

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION REGARDING CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT IN SCHOOL-BASED CURRICULUM

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Abstract. Classroom Assessment (CA) involves students and teachers in the continuous monitoring of students' learning (Angelo and Cross, 1993) as it provides teacher with feedback about their effectiveness as teachers, and it gives students a measure of their progress as learners. For many instructors, *assessment* just means *grading*, but it actually entails much more than this. When designed thoughtfully and implemented carefully, assessments can provide important evidence about what and how students are learning and whether course goals have been met. This study was intended to explore teachers' perception regarding classroom assessment that implemented in school-based curriculum, and also to identify the teachers' experience in conducting classroom assessment. The data were collected from questionnaire of two sections. The first section consists of twenty five items exploring teachers' perception on classroom assessment in school-based curriculum. While the second section consists of 15 items that deal with the way teachers conduct CA based on their experience. Therefore, three English teachers who implemented school-based curriculum were chosen as the subject of the study. The result indicated that teachers have a comprehensive understanding toward classroom assessment regarding its principles and teachers role in classroom assessment. Further, in implementing the CA, the teachers also used various techniques and methods such as portfolio and performance assessment instead of relied on pen and paper test only.

Key words: *perception, classroom assessment, school-based curriculum.*

Introduction

The assessment conducted in classroom or mainly known as *Classroom Assessment* (CA) is a major component of Classroom Research. It involves student and teachers in the continuous monitoring of students' learning (Angelo and Cross, 1993). It also provides teacher with feedback about their effectiveness as teachers, and it gives students a measure of their progress as learners. For many instructors, *assessment* in practice is just means *grading*. However, it actually entails much more than this. When designed thoughtfully and implemented carefully, assessments can provide important evidence about what and how students are learning and whether course goals have been met (Steinkuehler & Derry, 2001; Angelo & Cross, 1993). Further, it would be reasonable to require

assessment to *serve*, by providing feedback on pupils' learning that would make the next teaching events more effective, in a positive, upwards direction (Cameron, 2001, p. 215). In this case, Cohen (2005, p.17) added that assessment can provide an opportunity for learners to learn about what they know and do not know, but only if the feedback from assessment is intelligible to them.

In practice, the changing paradigms of education from the behaviorist to the constructivist, contributes some consequences to any aspects of teaching and learning process, including to the assessment conducted by the teacher in classroom (Sudrajat, 2008). On the view of old paradigm, learning assessment put more emphasize on the *product* that tend to give a high priority in assessing the cognitive aspects of the learners, while disregard the other significance aspects of learning such as the psychomotor and the affective ones. This is indeed against to the idea of constructivist which perceives assessment as to not only measure learners' cognitive competence, but also include all aspects of learners' characteristics such as moral development, emotional, social and other individual aspects of the learners learning. In fact, the changing curriculum from the *content based* to *competency based curriculum* implemented in *school-based curriculum* (SBC) particularly in Indonesia, has put the assessment as one of significance curriculum components in teaching learning process that should get a high consideration and attention from the school and also from the teacher (Sanjaya, 2008, p. 349). In this curriculum, teacher was given the authority to construct their own assessment in assessing students' performance. However, the assessment techniques used by the teacher should not based on the "traditional" one in a form of test only, but should be developed and combined also with other "alternative" techniques, such as performance, project, paper and pen, portfolio, attitude, and product assessment (Sanjaya, 2008; Malley & Pierce, 1996).

Unfortunately, deals with other responsibilities of teaching such as materials development in SBC, then assessment is sometimes considered as a burden. The reasons of this condition might deal with the ongoing process of assessment on three aspects of learning (i.e cognitive, affective and psychomotor) that takes time indeed. Besides, the inadequate knowledge of the teacher to develop appropriate assessment in teaching linked to the teaching objectives also becomes one of the reasons causes this condition. Therefore, the assessment tends to be applied imprecisely and inaccurately without having a good preparation. Beckmann, Senk and Thompson (1997) also support the ideas indicated that there are three reasons why teachers do not use multiple assessment methods. First, some teachers had limited knowledge of different forms of assessment. Second, teachers felt they had no time to create different forms of assessment. Third, teachers felt there was little or no professional guidance; therefore, they (teachers) were not confident enough to try out other forms of assessments.

