

## A STUDY ON LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT APPLIED BY ENGLISH TEACHER

Seftika<sup>1</sup> and Kurniati<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Lecturers of English Department, STKIP Muhammadiyah Pringsewu  
STKIP Muhammadiyah Pringsewu Lampung  
Jl. Makam KH. Ghalib. No. 112 Telp (0729) 21359. Fax. (0729) 24002  
email: seftika@rocketmail.com/kurniati.sewu@yahoo.com

**Abstract** *The purpose of this research was to investigate how the English teachers of Junior High School 4 Banjit, Way Kanan apply language assessment in teaching learning process. This study used descriptive qualitative method. The respondent is one of English teachers of that school. For collecting the data, the researcher employed observation and interview. The finding showed that the participant tend to less care toward assessment. It is caused by less of knowledge about the assessment itself. The participant was reluctant did the assessment because he felt that it is difficult to be conducted and complex matter. In conclusion the participant did not assess optimally and the assessments applied by the teacher were less able to present the result of students' learning.*

**Key Words:** *language, assessment, students' learning.*

### 1. Introduction

In teaching English, assessment is becoming more prominent. There are some purposes of assessment according to O'Malley and Pierce in Hartoyo (2011) : First, to identify eligible for special language and/ or content area support programs. Second, to determine the language proficiency and content area competencies of students in order to recommend an appropriate educational program. Third, to determine if a student has gained the language skills and content area competencies needed

to benefit from instruction in grade-level classroom. Fourth, to review students' language and content area learning in classroom. Fifth, to determine the effects of national or local instruction programs and the last, to guarantee that students attain expected educational goals or standard.

Many researchers have proven the benefit of assessment. Jabbarifar (2009) investigated the importance of classroom assessment and evaluation in educational system. He found that

assessment and evaluation are crucial to give the teachers information about how to enhance their teaching method, students' motivation, and identify how students have learned the language.

Al Hammadi et al (2013) revealed that teachers' mistakes occurred because they neglect the rule and conditions of language testing. Then, Sook (2003) investigated second language assessment in the Korean classroom. The result shows that Korean Junior Secondary School teachers were not concerned with the validity and reliability of their assessments. Thus teachers are not confident in performing speaking assessment.

In learning English as foreign language, teachers assess both language skills and components. It is essential to be done for understanding students' progress. The language skills assessment consists of assessing listening, assessing speaking, assessing reading, and assessing writing. While language components assessment include assessing grammar, assessing vocabulary, and assessing pronunciation. Usually these language components are assessed

integratedly with language skills for instance, when teachers assess students' speaking ability, pronunciation, the words choice and grammar also involved in assessing speaking. In practice, most of assessment is still carried-out on the paper. Then most of the assessment is prepared by classroom teachers who are responsible for marking and record-keeping the assessment. So that is why teachers have to know principles for assessing student's language learning. As Cameron noted that principles for assessing student's language learning are assessment should be seen from a learning-centered perspective, assessment should support learning and teaching, assessment is more than testing, and assessment should be congruent with learning (2001).

Thus based on the explanation above the writer is interested to investigate the assessment conducted by English teacher in the classroom. Since English is compulsory subject for junior high school. It is one of the subject which be examined in national examination. Focus of this study is to know how the English teacher of Junior High School 4 Banjit, Way

Kanan apply language assessment in teaching learning process.

## 2. Literature Review

Assessment is one of the most important parts in teaching. It is ongoing process that encompasses a much wider domain (Brown, 2004: 4). Assessment should be done continuously in teaching learning process that consists of number of testing for recognizing the difficulties, characteristics and improvement of result. Further Linse added that assessment is gathering of information for a spesific purpose (2005:138). The focus of assessment in education is students' success in achieving standard of competence given.

By doing assessment, teachers are able to know students' ability, appropriate method , and students' achievement in getting the competence which have been decided. Then, based on the result of assessment, teacher can decide what should he/she do in the next step. The result of assessment also gives motivation to the students in order to get better achievement.It is supported by Cameron who stated that assessment is required to serve teaching, by providing feedback on

pupils' learning that would make the next teaching event more effective, in a positive, upwards direction (2001:215).

Assessment is not only valued for teacher but also for the students. Purwanti (2015) in her study also found that students agreed that selfassessment assist them reflect on what should be revised in their learning.

Considering the important of assessment in teaching learning process, teachers have to know how to make good test as part of assessment.Actually, conducting language assessment is still be an obstacle or difficulty for English teachers.

## 3. Methodology

In this study,the researcher used descriptive qualitative method. Observation and interview were aplied as research instrument. The researcher conducted observation toward assessment applied by English teacher in Junior High School 4Banjit, Way Kanan. It is one of the State of Junior High School in Way Kanan, Lampung Province. Respondent of this study is one of the English teacher of that

school. He has been teaching for more than fifteen years. Now, he teaches English in seven classes. The researcher used interviews as instrument for collecting the data due to some reasons: Firstly, it is because the researcher only took one sample as a respondent. Secondly, interview is good instrument to be used for gathering information directly bearing on the objectives of the study. As Schunk (2012:17) stated that interviews are a type of questionnaire in which an interviewer presents the questions or points to discuss and respondent answers orally.

