

# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT IN ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING

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## **Abstract**

*According to the curriculum 2013 demands, one of the assessments suggested used by the English teachers is performance-based assessment. These kinds of assessments should be well-implemented by the English teachers in the English classroom. Knowing the need for accurate implementation of performance-based assessment in English classrooms, this recent study is trying to capture how performance-based assessments were implemented in a real English classroom. For this purpose, this study applied a qualitative research design. Two English teachers were pointed as the subject of this study. To collect the data, an open questionnaire was distributed to the English teachers. The data gained were analyzed qualitatively. The findings showed that the implementation of performance-based assessments was good. The English teachers also had a good understanding of the concept of performance-based assessment. Furthermore, there were three common performance-based assessments implemented by the English teachers such as writing samples, story retelling, and project.*

*Keywords: performance-based assessment, authentic assessment, English learning*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English is a global language that is most frequently used in the world. English is used as media of communication to interact with others in the international society. The emergence of this case is having a considerable impact on policies and practices in all countries in the world, especially in the field of education. In Indonesia, English is learned as one of the subjects in the school as a foreign language that is taught at every level of education. Starting from elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, until university.

Relating to English teaching and learning process, the curriculum is needed to guide the English teaching and learning activities so that it is able to transmit its messages, to exemplify its values, and to convey its meanings. A curriculum is one of the education components that covers all learning, activities and experiences of the students with the guidance from the school both inside and outside the classroom (Syaodih, 2007)

In a curriculum, assessment is an essential component in the teaching and learning process (Prastikawati, 2018). An assessment is used to measure students' language ability by collecting information on their learning process in a variety of ways. As stated by Brown (2004) assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a much wider domain. Whenever a student responds to a question, offers a comment, or tries out a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously makes an assessment of the students' performance. The learning process and learning result can be evaluated by assessment, so that the quality of education components can be improved. In this case, teachers are thus finding themselves in the position of having to develop tools and procedures for monitoring, recording, and assessing learners progress and achievement in the classroom on a more systematic and formal basis (Wiyaka et. Al, 2019).

Many kinds of assessments are familiar for English teachers today. One of suggested assessments by 2013 curriculum in Indonesia is authentic assessments. These assessments require the students to perform real world tasks by demonstrating their prior knowledge and skill (Mueller, 2016; Brown, 2004). A performance-based assessment is one of authentic assessments that asks the implementation of oral and written production, open-ended responses, group performances, and some other interactive tasks (Brown, 2004). Meaning that the students in their learning need to practice and demonstrate the competencies which they supposed to do in their daily lives. On the other hand, the teachers also need to take a focus on how the assessment does not rely on their students' product only but also focus on the process too. In a

similar way, a performance-based assessment controls the student' learning progress by monitoring their learning process as well as their learning result (Oberg, 2010). Knowing this importance, the implementation of performance-based assessment should be well-captured to show whether it has been well-done or not.

This current study is trying to describe the implementation of performance-based assessment under the following research question: "How is the implementation of performance-based assessment in English classroom in SMA N 2 Pati?".

## **2. RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1. Assessment**

Assessment is a popular and sometimes misunderstood term in current educational practice. It has an important role in education in the learning process. Assessment is used for making decisions about what the students have learned. It is an important thing to measure whether students learn what the teacher has taught. Assessment is a general item, which consists of methods and techniques used to gather information about student ability, knowledge understanding and motivation (Ektabani & Pierson, 2000; Lambert& Lines, 2000). Assessment is, on the whole, accepted as one of the very crucial parts of teaching, by this means, educators can determine the level of skills or knowledge of their students (Taras, 2005). Furthermore, Brown (2004) stated that assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a much wider domain. Whenever a student responds to a question, offers a comment, or tries out a new word or structure, the teacher subconsciously makes an assessment of the student's performance.

