



How the EFL Teachers' View of Their Language Assessment Literacy?

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ABSTRACT

As a great important part of language teaching and learning, assessment enables the teachers to acquire the information related to the process of students' learning that allows them to make decisions for their future instructional practices. In consequence, the language teachers need to be proficient in assessment literacy. Language assessment literacy (LAL) is the combination of the teachers' knowledge and skill in order to apply the procedures and principles of language assessment. Thus, this paper is aimed to investigate the senior high school EFL teachers' language assessment literacy practices in constructing the language assessment. Twenty-four senior high school teachers were involved in this study, then they were asked to fill the questionnaire from five indicators with thirty-one items regarding to their practices in applying the principles of language assessment to the teacher-made tests. Descriptive statistic was used in order to analyze the data with the help of SPSS 17 for the windows program. The result showed that the teachers' practices in applying the principles of language assessment literacy were categorized into "very high level" which was proved by 85% of the teachers perceived that they have applied the principles of language assessment to teacher-made test. It means that the language teachers are able to understand the concept of language assessment, enhance their instructional practices, use the knowledge in practice, and comprehend how the test can help their students to improve the students' learning.

Keywords: Teachers' View, Language Assessment Literacy, Principles of Language Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is considered as a crucial part of the teaching and learning process because, through assessment, it can indicate the quality of learning which is right or wrong, and what has to be changed and improved [1]–[3]. Assessing the students' performance at the same time involves the difficult task, because of this the language teachers are demanded to comprehend and master how assess the students' knowledge and ability in order to improve the students' learning. The teachers' knowledge, skill, and principle in assessing the students' performance is known as teachers' language assessment literacy (henceforth LAL) [4].

Knowledge and skill in language assessment are the two important aspects in the process of teaching and learning, with that result the teachers have to pay attention to their language assessment literacy [5]. Thus, the language teachers have to improve language assessment literacy so that they can evaluate themselves, comprehend the nature of assessment phenomenon, and aware toward the assessment practice [6].

Language assessment literacy is the combination of abilities, knowledge of how to use assessment procedures, and prompt employment of the right instruments that enable teachers to comprehend, evaluate, construct, and analyze data [7]. Hence, the language teachers are successful in obtaining the assessment literacy itself if they are able to put the relevant assessment for a particular purpose and analyze the empirical data to improve their teaching process.

Furthermore, in assessing the students' performance effectively, the teachers are expected to have the skills and abilities to design reliable assessment task, choose appropriate assessment method, provide feedback on the students' performance, and assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning process. Thus, the five principles of language assessment should take into account that can describe the teachers' skills and abilities. Five principles of language assessment are practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback [8]. Those principles are used by the teachers as a guideline in creating and designing assessment task.

The research confirmed that most of the teachers believe in their teaching skill than assessment skill [9], [10]. Furthermore, it was found that the primary school English teachers in China have low level in language assessment literacy especially in understanding the principles of language assessment even though they are sure that they have prepared well their assessment practice [11]. On the other hand, others studies revealed that Indonesian EFL junior high school teachers perceive that they are adept at understanding LAL and the principles of language assessment but their understanding does not realize into their assessment practice [1], [2]. This paper, therefore, explores one of the components language assessment literacy by investigating to what extend the senior high school EFL teachers' LAL practice in applying the principles of language assessment into teacher-made test in Indonesian context.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Language Assessment

Assessing a language is a crucial job of language teachers since they have to assess the four main skills of language. In a learning environment, each skill is assessed using a different set of tools, methods, and procedures. Therefore, it is up to the teacher to choose when and how to employ those tools and techniques [1].

Teachers are expected to be able to design reliable assessment tasks, select appropriate assessment methods, give feedback on students' performance, and evaluate the efficiency of the teaching and learning process in order to effectively assess students' performance. In order to describe the skills and abilities of the teachers, it is important to consider the five principles of language assessment [12]. The five guiding principles of language testing are: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity, and washback [8]. It begins with practicality that means evaluating the assessment according to cost, time needed, and usefulness. Then, Reliability means that the assessment is consistent and dependable, which means that the same score will be achieved from the same type of students no matter when it is scored or who scores it. Furthermore, a valid test means that measuring exactly what it proposes to measure. The next principle is authenticity, which refers to how closely a language test task's characteristics match those of a task in the target language for example the test is linked to real world task. Finally, washback points out to the effects of the test that can be felt both of the teacher and students [13], [14].