Due to the practical fact of teaching as mentioned above, then it was considered important to come up with an idea to conduct a research on teachers' perception regarding classroom assessment in school-based curriculum, which mainly focused on teachers' understanding on classroom assessment in SBC and the way they assessed their students' performance. This idea was mainly underlined on some basic reasons.

First, teacher's perception toward classroom assessment is highly required as the input to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented classroom assessment and teachers' understanding on it. This idea is indeed closely related to the idea of language assessment proposed by Cohen (2005, p.5) that classroom teachers sometimes find themselves in both roles, as *developer* and user. For this reason, it is crucial for the classroom teacher to have a clear idea of how assessment will be conducted in the classroom.

Second, the selection of some English teachers in one public junior high school in Bandung as the subject of investigation was based on an observation indicated that this school has implemented school-based curriculum, which means that the teachers has also required to assess their students based on classroom assessment in SBC.

Although many previous research reports have given a comprehensive portrait on classroom assessment in SBC, this issue is still regarded significant to be further investigated particularly on its senses of teachers' perception on classroom assessment and on how they conduct the classroom assessment in classroom teaching and learning.

The School-based curriculum

The term "school-based curriculum development" (SBCD) had great currency in 1970s and 1980s of educational literature. However, in many countries the term dropped out of use during the late 1980s/early 1990s (Bolstad, 2004). Bezzina (1991) identifies *collaboration* among school staff as a defining feature of SBCD. School-based curriculum development does not necessarily entail the creation of entirely new curricula within schools (Brady, 1992; Marsh et al, 1990). Bezzina (1991) suggests that SBCD can involve at least three kinds of activity, which are *creating* new curricula; *adapting* existing curricula; and even *adopting* an existing curriculum unchanged. In the 1970s and 1980s, SBCD was seen as a solution to many of the problems of school education. These included perceptions that centralized curricula were too slow to keep pace with changing social and educational environments. SBCD was also strongly tied to a view that teachers should be developers, rather than simply transmitters of curriculum. Today, central concerns for SBCD include developing school curricula to reflect local needs, bringing students and other people into the school curriculum development process (Bolstad, 2004).

Specifically in Indonesia, the school-based curriculum is sustained by the Law No.20/2003 on The Standard of National Education that determines the school-based curriculum as an operational curriculum, which is designed and implemented by each educational institution or school (Sanjaya, 2008, p.128). As an operational curriculum, although the school was given the authority to develop the curriculum, the authority is just intended to the operational development only, while operational criterion such as the content, the learning outcome, expected competencies, etc remain arranged by the central government. In addition, the school-based curriculum developers are obliged to give prior attention to the local characteristics of the school. Furthermore, those developers have opportunity to

develop the curriculum into subject units to determine teaching and learning strategy, method, media and also the evaluation.

The school-based curriculum has its general and specific purposes in the implementation. In general, the purpose of SBC implementation is to endeavor and to set an independency of an educational institution or school by providing the autonomy to them. By doing this, it is expected that the school is forced to take a decision by themselves in the curriculum development. In addition, one of the specific purposes of the SBC is that to improve the educational quality through autonomy and school initiative in developing, managing and making use of the available resources.

Although SBC is seen as a solution to many of the problems of school education especially in improving school autonomy in developing curriculum, it remains have several weaknesses in the implementation. The weaknesses of the SBC (Hanafie, 2007) are the lack of competence or capable human resources to elaborate SBC on school; insufficient facilities to support the SBC implementation; and lack of understanding on the concept, design and practical of the teacher to understand the SBC comprehensively.

The Classroom Assessment

There is enough evidence suggesting that assessment in schools mainly refers to tests, examinations and grading (Bezuk et al., 2001; Lissitz and Schafer, 2002; Van de Walle, 2001). School leaders have reached a point of believing that one cannot assess without assigning grades (Lissitz and Schafer, 2002). Although tests seem to be popular in schools, teachers seem to have different skills and views about tests. A study by Morgan and Watson (2002) revealed that different teachers interpreted similar students' work differently. McMillan (2001) studied the actual classroom assessment and grading practices of secondary school teachers in relation to specific class and determined whether meaningful relationships existed between teacher's assessment practices, grade level, subject matter, and ability levels of students. McMillan found that there was no meaningful relationship between teacher's assessment practices, grade level, subject matter and ability level.

