

## AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT IN ACTION: ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND PRACTICES FOR ASSESSING STUDENTS' PRODUCTIVE SKILLS AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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**Abstract.** This study explores how

English teachers' perceptions and practices of authentic assessment for assessing students' productive skills at Senior High School 2 Kuta. Using Qualitative research aims to explore in-depth information on various responses. This research is the result of expressing a person's various thoughts about a topic (McCarthy, 2017). The result revealed teachers believe that the design and implementation of authentic assessments are critical for effectively improving students' productive skills and that these assessments should fit with the Merdeka Curriculum's learning objectives. Teachers acknowledge that authentic assessments have a beneficial impact on student's ability to apply skills in real-life circumstances, and they emphasize the importance of planning and implementation in achieving good assessment outcomes.

### INTRODUCTION

The changing of the Indonesian curriculum to Kurikulum Merdeka brings new paradigms in education. This curriculum brings more flexible learning conditions than the previous curriculum. Hence, the teachers of all learning subjects should change their learning and assessing ways for the students. In Kurikulum Merdeka, learning and assessment relate to each other. Assessment should be directed from the dawning of learning until the end of learning (Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, 2024). Briefly, the assessment should be directed to the implementation of authentic assessment. As a different way of assessing in education, authentic assessment is defined differently by experts. Butakor & Ceasar (2021) defines authentic assessment as a process that applies actual proof of students' learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes related to instructional classroom activities. It aims to provide input on students' learning to encourage further improvement of their knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking that could be used to imitate a real-world situation (Widana & Ratnaya, 2021).

Authentic assessment prepares the students to be ready to show their competency. Huang & Jiang (2021) mention that authentic assessment has the potential to close the gaps among

learning in school, the world of profession, and everyday life context. The use of authentic assessment is expected to stimulate students to improve their language skills and communication in an authentic context (Citrawan et al., 2024). Authentic assessment connects the school with real-world life. Authentic assessment facilitates the development of students' deep understanding of how to perform knowledge in real life. Briefly, It highlights more on improving students' knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking by providing them with a real world task which is able to show significant application of their knowledge and skills (Sukendra et al., 2024).

If the authentic assessment is connected to English as a foreign language learning (EFL), it can contribute to the learning process and product. As stated in the curriculum, teaching English is divided into four language skills, namely: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Speaking and writing are categorized into productive skills, while listening and reading are categorized into receptive skills. It means that in speaking and writing the students should produce various learning products or performances. For example, in speaking the students can make conversation, storytelling, speech, etc. Meanwhile in writing the students can write down various texts or genres. Hence, the teachers need to check their performance in speaking or product in writing in a detailed way.

In the context of Kurikulum Merdeka, speaking and writing cannot be assessed by using paper-pencil tests or other tests such as mid-term exams and final assessment tests. Butakor & Ceasar (2021) argue that the traditional type of assessment frequently fails to observe further types of learning and it could not optimally view students' changes in their knowledge it is because students are not given opportunities to apply their knowledge or understanding. Here, authentic assessment is the alternative assessment. In addition, Kurikulum Merdeka carries out the assessment which is directed at an ongoing assessment such as authentic assessment. Hence, this authentic assessment is matched to the nature of productive skills (speaking and writing) which is also an ongoing skill.

By knowing the importance and roles of authentic assessment in productive language skills, English teachers should have a good perception of it and try to practice the use of authentic assessment. The perception that the teacher has about authentic assessment influences how the teachers act or practice it. Teachers' perceptions will reflect the teachers' knowledge, beliefs and thinking in the classroom practice. It will impact the role and contribution of the teachers in authentic assessment. Theoretically, when teachers have a good perception of authentic assessment, they implement it well. However, the implementation of authentic assessment has various problems in reality. It is proven by several research done by experts. Teachers' readiness was average in planning and not ready in executing and reporting authentic assessments due to 3 main reasons faced by the teachers namely insufficient of authentic assessment understanding, lack of experience in designing authentic assessments, and lack of discussion about authentic assessment among other teachers who already joined authentic assessments' workshop. Meanwhile Imansyah et al. (2018) teachers had a good enough perception of authentic assessment meanwhile their understanding and practices seemed to be limited because there were some problems in implementing the authentic assessment.