Assessment includes a broad range of activities and tasks that teachers use to evaluate student progress and growth on a daily basis. In line with political and economic pressure to demonstrate 'efficiency and effectiveness', educational institutions are increasingly being called on to provide much more explicit information on program activities and outcomes. In some schools, this has resulted in a proliferation of standardized tests of various kinds. In others, educational authorities have introduced outcomes-based approaches, which use teacher-conducted assessment as a basis for reporting learners' progress and achievement against system-wide or national standards (Brindley, 1997) cited on (Wiyaka, et all. 2019:3). The assessment information is needed by administrators, teachers, staff developers, students, and parents to assist in

determining appropriate program placements and instructional activities as well as in monitoring student progress (O' Malley, 1996:3).

## 2.2. Performance-Based Assessment

There are varieties of ways to define and measure the work students do to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Oberg (2010) describes performance-based assessment generally as “one or more approaches for measuring student progress, skills, and achievement” and performance assessments are “the ultimate form of linking instruction with the assessment”. Further, performance-based assessments require students to use higher-order thinking skills like analysis, synthesis, problem-solving, and critical thinking in order to create the responses or perform the tasks (Tsagari, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, 2013). Performance assessment consists of any form of assessment in which the students construct a response orally or in writing. (Feuer and Fulton 199; Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters 1992). According to Brookhart (2007), the student response may be elicited by the teacher in formal or informal assessment contexts or may be observed during classroom instructional or non-instructional settings. Some of the characteristics of performance assessment are the following (adapted from Aschbacher 1991; Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters 1992); (1) Constructed responses-students construct a response, provide an expanded response, engage in a performance, or create a product. Higher-order thinking: the student typically uses a higher level of thinking in constructing responses to an open-ended question, (2) Authenticity-tasks are meaningful, challenging, and engaging activities that mirror good instruction or other real-world contexts where the student is expected to perform, (3) Integrative-the tasks call for an integration of language skills and, in some cases, for an integration of knowledge and skills across content area., (4) Process and product-procedures and strategies for deriving the correct response or for exploring multiple solutions to complex tasks are often assessed as well (as or sometimes instead of) the product or the “correct” answer, and (5) Depth versus breadth-performance assessments provide information in-depth about a student’s skills or mastery as contrasted with the breadth of coverage more typical of multiple-choices tests.

Teachers using performance-based assessments in the classroom have three types to choose from: products, performances, or process-oriented assessments (Abedi, 2006; Rudner & Schafer, 2002). *Products* are works produced by students that provide concrete examples of their application of knowledge, for example, writing samples, projects, art or photo exhibits, and portfolios.

*Performances* allow students to demonstrate the application of their knowledge and skills under the direct observation of the teacher. Students may engage in tasks that are useful outside of school, such as asking for direction by telephone, demonstrating a process, or arguing a position (Cheng, 2005). All of these can demand high levels of language skills. Example of performance tasks includes oral reports, skits and role-plays, demonstrations, and debates. *Process-oriented assessments* provide insight into student thinking, reasoning, and motivation (Alfabet et. Al, 2014). They can provide diagnostic information on how well students use learning strategies and may lead to independent learning when students are asked to reflect on their learning and set goals to improve it.

### **2.3. Previous Studies**

Some previous studies were already conducted by some scholars relating to the performance-based assessment. The first study was conducted by Kadidja Kone (2015) entitled “The Impact of Performance-Based Assessment on University ESL Learners’ Motivation”. This study reports on a study investigating the impact of PBA on University ESL Learners’ Motivation, international ESL students who took an intensive oracy course for non-native speakers. The main aim of this study is to examine the impact of performance-based assessment on university ESL learners’ motivation. To reach this aim, the data were collected by online motivation questionnaires were used in order to find out how these learners responded emotionally and motivationally to performance-based assessment, specifically an oral presentation project both before and after the project. The result from the study revealed that the students responded positively to the type of project. However, their motivational and emotional states varied across time depending on their experience with the oral presentation, their performance, and the cohesion of their group.

