The Problems in Applying Authentic Assessment for Speaking Skills in Junior High School

Muhlis Fajar Wicaksana, Sarwiji Suwandi, Retno Winarni, dan Ngadiso

Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta, Indonesia
wicaksana_muhlis@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Various problems arise in the application of the 2013 curriculum, especially the authentic assessment system. This study tries to describe the various problems that arise, the factors that cause debate, and efforts to overcome them. This research method uses a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The source of information for the research came from two female teachers at Sukoharjo 1 & 3 SMPN and one male teacher from Al-Azhar Islamic Middle School 21 Solo Baru. The data validity technique is done through data triangulation. Data obtained through observation, interviews, and document analysis are all complementary. The results showed that: a) understanding the teacher about authentic assessment still varied, b) limiting the time in applying authentic assessment, c) the teacher did not check the instrument to be used, d) the teacher who often did not conduct the research process in learning, e) processing the value of learning outcomes received by the teacher is too complicated and complicated, also f) the minimum reading power of the teacher to study books about authentic assessment. One of the causes is internal and external factors. Internal factors come from within (teachers and students), while external factors come from outside the teacher’s ability.

Keywords:
authentic assessment, Junior High School skills, speaking, Sukoharjo

Berbagai permasalahan muncul dalam penerapan kurikulum 2013, khususnya sistem penilaian autentik aspek keterampilan berbicara di SMP. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan berbagai permasalahan yang muncul, faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan permasalahan, dan upaya untuk mengatasinya. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen. Sumber informasi penelitian berasal dari dua guru perempuan di SMPN 1 & 3 Sukoharjo dan satu guru laki-laki dari SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru. Teknik keabsahan data dilakukan melalui triangulasi data. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen semuanya saling melengkapi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: a) pemahaman guru tentang penilaian autentik masih bervariasi, b) keterbatasan waktu dalam penerapan penilaian autentik, c) guru tidak mau mengecek instrumen penilaian yang akan digunakan, d) guru sering tidak melakukan penilaian proses dalam pembelajaran, e) pengolahan nilai hasil belajar yang dirasakan guru terlalu rumit dan kompleks, serta f) minimnya daya baca guru untuk mengakui buku-buku mengenai penilaian autentik. Adapun faktor penyebab permasalahan adalah faktor internal dan eksternal. Faktor internal berasal dari dalam (guru dan siswa), sedangkan faktor eksternal berasal dari luar kemampuan guru.

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INTRODUCTION

Along with the enforcement of 2013 curriculum in every education unit in Indonesia, teachers in the education units need to understand the assessment system applied, which is the authentic assessment system. The authentic assessment refers to the significantly meaningful measurement of the achievement of the students in the aspects of attitude, skills, and knowledge (Arifin, 2016). Conceptually, the authentic assessment is significantly more meaningful compared to the multiple-choice test. When applying the authentic assessment to know the result and achievement of the students, teachers apply the criteria regarding the construction of knowledge, observation and tryout activity, and achievement value outside the school. Kurinasi & Sani (2014) explain that authentic assessment of students comprises the attitude, knowledge, and skills competencies assessment, which is carried out in balance.

Majid (2011) proposes that the authentic assessment refers to the information gathering process conducted by teachers regarding the study advancement and achievement of the students through various techniques which are able to express, prove, or show accurately that the purpose of the study and the competence have really been achieved and mastered. The importance of the speaking competence is also delivered by Tarigan (2008) which defines speaking as the skills to pronounce articulation sounds to express, state, and deliver the thought, idea, and feeling. Speaking is one of the behavioral form of human, which utilizes the factors such as physical, psychological, neurological, semantic, and linguistic factors (Halidjah, 2010). In wider sense, speaking is regarded as the most fundamental tool in controlling the human (Sari, Wendra, & Wisudariani, 2016).

Based on the regulation of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Permendikbud No. 23, 2016), the assessment system in the 2013 curriculum is divided into three aspects, namely attitude, skills, and knowledge. One of the forms of the authentic assessment is used to assess students’ skills. This type of aspect assessment can be applied through the practical, product, and portfolio assessment techniques (Sintadewi, Sriasih, & Sudiana, 2017). Certainly, in applying the assessment technique, teachers will be presented with various problems.