Furthermore, an observation was done in SMAN 2 Kuta in the academic year 2024/2025 for two months (August-September). During the observation, six major problems were found.

First, English teachers felt the changing of curriculum was quick so they did not have preparation to learn it. Second, the English teachers lacked knowledge and understanding about authentic assessment because it was new for them. Third, the teachers did not fully know the assessment type that could be used for English. Fourth, the teachers still applied paper-pencil tests for English performance. Fifth, the teachers did not plan the assessment well yet. It still used assessment in the previous curriculum. Sixth, Kurikulum Merdeka could not be done ideally yet. To get deeper information about authentic assessment, an interview was done to English teachers. From the interview, the teachers just knew a little bit of authentic assessment. They knew it just from sharing it with friends in MGMP. For them, authentic assessment was good and appropriate for assessing English skill, especially for speaking and writing. However, designing and implementing authentic assessment were still problems. Actually, they tried to find authentic assessment model, but it was hard to get which was based on the competency in Kurikulum Merdeka. Briefly, they had positive view of authentic assessment and in the progress of learning authentic assessment.

Based on the explanation of the theory and facts of authentic assessment in reality, it was urgent to do research about the teachers' perception and implementation of authentic assessment in productive skill for three reasons. First, it is a case of implementing Kurikulum Merdeka which should be solved soon. Second, the perception of the teachers is considered as a basic foundation for applying authentic assessment hence it should be identified. Third, knowing the range of knowledge and implementation of authentic assessment influence the next government decision or program for improving teachers' quality in practicing authentic assessment. Furthermore, it is discovered that there is a gap between teacher's perception and their implementation. Lastly, the researchers also investigated the problems in implementing authentic assessment.

### **English Teachers' Perception and Practices**

Perception refers to someone's opinion or understanding of a certain phenomenon. Longman Dictionary Contemporary defines perception as the way someone thinks about ideas and the way in notice things by using a sense of sight, hearing, etc. [Maisani et al. \(2022\)](#) explains that a series of actions is taken to attain awareness or comprehension of sensory information. Those processes included receiving, collecting, taking possession, and apprehension with the mind or senses. According to [Bagus & Nyudak \(2024\)](#), perceptions is usually defined as the awareness of certain material things present to sense in some factors like intensity, physical dimensions of stimulus, subject experience, and other factors in attention like readiness to respond to stimulus, motivation, and emotional state of a person's perception.

Perception is the interpretation of a stimulus. The phenomenon faced by a person is the stimulus and its stimulus is then interpreted based on previous experience. This is also in line with [Chamdani et al. \(2022\)](#) who states that perception is a process of interpreting stimulus into an understanding in which it is received through the five senses of humans such as taste, smell, hearing sight, and touch. Thus, humans create knowledge by using the sense that captures the information and it is also associated with other human competencies. In conclusion, perception is someone's understanding or opinion that exists in an organism of a given phenomenon. It refers to the way a person thinks about something and the way of noticing things with senses of sight, hearing, etc.

Recognizing a teacher's perception of a specific academic performance, particularly assessment, is widely regarded as an important step toward improving the quality of the teaching and learning process. Perception may lead teachers to implement a successful authentic assessment strategy or practice. There is a strong relationship between one's self-concept (perception) and one's academic practice or ability because perception provides a set of beliefs that guide one's approach to a specific subject. Teachers' perceptions are influenced by their attitudes and beliefs as well as their knowledge.

Thus, it could be explained that teachers' beliefs and practices are closely associated because it has direct implications on how authentic assessment is applied through their practices in the classroom. This is emphasized by [Yanti \(2020\)](#) who mentions that teachers' perceptions reflect teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and thoughts which throws back how they implement authentic assessment in their teaching practice. Their perceptions reflect how they perceive the purpose of assessment and how it will affect the implementation. Teachers' perceptions shape their understanding and practices of authentic assessment and its benefit, they are more likely to implement it effectively and think effectively and in a broader range of authentic assessment implementation. Following this teacher need to realize the concept of authentic assessment to assess students' progress effectively and meaningfully.