The third study was conducted by Wiyaka (2020) entitled “Washback of the Performance-based Assessment test of Reading for EFL Learners.” This study investigates the washback effect of low-stakes tests namely performance-based assessment tests used in measuring reading skills. The results showed that performance-based test gives a positive effect on reading for EFL learners in the areas: students’ enthusiasm for reading, reducing boredom in reading, students’ curiosity about reading text content, and students’ improvement in higher-order thinking skills. To the teachers, it affects the areas of teaching methods, teaching materials, and time allotment. The use of retelling text as the method of reading assessment in the English class can eliminate the students’ boredom

in the reading activity. The reading activities might be not monotonous and challenge the students to think more than just answering the questions attached right after the reading materials. The result data showed that by retelling technique as authentic performance-based assessment in the reading activity positively increase the students' enthusiasm and their high curiosity. Besides, the last positive washback effect of performance-based assessment in the learning process on students' behavior in reading was about their improvement in higher-order thinking skill.

Those previous studies have focused mainly on the effect of performance-based assessment on the EFL learners' English ability for the university level. On the other hand, this current study fills the existing gap by providing an investigation on how performance-based assessments were implemented in an English classroom in a senior high school.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study applied a descriptive qualitative research design as it is a correct design to find the real phenomenon of the data (Kothari, 2004). The process of the research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Cresswell, 2014). The subjects of this study were two English teachers in SMA N 2 Pati, Central Java. These English teachers were selected as the sample of the study because they have more than ten years of teaching experience. In collecting the data, the instruments used were an open questionnaire and a class observation. Then, the data gained were analyzed descriptively.

## **4. FINDINGS**

### **4.1. Performance-based Assessments Implemented in the English Learning Process of the Tenth Grade in SMA Negeri 2 Pati**

#### **A. Based on the Observation**

The observation was conducted by the researcher to get information about the application of performance-based assessment in the English class of tenth-grade students in SMA Negeri 2 Pati. The observation was conducted for several days. The researcher saw how the application of performance-based

assessment by the teachers in the English class. The teachers have understood the concept of that assessment.

From the observation, the researcher found that the English teachers applied several types of performance-based assessment to assess their students' skill abilities but also still used the traditional assessment to measure their students such as taking a midterm test or final test by using multiple-choice and essay forms.

Based on the first observation in the X MIPA 2 with Mr. Ladjer who taught English, the researcher found that a performance-based assessment was implemented in the class. He taught chapter 1 (introducing self). He played a video in the LCD to introduce the material that would be learned that day, the video was about how to introduce self. Then he asked his students to make a dialogue based on the topic of the meeting. After that, the students come forward to practice the dialogue in pairs. He assessed the students by this project.

Further, the next observation was conducted in the X IPS 4 who taught by Mr. Disma. He taught about advertisements at that time. He explained how to make an interesting pamphlet and showed some examples of pamphlets; the pamphlets consist of some interesting events. The students felt interested during the learning process. Mr. Disma instructed his students to make a simple pamphlet like what he showed in the class. He used this project to assess their students.

Figure 1

Writing and retelling story



Figure 1

*The students write narrative texts*



Figure 2

*The student retells the story*

On the third observation, the researcher observed in the X MIPA 2 who taught by Mr. Ladjer. He taught chapter 2 that discussed congratulating and complimenting others. He showed a video on the LCD. That video consists of how to congratulate and compliment others. He also showed some expressions used to congratulate others. After that, he asked some students to come forward and practice what did they watched in the video. On this occasion, he gave some examples of congratulation cards and the table content of it. To assess the students, Mr. Ladjer instructed his students to make a congratulation card and had to submit in the next meeting. In this case, the researcher found that Mr. Ladjer applied performance-based assessment in his class. Last, the observation was conducted with Mr. Disma who taught English subjects in the X IPS 4. He explained about a narrative text. He explained what the generic structures of narrative text are and how to write narrative text well. He showed some examples of narrative text in the LCD. Then, he asked the students to retell the story in front of the class in their own words. Besides, he also instructed the students to make a narrative text as their homework.