The problem in applying the authentic assessment towards the speaking skills aspect is, for instance, some teachers do the assessment of speaking skills aspect through the written test (Nurgiyantoro, 2011). This type of written text does not
involve the students’ performance but by answering the questions regarding the speaking skills aspect. Therefore, the skills mastery shown by the students may not be in relevance with the assessment result (Absari, Sudiana, & Wendra, 2015). The written assessment of speaking skills aspect fails to depict the speaking skills mastered by the students. This is supported by the research finding by Frey, et al (2012) in their research entitled “Defining Authentic Classroom Assessment” which describes that in accordance to this problem, the speaking skills in class according to some teachers can be tested by written text instrument. However, outside the class, this method is unacceptable due to the requirement that outside the class the speaking skills competence must be practiced directly.

The problem faced by the teachers in applying the authentic assessment of speaking skills aspect is regarding the time inadequacy. To conduct the assessment to all students from every class through the practical assessment technique, teachers must need extra time and energy. This is what becomes the dilemma among the teachers.

In applying the assessment of speaking skills aspect, most of the teachers are reluctant to develop the assessment tool or instrument in the speaking skills aspect. It has been the teachers’ inurement to do the assessment using the assessment tool or instrument directly from the handbook available. Teachers are reluctant to add or reduce the components of the assessment tool or instrument. This leads to a problem for the teachers.

Based on the problems occur in the application of the authentic assessment of skills aspect, this article aims at giving an alternative to overcome various problems. The efforts have been done in this research so that presenting the problem and how to deal with it can be new prospects for the teachers in applying the authentic assessment of speaking aspect skills in junior high school.

Assessment is one part that is inseparable from learning and learning. This assessment provides the most important role in the class. In this case, the assessment cannot be separated from learning. With good judgment we can improve learning and with the right learning we can improve the achievement of all students (Triantingsih, 2018). According to Ridlo (2018) assessment is a process to find out whether the process and results of an activity program are in accordance with the objectives or criteria that have been set. Assessment can be carried out appropriately if data is available relating to the object of assessment. How to obtain it is needed an assessment
tool in the form of measurement. Assessment and measurement are two things that are interrelated.

The form of assessment in the 2013 curriculum is authentic assessment. Authentic assessment is carried out on the assessment of attitudes, skills, and knowledge. In this authentic assessment it tries to challenge students to apply new information and academic skills in real situations for specific purposes. Students actively try to develop real experiences through various problem solving activities through experiments, demonstrations, and field activities.

O’Malley dan Pierce (1996) define Authentic Assessment as follows: "Authentic assessment is an evaluation process that involves multiple forms of performance measurement reflecting the student's learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructionally-relevant activities. Examples of authentic assessment techniques include performance assessment, portfolios, and self-assessment."

Furthermore, Wiggins (1993), Stiggins (1987), and Mueller (2005), (Beatson, dkk, 2009) define the authentic assessment as follows. “a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills”.

Similar to Johnson (2010), an assessment needs to be carried out standard testing, this test is more exclusive and narrow. Meanwhile, authentic assessment is inclusive with various benefits obtained by students. The assessment that is really implemented will bring a significant impact optimally for students.

In addition, Majid (2011), authentic assessment is the process of collecting information by teachers about the development and achievement of learning carried out by students through various techniques that are able to express, prove or show precisely that the learning objectives and abilities have been mastered and achieved. It could be that the assessment techniques used also vary. Speech assessment can be done through assessment techniques through student performance, or in other words performance techniques. In addition, portfolio techniques can also be used. The answer sheets completed by students are collected in one container whose name is this portfolio.

Further, W.F. Meckey in Bygate & Samuda (2005) proposes that “oral expression involves non only [...] the use of the right sounds in the right patterns of rhythm an intonation, but also the choice of words and inflections in the right order covey the right meaning.” Iwashita, et al (2008) mentions that “Speaking proficiency at higher levels,
four factors (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency) show equal contributions, with the sociolinguistics factor contributing relatively less.”

O’Malley and Pierce (1996) explain “speaking means negotiating intended meanings and adjusting one’s speech to produce the desired effect on the listener.” The essence of speaking is the mastery of the topic to create certain effects on the listener. The understanding of the listener is the main component in speaking.

