6%
Tautology	2	16,6%
Not enough examples	1	8,3%
Lack of connection between paragraphs	1	8,3%
Lack of vocabulary	1	8,3%
Grammar	1	8,3%

Table 10 –The criteria deemed most effective by teachers for assessing essay quality

Assessment criteria	The amount of teachers	Percentage of the total participant pool
Comprehending the subject matter and the attitude towards it	19	44,4%
Organization and structure of text are important considerations	36	83,3%
Factual material and erudition	14	33,3%
Argument and conclusion	41	94,4%
Subject area coverage	5	11,1%
Style and literacy	38	88,8%
Presentation of the topic and material	7	16,6%
Other comments	-	0
Overall rating	5	11,1%

As illustrated in Table 10, when asked about the best ways to assess the quality of an essay, most teachers (94.4%) chose how well the argument is made and how it is supported. 88% of teachers chose how well the writing is done. 83.3% of teachers said that logic and consistency were important, as well as how well thoughts were organized and the structure of the text. 44.4% of teachers said that understanding the topic was important [1, pp. 228-230].

Also, teachers were offered the following methods for evaluating essays, which were developed by the authors.

Evaluation based on the L.N. Yusupova method. Yusupova's methodology for essay composition comprises a series of ten sequential steps. The steps are divided into three stages, as follows:

The initial stage of the process is designated "Preparation": 1. selection and evaluation of the topic; 2. formulation of the essay's thesis; 3. creation of a precise plan; 4. identification and examination of sources for the argumentation.

The second stage of the "writing process" is outlined as follows: 5. Introduction; 6. Main body; 7. Conclusion.

The third stage of the process is entitled 'Editing'. It comprises the following steps: 8. Verifying the essay's integrity; 9. Examining grammar, vocabulary and punctuation; 10. Completing the essay. [8, p.15].

Yusupova asserts that the following criteria are taken into account when essays in English are evaluated:

- The essay's structure and logical presentation (unity and coherence) account for a maximum of 20%.
- The ability to provide arguments (support/elaboration) is taken into consideration, with a maximum of 20%.
- The lexical content of the essay is evaluated, considering the appropriate scientific style of presenting information (lexical resource in the suitable style/register), with a maximum of 20%.
- Grammar is assessed, including the range and accuracy of language usage, spelling correctness, and punctuation, accounting for a maximum of 20%.
- The uniqueness and originality of the essay (strong and specific thesis statement) are taken into account, with a maximum of 20%.

In her book, "Academic Essay Writing", she gives a full set of rules for judging essays based on the criteria we talked about earlier, then gives each essay a mark based on these rules. Excellent: from 90% to 100%; Good: from 89% to 75%; Satisfactory: from 60% to 74%; Needs improvement: from 0 to 59%. For the author, being original mainly means having a strong and interesting main point. A thesis statement should include a topic and an opinion that is going to be challenged. When you read it, it should make you want to argue it. A weak thesis statement simply states the purpose of writing the essay [9, p.5].

The assessment is conducted in accordance with the methodology established by D.A. Makhotin. As posited by D.A. Makhotin, the following criteria may be employed for the evaluation of the essay on pedagogy:

- The presence of a competent, detailed response to the question is imperative.
- Achievement of proficiency in pedagogical concepts and terminology.
- The composition is characterized by clarity and logical consistency.
- The presentation of arguments, examples, quotations and illustrative material is to be undertaken.
- The ability to think independently, purposefully analyze material, compare facts without distortion, draw conclusions and make generalizations is paramount.
- To articulate their point of view and personal attitude to the problem in a clear and vivid manner.

However, when synthesizing the multifarious criteria of essay evaluation, D.A. Makhotin identifies the following principal criteria, with a maximum of three points allocated for each criterion:

- Awareness and comprehension of the educational material.
- Information analysis and evaluation.
- Logical formulation of judgments. The total maximum score is nine points [10, p. 50].