Furthermore, from the observation, the researcher found that among six types of performance-based assessments, the English teachers just applied three types of performance-based assessments in the learning process. There were story or text retelling, writing samples, and projects. The details are showed by the following table.

Table 1

Types of Performance-based Assessment Implemented by the English Teachers

Types of Performance-based Assessment	Sources
1. Oral interview	Not found
2. Story or text retelling	Found (the students retell the text or story in front of the class).
3. Writing samples	Found (students' work; the students wrote the narrative text).
4. Project/exhibition	Found (the students made the congratulation card, made a dialogue in a group).
5. Experiment/ Demonstration	Not found
6. Constructed-response item	Not found



Based on the table 1 above, it is clear that the English teachers applied three types of performance-based assessment to assess their students. Moreover, based on the documentation that was collected by the researcher, the type of performance-based assessment applied by the English teachers were just writing samples and projects. It could be seen from the students' work. The writing samples that found were narrative text and the projects that found by the congratulation card and the pamphlets.

In summary, according to the observation in the English class, the researcher found that the implementation of performance-based assessment in the English learning process, especially in the tenth grade is good. The teachers have prepared the preparations before applying the assessment in the class. They believed by applying that assessment could increase their students' motivation to master the materials in the English learning process.

## **B. Based on the Open-ended Questionnaire**

According to the questionnaire, the data showed the two English teachers (all respondents: 100%) who taught the tenth grade have applied performance-based assessments to measure their students' competencies. The first data is known by T1 who confirmed that he used traditional assessment and authentic assessment in his teaching process. Then, T2 also said that he didn't only use traditional assessment in the teaching process, but also assess the students based on the practical assessment. It was clarified by questionnaire number 1 that answered by T1 and T2.

Question 1 : "What kind of assessment that you use to assess students in the learning process?"

T1 : *I usually use both authentic and traditional assessments in the English teaching process*

T2 : *I get used to applying the traditional ones such as multiple-choices and fill in the gaps form. A simple essay was also used but on a rare occasion. Besides, I also often implement performance-based assessments to assess my students in the classroom.*

Moreover, it is a must for the teachers to understand the concept of assessment before applying it in the class activity. In this case, the teachers understood the concept of performance-based assessment well. They administered that assessment as the better option to gather information about students' progress in the English learning process. It was seen by questionnaire

number 2 that answered by T1 and T2 as in the excerpts below:

Question 2: "What do you know about performance-based assessment?"

T1 : *In my opinion, It is a type of assessment which is intended to measure the students by considering their performance in English.*

T2 : *For me, PBA is about having students' score by taking a consideration on their practical assessment such as in writing sample task, practicing the conversation which reflect their daily activities.*

Further, the teachers had confirmed that they prepared a lot before they implemented performance-based assessments in their English class. As they mentioned that their preparation aimed to ensure that the implementation of performance-based assessment would run well and properly. This preparation was also in line with the preparation of the assessments' scoring rubric and the media used. This fact was revealed by the answer of T1 and T2 in questionnaire 3.

Question 3: "What preparation before applying performance-based assessment?"

T1 : *I used to prepare a lot before I applied performance-based assessments. The preparation are such as scoring rubric and the media of delivering the assessment. For me, it is so important to do for effective assessment implementation.*

T2 : *In my preparation, I prepare the rubric, learning media and also what kinds of English daily context that I would present for that time.*

Relating to more deep investigation on types of performance-based assessments implemented by the English teachers, questionnaire 3 had revealed the answer, as follows:

Question 4: "What types of performance-based assessment do you commonly used in your English class?"

