

School based assessment for learning essay



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School Based Assessment for Learning: A report: Assuring Fairness in the assessment component of school based assessment practice in Brunei

Abstract This article describes a research project study in depth carried out with 3 self-selected 'educators' teaching English language subject in one of the secondary school in Brunei. All are supporting standardized task provided requires flexibility to cater the students' need individually. The paper explores the educators' conceptions of and approaches to school based assessment in relation to their teaching.

It sets the discussion in the context of 'assessment for learning' and the literature on students' learning in general and raising students' achievement in particular. Drawing out a number of key themes arising from the study, I compare and contrast these with the existing literature. Finally I examine some implications of this assessment for learners' development, and ways in which we could support learners in fostering their learning to achieve the aims of the education system of the 21st century.

The researcher is seeing at different perspective of school based assessment for learning and if assessment is made for learners it should cater with different needs of each learner. **Keywords:** School-Based Assessment for Learners, Brunei Common Assessment Task, pedagogy, standardized 1. **Introduction:** School Based Assessment School Based Assessment for Learning (SBAfL) is an assessment for learning tool which focuses on obtaining feedback on individual student's development and performance in the four important domains highlighted in SPN21.

Brunei is moving towards the changes as learner is seen as a main player in education, hence to support the changes towards assessment for learning; Brunei Common Assessment Task (BCAT) is implemented. The idea of the introducing BCAT is to make a transition or pedagogical shift between the old system to a new format SBAfL ' School-Based Assessment for Learners' instead ' of learners'. In order to ease the transition, the curriculum department introduced BCAT, standardized SBAfL test. This paper therefore examines / aims to highlight significant aspect of school based assessment or learning and the lapses in existing practices. " Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there. " Assessment Reform Group (2002) 2.

1 Objectives or purposes of SBAfL The rationale behind school-based assessment We first can start by looking at the overseas. Internationally, particularly in the West, many countries and almost all the examination boards have introduced school-based assessment.

In fact, some countries, SBA contributes to 100% of the total assessment of the students. Typically, however, in countries such as Australia and the UK, it contributes about 50%. So, you must ask that: why have these countries and increasingly, why are other countries now following this example and introducing SBA? First of all, the reason is to improve validity. It is to ensure that we can assess the full range of outcomes relevant to our subject. And this is to ensure that we are assessing those things that we are really value.

But, there is another side of it; people often think that there is a bit of a trade-off between validity and reliability. Actually, what we know is that

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when school-based assessment is done properly, it can also contribute to reliability too. In other words, it can be ensure that the student has a more accurate assessment of their ability. Sometimes more accurate than can be obtained from a one-shot examination. So these are some of the reasons why we move to school-based assessment.

2. Review of Related Literature

The main research question is ‘ to what extend school based assessment help students’ learning with the implementation of Brunei Common Assessment Task (standardized tasks)? Does standardized task could be used for all students? ’ The main theme identified from the previous introduction is the rationale of school based assessment. In literature part, I intended to review the significant of school-based assessment towards students’ learning. Prior to gathering the literature, I produced a list of necessary references and resources to cite from.

These resources include library books, internet, journal articles, magazines and electronic books. The first step was a big step because it was not easy to locate the literature. In researching the literature, attention was drawn to the keywords: assessment task, assessment for learning, and standardised assessment.

3. 2 Assessment tasks

Assessment and schooling go hand in hand. The assessment of learners and learning is a regular practice in education and are used to determine how far learners have learnt or mastered an educational task or knowledge or how well an educational process has addressed its set objectives.

Anikweze (2005: 2) precisely refers to Assessment as “ the process of investigating the status or standard of learners’ attainment, with reference

to expected outcomes that must have been specified as objectives” when it concerns learners’ output. Njabili, Abedi, Magesse and Kalole (2005: 2) add that “ The fundamental role of Assessment is to provide authentic and meaningful feedback for improving student learning, instructional practice and educational options” which means that Assessment is not and so should not be seen as an end in itself but a means to a justifiable end of learning”. The student’s point of view matters because of its effect on learning. From the student’s point of view, classroom assessment information is not merely information “ about” himself or herself. Rather, it forms a major part of his or her learning life, becoming part of the lessons he or she is expected to learn, the relationship he or she has with the teacher and the subject matter, and relationships with peers. (Brookhart, 2003, p. 6)

3.3 Fairness in School Based Assessment

Among recent trends around the globe, is the concern on fairness in matters concerning the various issues in education.

