

English Teachers' Perception on the Use of Authentic Assessment in EFL Classroom

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Abstract

The aims of the study were to find out English teacher's perception on the use of authentic assessment and its difficulties in EFL classroom. The approach of this study used a qualitative research. One of the qualitative research designs applied in this study was case study design. The participant of this study two of the English teachers of MA Al-Fatah Palembang. The data were collected through interview. The results of this study showed that the use of authentic assessment in EFL classroom at MA Al-Fatah Palembang is very helpful by the teachers in learning process. This research finding consisted of four themes, as follows; the concept of authentic, types of authentic assessment, the steps of authentic assessment and the strengths and weakness of authentic assessment. The teachers basically supported this assessment to implement in English language teaching classroom. However, the teacher found some difficulties during instructional activities such as managing class activity, maintaining consistence scoring, and monitoring student's work originality. Therefore, the teacher is expected to extent her insight and creativity to improve the quality of the assessment.

Keywords: Perception, Authentic Assessment, EFL Classroom

A. Introduction

Indonesia is a country in which English is taught as foreign language (EFL context). Although daily conversation among Indonesia mostly requirement are needs to fulfill in applying for strategic position at works in the country. English become important in many sides. Most of scientific references are written in English; almost all fields of life require English especially in relation with foreigners. Therefore, the education, culture, politics, economics, cannot be far

from English. According to Lauder (as cited in Saputra & Marzulina, 2016), English is widely recognized that English is important for Indonesia and the reason most frequently put forward for this is that English is a global international language. English is not only used in the international community such as ASEAN Economy Community (AEC), Asian Pacific Economy Cooperation (APEC), but also English is playing a major role in many sectors including medicine, engineering, education, advanced studies, business, technology, banking, computing, tourism etc. Ahmad (2016) stated that English language plays a important role to weave the world into the single thread. Thus, English is the most fundamental and common language in this world that is learned by students in most school around the world.

To master English well, students have to study four basic language skills of English. There are various reasons why students must learn four basic language skills of English. Peregy and Boyle (2001) maintain that students should learn four basic languages to develop their own learning and language proficiency by responding verbally as they read, write, speak, listen, and learn in English for functional and meaningful purposes. Also, learning four basic language skills is needed because students use more than one skill to communicate and all skills are learned to provide opportunities for students to develop these skills at the same time (Jing, 2006). Teaching English in senior high school is expected to enable students to reach the level of function in which students are competent at oral and written communication in English to cope with daily needs. Thus, the government need to improve the education system.

In education system, the most important thing besides teacher, tools, and the other is curriculum. Curriculum is used to become the basic concept in education and to be the indicator of the success of education. According to Hamalik (2014), curriculum is very important tool to realize and achieve the goal of education. By definition, curriculum is a set of plans and regulations on the learning objectives, contents, and materials. It is also the way used in guiding the implementation of learning activities to reach certain objectives (Government Regulation (PP) No. 19/2005 Article 3). The practice of students' learning assessment is in line with the applied curriculum. Assessment is one of the

learning components included in the curriculum. Thus, to measure the success of the curriculum, assessment is therefore necessary.

Assessment is needed to identify and gathering information about learners, in order to seek ways of addressing needs and means of overcoming barriers to learning. Based on Permendikbud No 81A (2013), teachers are demanded to implement authentic assessment as the method of assessing the student's competence which promotes learner autonomy and critical thinking as a part of higher order thinking skills. In reality, most teachers still prefer the traditional assessment. It can be clearly seen in several summative test types where the teachers usually used multiple choice test than composing writing. According to Koh (2015), in competency-based curriculum and outcome-based learning, building teachers' capacity in implementing authentic assessment is one of the key priorities in in-service teacher education and professional development. Thus, authentic assessment should be used by teachers in teaching and learning process to achieve the competency needed (Guliker et al., 2014; Zaim and Refnaldi, 2016).