Evaluation based on the I.V. Korotkina method. In order to evaluate the quality of essay writing, Korotkina I. B. proposes a 100-point system for assessing academic essays. This system is based on the 3D literacy model of the Australian scientist and educational ideologist Bill Green [11]. In accordance with the provisions stipulated within the aforementioned system, the following components are to be regarded as criteria for the evaluation of an essay.

- Structural aspect (text organization, language usage): 40 points.
- Cultural aspect (content, reader engagement, writing style): 30 points.
- Analytical aspect (personal standpoint, relevant evidence, textual objectivity): 30 points.

The essay is assessed on a 100-point scale [12, p. 60].

Evaluation based on the Randy Rambo method. The author's article on Illinois college essay grading criteria provides a table outlining the following criteria for grading written assignments:

- Thesis and Main Argument
- Structural Arrangement
- Evidence and Elaboration of Concepts
- Depth of Understanding in the Topic
- Expression and Writing Style
- Grammar and Punctuation [13].

IELTS score:

The written assignment is evaluated using four criteria:

- Responses to tasks.
- Coherence and cohesion of the essay.
- Lexical range.
- Grammar accuracy and complexity.

The evaluation is scored from 0 to 9 points. Levels: A2 (less than 4), B1 (4-5), B2 (5-6.5), C1 (7-8), C2 (more than 8) [14].

In the survey, teachers in 72.2% of cases chose the "Yusupova's method", which indicates its high efficiency in teaching practice. 22.2% of teachers lean towards the IELTS method.

Teachers consider the standard grading scale (50%) to be the best approach to assessing essays; the second place in the essay assessment system was given to the IELTS method (40%).

The theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the assessment criteria employed for Yusupova's, Korotkina's, Makhotina's essays are rooted in the principles of criterion-based assessment, which postulates the correlation of outcomes with predetermined standards. For instance, Yusupova's method, which places significant emphasis on structure and argumentation, corresponds to the level of analysis. In contrast, Korotkina's method, which incorporates the cultural dimension, pertains to synthesis and evaluation. However, the survey demonstrated that neither method is universally applicable. Yusupova's method, which is the most prevalent (72.2%), prioritizes formal aspects, making it particularly well-suited to elementary courses. Makhotina's method is a subjective tool for the assessment of awareness, due to the absence of clear discriminators in its application. In contrast, Korotkina's approach is pertinent for tasks that demand critical thinking. The IELTS method, being standardized, mirrors global trends but does not consider local contexts.

The data indicates that teachers and students exhibit varying degrees of readiness to utilize specific assessment criteria. Concomitantly, however, it is imperative to acknowledge the challenges associated with the integration of these methodologies within pedagogical practices:

- It is evident that teachers are not always adequately equipped with the requisite methodological training to formulate specific and measurable criteria, particularly in relation to argumentation and originality.
- The absence of standardized programs, scales, methodological templates, and the inconsistency of objectives and criteria has been demonstrated to result in erroneous assessments.
- The absence of systematic feedback is a salient issue.

The challenges experienced in this context are multifaceted, including but not limited to a paucity of time and a dearth of training workshops. Additionally, there is often a degree of resistance from students who have become accustomed to a more intuitive yet less transparent approach to assessment.

Conclusion. Hence, during the study, the effectiveness of implementing essay writing assessment criteria in pedagogical practice and the overall perception of students and teachers towards the implemented assessment system were examined. A divergence of opinion was identified between students and teachers with regard to the assessment system. Teachers advocate a stringent approach to the system, emphasizing the importance of strict rules and guidelines. Conversely, students contend that the absence of clear and comprehensible criteria, the utilization of disparate assessment methods, and the delayed communication of learning outcomes do not ensure the quality of assessments. This discordance has led to the assessment system falling short of students' expectations, as it does not align with quality standards, consequently impeding the timely determination of educational pathways.