Sanjaya (2008, p. 350) added that Classroom Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning process conducted as a process for collecting and making use information comprehensively regarding students' achievement in learning that will be used to make a judgment on students' learning and function as a feedback to teaching learning process. As a feedback, classroom assessment provides teacher with information about their effectiveness as teachers, and it gives students a measure of their progress as learners. Most important, because Classroom Assessments are created, administered, and analyzed by teachers themselves on questions of teaching and learning that are important to them, the likelihood that instructors will apply the results of the assessment to their own teaching is greatly enhances. Classroom Assessment helps individual college teachers obtain useful feedback on what, how much, and how well their students are learning. Teacher can then use this information to refocus their teaching to help students make their learning more efficient and more effective.

Classroom Assessment is particularly useful for checking how well students are learning at those initial and intermediate points, and for providing information for improvement when learning is less than satisfactory. Through practice in Classroom Assessment, teacher become better able to understand and promote learning, and increase their ability to help the students themselves become more effective, self-assessing, self-directed learners. Simply mention, the central purpose of Classroom Assessment is to empower both teachers and their students to improve the quality of learning in the classroom.

Nevertheless, a variety of assessment tools should be used to measure complex achievement targets, and that these tools should depend upon the students and the subject matter being assessed. Brown (2004) elaborates that there are some alternatives or assessment tools that might be used instead of tests in assessing students' language performance. Those alternatives are *performance-based assessment, portfolios, self- and peer assessment, conference and interview, observation, and journals*. Performance assessment consists of any form of assessment in which the student construct a response orally or in writing (Feuer and Fulton, 1993; Herman et al, 1992; as cited in O'Malley and Pierce, 1996, p. 4).

- a. *Performance assessment* requires students to “accomplish complex and significant task, while bringing to bear point knowledge, recent learning, and relevant skills to solve realistic or authentic problem”, such as oral reports, writing samples, individual and group projects, exhibition, and demonstration.
- b. *Portfolio* in the one hand is a systematic collection of students' work that is analyzed to show progress over time with regard to instructional objectives. Examples of portfolio assessment include writing samples, reading logs, drawings, audio or videotapes, and/or teacher and student comment on progress made by the students.
- c. *Self- and peer assessment*. Student self-assessment is a key element in authentic assessment and in-self regulated learning, the motivated and strategic efforts of students to accomplish specific purposes. It promotes direct involvement in learning and the integration of cognitive ability with motivation and attitude toward learning.
Brown and Hudson (1998) as mentioned in Brown (2004, p. 270) agree that self- and peer- assessment offer certain benefits such as direct involvement of students in their won destiny, the encouragement of autonomy, and increased motivation because of their self-involvement.
- d. *Conference and interview*. Conferences have been a routine part of language classrooms, especially in writing. Conference must assume that teacher plays the role of a facilitator and guide, not of an administrator of a formal assessment. While interview is intended to denote a context in which a teacher interviews a students for a designated assessment purpose.
- e. *Observation*. One of the objectives of such observation is to assess students without their awareness of the observation so that the naturalness of their linguistic performance is maximized. Recording observation can take the form of anecdotal records, checklist, or rating scales.

- f. *Journal* is a log of one's thought feelings, reactions, assessment, ideas, or progress toward goals usually written with little attention to structure, form or correctness.

There are some defining characteristics of the alternatives in assessments (Brown & Hudson, 1998; as cited in Brown (2004, p. 252). The alternatives in assessment at least requires students to perform, create, produce, or do something; use real-world context or simulations; are nonintrusive in that they extend the day-to-day classroom activities; allow students to be assessed on what they normally do in class every day; use tasks that represent meaningful instructional activities; focus on processes as well as products; tap into higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills; provide information about both the strengths and weaknesses of students; ensure that people, not machines, do the scoring, using human judgment; encourage open disclosure of standards and rating criteria; and call upon teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles.

