An Analysis on the EFL Teachers' Perception about Authentic assessment

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Abstract

This research was aimed in attempt to analyze and describe the EFL Teachers' Perception about Authentic Assessment. The EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim were taken as subjects of this research. Descriptive research design with quantitative data was applied since the method of gathering the data was questionnaire with interview as the supporting method. In relation to the problem proposed, the current study found that the EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim had positive perception about authentic assessment. It was proven that the EFL teachers had positive knowledge, point of view, belief, feeling, and behaviour towards authentic assessment.
Keywords: perception, authentic assessment

1. Introduction

Teacher's perception alters what teacher sees, makes version of reality, which ultimate corrupts the way human perceive the truth. When people view something with a preconceived idea about it, they tend to take those preconceived ideas and see them whether or not they are there. This problem stems from the fact that human are unable to understand new information without the inherent bias of their previous knowledge. The extent of person's knowledge creates their reality as much as the truth because the human mind can only complete that which it has been exposed to. When object are viewed without understanding, the mind will try to reach for something that it already recognizes in order to process what it is viewing. That which most closely relates to the unfamiliar from our past experiences makes up what we see when we look at things that we do not comprehend.

Understanding a teacher's perception of his academic performance for a particular subject has been widely accepted as an important step toward improving the quality of teaching which includes assessment as its part. The reason for this is that the perception can steer and direct the teacher's own teaching (Boekaerts, 1998: 13 as cited in Suartika, 2009). Research suggests that the relationship between one's self-concept (perception) and one's academic ability is very strong

(Byrne, 1984; Zimmerman, 1994 as cited in Suartika, 2009). Boekaerts further states that the perception has a role in providing a set of expectancies toward teaching a particular subject.

The use of authentic assessments offers a more comprehensible representation of the student, teacher, or program than a single evaluation since these provide more information to educators and when used appropriately, and can enhance the curriculum and improve the quality of education (Nitko, 2004). These assessments are capable of presenting educators with feedback on the success of their teaching methods, if the learning goals are practical, effective teaching activities, and which activities to adjust or discard. Educators need to have the aptitude to choose tests and other assessment methods that are fitting for the circumstances, technically acceptable, fair, and that present useful information. Consequently, educators need to have knowledge of assessment methods that are accessible for use in schools and the nature of information the various methods offer. To assess the technical qualities of tests, teachers need to be knowledgeable of both reliability and validity and be competent in making evaluative decisions about the value and appropriateness of various assessment methods (Reynolds et al., 2006). Most often, assessment information will originate from teacher-made tests. As a result, educators must be skillful in preparing, developing, and using classroom tests. Therefore, educators should be knowledgeable of principles and standards for developing various assessment practices including select-response items, construct-response items, performance assessments, and portfolios. Educators must also be able to assess the technical dimension of the instruments they develop. In addition, educators must have the ability to use assessment methods appropriately, realize the principles of standardization, and oversee tests in a standardized way (Reynolds et al., 2006).

In order that teachers can assess students' progress properly, they need to understand the concept of assessment required by curriculum-authentic assessment. Related to this issue, this research was aimed at identifying the perception of the EFL teachers in MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim academic year 2017/2018about authentic assessment.

2. Method

This study was designed descriptively where the researcher describes, writes, analyzes, and interprets the current issue (Mardalis, 2007). In this research, the researcher described the perception of EFL teachers in MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim. The questionnaire was employed to find out the EFL teachers' perception about the Authentic Assessment. To get more deeply information about the object of the research, the researcher conducted interview. It was conducted to get a clarification about the answers of the teachers to the questionnaire and the reason of conducting certain authentic assessment type.

2.1 Participants
In order to answer the research questions, the study involved three English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers.

2.2 Data Collection

2.2.1 Instrument of Collecting Data

In relation to the EFL teachers' perception about authentic assessment, the researchers developed questionnaire based on five components of perception proposed by Baron and Byrne, and Myers (in Gerungan, 1996). They were the EFL teachers' knowledge of about authentic assessment, the EFL teachers' point of view about authentic assessment, the EFL teachers' belief in authentic assessment, the EFL teachers' feeling about authentic assessment, and the EFL teachers' behavior (readiness) toward authentic assessment as the way of gathering information about students' progress.

2.2.2 Techniques for Collecting Data

In this research, the researchers used semistructure interview to get deep information about the EFL teachers' perceptions.

2.3 Data Analysis

In this research, the data collected through questionnaire and interview were analyzed qualitatively.

3. Results

The data about perception of EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim were gathered through questionnaire and interview. The following is the summary of the research finding on the EFL teachers' perception.

3.1 Teachers' Perception

In relation to the English teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim perception about authentic assessment, there were five components that determined and shaped the perception toward authentic assessment. They were the EFL teachers' knowledge of about authentic assessment, the EFL teachers' point of view about authentic assessment, the EFL teachers' belief in authentic assessment, the EFL teachers' feeling about authentic assessment, and the EFL teachers' behavior (readiness) toward authentic assessment as the way of gathering information about students' progress.

