Classroom Assessment Preference of Indonesian Junior High School Teachers in English as Foreign Language Classes

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Abstract
This study was conducted using a mix method design with 24 Indonesian junior high school English teachers as respondents who completed the questionnaire on classroom assessment practices. Six respondents participated in an interview and observation to further clarify their practices on classroom assessment. The study found that an Indonesian Junior High School English Teachers main purpose of classroom assessment was assessment *for* learning as the first preference. It was then followed by the classroom assessment of learning. And the last purpose was classroom assessment as learning. The most frequently used of classroom assessment *for* learning for Indonesian English Junior High School teachers was to group their students for instruction purposes in the class. The most frequently used of classroom assessment *of* learning among Indonesian teachers was to determine the final grades for students and to provide information to the central administration.
Key words: assessment, learning, preference

1. Introduction

The importance of classroom assessment in Indonesia has been increasingly recognized since the change of old curriculum paradigm into the newest concept of curriculum that places students as the center of learning. More specifically, it becomes a teachers and government's concern when the new curriculum is implemented in both countries.

The educators of Indonesia realize that classroom assessment should be viewed as a process rather than as a product in which assessment purpose is not only a matter of getting the students' score and determining whether they pass the requirements or not but it is more on how to know the students' progress in learning and mediating them to get success in learning. This paradigm is in line with Black and Wiliam's (1998) statement in which they said that educators are forbidden to see a classroom as a black box where certain inputs, pupils, teachers, other resources, management rules and requirements, parental anxieties, standards, tests with high stakes, and so on, from the outside are fed into the box. Some outputs are supposed to follow: pupils who are more knowledgeable and competent, better test results, teachers who are reasonably satisfied, and so on. But educators have to realize that a classroom is a place for the students to construct knowledge through critical thinking, manipulatives, primary resources, and hands-on activities (Piaget in Weegar, 2012). Thus, classroom assessment is a part of educators' work to promote students in accommodating this function.

Stiggins (2004) also reflects a similar perspective. He suggests that educators replace their assessment of learning with a more balanced approach, using not only assessment *of* learning but also assessment *for* learning. That is, teachers should use assessment not only to actively and continuously measure a learner's progress but also to acquire useful data to inform their own instructional practice. More recently, assessment discourse has shifted to assessment as learning that identifies feedback to students as being central to the teaching and learning process (Hattie & Brown, 2008).

With this current view of assessment, the practices of classroom assessment have brought a lot of changes in the way educators perceive it, especially in Indonesia. Assessment is not, however, being implemented in just the traditional sense of assessing learning for accountability purposes like grades, graduation, admissions, certification, or licensure. Instead, assessment has itself become a medium embodying and setting the stage for learning (Black & Wiliam, 2005).

Apart from the regulation, not all of the English teachers in Indonesia are fully aware in the implementation of proper classroom assessment practices in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. This is because ELL students come from very different backgrounds and often face multiple challenges in the classroom. To complicate matters further, teachers lack practical, research-based information, resources, and strategies needed to access EFL students. Other challenges included the lack of tools to teach EFL students as well as appropriate assessments to diagnose student needs and measure student learning. Teachers also expressed frustration over the wide range of English language and academic levels and the fact that they received little professional development or in-service training on how to access EFL (Roekel, 2008).

This study explored on how English teachers in Indonesia practice their classroom assessment in ELL classes. Specifically, it focused on knowing their purpose, methods and procedures. Most of the researchers in classroom assessment focused on finding the impact of some assessment techniques on students' achievement and motivation (Pujihati and Suwarni, 2014); Pitono, 2012 and Rosaline, 2011), and also the washback effect of assessment toward the EFL students learning (Syafei , 2012; Sukyadi and Mardiani, 2011).

2. Review Of Literature

The current practices of classroom assessment in the 21st Century are influenced much with the concept of constructive learning. Constructivism assumes that knowledge is actively constructed by individuals. The constructivist perspective is based on the view that knowledge is internal and personal to the individual. There is no such thing as absolute knowledge. Different individuals will have different understandings of their learning and will create their own meanings (Cheng, 2008) Thus, constructivists claim that classroom assessment is diverse, employs authentic tasks reflecting an interactive language use, such as those used in the social and cultural life of the individual, and it addresses learning process, as well as learning outcomes, is an ongoing process, integrated with instruction, used formatively in support of student learning (Shepard, 2000).

This new paradigm of classroom assessment purpose brings into current thinking of assessment where assessment can be put as learning, for learning and of learning.