Moreover, Sudrajat (2008) also added that the scope of learning assessment should not only cover the cognitive aspects as commonly occur, but should also cover the affective and psychomotor domains of learning. Cognitive aspects here emphasize on the knowledge or include language and logical intelligence of the students. Besides, the affective domain deals with the attitude and value or something that include inter and intrapersonal intelligence or emotional intelligence. Finally, the psychomotor domain underlies the kinesthetic, visual-spatial and musical intelligence.

Today, various stakeholders use classroom assessments for many purposes (Rieg, 2007). Teachers use assessments to inform decisions, to determine instructional strategies and, at times, to control student behavior. Students use assessments to set personal academic expectations, to compare how hard they worked and how much the teacher's assessment indicates what they have learned, and to decide how to study and prepare for future assessments. Parents use assessments to set expectations for their children, plan educational resources, set study environments, and help with instruction (Stiggins, 1992). Stiggins and Chappuis (2005) as quoted by Rieg (2007) identified four conditions that need to be satisfied in order to ensure the effective use of assessment to reduce achievement gaps: 1) Assessment development must be guided by a clear purpose 2) Assessment must accurately reflect the learning expectations 3) Assessment methods must be capable of reflecting the intended targets and also act as a tool for teaching to proficiency, and 4) Communication of assessment results to students must be timely, understandable, and helpful.

Methodology

This study employed a questionnaire survey as the primary data collection technique to answer the research questions. Here, the questionnaire was divided into two parts. First part consisted of twenty five items questions, which were addressed to answer the first research question toward teachers' perception regarding classroom assessment in SBC. The second part was 15-items that intended to answer the second research question due to the way teacher assess

their students learning. In order to spread out the vary responses of the participants; the statements were set in positive and negative statements. Each item statements were then measured using Likert-scaling from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, for the first section, while the second section was measured based on their frequency of the implementation of classroom assessment. The formulation of those questionnaires was expected to perform the teachers' actual responses toward the topic.

As a result, a descriptive qualitative approach was used to interpret and analyze the findings in a descriptive way, based on the quantitative data from the questionnaires. However, since the study was the case study design of three English teachers of one public junior high school in Bandung, then the findings of the study may not be generalized as the whole/general representation of teachers' perception toward classroom assessment in SBC.

Findings and Discussion

This part concerned with data analysis, regarding findings and discussion, and interpretation on the findings. Moreover, in analyzing the data, the writer used the numbers and percentage. The number here aims to shows the total numbers of the respondents' responses to each item statement, while the percentage confirms the range of the each item due to its significance on classroom assessment.

In this part, all data collected from the questionnaires were put into the table. The data on the table were arranged based on the responses for the first section consisted of twenty five items, and the second section of 15 items. Further, after accomplished step by step calculations, the percentage of each item was then interpreted based on the criteria of scores interpretation as proposed by Riduwan (2008). The scores interpretation has a comprehension range of scores, as follows: item percentage of 0-20 % is interpreted as very insignificant, 21-40% is insignificant, 41-60% is sufficient/enough, 61-80% is interpreted as significant, and 81-100% as very significant. This interpretation was intended to identify the significance of that particular item based on teachers' perception toward classroom assessment, mainly due to their perception for answering the first research question. While the second section analysis was in line with the frequency of the implementation in conducting classroom assessment.

The result of descriptive statistics from the first section (as can be seen in Table I below), indicated that there was no any statement perceived by the teachers as very insignificant concerning the classroom assessment in SBC. In other words, all the 25 items were taken into account among the range of insignificant to the very significant aspects in classroom assessment. From all data, five items statement (no. 1, 12, 14, 18, 23) were considered as insignificant with the range between 21-40%. Further, there were five items also (no. 4, 5, 11, 13, 16) having the portion of sufficient between the range 41%-60%. In addition, seven items statement on number 3, 6, 7, 10, 19, 24 and 25 with the range among 61%-80% perceived as significant to classroom assessment in SBC. Finally, having the highest percentages of the total result between 81%-100%, eight statements are then considered as very significant in classroom assessment.