### **Authentic Assessment**

According to [Samaie & Valizadeh \(2023\)](#), assessment is divided into three approaches namely assessment as learning, for learning, and of learning. Firstly, assessment as learning is the approach that focuses on students' role as the critical connector between assessment and their learning or they became assessors themselves. In this approach, they assess and monitor their own learning and use various strategies to decide their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, when teachers apply assessment as learning, they will focus on helping the students to become critical thinkers who are comfortable with reflection and critical analysis of their learning. In applying assessment as learning, some types of assessment strategies like peer assessment, self-assessment, and reflection are employed. Secondly, assessment for learning is the approach that is conducted during the teaching and learning process. This approach focuses on a view of learning that helps students to learn better rather than obtaining a better score. Thus, this approach encourages the students to become more active in the learning process. Lastly, assessment of learning. The purpose of this approach typically comes at the end of a course or unit of instruction. It is used to determine the extent of the instructional goals that have been achieved and for grading or certification of students' achievement.

In sum, assessment has three approaches namely assessment as learning, assessment for learning, and assessment of learning. This approach focuses on developing and supporting students as active critical thinkers in monitoring their own learning or known as self-assessment. The second one is assessment for learning. This approach is suitable for providing the students' feedback and notifying teachers about areas of improvement is known as assessment for learning or formative assessment. Assessment of learning is the last assessment approach. This approach provides student's learning evidence in a certain time. Clearly, those three approaches have different functions based on what the teachers want to do with the teaching and learning process. However, assessment as, for, and of learning are the approaches that allow teachers to gather evidence and make judgments of student's

achievement.

The traditional type of assessment like a test is generally found to fail in analyzing the change in students' knowledge or performance. Pushing the students to do well on tests like multiple choice or written form could not reflect their maximum competencies and is not always the right way to support the students' development (Nguyen & Phan, 2020). Moreover, to make an assessment beneficial for both teachers and students is significant to apply suitable types of assessment that help the teachers to measure students' knowledge, competence, and performance and also provide an opportunity for students to develop their skills for their future career and professional development. There should be better strategies to understand students' needs and help them to improve rather than creating conclusions about their high or low level of achievement. This is why authentic assessment can be a way to assess what students have learned and to help them improve their critical thinking and creativity which could be utilized in the limitation of real-world circumstances (Rukmini & Saputri, 2017).

Butakor & Ceasar (2021) argue that authentic assessment refers to multiple forms of assessment that show students' learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes. Authentic assessment is a process that gives a description of the changes in students after the learning process. It is no longer simply assessing students' achievement meanwhile it is a process to obtain various regular information, a continuous and thorough process of students' learning progress and outcomes. Furthermore, authentic assessment is widely defined as the activities that involve replicas of the real professional world (Aziz et al., 2020). As emphasized by Havnes & McDowell (2007) authentic assessment is a process that should require students to apply and demonstrate the same kind of competencies, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are applied in the real situation of a professional life.

In English, application of knowledge in the real world is needed. English language learning, learning itself should meet students' needs so that they can apply their knowledge to their own real-life situations. This means that authentic assessment is expected to provide students with some experience to practice real-life problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and communication. Thus, authentic assessment is essential to be applied particularly in language learning because it offers a number of significant advantages in preparing students for the unexpected future world. Authentic assessment is an appropriate type of assessment that can help teachers assess the actual knowledge, competence, and performance of students. By implementing authentic assessment, it helps students to develop their skills. Students' development of their achievement, motivation, and attitudes are developed throughout the process of authentic assessment which applies various activities that practice real-life problem-solving skills.