T1 : *Project is one of the performance-based assessments that I commonly implemented.*

T2 : *I have a lot of performance-based assessments implemented in my English class. They are writing samples, project, and story retelling.*

## 5. DISCUSSION

According to the findings, it could be known that the application of performance-based assessment in the English learning process of the tenth-grade students in SMA Negeri 2 Pati was good. The teachers understood the concept of

PBA and prepared some preparations before applying that assessment effectively. Those preparations were preparing the rubric, choosing the appropriate context, and providing the media. The teachers believed by applying PBA in the English class could increase their students' motivation to master the materials. O'Malley (1996:3) states assessment information is needed by administrators, teachers, staff developers, students, and parents to assist in determining appropriate program placements and instructional activities as well as in monitoring student progress. The teachers were challenged to implement performance-based assessments in order to improve the students' cognitive development, reduce the less-interest, and positively impact the students in the learning process. That is why many schools around the world have been trying to implement effective teaching and assessment practices to build upon students' abilities to use English in the fullest meaning of the term and real contexts, as has been confirmed by McKay (2006). Besides, assessing the students by performance-based assessment is the one of most appropriate and effective evaluation strategies so that there were some preparations that must be prepared. The preparation is needed to make sure that the assessment process would conduct successfully. This finding supports the study of Antoni (2004) cited on Akmal, et.al (2019) revealing that good preparation includes the knowledge of what the test looks like and what strategies can be used during the test.

Furthermore, some of the characteristics of performance-assessment (adapted from Achbacher 1991; Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters 1992) were constructed responses, higher-order thinking, authenticity, integrative, process and products, and depth versus breadth. In this case, those characteristics could be seen by the real tasks that were administered to the students while the English subject was learning in the class. The teachers stimulated their students to engage their knowledge and skills to improve their language abilities. They involved the students to perform their tasks, gather the materials and knowledge into a skill in all aspects. During the English learning process, the students were assessed by the teachers using a project, writing-samples, and text/ story retelling as the authentic performance-based assessment. They were required to make a dialogue then practice it in front of the class, make a product of their projects such as the congratulation card and the simple pamphlet, and also write a narrative text then retell the story in front of the class. This type of performance-based assessment was implemented to assess the students' language abilities. Later on, the implementation of some types of PBA in the class had a similar theory by Mc Tighe & Ferrara (1998) stated teachers using PBA in the classroom have three types to choose from: products, performances, or process-oriented assessment. Further, this finding is in line with a study was done by Prastikawati (2018) who

reported that the use of performance-based assessment which had been already applied by the English teachers were role-playing, writing samples, and retelling.

As noted, performance assessment requires students to “accomplish complex and significant tasks, while bringing to bear prior knowledge, recent learning, and relevant skills to solve realistic or authentic problems” (Achbacher 1991; Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters 1992, p.2). Meanwhile, designing a complex assessment that is truly informative might be difficult. The use of performance-based assessment needed more time to be administered, designed, and scored. Whereas curriculum 2013, English subject just taught two hours a week. The limitation of time had been the main factor that could be the problem faced by the teachers to apply PBA. As stated by Linn & Miller (2005) PBAs are time-consuming since students need a substantial amount of time to perform the tasks. The teachers were required to design an assessment that included challenging, meaningful, and engaging tasks that combine the English abilities with knowledge and skills in real-world contexts. This confirmed the theory and research findings by Metin (2013) revealed that the problems encountered while assessing the performance task were taking a long time for the assessment and incorrect determination of performance tasks. The teachers needed to be tutored so they could apply performance-based assessments efficiently.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

According to the data findings, it can be summarized that the performance-based assessment applied in the English learning process of the tenth grade in SMA Negeri 2 Pati is good. The English teachers actually know the concept of performance-based assessment. They applied that assessment with some preparations such as preparing the rubric, chose the appropriate context, and also the supporting media to make sure that with performance-based assessment could increase their students' motivation to learn and master the materials of the English subject in the class. Further, relating to the types of performance-based assessment applied in the English learning process of the tenth grade in SMA Negeri 2 Pati, the English teachers just implemented three types of performance-based assessments. Those were story/ text retelling, writing samples, and projects. They do not apply all these types of performance-based assessments because of the time allotment.

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