**Table I. Results of Descriptive Statistics from Section 1
“Teachers’ Perception toward Classroom Assessment in SBC”**

No	Items Statements	N	Percentage
1	Assessment, evaluation and test have the same understanding	3	40 %
2	One of the purposes of assessment is to identify students’ level of competence	3	87 %
3	Assessment system in school-based curriculum is more comprehensive and effective rather than the assessment in the previous curriculum	3	73 %
4	Assessment is the most difficult component in SBC implementation	3	53 %
5	Cognitive aspect (knowledge) is the most prominent aspect in classroom assessment of SBC	3	53 %
6	Classroom assessment in SBC is more emphasized on product oriented of students’ learning	3	67 %
7	Classroom assessment in SBC acquires the system of mastery learning (<i>pembelajaran tuntas</i>)	3	80 %
8	Assessment tool or techniques used by the teacher must be fit to the competence that will be achieved	3	87 %
9	Portfolio is one of the assessment techniques in SBC	3	87 %
10	Students’ learning achievement is one of the measurement of teaching success in class	3	80 %
11	Written test is most appropriate considered as the effective techniques to measure students’ learning due to the assessment principles of SBC	3	53 %
12	Assessment of students achievement cannot be done during the learning process	3	40 %
13	Performance assessment is appropriate to assess students’ writing competence	3	53 %
14	Students do not need to know the assessment types or procedure and criterion of assessment	3	40 %
15	Students’ learning achievement should be published and returned to them	3	100 %
16	All assessment process should be done only by the teacher without having students participation in it	3	53 %
17	Students’ learning achievement must be function as the feedback for the teacher toward the success of teaching process	3	93 %
18	Teachers do not require to provide feedback to every students’ work	3	27 %
19	Assessment is important for the students to recognize their strength and weakness in learning	3	80 %
20	Teachers should be fair and objective in assessing the students	3	93 %
21	Teachers have to have competence and understanding toward CA before assess the students	3	87 %
22	Classroom assessment has to be planned well by the teacher	3	93 %

	before entering the class		
23	Affective aspect is difficult to be measured	3	40 %
24	Observation technique can be used to observe students' attitude	3	80 %
25	Teacher and school must get the autonomy to construct their own assessment	3	80 %

The finding of the section one indicated that the respondents have vary perceptions on the classroom assessments, due to its basic principles, functions, techniques, and also students' and teachers' role in conducting CA. That finding immediately has answered the first research question about the teachers' perception toward classroom assessment in school-based curriculum. First, it is obvious that all respondents give a positive perception toward the basic principles of CA and teachers' role (items number 15, 17, 20 and 22). Here, majority of the respondents were strongly agree that the students' learning achievement should be returned to them as a feedback for the students' and also for the teachers toward the success of the teaching process. Besides, they also insist that the teachers should be fair and objective in assessing the students and they should have a good assessment planning that have been made before the classroom begun. This information is actually in line with Rieg's idea stated that communication of assessment results to students must be timely, understandable and helpful in order to help the students to improve their learning process. Further, as a feedback, classroom assessment provides teacher with feedback about their effectiveness as teachers, and it gives students a measure of their progress as learners. By making use of the feedback, the students are able to know on what, how much, and how well they are learning (Angelo and Cross, 1993, Slavin, 1994). Further, teacher can also use this information to refocus their teaching to help students make their learning more efficient and effective. Further, by being fair and objective, teachers may promote students' motivation in learning (Stiggins, 2005).

In addition, the agree position goes to several items number 2,3,6,7,8,9,10,19,21,24,25 regarding the functions of CA, the effectiveness of CA in school-based curriculum, the basic principles of CA in SBC, assessment methods linked to the objectives and expected competence, and also the autonomy that should be given to the school and teachers in conducting CA. This is in line with the concept of school based curriculum as mentioned by Sanjaya (2008) that the SBC provide more opportunity for the school developers to develop the curriculum into subject units to determine teaching and learning strategy, method, media and also the evaluation. On the opposite way, the majority of the respondents gave the opponent perception on several items (number 1,4,5,11,12,13,14,16,23). Those nine items were basically the items that constructed in negative statement or even in the opposite principles of the right one. Therefore, the given answers of the oppose position was actually strengthen the right ideas toward the statement.