There were two categories to judge teachers' perception about authentic assessment, negative and positive perception. The respondents were considered to have negative perception if the average score of item was less than 3 points, and the respondents were considered to have positive perception if the average score was equal or more than 3 points.

The finding of the research indicates that the EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim had good enough perception about authentic assessment. The EFL teachers' perceptions were shaped by five aspects proposed by Baron & Byrne, and Myers; knowledge, point of view, belief, feeling, and behavior (readiness).

From the aspect of knowledge, it seems that the EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim had sufficient knowledge about authentic assessment. It can be seen from many aspects. They argued that they used various types of assessment in their classroom assessment. Besides, they used more than one type of assessment to assess one single skill. They used Oral Presentations and Dramatizations and story telling to assess students speaking. Oral presentations was in form of oral interview from teachers to students, while dramatizations were in form of dialogue and drama.

Unfortunately, the EFL teachers understanding about authentic assessment seemed to be limited. Just by implementing various types of assessment in classroom assessment does not mean that the EFL teachers have good knowledge. There are some more things that teachers must do in their classroom assessment. According to education assessment standard (government regulation no 20 year 2007), the teachers do not only plan and implement the assessment, but they also have to analyze the results of their students work. In analyzing, they need to have some specific criteria that would help them score and interpret the students work.

In this research, it was found that the EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim did not have specific criteria or rubric that they used in facilitating grading the students work.

Beside from the interview, the researcher also found that the EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim did not have any rubrics that helped them grade students work. In their lesson plan, it was not found any rubric they made.

Some other factor shows the lack of EFL teachers understanding about authentic assessment was from the absence of portfolio and self-assessment. They argued that teacher was the main party in portfolio. Theoretically, the main party in portfolio is the student, beside the students' work and the specific criteria. Through self-assessment, the key point in portfolio-students will be the one who decides which of their work would be put in portfolio. The teacher only guides them in doing self-assessment by providing samples of good work and instrument that would be used by the student (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996: 38).

In dealing with the absence of self-assessment, the EFL teachers argued that the students lack of knowledge caused the absence of self-assessment. Theoretically, self-assessment is a collaborative assessment which engages both students and teachers in the process. According to O'Malley & Pierce, self-assessment is a process through which students must be led. Teaching students to evaluate their progress begins with realizing that students will be learning new skills, therefore, the students will need feedback from teachers when they are doing self-assessment (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996: 39). In order students to evaluate their own works or performance, they need to be able to see the examples of good work and understand by what standard it has been judged. Teachers have to have specific criteria to be used. To help students assess themselves, the teachers must build a repertoire of self-assessment approaches and techniques that most closely match the instructional goals. What is meant by the above explanation is that students must be guided when doing self-assessment. The teachers role here is to provide the students with the samples of good work and specify the criteria. Teachers can have instrument to

help students in doing self-assessment. Teachers may provide checklist that would guide students to do self-assessment before they were asked to make portfolio.

From this explanation, it can be concluded that it is not necessarily to say that the students' lack of knowledge was the cause of the absence of portfolio and self-assessment. If the EFL teachers had enough understanding about the concept of portfolio, it would be possible that the EFL teachers made use portfolio and self-assessment in their classroom assessment. It means that this finding support the previous finding (Suparjana, 2010) about the teachers understanding about authentic assessment. Suparjana found that teachers dealt with the problems of understanding and implementing the authentic assessment and performance assessment, as the type of authentic assessment.

In relation to the teachers' point of view, the EFL teachers had positive point of view about authentic assessment. They tended to have the same opinion about authentic assessment. They argued that authentic assessment is important to be implemented, since it requires students to practice more, rather than just to memorize. Besides, authentic assessment provides teachers with some alternative of assessment methods.

In dealing with their belief, it is found that the EFL teachers had a positive belief in authentic assessment. They believed that by implementing various types of assessment would help them understand their students. They also believed that by implementing authentic assessment, it would give positive effect to the students' competency mastery.

The teachers also argued that there were some problems in implementing authentic assessment as the way of gathering students' progress. They could be the time allocation and the students. Even though there were lots of problems, the EFL teachers would still implement authentic assessment in their class. It was because they believed that by implementing authentic assessment, it would give positive effect on students' competency mastery. Besides, the EFL teachers enjoyed using authentic assessment since authentic assessment allowed students to apply their knowledge into performance. It indicates that the EFL teachers were ready to implement authentic assessment in their classroom assessment. It indicates that the EFL teachers had positive behavior toward authentic assessment.

4. Discussion

The result of the finding of the research indicates that the EFL teachers at MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim had good enough perception about authentic assessment. The EFL teachers' perception were shaped by five aspects proposed by Baron & Byrne, and Myers; knowledge, point of view, belief, feeling, and behavior (readiness).

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5. Conclusion

Pertaining to the research question posed, it can be concluded that the EFL teachers in MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim had positive perception about authentic assessment. They mostly believed that authentic assessment gives positive effect towards students' competency mastery. Applying authentic assessment allows students to display the mastery of competencies and the depth of understanding while simultaneously increasing their knowledge and discovering ways to improve it.

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