AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT IN EFL TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

The assessment has been regarded as the crucial element in instructional process which involeved the teacher and students ini it. In addition, it requires a number of aspects which are concerned on authenticity of how students do the task performatively. Therefore, authentic assessment is necessarily selected in order to reach the goal or objectives of teaching and learning process which focused on real-world tasks. The five dimensional framework proposed by Gulikers et.al (2004) need to be employed inside the implementation of authentic assessment which covers at least: tasks, physical context, social context, result or form, and criteria. The framework represents how the students are assesses authentically as well performatively in order that there are innovative product and also perfomance created by the students particularly. Beacuse authenticity is crucially needed to model of assessment recently and it also represents the authentic outcomes that are totally obtained in the teaching and learning process. Authentic assessment is a new assessment paradigm which contributesto significant alternative towards the existence of traditional assessment practices which are still used by most of the teachers in any levels. Regarding the paradigm, assessment is a process which supports as well as improve students' learning (focuses on enhancing their cognitive skills) instead of only assessing the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Authentic Assessment, EFL Teaching and Learning

1. Introduction

In terms of teaching and learning process, assessment is needed to assisst thestudents'learning as well as provide the teachers wide opportunities to recall and review what they teach in order to enhance the students' learning particularly. It is in relation to the idea that assessment is a salient variable in determining what and how students learn has become an often examined subject of research in the last two decades (Scouller, 1997; Scouller & Prosser, 1994; Thomas & Bain, 1984). Meanwhile, Segers, et.al (2003) argue that several aspects characterise tests or assessments, one of which being the authenticity continuum. This continuum refers to situated as well as artificial aspects that must be well-prepared by the teachers in terms of

assessing the students' performance. In fact, the goals of teaching and learning process is well-achieved as long as there is integration between instruction, learning, and assessment. Biggs (1996) claims that in order to meet the goals of education, a constructive alignment between instruction, learning and assessment (ILA) is necessary. Thus, the assessment is regarded as the prominent intructional tool to embody an effective teaching and learning process as well as to avoid a monotonous learning which contains less performative tasks given by the teaacher.

The authentic assessement is appropriate for creating lively as well as interactive teaching and learning process. However, a number of teachers do not know how to implement it in their instructional processes and they stiil employed traditional assessment in terms of providing the students the tasks such as filling in the blanks, matching the statements, and selecting the approriate options. It is line with authentic Puckett & Black (2000) who states 'assessment considers teaching, learning and assessment as an ongoing, intertwined and all happening at the same time'. It is clear that authentic assessment covers the whole aspects which are necessary for conducting an innovative as well as progressive teaaching and learning process. Thus, to increase the students" learning we are supposed to create classroom assessments that contains high-quality information about the students' learning (Gulikers et al., 2004). As a result, it is obvious that EFL teaching and learning need to be equpped by authentic assessment in order to boost not only the teachers' cognition but also the students' schemata in learning the related materials. To achieve it, there must be relevant indicators as well as aspects that need to be considered to implement the authentic assessment. Gulikers, et.al. (2004) proposed five dimensions of authentic assessment are : (a) the assessment task, (b) the physical context, (c) the social con- text, (d) the assessment result or form, and (e) the assessment criteria.

The authentic assessment contributes to EFL teaching and learning by optimizing the students' cognitive skills through a series of real-world tasks which are innovatively created by the teachers. There are main considerations in terms of applying

authentic assessment which are construct validity and consequential validity (Gielen, Dochy, & Dierick, 2003). Dealing with construct validity, it covers some principles or criteria which are (a) tasks must appropriately reflect the competency that needs to be assessed, (b) the content of an assessment involves authentic tasks that represent real-life problems of the knowledge domain assessed, and (c) the thinking processes that experts use to solve the problem in real life are also required by the assessment task (Gielen et al., 2003). These can be teachers' guidelines to create authentic assessment for the purpose of meeting the goal of instructional process. Meanwhile, Consequential validity describes the intended and unintended effects of assessment on instruction or teaching (Biggs, 1996) and student learning (Dochy & McDowell, 1998). It is clear that the the role of assessment and students' perceptions significantly influence the students' learning student learning is largely dependent on the assessment and on student perceptions of the assessment requiremen (Gibbs, 1992). Meanwhile, Sambell and McDowell (1998) states the idea on consequential validity differently that the teacher and students' perceptions extremely affects the instruction and assessment in teaching and learning activity. In conclusion, authentic assessment is significantly influential in terms of enhancing the students' cognitive and also metacognitive competencies. Furthermore, it brings enormous changes which are related to develop the students and teachers' competencies as well as cognitions. On one hand, it can be measured to recognize how well the student graps the information as well as the teachers govern the instructional process efficiently and effectively.