Although the implementation of CA in school-based curriculum was considered complicated, however, the respondents here showed the opposite condition of the common assumption. This condition is might be influenced by the teaching background of the teachers who has taught English for more than five

years. This teaching experience actually can determine the effectiveness in implementing the curriculum or especially in conducting classroom assessment (Hanafie, 2007).

Furthermore, the result of the section 2 regarding the way teachers conducting classroom assessment (as clearly seen in the following Table II) indicated that all teachers have vary experience in conducting CA. The answers of item number one pointed out that the CA conducted by the teachers did not only emphasize on cognitive aspects only, but also other aspects such as affective and psychomotor. Besides, it seems that they did not face significant problem in conducting CA. Related to the students' involvement in CA, it was obvious that they sometimes or even never involve the students in assessing their own performance. It was supported by the answer of item 9 that all type of test was determined by the teacher.

However, it was quite contrasted to item number 11 in which most teachers were often gave opportunity for the students to assess their own work and also their peers' work. In the portion of the techniques and methods, teachers often have criterions of assessment, and used various assessment methods such as performance assessment, written tests and also portfolio (items number 4, 6, 14). Here, the preparation of the teachers in conducting CA was also good that was seen in the answer of item number 10 that they were often and always planned the assessment process in lesson plan. Since the feedback is essential in improving students learning, the result was actually contradicted to the basic principles of feedback in assessment. Here, the teachers were not usually gave feedback in written forms and majority of them did not return the students' work including the feedback and correction in a specified time at least in five days after the assessment conducted.

**Table II. Results of Descriptive Statistics from Section 2
"Teachers' Experience in Conducting Classroom Assessment"**

NO	Item	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1	I did classroom assessment that more emphasized on cognitive aspect			67 %	33 %
2	I faced difficulties in determining assessment techniques that is appropriate with targeted competencies			67 %	33 %
3	I involve students in the process of assessment			67 %	33 %
4	I use certain format and assessment criterion to assess students competence		100 %		
5	Written test is the most common technique used in CA		33 %	67 %	
6	I use performance technique to assess students' speaking competence		100 %		
7	I give written feedback and correction to students work	33 %		67 %	

8	All assessment procedure were planned in the beginning of the semester in the lesson plan	67 %	33 %		
9	I determined all types of tests that will be given to the students	33 %	67 %		
10	Students are given the opportunity to correct their mistakes and improve their score	33 %	67 %		
11	Students are allowed to assess their own performance and also to assess their peers work		67 %	33 %	
12	I give quiz at the end of every meeting			100 %	
13	I explain the criterion and assessment techniques to the students clearly	33 %	67 %		
14	I use portfolio as one of classroom assessment techniques		33 %	67 %	
15	Students' learning results including feedback and correction were returned in at least five days after being assessed.	33 %		67 %	

The findings of the second section showed that the respondents in this case the teachers employing various ways in conducting CA. In assessing students' competence, the teachers here did not emphasize on cognitive aspects only, but considered other aspects of learning, which are affective and psychomotor. This idea is in line to Sudrajat (2008) ideas that classroom assessment in SBC should cover all three domain of learning including cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Furthermore, in terms of the techniques and methods used in assessing their students, the teachers also used various techniques, such as performance assessment, written and also portfolio assessment. This implementation is actually correlated with what is stated by Sanjaya (2008) and MGMP (2006), in which classroom assessment does not only focus on traditional technique such as pen and paper test or written test, but may be developed by collaborating other techniques likes portfolio, project, product, self-assessment, performance, and others.

Conclusion

Assessment is one of the important components in curriculum. The implementation of assessment requires teachers' understanding toward the principles and how to conduct the assessment appropriately, so that the students' learning achievement might be measured accurately. In the implementation of school-based curriculum, teachers are required to assess all aspects of learning (affective, psychomotor and affective aspects) by employing various techniques of assessment. The techniques here should be developed based on the learning objectives that do not rely on paper and pencil test, but also include other

techniques such as portfolio, project, performance assessment, self-and peer assessment, etc.

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