In wider sense, Brown (2004) mentions that in the speaking skills, there are macro and micro competencies, which have to be mastered by the speaker, as, explained as follows:

A similar list of speaking skills can be drawn up for the same purpose: to serve as a taxonomy of skills from which you will select one or several that will become the objective(s) of an assessment task. The micro skills refer to producing the smaller chunk of language such as phonemes, morphemes, word, collocations, and phrasal units. The macro skills imply the speaker’s focus on the large elements: fluency, discourse, function, style, cohesion, nonverbal communication, and strategic options.

The micro skills competence refers to the micro language components such as phoneme, morpheme, words, collocation, and phrase units. Meanwhile, the macro skills refers to the speaker’s factors, such as: fluency, discourse, function, style, cohesion, nonverbal communication, and strategy option. According to Nunan (2005) “Speaking is a productive aural/oral skills and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning.”

A conclusion can be drawn that speaking skills are active productive skills. In this skill there are five components that must be mastered by someone. These components include: 1) relevance and clarity of message content (problem or topic); 2) accuracy of pronunciation (intonation, pause, gesture, and pressure); 3) the use of good and correct language (vocabulary and grammatical elements); 4) vocabulary vocabulary; and 5) fluency in delivering through the use of communicative language (easy to understand including the style of appearance and cohesion.

**METHOD**

This research methodology discusses several aspects, namely the research location, research subject, research approach, data collection technique, and data analysis technique. This research was conducted in the Junior High School in Sukoharjo
Region, specifically to the teachers of 8th grade. This research subjects consist of three junior high schools in Sukoharjo Region, namely SMP N 1 Sukoharjo, SMP N 3 Sukoharjo, and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo. From the three schools mentioned, two female teachers and one male teacher were selected.

This research method applies a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Sukmadinata (2011), descriptive research aims to describe and depict the phenomena occur, both natural or cultural, which focuses more on the characteristics, quality, and the interrelation between each activity. The research data were collected through observation, interview, and document analysis. Observation was conducted through directly observing towards the assessment activity when teachers apply the authentic assessment of speaking skills in the class. The data results were obtained through interview with three teachers from SMPN 1 Sukoharjo, SMPN 3 Sukoharjo, and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo. The document analysis was conducted by analyzing the syllabus, learning implementation plan, and assessment sheets.

The data analysis in the qualitative research was conducted interactively and continuously until the data is saturated. The activity involves the data reduction, data display, and verification. Next, the validity of the data obtained is examined through the data triangulation which covers the data from the observation, interview, and document analysis. The technique used to test is utilizing the data unit parameters.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research finding elaborates three components, namely the problems occur, the factors of the problems, and the effort to overcome the problem in applying the authentic assessment of speaking skills in junior high school. The research findings are elaborated as follows:

1. The Problems Occur During The Implementation of Authentic Assessment for Speaking Skills

The implementation of 2013 curriculum arouse several problems to occur. Based on the observation and interview conducted in SMPN 1 Sukoharjo, SMPN 3 Sukoharjo, and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo, it is revealed that the teachers understanding on the authentic assessment is still relatively low. When the teachers were given some questions, each teacher gave different explanation. They were doubtful when asked to explain about the concept of authentic assessment. Based
on these different understandings, in can be concluded that the teachers still need to be
given the appropriate explanation about the authentic assessment in 2013 curriculum.

Besides the teachers’ varied understanding on the authentic assessment, teachers
also reveals another problem, which is the time limitation. Teachers feel that when the
assessment is applied, the implementation of authentic assessment is considered
lacking. Furthermore, when the assessment technique is applied through practical
activity, for instance, giving each student a chance to perform in front of the class,
there will be no adequate time for the teachers to do the assessment. The fact says that
the teachers only do the assessment through selecting some representatives from the
students.

Another problem is that the studying process tends to be ignored by the teachers. They often neglect the assessment on the studying process, and only do the assessment on the studying result. Whereas, the assessment on the studying process can also be conducted in order to know the students’ speaking skills. Not only at the end of the studying process, but also in the discussion, in giving opinions, in giving assessment or input during the studying process. Those activities can be the medium to do the assessment.