Assessment can be used for teachers to improve the students' learning so that language assessment is commonly dealing with English language students or test-takers and language teachers or test-designers. Furthermore, the assessment can be analyzed into two functions. It begins with assessment of learning that points out to students' result in the end of teaching and learning process; then it is used to make decision to the process of students' learning. Finally, assessment for

learning is usually used for the teachers as the reference to decide where the students are on their learning; meanly what needs to be improved for their future learning.

2.2. Language Assessment Literacy (LAL)

Richard Stiggins found the phrase "Assessment Literacy (AL)" in 1991. Assessment literacy discusses the person who is literate to the characteristic of assessment in which the person in question is a teacher, especially language teachers. He claimed the idea that assessment-literate teachers are aware of what they assess, why they do the assessment, how the assessment can achieve the students' interest, how the assessment reflects on the students' performance, what goes wrong, and how to avoid the problems before they arise [15].

Furthermore, the terms of assessment literacy is commonly used by the teachers where it is known as the combination of the teachers' knowledge, skill, and principle [16]. Other explanation about teachers' language assessment literacy is that it refers to the teachers' understanding about the principles of selecting and designing task, scoring the students' work, describing the result of the students' assessment in order to enhance the students' learning [17]. Assessment literacy can be described as a dynamic of the social practice where the teachers are able to articulate and negotiate with the students about the classroom situation so that the assessment practice can be implemented to achieve the learning objectives [18].

In line with the theories above, it can be concluded that assessment literacy is the knowledge, skills, and principles that must be possessed and mastered by a teacher in this case is the language teacher and how the teachers can apply the assessment accurately and effectively. Those aspects are connected to the teachers' social practice, experience, belief, and others that will influence the improvement of learning quality and teaching instruction.

2.3. Teachers' View of Applying the Principles of Language Assessment

In the classroom, the teachers have a point of view in applying principles of language assessment which each principle draws different aspects for students' assessment. The teacher recognizes that situation or accidents in the classroom with the stimulus of surroundings. Perception is a process of conceiving an accident, event, or condition using common sense, such as sight, hearing, or touch. It happens when the teachers describe what their point of view related to what they see, hear, or touch [19]. Thus, teachers have personal opinion pertaining to the situation that occurs in the classroom.

In applying the principles of language assessment, teachers have different knowledge and skill to implement in the classroom. Therefore, teachers with brilliant knowledge deliver their perception differently than teachers with adequate knowledge in applying language assessment. However, the perception allows

teachers to evaluate themselves in teaching [9]. Thus, it is necessary for teachers and students to enhance the teaching and learning process that impacts students to achieve learning objectives.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey research. This research design is one of the quantitative procedures in order to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population [20]. Thus, this study was intended at investigating the senior high school teachers' LAL practices in applying the principles of language assessment. Twenty-four senior high school teachers who joined MGMP at Lima Puluh Kota regency, West Sumatera province, were addressed to

complete this survey research. They were selected because they had more than ten years experiences in teaching English and they got used to design the assessment for the students.

The questionnaire was used to collect the data. It was distributed when the teachers had meeting on the MGMP schedule. The questionnaire was adopted from Hudaya [12]. It consisted of thirty one items with five indicators regarding to their practices in applying the principles of language assessment with five Likert scales namely "strongly agree", "agree", "undecided", "disagree", and "strongly disagree". The composition of the questionnaire is clearly explained on the table below:

Table 1. Composition of the Questionnaire

No	The Principles of Language Assessment	Number of Questions
1	Practicality	7
2	Reliability	5
3	Validity	10
4	Authenticity	5
5	Washback	4

For analyzing the quantitative data, descriptive analysis of the data with the help of SPSS 17 for the windows program was employed in order to find out the

percentage of the questionnaire response. Furthermore, the result of the questionnaire was classified [21] as follows:

Table 2. Classification of the Percentage

Percentage	Category
81% - 100%	Very High Level
61% - 80%	High Level
41% - 60%	Enough Level
21% - 40%	Low Level
0% - 20%	Very Low Level