Related to the implementation of 2013 curriculum, authentic assessment is strongly relevant since it can describe students' achievement as it is recommended in the new approach of 2013 curriculum; scientific approach. Thus, it is not only deal with students' achievement and motivation but it also kind of washback for teachers regarding the improvement in their teaching and learning process as well. Thus, the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing can be covered by using authentic assessment. Indeed, teachers may provide some possible specific objectives on their authentic assessment which relevant to their teaching in order to meet the students need that replicate real world performances as closely as possible. Therefore, it is more capable to provide information of students' ability holistically and validly. Moreover, Authentic assessment that used in the evaluation assess the students' readiness, process, and outcomes of learning as a whole. It is similar with the 2013 curriculum learning outcomes which emphasized that an assessment is able to cover attitude competencies (spiritual and social), knowledge, and skills (The Regulation of the Minister of Culture and Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 104 Year 2014,

2014). However, in using authentic assessment, the teacher should to be skillful because of there are probably many problems will be faced by them.

Some investigations on the implementation of authentic assessment have been conducted by previous researchers. Fitriani (2017) conducted a research on the implementation of authentic assessment of 2013 Curriculum. It was described in details that teacher still had limited understanding about 2013 Curriculum. Teacher also thought that the implementation of authentic assessment did not run effectively because of the complex procedure and the class condition. In other words, teacher has been implementing authentic assessment as directed in curriculum 2013. however, the English teacher still experienced some constraints during instructional activities so that assessment process did not run effectively.

In addition, Al Fama (2015), who conducted a study focusing on the implementation of authentic assessment in teaching writing, found that the teachers' knowledge and their experience influenced the implementation of the assessment. The teacher who had sufficient knowledge of the nature and types of authentic assessments implemented it properly. Appropriately employed, authentic assessments could provide feedback on a student's learning to encourage further development. It could improve students' knowledge, deep understanding, problem-solving skills, social skills, and attitudes which could be used in the simulation of a real-world situation. Although this study has depicted the implementation of authentic assessment on the site, it only focuses on writing skill.

From the pre-research, the researcher found that the school is using 2013 curriculum and implementing authentic assessment, which reflects the real situation of the assessment's implementation. It improves from the statement of the vice principal of curriculum implementation in MA Al-Fatah Palembang. He stated that their school have implemented the 2013 curriculum for teaching and learning activity since 2015. The researcher also found that the teachers faced some problem on the use of authentic assessment in English foreign language classroom.

Considering all the issues above, this study aims at describing how the teacher's perceptions on the use of authentic assessment in EFL class and the

barriers in conducting authentic assessment in the English foreign language classroom. By this condition, the we were highly intended to investigate entitled “English Teacher’s Perception on The Use of Authentic Assessment in EFL Classroom: a Qualitative Study”

B. Literature Review

2013 Curriculum

2013 curriculum is a continuation and development of competency based on curriculum that has been initiated in 2004 with the competency that covers the attitude, knowledge, and skills that are integrated. The changing from school-based curriculum to 2013 Curriculum is an effort to renew after evaluating the Curriculum appropriate with the needs of students. Theme of 2013 Curriculum are delivering Indonesia become productive, creative, innovative, affective through strengthening on attitude, skill, and integrated knowledge. Balance point of 2013 Curriculum is aimed the students get better ability in doing observation, interview, associating, and communicating from the learning that students have got. The object of learning in 2013 Curriculum include: natural phenomenon, social, art, and culture. From this approach, the students have attitude competence, skill, and knowledge. So that the students are able to be more competitive.

The Definition of Authentic Assessment

Assessment is directed to measure student’s competence stated in the curriculum. It means that our assessment should be able to measure the students’ moral or religious values, their social attitude, their knowledge, and their skills. Brown (2004) states that alternative in assessment gained its popularity when there was a rebellion against the notion that all people and all skills could be measured by traditional tests. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning process since assessment encompasses the success of teaching and learning. Assessment aims to educate and improve students’ performance (Wiggins, 1989). Thus, assessment is not only as a means to measure the students’ outcome through conducting several tests. On the other hand, it has to help students to perform well in the assessment process.