#### **4. Discussion**

Having conducted the observation the researcher got the result as follows:

Firstly, In fact the respondent do not really understand the terms of test, assessment, examination, and evaluation. Generally he uses these terms as an activity to measure students' competence. Then he differentiated these terms only based on the time of application for instance, he explained the term of test as activity to find students' achievement which is done after certain materials

has finished discussed; he defined the term examination as a test which is done after one semester, while evaluation refers to know whether the test has succeeded or no.

Secondly, the respondent only constructs item test for daily testing, and mid-term test. He constructs item test based on materials which have been taught. For final test semester, he did not construct by himself. He only copied the item test from many sources such as students' sheet, text book and ect. He assumed that these sources are good enough for testing the students. Then he did not try the test out, he said that not time for conducting try out because the schedule is full for finishing materials which be delivered for students. Then there is an assumption that teachers are too busy making test by themselves. In giving test, he only used essay test for mid-semester and multiple choice for final semester.

Thirdly, actually the respondent know how to make a test. It can be seen from his explanation. He said that to construct a good test teachers have to know some principles, for instance, the test is administered for whole of students'

ability; it should be based on material that have been taught, and it is based on the syllabus of lesson; it is neither too easy nor too difficult. For multiple choice test, the distracters should be appropriate. They have possibility to be answered fifty-fifty. Then varying the position of the correct answer in a random manner, and make the alternatives grammatically consistent and parallel in form. He also said that he applied these principles when he was constructing a test.

Fourthly, the respondent said that for daily test or mid-term test, he assesses students' work based on students' score whether they have mastered the material/ lesson or not. Students who have not get score standard yet will be given additional assignment. Then for final semester test, he analyzed the items test based on frequency of students who have chosen the right and wrong answer. Having analyzed the items test, the teacher found which topic that students have not understand yet.

Fifthly, the respondent constructed two types of test. Essay test for daily test or mid-term test and multiple choice for final examination. The reason underlined these types is

because they are easier to be conducted. The last, the participant said that sometimes teachers feel hard to construct and interpret the test because it takes time. Then teachers also face difficulty in assessing because they lack of knowledge and procedure in assessment.

Based on the report of the observation above, the researcher assumes that not all teachers really understand the concept of test, assessment, examination and evaluation. They tend to treat assessment same as the daily test. The assessment which teacher gives only describing cognitive aspect of learners. It can not deliver both aspect of product and process. Then, teachers are reluctant to construct the test by themselves even though they understand the principles for making assessment. They also ignore the important of try out of the test using the term 'take time' as the reason. Whereas try out of test is primary to know the quality of a test, and to know the reliability of the test which show whether the test can be used to measure students' competency or not. As Brown (2004:19-37) stated that there are five cardinal criteria for

testing test such as practically, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback.

Then, assessment in learning process should be based on mastering of competence that have been determined but in fact the application of assessment in classroom less of students' competence. The causes are inappropriate ways in assessment, limited time and limited teachers' ability in assessing. This finding research supports by the previous research where teachers often ignore the role and the condition of language testing (Al Hammadi et al, 2009) .

Furthermore, there is still some teachers who regard that assessment is only formal requirements in teaching so that teachers tend to less attention in assessment. Whereas assessment is primary thing in studying since assessment and teaching process can not be separated in learning process. It can assist language teachers to create a dynamic classroom situation for evaluation (Jabbarifar: 2009). It is also supported by Brown (2004) who reminded the benefit of assessment in the classroom: periodic assessment, both formal and informal can increase motivation as they serve as milestones

of student progress; assessment can spur learners to set goals for themselves; assessment can provide a sense of periodic closure to various unit and modules of a curriculum; assessment encourage retention of information through the feedback they give on learners' competence; assessment can encourage students' self- evaluation of their progress; assessment can promote student autonomy as they confirm areas of strength and areas needing further work; and assessment can aid in evaluating teaching effectiveness.

## 5. Conclusion

The result of the observation was teacher still regard that test, assessment, examination as the same as the usual terms of teaching process. Not all these terms can be understood well. The teacher was reluctant to construct test by themselves and they are lack of knowledge and procedure in giving assessment. Consequently, teacher still gives assessments subjectively, so, the result showed that the students' learning in real process of studying are still not valid based on students' ability. The monotonous ways and tools in assessment; the limited time

and knowledge are some factors cause of failure in assessment. The result shows that teacher do not assess optimally and the assessments applied by teacher are not in real situation.

Therefore, teacher should learn and practice how to make good assessment. It is better for teacher to understand the terms of test, assessment, examination and evaluation. Next, they have to construct the good test by themselves. It is needed because one of the indicators of learning success is determined by level of success which students gained. In assessing students, teacher should not only carried-out the test on the paper but also make an assesment of the student's performance whenever a student responds to a question, offers a comment, or tries out a now word or structure. Through assessment teachers find out how far students understand the lesson and the result of assessment can be reported to the parents. That is why result of good assessment is beneficial for measuring the students' achievement and it is a useful feedback for educators in

improving process of teaching and learning.

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