In some contexts, Fairness and Equity are used synonymously. Fairness or equal opportunity in assessment relates to two issues: “... fairness in . . . comparison: in essence, have the groups ... being tested had the same opportunity to learn? ” (Uwakwe, 2005: p4). Teachers are professional and know their students best. So they can compare their students’ work done inside or outside the classroom. Then they can authenticate whether the students themselves have done the work. In this way the authenticity of SBA is guaranteed and students’ abilities can be accurately reflected.

Assessment and grading procedures had the effect helping some students succeed now must serve to help all students succeed. The ‘ Including all learners’ statement should be used by settings/schools to look at their

existing arrangements and identify good practice. “ Assessment ‘ as Learning’ is a Professional Obligation in a previous system. Assessment for learning (AfL) should be Celebration of Learning – students should involve not abundant process” (Rick and Doug, 2008). 3. Research Design It will generally give the overview of the research design, methodology, method, selection of research participants, and data collection.

The details of data account will be presented in the later part of this report. I had outlined a research focus and constructed the main research question aligned with the qualitative methodology. I had chosen semi-structured interviews for my data collection because it suited with the nature of my study. Three participants were recruited for the research. I developed understanding of the issues which emerged in the research from the coding frame after analysing the data collected using the grounded analysis procedures. Finally, I presented the extracts based on the participants’ transcripts. . 4 Main Research Question: The Brunei Common Assessment Tasks (BCATs) currently implemented in schools are formal, standardized and moderated assessment tasks that familiarise teachers and students with Assessment for Learning (AfL) best practises. Over time, teachers are expected to develop their own SBAfL tasks to better cater to the varied abilities and needs for their students. The main research question is ‘ to what extend ‘ SBAfL help students’ learning with the implementation of Brunei Common Assessment Task (standardized tasks)? 4. 5 Choice of Methodology

The methodology that I selected and employed throughout the research is qualitative. I chose qualitative because it is fundamentally different from quantitative methods. This qualitative research methodology puts my <https://assignbuster.com/school-based-assessment-for-learning-essay/>

research in a good position because I want to gain meaning and understanding of teachers' experience stored, improved and implemented for future practices. This methodology I used requires special equipment to record and transcribe to gather and analyse the data in-depth. Therefore, the qualitative perspective emphasises on the 'depth of the understanding' of the study.

4. 6 Sampling

The sample involved 3 teachers who taught English language in one of the secondary schools in Bandar Seri Begawan. Considering their background of teaching experience, each teacher has taught English language at different length/duration in experience of teaching. Three teachers which I recognise as teacher A, teacher B who has taught 13 years in English language and teacher C which is a new experience teacher taught English subject.

4. 7

Limitation of Study

There are shortcomings, conditions or influences that cannot be controlled that place restrictions on the methodology and conclusions that I have chosen.

Even though the report finished on time, it does not mean that I did not face any problem in doing this research. Initially, I intended to interview some students to see the overview, real-classroom situation. However, with school activities these students had to involved, it was difficult to gather these students to willingly involve in this study within the constraint time. Another difficulty I faced was, no permission was given in collecting students' mark as the academic staff seen this as case sensitive. The idea was to view the overall and breakdown results of a chosen class as a reason to see students' progress and development when conducting assessment.

4. The Account In

line with the research question to investigate the students' learning with the

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implementation of Brunei Common Assessment Task (standardized task) in supporting assessment for learning, teachers were asked their views and experiences in conducting school-based assessment. Figure 1: This figure shows Coding Frame which indicates issues arise during the grounded analysis study. Two nodes were highly discussed; teacher's view on school based assessment and impact of standardised Brunei Common Assessment Task (BCAT) for learners.