Assessment as Learning

Assessment as learning emerges with the current beliefs of constructivist learning theory. Elliot (2002) states that constructivist learning involves two things, meaning and action. This means that the learner must seek meaning by doing it herself, not others doing it for her. If learning is to develop competency, individual students must develop it by themselves. Thus, assessment must include students' assessment to both their product and process of learning. Furthermore, people learn best when they can assume control of their own learning. This implies that it is not just teachers who need assessment skills but also learners, as the purpose of assessment is to support learning (Absolum, Flockton, Hattie, Hipkins, & Reid (2009) in Stiggins (2002). Earl and Katz (2006) also expose when students are active, engaged, and critical assessors, they make sense of information, relate it to prior knowledge, and use it for new learning. It occurs when students monitor their own learning and use the feedback from this monitoring to make adjustments, adaptations, and even major changes in what they understand.

Assessment as learning is characterized by students reflecting on their own learning and making adjustments so that they achieve deeper understanding. Students engage in personal evaluation of their learning and also use the obtained information to improve their learning and academic career. Assessment as learning helps the students to discover their own mistakes and also, learn from their peers in order to improve their learning (Earl, 2003).

Assessment as learning involves students in becoming more responsible participants in the whole learning process. They understand the purposes of their work; generate personal learning goals that link into the broader Standards they are working towards; ask themselves metacognitive questions to actively reflect on their progress; and regularly undertake informal and formal self and peer assessment (Stiggins, 2004).

Teachers can follow some models of this assessment in order to practise it in their classroom such as discussing the learning outcomes with the students; creating criteria with the students for the various tasks that need to be completed and/or skills that need to be learned or mastered, providing feedback to students as they learn and ask them guiding questions to help them monitor their own learning; helping students set goals to extend or support their learning as needed in order to meet or fully meet the expectations; providing reference points and examples for the learning outcomes (WNCP, 2006).

Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning happens in the middle of learning, often more than once, rather that at the end. It is interactive, with teachers providing assistance as part of the assessment (Earl, 2003) Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence. (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and Wiliam, 2004).

According to Stiggins (2002) when teachers assess for learning, teachers use the classroom assessment process and the continuous flow of information about learners that it provides in order to advance, not merely to check on the learner learning. They do this by understanding and articulating in advance of teaching, the achievement targets that their learners are to hit, informing learners about those learning goals from the beginning of the learning process, becoming assessment literate and be able to transform their expectations into assessment exercises and scoring procedure that accurately reflect learner achievement.

Teacher also uses classroom assessment for learning to build learner confidence in them as learners and help them take responsibility of their learning so as to lay a foundation for life learning. Teachers also translate classroom assessment results into frequent descriptive feedback (versus judgemental feedback) for learners, providing them with specific insights as to how to improve and continuously adjust instruction based on the results of classroom assessments and Engaging Learners are engaged in regular self–assessment, with standards held constant so that learners can watch themselves grow over time and thus feel in charge of their own success (Stiggins, 2002).

Assessment of Learning

At the current juncture, almost all classroom assessments in a traditional environment is summative assessment of learning, focused on measuring learning after the fact and used for categorizing students and reporting these

judgments to others. (Earl, 2013) Assessment of learning is equivalent to summative assessment when it is used in the learning process. Assessment of learning is a single shot appraisal that involves examining what the students have learnt and the study program at the end of a given course(s).

Assessment of learning is used to understand whether the students have attained the required knowledge in totality at the end the course(s) they have undertaken (Gipps, 1994). Results from assessment of learning provide accurate and sound statement of students' proficiency, so that the recipients of the information can use the information to make reasonable and defensible decisions (Earl & Katz, 2006).

3.   Research Methods

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' practices of classroom assessment in Indonesia**.** Therefore, to meet the goal of the study, the research methods adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

A mixed method design, as described by Creswell (2008), was used to answer the research questions. A mixed method approach offers several strategies for research, depending on: (1) the sequence of the data collection methods, and (2) the degree of importance given to each method (Creswell, 2003). A concurrent nested strategy was chosen for this study. Qualitative and quantitative data collections were done concurrently, meaning that a particular sequence was not followed (e.g., qualitative data collection followed by quantitative data collection or vice-versa). It also means that the quantitative method is dominant in relation to the qualitative one (which is the embedded method) since the two address research questions in different ways.

The participants of this study were taken from six high schools of Banyumas Regency with total number of 24 teachers. One teacher from each school was selected as participant of interview and observation to clarify his/her classroom assessment practices alongside other 6 teachers. The questionnaire and interview was used in this research because it can reach a large number of people relatively quickly and with minimal expenditure (Ary, et al., 2006.). The questionnaire was adopted from Liying Cheng, Todd Rogers and Huiqin Hu classroom assessment practice questionnaire (2004) with some modification. Permission in using the questionnaire was obtained through e mail correspondence. Twelve respondents participated in a face-to-face interview. All interviews basically followed the same format and questions prepared prior to the interview. The researcher kept maintaining the flow of natural conversation if the interviewee cannot meet any additional explanation on a question.