The utilization of criteria-based assessment empowers teachers to enhance the educational process, establish criteria to ensure high-quality outcomes, gather information for analysis and planning of their work, considering each student's unique characteristics. It enables the creation of personalized learning paths for students, utilization of diverse assessment methods and tools, and the implementation of recommendations for improving the curriculum content [15, pp. 4-6].

In consideration of the fundamental objectives within the educational system, it is imperative to establish an assessment framework that is grounded in clearly defined criteria, encompassing the evaluation of essay writing. This underscores the necessity for research endeavors aimed at formulating a methodology for evaluating the quality of essay writing and for monitoring the development of students' core competencies, utilizing criteria that are aligned with the standards of essay writing quality.

To achieve this objective, the following tasks have been identified: examining international and domestic experiences in utilizing criteria for assessing essay writing quality in pedagogical practice, conducting a sociological study among teachers from domestic universities and students to identify the primary applied criteria for assessing essay writing quality through questionnaires, determining the main criteria for evaluating essay writing quality based on the collected data, and developing a methodology for assessing the quality of student essays.

The study enabled an evaluation of the efficacy of criterion-based assessment by teachers in students' learning activities, specifically in the assessment of essay writing based on criteria. Additionally, it provided insights into the perspectives of participants in the educational process regarding this assessment approach.

A thorough analysis of the assessment system in the educational activities of KSU named after Sh. Ualikhanov and ENU named after L.N. Gumilyov was conducted, with a particular focus on the significance of the functions and principles of assessment. After looking at the results, it was decided that the grades should match what the course is aiming to achieve, and that all students should be judged by the same standards. To make sure the grading process is fair, everyone on the same course should be given the same chances of doing well. However, an analysis of the students' responses indicated that the validity of the assessment is not adequately substantiated. It was further noted that teachers frequently modify the evaluation criteria during the learning process. Furthermore, students have expressed a lack of consistency in the provision of feedback on essay assessments by teachers. Furthermore, it was observed that 63% of students received information regarding the evaluation criteria only after the submission of their work, while a mere 5% stated that they were completely unaware of the criteria. Conversely, 60% of teachers affirm that "all evaluation criteria are incorporated into the program," while only 5% indicate the absence of essay evaluation criteria in their program. The main part of students (67%) believes that the grades for writing an essay are given by teachers biased. The grade received for writing an essay "partially informs" the student about his difficulties, helps him understand what else is worth working on. Only 36% of students partially agree that when evaluating a student's essay, the teacher receives feedback.

Analyzing the personal experience of teachers, it was found that students most often miss mistakes in the "essay structure" – 58.3%, do not have "critical thinking" – 50%, in 25% of cases they have "vague ideas", "inconsistency with the topic", "lack of conclusions. The analysis of the teachers' responses during the interview revealed the most common mistakes made by students when writing essays. The analysis indicated that 77.8% of mistakes were attributed to "inadequate inclusion of specific information", 38.9% were attributed to "insufficient self-review by students" and 27.8% were attributed to "verbosity" and "tedious introductions." These findings are consistent with the most frequently used criteria by teachers when evaluating the quality of essay writing.

In the opinion of teachers, the most efficacious criteria for the evaluation of essay writing quality are as follows: "argumentation and conclusion" (chosen by 94.4% of teachers); "style and literacy" (88.8% of teachers); "logic, consistency, logical presentation of thoughts" and "structure and organization of the text" (83.3%); and "understanding of the subject and attitude towards it" (44.4%). The most effective way of evaluating essays in existing pedagogical practice is considered to be the "Yusupova's method", which was chosen by 72.2% of teachers. In second place in terms of frequency of use is the IELTS assessment method. Teachers consider the standard grading scale (50%) to be the best approach for assessing essays, then the IELTS approach (40%).

The existing problems in the essay assessment system dictate the need to develop a methodology for assessing the quality of essay writing in university teaching practice, the introduction of advanced training courses in criterion assessment for teachers, the creation of a bank of standard essays with comments from teachers, as well as the dissemination of electronic templates with assessment criteria. This will increase both the objectivity and its acceptance by students.

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