In doing the assessment in the class, teachers are also reluctant to check the
assessment instruments previously before using them. Teachers are already occupied
with the assessment instruments. The instrument available is in the form of handbooks.
Whereas, the assessment instrument found in the handbook is not necessarily relevant or can be directly applied. The teachers need to check the instruments before using them.

Based on the interview with three teachers from each school, only the teachers
from SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru who often adds component or indicator to
complete the assessment instruments found in the handbook available. The teacher
checks previously the form of the instruments, which will be used. If there is any
assessment indicator which is considered not representing, another indicator will be added, and vice versa. When an indicator is considered causing a term confusion to the
students, the indicator will be replaced.

In the authentic assessment, teachers feel that the processing of studying result is
complicated and complex. Teachers are always anxious when inputting the scores in
the programmed assessment application. A little mistake (when inputting the score)
will confuse the teachers. Besides, the assessment aspects available are considered very complex.

In conducting the assessment, teachers also have troubles to assess the students according to their ability. Based on the observation towards the studying process in the class, teachers seem to find difficulties in observing the students. When the assessment process is carried out to every student from each group, the students who stand out in skills dominates the others so that the teachers cannot observe them closely. The results are then considered not optimal when the students procrastinate doing their works. The results are also considered less objective, and far from fair.

Another cautioning problem is the lack of teachers’ ability in reading the assessment system. The lack in teachers’ ability to study the books about authentic assessment affects their understanding on the assessment. Based on the data, the teachers scarcely read unless it is by urgent interests (by means of finishing works or obeying the regulation by the institution on it). Moreover, the books available to read are limited in number. This is one of the factors making the reading power of the teachers low.

2. The Factors Causing The Problems in the Application of Authentic Assessment of Speaking Skills

Based on the interview with Indonesian Language teachers in SMPN 1 & 3 Sukoharjo dan SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo, there are several factors causing the problems in the application of authentic assessment of speaking skills. The factors causing the problems are divided into internal and external factors.

The internal factor coming from the students is one of the factors causing the problems in applying the authentic assessment. Students in every class have different characters and behaviors. Some classes can understand the instruction of the teachers, but some cannot or find difficulties in doing the assignments. There are only certain students who participate actively in the assessment of the speaking skills in the class. This is one of the difficulties in the application of authentic assessment according to the 2013 curriculum.

Besides the factor coming from the students, the teachers can also be the cause of the problem in applying the authentic assessment. Based on the interview with Indonesian Language teachers from three schools (SMPN 1 & 3 Sukoharjo and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo), another factor causing the problem is the time
limitation. The three teachers find that to carry out the speaking skills assessment through practical activity needs much time and extra energy. All of them agree that it is not easy to apply the authentic assessment of speaking skills. Moreover, the documents used in the assessment are complicated and there are many assessment sheets to fill.

Besides the internal factors, there are external factors causing the problems in applying the authentic assessment. One of the internal factors is the facilities and infrastructures in the schools. Based on the interview with three teachers in SMPN 1 & 3 Sukoharjo and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru, the school facilities and infrastructures have a significant role in supporting the teachers in applying the interesting learning model. We hope that the interesting learning model will boost up the students’ scores. In other words, teachers will think of how to arrange the interesting strategy to do the assessment towards the students. The assessment covers not only the result, but also the process of learning.

Besides the facilities and infrastructures, another external factor is the facilitation of the local government educational institutions in organizing scientific conferences. Both quantity and quality of workshop or training on assessment should be improved. Not only through the scientific meetings, but also through discussions among subject teachers or MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran).

3. The Effort to Overcome the Problems Occur in the Application of Authentic Assessment of Speaking Skills

Based on the research result elaborated, regarding the various problems in the application of speaking skills authentic assessment in junior high schools, the teachers in SMPN1 Sukoharjo, SMPN 3 Sukoharjo, and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo gives their opinions regarding the solutions to overcome the problems. Regarding the teachers’ diverse understanding on the authentic assessment, the teachers stated that the effort to overcome the problem can be done through workshop or training. Not only through local education and cultural services, but also discussion between teachers or MGMP.