4.   Findings and Discussion

4.1 Classroom Assessment for Learning

Table 1 presents the result of Indonesian English teachers' purposes in doing classroom assessment *for* learning. In general, it can be seen that the highest percentage of doing classroom assessment for learning for Indonesian English teachers was "*to group students for instruction purposes in my class*", with 100%. The lowest percentage was *to prepare their students for standardized tests in the future (e.g. National Examinations, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Test of English as International Communication (TOEIC), or College English Test (CET)*, with 21 responses or 87.50%.

In detail*, obtaining information on students' progress* was the second main purpose of Indonesian teachers' classroom assessment for learning with 95.83%. The following purpose which have the same percentage was "*to plan instruction, diagnose strengths and weaknesses in their own teaching and instruction and provide feedback to students as they progress through the course"* with 91.87% (n=22).

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Classroom Assessment for learning Purposes by Indonesian Teachers

Purposes/reasons	Indonesian Teachers	
	F	**P**
To group my students for instruction purposes in my class	24	100%
To obtain information on my students' progress	23	95.83%
To plan my instruction	22	91.87%
To diagnose strengths and weaknesses in my own teaching and instruction	22	91.87%
To provide feedback to my students as they progress through the course	22	91.87%
To prepare students for standardized tests they would need to take in the future	21	87.50%
Mean	**22.33**	**93.06%**

Furthermore, qualitative findings through interviews also indicated that Indonesian English teachers' purposes more mainly focused on classroom assessment for learning. Indonesian English teachers also believe that classroom assessment could help them identify their students' strength and weaknesses in learning:

> *"the function of assessment is to help me in recognizing my students strength and weaknesses, so that I can know how to give a treatment" (Indonesian teacher 2, Interview, March 25, 2015).*

> *"from the assessment given, I know the weakness of my students in observing the lesson" (Indonesian teacher 5, Interview, March 31, 2015).*

Observation results also supported the finding that Indonesian teachers used classroom assessment for learning. During the observation, Indonesian English teachers used short quizzes. The quizzes were aimed at checking the students understanding of the material and formatively done in that teachers addressed concepts to the students. The quizzes also served as cues for the teachers in determining students' readiness for the summative assessment or if they needed to re-teach or take a different approach in teaching.

Teachers also gave grades and provided student with feedback without giving away the correct answer. This allowed the teacher to facilitate small group activities where the students had opportunity to practise collaboration. This also provided another opportunity for teachers to monitor students' progress and use high-level questioning techniques to small-groups and individual students. This in turn, helped them in gathering more evidence of students' learning and understanding, probing deeper, eliciting their thoughts, ideas, and hopefully making visible misconceptions that need to be further explored and eventually corrected.

The observation results show that when teachers assess for learning, they use the classroom assessment process and the continuous flow of information about learners that it provides complete information of students learning. moreover, they do this by understanding and articulating in advance of teaching, the achievement targets that their learners are to hit, informing learners about those learning goals from the beginning of the learning process, becoming assessment literate and be able to transform their expectations into assessment exercises and scoring procedure that accurately reflect learner achievement. Teachers also used classroom assessment for learning to build learner confidence in them as learners and help them take responsibility of their learning so as to lay a foundation for life learning.

These findings show that classroom assessment for learning should be used by the teachers at all times since students benefit from the teaching practice such as: allow teachers to adapt instruction based on results, making modifications and improvements that will produce immediate benefits for the students' learning, give students evidence of their current progress to actively manage and adjust their own learning. This also provides students the ability to track their educational goals, and give teachers the ability to provide constant feedback to students. This allows students become part of the learning environment and develop self-assessment strategies that will help them understand of their own thought process.

4.2 Classroom Assessment of Learning

Table 2 describes Indonesian teachers' purposes in doing classroom assessment of learning. It can be seen that more than 90% of Indonesian English teachers use assessment of learning in their classroom. The highest percentage obtained from Indonesian English teachers' purpose for doing classroom assessment of learning was *to determine the final grades for my students and to provide information to the central administration* (e.g. school, university), with 95.83% (n=23), while the lowest percentage was *providing information to parents and public* with 83.33%. Lastly, more than 85% of Indonesian teachers used classroom assessment of learning *to formally document growth in learning and to rank students based on their class performance.*

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Classroom Assessment of learning Purposes by Indonesian English Teachers

Purposes/reasons	Indonesian Teachers	
	N	P
To formally document growth in learning	22	91.67%
To rank students based on their class performance	21	87.50%
To determine the final grades for my students	23	95.83%
To provide information to the central administration (e.g. school, university)	23	95.83%
To provide information to parents and public	20	83.33%
Mean	**21.8**	**90.83%**

The overall percentage average shows that Indonesian English teachers used classroom assessment of learning dominantly. This finding was reasonable since Morrison (2006) in Kennedy (2007) found that assessment of learning, such as examinations have been privileged in some Asian countries in many ways that they are not in many western countries.