Authentic assessment is considered as the most effective way in assessing students' performance in the classroom as its ability to assess the whole process of learning rather than just testing students' knowledge at the end of the course. Particularly, based on Permendikbud No.81a Tahun 2013 about the implementation of Curriculum 2013, authentic assessment is an assessment which significantly focuses on measuring student's learning process dealing with their behavior, knowledge and skill. And also in permendikbud No. 104 state that the authentic used to measuring the student in attitude, knowledge, and skill using the Test, Observation, Self- Assessment, Peer Assessment, Performance Assessment, Portfolio Assessment, Project Assessment, Product Assessment, and Journal Assessment.

Characteristic of Authentic Assessment

The following are the characteristics of authentic assessment as described in Bean (1993) and Svinicki (2004):

- 1) Resemble real-world tasks and activities.
- 2) Can be structured as written or oral assessments completed individually, in pairs, or in groups
- 3) Often presented as ill-structured problems with no right answers
- 4) Ask students to communicate their knowledge orally or in writing to a specific audience and for specific purpose
- 5) Usually ask students to address professional or lay audiences.

Types of Authentic Assessment

According to Feuer and Fulton (1993), there are numerous types of authentic assessment used in classroom today. Teacher can select from a number of options to meet specific purposes or adapt approaches to meet instructional and student's needs.

- 1) According to Permendikbud No.81a Tahun 2013, performance assessment is assessment which is conducted by observing student's activities in doing something. The assessment is used to measure the competence which insists student to perform certain task: role-playing, singing, reading poetry, etc. The

implementation of performance assessment should consider the following aspects. Students can perform the right stages in performing their competence. The aspect that will be measured should be complete and proper. Teacher should consider the special skills in finishing the tasks.

- 2) Portfolio assessment is a purposeful collection of student's work that is intended to show progress over time (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996). The portfolio may include samples of student's works, usually selected by the students, or by the students and the teacher to represent learning based on the instructional objectives.

The Technique of Scoring Authentic Assessment

The scoring of authentic assessment should always be defined before the exercises and assessment procedures are developed. According to Nitko (2001) rubrics, checklist, and rating scales are the most frequently technique used in scoring authentic assessment.

- 1) Rubric is scoring guide, consisting of specific pre-established performance criteria, used in evaluating student work on authentic assessments (Mertler, 2001).
- 2) The types of a rating scale. Although there are many varieties of rating scales, three varieties – numerical rating scales, graphic rating scales, and descriptive graphic scale- when used to their full advantage, serve the teacher well for most purposes (Nitko, 2001).
- 3) Checklist consists of a list of specific behaviors, characteristic or activities or a place for marking wither each is presents or absent. Teacher may use a checklist for assessing procedures students use, products students produce, or behaviors students' exhibit.

The Difficulties of Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment is designed by individual teacher or by school districts, a number of difficulties will emerge that need to be addressed concerning the assessment in general and the use of assessment with English

language learners. These include the purpose of assessment, fairness and grading (O'Malley and Peirce, 1996).

- 1) The purpose of authentic assessment with English learners can include identification, placement, re-clarification, and monitoring student's progress. The first three purpose involve extremely important decisions that affect whether or not English language learners receive special language-based instruction, the type of instruction, and the duration over which the instruction continuous
- 2) All students taking authentic assessment should have reasonable opportunities to demonstrate their expertise without confronting barriers. English language learners should be provided opportunities to learn and to demonstrate their mastery of material under circumstances that takes into accounts their special needs.
- 3) Report-card grades are important part of the communication among teachers, students and parents. Grades have two basic purposes in the classroom: to reflect the student's accomplishment and to motivate students (Stiggins, 1988). While grades can indicate the level or rank order of student's performance, there are question about the success in serving and incentives for students to exert greater effort

Previous Related Study

Some investigations on the implementation of authentic assessment have been conducted by previous researchers. Herawati (2019) conducted a research on English teachers' perception of authentic assessment and its implementation of SMA Negeri 1 Widodaren and SMK PGRI 6 Ngawi. It was described in detail that there are difference perceptions of authentic assessment of teacher of SMA Negeri 1 Widodaren with SMK PGRI 6 Ngawi. There are also some problems faced by the teachers such as inability to manage the class, removal of affective column on student's report, lack of teaching learning facilities, limited time allocation, difficulties in determining on scoring rubric item, and the student's lack ability in language skill.