After calculating the teachers' response, the researcher classified it based on the category that is stated on the table above. Then, it was described how

the teachers apply the principles of language assessment into the teachers-made test.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 3. Practicality

Items	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Q1	Before the test, I clearly establish administrative details like the test's specifications and the scoring criteria.	58.3	41.7	-	-	-
Q2	Students can reasonably finish the test I give in the allotted time.	4.2	87.5	-	8.3	-
Q3	I can conduct the test without experiencing any procedural.	12.5	54.2	8.3	20.8	4.2
Q4	The test's entirety, including the answer sheets for students and the listening section's listening tape, is prepared.	50.0	37.5	-	12.5	-
Q5	The test is in limited budget.	33.3	45.8	8.3	12.5	-
Q6	I make the worthy scoring system with time allocation.	37.5	50.0	4.2	8.3	-
Q7	I assign the test result method before the test.	41.7	54.2	-	-	4.2

The table above shows the teachers practice in applying practicality into the teacher-made test. It indicated that most of the teachers strongly agree that they clearly established administrative details like the test's specifications, the scoring criteria, and the answer sheet of listening test for example. Then, 87.5% teachers agree that their students can finish the test in the allotted time. In addition, 54.2% teachers also agreed that they

can design the assessment without experiencing any administrative procedure and establish the test result method before the test. Nevertheless, 20.8% teachers felt that they have problems with assessment procedure and 12.5% teachers conducted the test with a large budget. Lastly, the teachers perceived that they decide the score with appropriate time allocation.

Table 4. Reliability

Items	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Q8	I ensure that the students have got accurately photocopied of the test sheet.	70.8	20.8	-	4.2	4.2
Q9	I ensure that the sound will be clearly delivered to everyone in the room.	45.8	33.3	12.5	4.2	4.2
Q10	I ensure that the slides presentation will be equally seen for students.	62.5	29.2	-	8.3	-
Q11	I ensure that classroom conditions are equal for all students.	45.8	41.7	4.2	8.3	-
Q12	It still leaves the debate for the objectives scoring.	16.7	66.7	4.2	12.5	-

Table above reveals the teachers' practice in applying reliability when designing the assessment. The result showed that 70.8% teachers strongly agree that the students have got the accurate photocopied of the test sheet. Unfortunately, 66.7% teachers agreed that they still leave the debate for the objectives scoring; nevertheless 12.5% teachers had design an objective

scoring without leaving debate for the students. Then, most of the teachers ensured that the slide presentation is equally seen for students, the sound is clearly delivered to the students, and the classroom conditions are equal for all students; even though some teachers are not sure that the sound, the slide presentation, and the classroom condition will be equal for students.

Table 5. Validity

Items	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Q13	The goals of the lesson are clear and appropriately stated.	50.0	50.0	-	-	-
Q14	The test reflects the learning goals.	41.7	54.2	-	4.2	-
Q15	The test I create has clear instruction.	70.8	29.2	-	-	-
Q16	The format of the test is logically organized.	54.2	41.7	-	4.2	-
Q17	The level of the test is appropriate in terms of test difficulty.	20.8	54.2	4.2	16.7	4.2
Q18	The test does not have surprises.	20.8	41.7	8.3	25.0	4.2
Q19	The test takes place at the right time.	41.7	54.2	4.2	-	-
Q20	Before the test, I provide the review and preparation for the students.	62.5	37.5	-	-	-
Q21	I give the students strategies that will be useful for them.	62.5	33.3	-	4.2	-
Q22	I create the test that can challenge students.	50.0	37.5	4.2	4.2	4.2

The table above indicates the teachers' practice in applying validity into the teacher-made test. The teachers, 70.8% "strongly agree", perceived that they have made a clear instruction of the test. Then, 62.5% of the teachers pointed out that they have provided the review, preparation, and strategies that will be useful for students. The teachers also have stated the goals of the lesson and the test that they create can challenge the

students. In addition, 54.2% of the teachers perceived that difficulty of the test is appropriate with the students' level and the test takes place in the right time; it also reflects the learning goals. Hence, 54.2% teachers have organized the format of the test logically. Lastly, 25.0% teachers disagreed that the test does not have surprise.