Regarding the problem, the teachers complain about the big number of documents they have to fill, and they agree that the documents need to be simplified so that it is more understandable and applicable for the students. By doing so, any other teacher will not get any difficulty in applying this authentic assessment. The teacher in SMPN 3 Sukoharjo and SMP Islam Al-Azhar 21 Solo Baru Sukoharjo answer this problem by
mentioning that the teachers must be more creative. They should find the simpler assessment strategy and make planning first so that the assessment can be carried out well earlier and not time and energy consuming. Teachers also need to give motivation to the students with high learning spirit by giving some rewards and by observing further the students with difficulties in learning.

Another problem is that teachers are reluctant to check the assessment instrument used. All of them mentioned that it is better to re-check the assessment instrument before utilizing them. Some assessment instruments available in the handbook are not relevant, so that it will be wise if the teacher check the instruments before using them.

Regarding the low level of teachers’ reading skills in studying books about the authentic assessment, the teachers during the interview mentioned that teachers must be more creative in dealing with the application of authentic assessment, by actively finding more references or other sources to improve their knowledge and understanding. Finding references is not only by purchasing the books individually. They can download them on the internet. They can also have discussions with other teachers, or with the teachers’ instructor in 2013 curriculum.

The problems occur in the application of speaking skills authentic assessment are: 1) the teachers’ lacking in mastering the authentic assessment; 2) The lacking in socialization and training organized by the Educational and Cultural Services of Sukoharjo Regency; 3) The teachers’ complaint about the big number of documents they have to fill; 4) The teachers’ complaint regarding the time limitation and extra energy; 5) The teachers’ reluctance to check whether the assessment instruments are relevant with what is being assessed; 6) The processing of students’ marks which is considered complicated and complex; and 7) The teachers’ low level of reading skills to study books about authentic assessment.

These problems occur due to many factors, such as students, facilities and infrastructures, and the inadequate time provided. The factor coming from the students become the cause of problem in the application. Each class has different characters and behaviors. There are classes that can understand the teachers’ instruction, while some other classes find difficulties in doing the assignments. During the assessment towards the speaking skills in the class, only certain students can participate actively. This leads to a problem in applying the authentic assessment according to the 2013 curriculum. Based on the research finding by Ermawati & Hidayat (2017) there are also two factors
hampering the teachers in implementing the authentic assessment, namely the students’ unsupportive characteristic and the inadequate time provided.

It is in accordance with the research by Sudiana (2015) which reveals three factors hampering the implementation of authentic assessment, namely teachers’ lacking in understanding the authentic assessment, the teachers’ low level of creativity, and the inadequate facilities and infrastructures. The finding shows that teachers’ do not understand how to make the relevant assessment instrument, so that they find difficulties in carrying out the assessment. Meanwhile, teachers’ low level of creativity can be seen in their poor time management and class organizing. Teachers inability in managing the time effectively makes the assessment process cannot be carried out well and optimally. Teachers’ inability in organizing the class also leads to the obstruction in the assessment process. Reproval and motivation given cannot get over students’ characters, which tend to lack responsibility in doing assignment and lack motivation. This leads to a difficulty for the teachers’ to assign the students. The inadequate facilities and infrastructures also contribute to the hampering of the implementation of the authentic assessment because the teachers find it difficult to assign the students.

The last effort of the teachers to overcome the problem of the application of authentic assessment is by participating in a workshop or training. Not only from the Local Educational and Cultural Services, but also through discussions between teachers with different subjects and through teachers forum or MGMP. This is commonly known as the peer collaboration. The collaboration between teachers and 2013 curriculum is expected to be more effective.

CONCLUSION

In applying the authentic assessment towards the speaking skills aspect, teachers should pay attention to these following aspects. Before carrying out the assessment, teachers should check the assessment rubrics whether it is relevant or not. The rubrics used should be in relevance with the skills assessed. Teachers should study more books as references, besides the books suggested by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia. Teachers should be competent in arranging strategy to apply the authentic assessment of speaking skills aspect. Strategy by means of giving the students the equal treatment to be assessed according to their skills. This is done to avoid the teachers from doing assessment to the most creative group and the most uncreative
In doing the skills authentic assessment through the peer friends, teachers should prepare all assessment instruments needed; give students some examples and how to use the assessment instruments.

REFERENCES