The figure indicates number of times by which it is frequently mentioned by the participants, on both teachers' view and the implication of the standardised task. When linkage as I observed it seems that the standardised BCAT is unconstructive for low achievers and all samples were agreed the assessment practice is quite summative. To make it easier to see account frequently mentioned by each participants, I breakdown the findings into Teacher A, Teacher B, and Teacher C. See graph: From the findings, all participants mentioned that assessment for learning (AfL) are beneficial for the learners.

From the graph, it says AfL are helpful for higher achievers, and could improve group of average students in their learning: " The feedback of the assessment helps them in improving. The weak students for some help them. For others it's still struggle. " Teacher B On the other hand, another participant describes that standardized BCAT is unconstructive for low achievers: " My comments on this may not affect the whole scenario, because my year 7K, very special class that can't read and can't write so I'm struggling with them. So, standardized BCAT is not for them.

It is wonderful test paper, the middle set and the top set is more relevant to them. If SBAfL, teacher are given freedom to do their own SBAfL, it will be much better, for me and for my students because I know their level and I know what to prepare for them. But the rules said it must be standardized, I couldn't do anything.... So, BCAT wasn't really helpful for them, for particular class. “ Teacher A The participant seems to relate that standardized BCAT or assessment practice is quite summative and less helpful to cater students' need: “ In the test or during the test, I have to help them, as most of them will get zero.

The student and the teacher couldn't cope the extensive syllabus. The syllabus is so huge, even by selecting few pieces in the textbook didn't help because by the end of the day I have to go to the basic spelling, writing, reading, and the teacher had to forget about the grammar, spelling first. We need to focus on the other skills. Teacher A 5. Discussion Following, the details of data account will be analysed, interpreted and discussed. There are two significant points that emerged from these findings.

I integrate the key issue into one significant aspect which deal with the obstacles that the teachers face in conducting ' assessment for learning' in relation to standardised BCAT for learners as to answer the main research question 5. 1 Discussion of assessment for learning in supporting lower achiever While the literature review gave a general picture on the roles of assessment, the finding have revealed that the challenging questions of how teacher conducting common assessment task.

Since SBA is a new mode of assessment, education policy provides teachers with the assessment criteria and a series of examples to illustrate the standards. They also provide training for teachers. All these measures will ensure standardization among teachers. Teachers know their own students, but may not know the standards of students in other schools, there may be discrepancies in the assessment of a student's performance by teachers from different school. The participants argued that there are reasons why assessment and grading procedures had the effect only helping some students succeed.

Assessment for learning should not be seen as a professional obligation for the students if we want to achieve the aim of the education system. A view expressed by a participant shows that 'including all learners' statement should be used by settings/schools to look at their existing arrangements and identify good practice. Common assessment task shows very little indications what students could actually do in real world or situation; content-based assessment task less constructive in promoting critical thinking and skills needed by the nation.

Hence, project-based does necessary happen and performance-based assessment. Conclusion If we are serious about raising student achievement, we have to change what happens in the classroom to enable all learners to access relevant skills, knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level. Schools may select content from or any key stage within the curriculum and use it flexibly, together with the skills framework given. In order to provide a meaningful relevant and motivating curriculum for their learners, meet the specific needs of their learners and further their all-round development.

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Recommendation: the need of flexibility It is recommended that flexible assessment activities is needed to cater the needs of different students and allow them to be assessed effectively. I would like to take this one step further and suggest that, there is a need of flexibility in assessing students' task by considering level of the students, settings/schools must work to provide an inclusive curriculum which offers opportunities for all learners to achieve and contribute to today's multi-ethnic. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum should be set out in school policy documents.

The full range of professionals, learners and parents/carers can play a part to evaluate the effectiveness of the whole curriculum in the longer term.

Standardization is helpful to cater some groups of students, however with the extensive syllabus; weaker students could not cope with too many common assessment tasks. Therefore there is a need to reduce number of common assessment task to be beneficial for access relevant skills, knowledge and understanding In order to provide a meaningful relevant and motivating curriculum for all learners. Reference: * Black, P. and William, D. (2001). Inside the black box.

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