2. Discussion

In this section, there are some elaborations as well as descriptions dealing with the five dimensions of authentic assessment proposed by Gulikers, et. Al, 2004. On one hand, the dimensions are described explicitly based on a number of relevan theories which focuses on the authentic assessment. On the other hand, they are also exemplified based on various studies which are concerned with authentic assessment. The five dimensions of authentic assessment are: (a) the assessment task, (b) the physical context, (c) the social context, (d) the assessment result or form, and (e) the assessment criteria.

The Authentic Task

An authentic task is a integrated task that focuses on knowledge, skills, and attitudes as professionals do and involves students with a number of activities that are also conducted in educational practices (Van Merrienboer, 1997). On one hand, it is called as a real- world task which is developed for authentic assessment which engage the students in the processes such as identifying an issue from their community, planning to solve the issue, exploration and demonstration of their understanding to the community. This task is also created to allow the students to integrate their knowledge, skills and attitude to analyze and understand the issue and design possible solutions (Gulikers et al., 2004). It is in line with what Kirschner et.al (2004) state that an authentict as a task that resembles the criterion task with respect to the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, its complexity, and its ownership. In conclusion, authentic assessment is regarded as the tool that blend the aspects of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to assess the students' capacity in educational setting.

Physical Context

The authentic assessment task contains different steps which are set out in different contexts in or outside the classroom. This deals with the physical contexts which are conceptualised by the teachers based on the content of materials given. For example, when having speaking class, the students are encouraged to develop the ideas on making the short conversations about the roles of English teacher inside the classroom. When the students are assigned to have interview, they directly find the English teacher who are willing to be interviewed. It means that they need to go around the school only for searching for the teachers outside the classroom. The idea is based on Gulikers et al., 2004 state that.issue identification and planning was done inside the classroom while the exploration (through interviewing people, visiting library, internet and the teacher demonstration) and demonstration of their learning through presentation was done outside the classroom in real context which is an essential element of authentic assessment.

Social Context

Not only the physical context,but also the social context contributes to the authenticity of the assessment. It is

related to Resnick (1987) mentions that learning and performing out of school mostly takes place in a social system. Therefore, the authentic assessment should reflect social processes that represent real-life contexts. During the process of authentic assessment, the students also obtain different opportunities to get engaged with others (Gulikers et al., 2004). For example, the students solve the problems with their groups by sharing what they have as the solution or inputs while doing various tasks during discussion session. In this case, there must be collaboration among the students in order that they can actively get involved in the group discussion. When the assessment requires collaboration, processes such as social interaction, positive interdependency and individual accountability need to be taken into account (Slavin, 1989). It is mentioned that the students need to be assessed colaborativelyto show social interaction, positive interdependency, and individual accountability.

The Assessment Result or Form

The assessment result covers a number of output of the assessment task, independent of the content of the assessment. In addition, an authentic result or form is characterized by four elements. It should be a an (a) quality product or performance that must be created by the students in real context (Wiggins, 1989). The students' performances include a (b) demonstration that permits making valid inferences about the underlying competencies (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). It should also nvolve a (c) full array of tasks and multiple indicators of learn-ing in order to come to fair conclusions (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). Finally, students should (d) present their work to other people, either orally or in written form, because it is important that they defend their work to ensure that their apparent mastery is genuine (Wiggins, 1989). By considering the four elements in terms of the assessment result, the teacher requires the students' performance in the form of presentationa and demonstration to assess them by providing output or feedback for them.

The Assessment Criteria

Criteria are closely related to characteristics of the assessment result that are valued and also standards are regarded as he level of performance expected from various grades and ages of students (Arter & Spandel, 1992).

So, Setting criteria and making them explicit and transparent to learners before-hand is important in authentic assessment, because this guides learning (Sluijsmans, 2002) and, after all, in real life, employees usually know on what criteria their performances will be judged. Therefore, the judgment criteria are the main consideration which are related to realistic outcome, explicating characteristics or requirements of the product, performance, or solutions that students need to create in authentic assessment. Furthermore, criteria and standards should focus on the development of relevant professional competencies and should be based on criteria used in the real-life situation(Darling-Hammond& Snyder, 2000). Criteria of an authentic assessment can also be made based on the interpretation of the other four dimensions of the framework. For example, if the physical context relates to an authentic assessment of a competency requires five hours, a criterion should be that students need to produce the assessment result within five hours. In brief, the assessment criteria are the crucial point that is well-developed by the teachers for the purpose of assessing the students' learning.