Interview results also support the finding that both Filipino and Indonesian English teachers did assessment of learning, especially to know the students grade in learning :

" I do classroom assessment to know my students grade in learning" (Indonesian teacher 1, Interview, March 26, 2015)

"Classroom assessment can provide me a data of my students' score/grade" (Indonesian teacher 3, Interview, March 27, 2015)

Based on the result of observation and document analysis, it was also known that Indonesian English teachers used teacher-made test to assess manageable and discrete areas of learning as classroom assessment of learning. They scheduled assessments after teaching no more than two basic competencies. Teacher-made tests mainly contained tasks familiar to students from class activities. A teacher- made test might consist of five to ten items to be completed within eighty minutes (one class period). The formats used in this test were similar to the semester test particularly for Year 7 and Year 8.

Indonesian English teachers also prepared grades for a final report and for the school principal to sign before each homeroom teacher writes the grades into the students' report books. The sheet contains a compilation of all students' scores covering four main sections: the average scores from adding classroom assessments, the scores from teacher tests, the mid-term test and the semester test. In order to reduce these into one final score, schools utilized a particular averaging formula which might differ from one school to another in terms of priority.

The interviews and observation validated the findings with regard to the teachers' purpose in using classroom assessment of learning. Based on the interviews and observation, assessment of learning needs to be appropriate for the audiences for whom it is intended, and should provide all of the information necessary for them to make reasoned decisions. Teachers also realized that classroom assessment of learning should be honest, fair, and provide sufficient detail and contextual information.

Assessment of learning has a direct and an indirect impact on students. Classroom assessment of learning prompts students to learn more the next study episode. Essentially, it reduces forgetting which makes the next related study area more productive. It also produce better organization of knowledge by helping the brain organize material in clusters to allow better retrieval sources. Classroom assessment of learning encourages students to study. Having frequent quizzes and tests motivates study and reduces procrastination.

4.3 Classroom Assessment as Learning

Table 3 shows Indonesian English teachers/purposes for doing classroom assessment as learning. The most significant finding was that Indonesian teachers used classroom assessment as learning *to support students' independence in learning* in which covered all respondents (100%)

The second highest percentage obtained for doing classroom assessment as learning was *to help students in recognizing what aspects of their own work needs improvements* with 91.67% (n=22). It was then followed by *facilitating students to become independent learners and working with students and to develop clear criteria of good practice* with 83.33% (n=20). The lowest percentage obtained in term of the Indonesian English teachers classroom assessment as learning was *to help students in recognizing what aspects of their own work need to improve* with 18 responses (75%).

Compared to the use of classroom assessment for and of learning, both teacher respondents did not prioritize assessment as learning. This is perhaps the practice of classroom assessment as learning does not come without challenge. Developing lessons that prepare students to engage in classroom assessment as learning and provide real support and opportunities for implementation is no small feat (Paris & Winograd, 1990). Many will find that the major obstacle in helping students become self-regulative is the time required to teach students how to use specific strategies (Boekaerts & Cascallar, 2006).

 Although teachers in Indonesian settings are faced with the obstacle in conducting assessment as learning, it is important to remember that classroom assessment as learning can help students learn new information and effectively prepare for those very tasks (Paris & Winograd, 2003).

Patrick et al (2007) said that fundamental changes at the school level may need to occur for teachers to be able to allocate the time and resources necessary for preparing classroom assessment as learning. Most important, classroom curriculum and accompanying assessment systems must be organized in ways that support and value autonomous inquiry and strategic problem-solving.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Classroom Assessment as learning Purposes by Indonesian English Teachers

Purposes/reasons	Indonesian Teachers	
	n	P
To support students' independence in learning	24	100%
To facilitate students to become independent learners	20	83.33%
To help students in recognizing what aspects of their own work need to improve	18	75%
To help students to monitor their own learning	22	91.67%
To work with students to develop clear criteria of good practice	20	83.33%
Mean	**20.8**	**86.67%**

In addition, as Stigins (2002) said that classroom assessment as learning has a significant benefit for students' learning such as students are actively engaged in the process, but also because the process develops the skills that underpin the effective development, monitoring and reporting on personal learning goals. Moreover, classroom assessment as learning also help to remove the student/teacher barrier, develop enterprising competencies in students, and can lead to greater motivation (Patrick et al, 2007).

5.   Conclusions
Indonesian Junior High School English Teachers main purposes was assessment *for* learning as the first preference. It was then followed by the classroom assessment of learning. And the last purpose was classroom assessment as learning

The most frequently used of classroom assessment *for* learning for Indonesian English Junior High School teachers was to group their students for instruction purposes in the class

The most frequently used of classroom assessment *of* learning among Indonesian teachers was to determine the final grades for students and to provide information to the central administration.

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