Other research come from Fitri Aliningsih & Ahmad Sofwan (2015) that conducted a research of English teachers' perception and practices of authentic assessment. It was described that the study revealed that the teachers have positive perceptions toward authentic assessment as they agreed that the assessment approach is beneficial to assess students' progresses and achievement. However, the teacher perceived insufficient time, crowded class, exhausting and time consuming activities and also complicated administration as the main problems in applying authentic assessment.

Some related study about the teacher perception of authentic assessment has been conducted by another researcher. Hanifah (2019) conducted a research teacher perception of authentic assessment for assessing students' writing task in the rural area. The research of study showed that teachers in the rural area had similar perception of authentic assessment. The second finding showed that the teachers' problem for applying the assessment such as students' low ability, teachers' objectivity to assess the students, the insufficient facility to conduct authentic assessment, the difficulties to make lesson plan, and the difficulties for conducting time management. For the result, it showed teachers' solution to solve the problem.

C. Research Methodology

Research Design

The design of this study was a qualitative research with a case study. Creswell (2012) states that a case study is a problematic study which focuses on an exploration of the deep understanding about a case or a restricted system, which involves understanding a phenomenon, activity, process, or one or more individuals. Therefore, a qualitative research along with its case study design was the form of this research.

Research site and Participants

In this study, the participants of this study took by using purposeful sampling for qualitative research. They were selected purposively by the assumption that they have rich information (Creswell, 2012) related to authentic assessment. In addition, purposeful sampling is widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood, 2015, p.2). To sum up, purposeful sampling technique is using to choose participants which understand the phenomenon.

At MA Al-Fatah Palembang, we chose two of English teacher by criterion sampling. In the case, we chose the participants based some categories, such as (1) the most experienced teacher, (2) the teachers who taught by using authentic assessment. These criteria are important to my research because they can allow me to gain rich and informative data

D. Results and Discussion

1. Results

The data obtained from the interview analyzed by using a thematic analysis were described as follows.

Table 1 Themes and Codes for English teachers' perception on the use of authentic assessment in EFL classroom.

Themes	Code
Concept of Authentic Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Both teachers felt that authentic assessment was very necessary to be applied in the English subject. Since, it was used to measure students' learning progress as well as student's learning product.➤ Both teachers felt that the assessment concept were influenced by the knowledge they got through the official training of the 2013 curriculum
Types of Authentic Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Both teachers knew about types of authentic assessment such as performance assessment, portofolio, project and also have implemented it because they felt these types were easy to

use

Steps of Authentic Assessment	➤ Teacher had their own technique to conduct authentic assessment such as analyzing the basic competency then determining indicator and then determining the task. They felt this way was simpler during the implementation
Strength and Weakness of Authentic Assessment	➤ Teachers felt time constraints is the main problem of authentic assessment. However, it really measured the students and was actually implemented by teachers and students.

Table 2. Themes and codes for the challenges faced by English teachers on the use of authentic assessment.