In brief, when applying authentic assessment, we need to consider the five dimensions proposed by Gulikers et.al. to accelerate as well as achieve the goal of teaching learning process. Furthermore, these can become the significance and also reference in terms of building up the students' cognition which is concerned with how they implement it actively by joining a series of activities. The five dimensions closely deals with the following aspects as follows: 1. Task: What do you have to do? 2. Physical context: Where do you have to do it? 3. Social context: With whom do you have to do it? 4. Result or form: What has to come out of it? What is the result of your efforts? 5. Criteria:How does what you have done have to be evaluated or judged?. It is certain that the authentic assessment covers a number of aspects which are related to taks, physical context, social context, result or form, and also criteria. These must be well-integrated in order to influence the implementation of authentic assessement effectively and aslo accurately.

3. Conclusion

By considering the five dimensional framework (Gulikers et.al, 2004), it leads to authentic product which is

created innovatively because the role of teacher is not only teaching but also preparing what appropriate tasks are give to the students based on their interest particularly. They are activated by a number of group discussion or presentation which are carried out cooperatively as well as collaboratively. The framework also provides important description dealing with the related elements or dimensions required in authentic assessment. Therefore, the teachers along with the related parties should be able to implement and socialize it not only for the students but also for the other teachers because the framework totally represents what is needed in the assessment. And it also reflects the specific characteristics of the assessment that is done authentically.

The five dimensions covers the following aspects as follows: firstly, it is task which focuses on what we have to do or the actions that must be done by the teachers in implementing authentic assessment. In addition, it covers procedural steps that are conducted to create an active and innovative activities. Secondly, physical context reflects where we have to to do the authentic assessment, it means that selecting the appropriate area which represent the assessment

task given to the students. Thus, the teacher (assessor) need to coorporate with the others only for the area selection in authentic assessment. Thirdly, after thinking of the second aspect, we (as assessor or evaluator in teaching learning process) have to consider the social context in which the students actively enggage with the others during the assessment. Therefore, ther must be colaboration among the teachers in terms of sharing ideas dealing with how to implement the authentic assessment. Fourtly, after implementing the three aspects previously, we should look at the result whether the assessment is successfully done or not. So, this leads to how well we achieve the goal of instructional process. Fifthly, it deals with criteria which is concerned with explicit framework towards the implementation of authentic assessment. Moreover, it is related to how we judge the product, and also performance from the students and it also focuses on the final decision made by the teachers in terms of assessing or evaluating the students' product and performance.

In this case, authentic assessment enables the students take a part actively and they have to be responsible for their learning. Meanwhile, the teachers

take the role as facilitator in the teaching and learning process. To sum up, it brings the students' activeness as well as enhance the students' cognition through the implementation of authentic assessment. In addition, it requires the involvement among the parties not only the teachers (as assessor or evaluator) but also the others such as supervisor, and also principal. Therefore, ther must be collaboration or coorporation among them to employ or apply it in terms of the students' performance assessment. For example; the supervisor should socialize the importance of authentic assessment to teachers and also principals through seminar and also workshop. The teacher who has joined the seminar or workshop need to help the other teachers on how to use the authentic assessment properly. Authentic assessment can be done well if there is firm integration among the parties involved. In fact, it has been the government's concern on the implementation of authentic assessment and it is also a part of 2013 curriculum that every teacher should assess the students authentically or performatively. It is line with Herrington & Herrington (1998) who states that assessment involves interesting real-life or authentic tasks

and contexts as well as multiple assessment moments and methods to reach a profile score for determining student learning or development. Increasing the authen-ticity of an assessment is expected to have a pos-itive influence on student learning and motivation). However, most of the teachers stiil have lack of how to implement it inside their own teaching and they have lack of professional development program which has the main concern on authentic assessment.

For further actions, there must be actualization that will be concerning with the procedures of applying authentic assessment by some experts. By doing this, it is sure that every teacher will be aware of the importance of authetentic assessment. It is supported by Savery and Duffy (1995) defined authenticity of an assessment as the similarity between the cognitive demands-the thinking required-of the assessment and the cognitive demands in the criterion situation on which the assessment is based. It is clear that the students' cognition as well as way of thinking will be significantly affected by how well the teacher asesses the students. So, the assessment must be authentically done to obtain the better outcomes and create an attractive,

innovative, and interesting atmosphere inside the classroom. This is supported by Birenbaum (1996) claims that students need to develop not only cognitive competencies such as problem solving and critical thinking, but also metacognitive competencies such as reflection, and social competencies such as communication and collaboration. Based on the statement, the competencies closely deals with cognitive, social, and also metacognitive ones which can be in the form of problem solving, critical thinking, reflection, communication, and collaboration. In this case, the activities stimulate the students to not only able to communicate actively but also the abiltity to be problem solver, critical thinker, and to able to make reflection on what they have done in their learning.

4. References

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