Table 6. Authenticity

Items	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Q23	The language used in the test is as naturally as possible.	62.5	37.5	-	-	-
Q24	The components of the test is made contextualized than isolated.	41.7	54.2	-	4.2	-
Q25	The interesting, enjoyable, and humorous topics are created for the students' test.	37.5	54.2	8.3	-	-
Q26	The theme of the test is created through a story or episode.	29.2	58.3	12.5	-	-
Q27	The authentic assessment is designed for the students.	29.2	66.7	4.2	-	-

The table above presents the teachers' practice in applying authenticity when designing assessment for the students. They perceived that the language used in the test is naturally as possible. Furthermore, 66.7% of the teachers were believed that the authentic assessment was designed for their students. Additionally, 54.2% of the teachers agreed that they created the test with

interesting, enjoyable, and humorous topics. Additionally, the components of the test was made contextualized than isolated. Finally, 58.3% teachers created the theme of assessment through a story or episode even 12.5% teachers did not practice it.

Table 7. Washback

Items	Statements	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Q28	The students are asked to develop goals for their future learning by using the test result as the reference.	33.3	66.7	-	-	-
Q29	After the test, I give the comment based on the students' result in detail.	45.8	54.2	-	-	-
Q30	When giving back the students' test, I provide them beyond number, grade, or sentence.	25.0	75.0	-	-	-
Q31	I provide time for the students to respond my feedback in order to clarify any questions that are unclear in fixing the suitable goals to come.	33.3	62.5	4.2	-	-

The table above shows the teachers' practice in applying washback when designing assessment for the students. Most of the teachers agreed that they provided the students beyond number, grade, or sentence when giving back the students' test (75.0%). Forth, 66.7% teachers also asked the students to develop goals for their future learning by using the test result as the reference and 62.5% teachers provided the time for

students to respond their feedback in order to clarify any questions that are unclear in fixing the suitable goals to come even though 4.2% teachers could not decide in terms of providing time for the students response. Then, 54.2% teachers did the comments based on the students' result in detail after the test is done.

Table 8. Recapitulation of the Questionnaire Result

No	The Principles of Language Assessment	Percentage
1	Practicality	81.7%
2	Reliability	84.5%
3	Validity	86%
4	Authenticity	86.7%
5	Washback	86.7%
Mean		85%
Category		Very High Level

The table above is the recapitulation of the questionnaire result for each item of the principles of language assessment. It can be described that 81.7% teachers perceived that they have applied practicality in designing the test for students. Furthermore, teachers perceived that their practice of reliability into the test is 84.5% of them and 86% teachers apprehended that they have adjusted the principle validity on the test. Lastly, 86.7% teachers felt hat they have applied the authenticity and washback principles when designing the assessment for students. As a whole, 85% teachers is categorized into very high level, it indicates that the teachers were literate meanly they perceived that they have applied the principles of language assessment to the teacher-made test. Thus, the result shows that the EFL teachers are able to understand the concept of language assessment, enhance their instructional practices, use the knowledge in practice, and comprehend how the test can help their students to improve their learning.

The result of the study is in line with Hudaya that EFL teachers perceived that they have good preparation when assessing the students' performance and they are able to adjust the principles of language assessment into the teachers-made test [12]. In contrast, Zulaiha et.al study that the EFL teachers had a good knowledge of language assessment but they are not able to implement their knowledge into assessment practice [2]. It is also supported by Puspawati found on her study that the teachers' know and understand the concept of language assessment literacy but they cannot apply their knowledge into the practice. It is also strengthened by

her interview result that indicated most of the teachers felt not confident with their assessment skill [9]. The result was also confirmed that most of the teachers focused on the students' progress during the learning process. It was proved by how the teachers gave the students chance to respond their feedback in order to achieve and decide the learning objective. This result is in accordance with Jannati's study that the teachers focus on improving the students' learning achievement although some of them just concern with give the students' grade [22].

5. CONCLUSION

This study is survey research in order to investigate the senior high school EFL teachers' language assessment literacy practices in constructing the language assessment. Thus, this study shows that 85% teachers were literate and they perceived that they have applied the principles of language assessment. The EFL teachers are able to understand the concept of language assessment, enhance their instructional practices, use the knowledge in practice, and comprehend how the test can help their students to improve their learning.

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