Themes	Code
Managing assessment class activity	➤ Teachers had problem in managing time allotment but for the solution, they instructed the student to work in pairs to save more time.
Maintaining consistence scoring	➤ Both Teachers had determined the appropriate assessment to maintain consistence score. However, they felt difficulty when determine the criteria. For the solution, the teachers made rubric simpler, there was no criterion. It was only whole score based on their observation
Monitoring of students' work originality	➤ Teachers had difficulty to overcome plagiarism because they couldn't monitor the student in their home. However, they always reminded students of it before giving the assignment

2. Discussion

Dealing with the definition of authentic assessment, most of the participants define authentic assessment as a kind of assessment to measure student's achievement, progress, and as a holistic assessment which covers

cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The participants' definition regarding authentic assessment was relevant with the definition of authentic assessment proposed by Fitriyani (2014). She defined authentic assessment as an assessment method done by the teachers which aims at describing students' achievement and needs in the teaching learning process through reflection and monitoring.

Regarding the way how they got the information related to definition of authentic assessment, most of the participants obtained the information from training, workshops, internet, and teaching books. However, they got limited information related to the definition about authentic assessment and its implementation in the teaching and learning process. It is relevant to the study conducted by Retnawati, Hadi, and Nugraha (2016) finding that most teachers and vice principals in Yogyakarta found difficulties in using authentic assessment since they had limited information about it, even they had joined training or workshops related to the use of assessment in 2013 Curriculum.

The participants did not have sufficient knowledge regarding to construct the steps of scoring rubric. They are used to make it from analyzing basic competency without any revision. So, sometimes the assessment did not run effectively. It is relevant with the study conducted by Al Fama (2015), who conducted a study focusing on the implementation of authentic assessment in teaching writing, found that the teachers' knowledge and their experience influenced the implementation of the assessment. The teacher who had sufficient knowledge of the nature and types of authentic assessments implemented it properly.

Related to the barriers found during the use of authentic assessment in the teaching and learning process. First, managing assessment in class activity. This barrier usually happened and affect the implementation in the teaching process. Besides, the total number of students in submitting the tasks became other contributing factors. Those problems were relevant to the study conducted by Fithriyani (2014). She found that there were four challenges in conducting authentic assessment, such as: managing time, putting fairness and purpose of the assessment, and teachers' objectivity. Thus, in order to solve the barriers, most participants used schedule which is based on the teaching objectives. It based on

the materials covered in the syllabus. If it had lots of materials to be tested, they would like to use non-authentic test and if it was not, they would like to use authentic assessment. It is in line with The Regulation of the Minister of Culture and Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 104 Year 2014 which stated that there are two kinds of assessment to be used: authentic and non-authentic assessment. In line with the Regulation, Fithriyani (2014) suggested four steps in solving the challenges in conducting authentic assessment. First, teachers have to define the purpose of the assessment related to the instructional objectives in order to bring consistent combination on the extent to those purposes. Second, Teachers have to lead students to learn how to express critical thinking towards the problem given in the assignment. Third, teachers have to manage time-allotment well if they want to implement this assessment. The last, teachers have to use inter-rater reliability to ensure consistency and fairness.

E. Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the conclusion described above, the researcher would like to convey some suggestions that it was important to use authentic assessment in EFL Classroom activities. In this context, the writer's suggestions were oriented to the teacher, curriculum coordinator and further researcher.

By knowing the concept of authentic assessment in EFL Classroom. The researcher hopes teacher can improve the whole process of classroom assessment. Despite the complicated procedure, teacher is highly endorsed to acquire in-depth knowledge about the authentic assessment; how it should professionally be developed, appropriately be administered and objectively be scored. She should be more pro-active to vary the classroom instructional activities and the assessment tasks to encourage students in learning and to motivate them to produce good tasks. Furthermore, to be less dependent on the available scoring rubrics, she could start to design her own more applicative scoring instruments which have been adjusted to meet the curriculum content and the level absolutely essential as valid judgment can only be derived from reliable scoring instruments.

Next, the researcher hopes the curriculum coordinator of MA Al-Fatah Palembang can get some significant information about the using of authentic

assessment. The data of teachers' difficulties can be used as a consideration to develop the management of curriculum in the school.

Finally, the researcher hopes that the present study can be useful for the next future researcher who are interested to excavate more information about the function of using authentic assessment in EFL Classroom.

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