### **Authentic Assessment for Language Productive Skill**

Speaking and writing are both activities that include the activity of producing language. Productive skills also known as active skills in which the students need to produce the language to communicate or express their ideas in spoken and written language (Astawa et al., 2017). The language is used to produce a message through speech or written text. Productive skills require the students to produce some form of production in the scope of the target language (Nayman & Bavli, 2022). Students are able to produce the language by receiving the language first then they will move to the next stage which is producing the language in order to express their ideas or thoughts. Students are able to produce

something if they are mastering productive skills. It is because productive skills allow the students to generate and communicate their ideas either in the form of spoken or written. In the same way, [Majeed & Ilankumaran \(2022\)](#) mention that speaking and writing are essential for students to express words and compose in order to be able to construct the language. It is essential since it might occur as a chance for the students to develop real-life activities.

Overall, it may be said that productive skills proceed as an important rule in language learning because it allows the students to generate and communicate their ideas either in the form of spoken or written language. It is also needed for the students to master productive skills because it will make them able to express and compose the words or language and move to the next stage such as constructing the language. Speaking is one of the productive skills that demonstrate students' learning achievement and provide opportunities to apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a practical context. It plays an important role in effective communication that allows the students to express themselves, interact with others, and participate in a social or professional setting. This is also explained by [Majeed & Ilankumaran \(2022\)](#), speaking which belongs to the productive skills involves the ability to express oneself orally and communicatively by using spoken language. It is also further stated that speaking is an ability to create and articulate the language orally which is done to express thoughts, ideas, and information. By mastering speaking skills, students can use the language for active communication with others in any situation where verbal communication is involved.

Additionally, speaking skills are categorized into two types namely micro and macro skills. Micro-skills are defined as a process of producing smaller language chunks such as phonemes, morphemes, words, collocations, and phrasal units. The objectives assessed in micro-skills are (1) producing several English phonemes and allophonic variants; (2) producing languages' chunks of different lengths; (3) producing the English stress patterns, the word in stressed and unstressed positions, rhythmic structure, and intonation contours; (4) producing reduced form of words and phrases; (5) using a sufficient number of words to achieve pragmatic purposes; (6) producing fluent speech at different rates of delivery; (7) monitoring one's oral production and use several strategies devices-pauses, filters, self-corrections, backtracking to improve the clarity of the message; (8) using grammatical words' class (noun, verbs, etc.), systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), word order. patterns, rules, and elliptical forms; (9) producing speech-inappropriate phrases, pause groups, breath groups, and sentence constituents; (10) demonstrating a certain meaning in different grammatical forms; (11) applying cohesive devices in spoken discourse.

Furthermore, macro skill refers to the speaker's focus on the large elements and there are 5 aspects included in it namely (1) completing communicative function according to situations, participants, and goals; (2) applying suitable styles, registers, interrupting, and other sociolinguistic features in face-to-face conversation; (3) expressing links and connection between events and communicate such events and feelings, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification; (4) expressing facial features, kinesics, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language; (5) developing and using a speaking strategies battery like emphasizes keywords, rephrases, provides a context for interpreting the words' meaning and assesses how well your

interlocutor is understanding you.

In brief, speaking is one of the productive skills that show students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in practical situations. There are two types included in speaking namely micro and macro skills. In micro-skills, refer to the smallest language' chunk in speaking. Meanwhile, macro skills describe the large elements of speaking. Furthermore, those two types of speaking are interconnected with each other which helps the students to master speaking skills and be able to produce the language, particularly in spoken language.

## **METHOD**

This research is categorized as qualitative research because it produces data in the form of narration, pictures, video, and text. Qualitative research aims to explore in-depth information on various responses. This research is the result of expressing a person's various thoughts about a topic (McCarthy et al., 2017). Specifically, this qualitative research is categorized into case study. Case study explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes".

In the context of this research, this study tries to understand, explore, and gather a detailed description of teachers' perceptions of authentic assessment practices and how the teachers plan and implement authentic assessments for assessing students' productive skills in Kurikulum Merdeka. Here, the researcher also wants to understand the case in-depth about the perceptions, planning, and implementation of authentic assessment practices in Kurikulum Merdeka. Furthermore, applying a case study is a way to understand the perceptions and practices of the case to capture rich and thick descriptions of the research questions. This is also because the case study enables the researcher to observe and describe the practices of authentic assessment in natural settings, which as in school.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

This chapter presented the findings of the study which were organized based on the research questions.

### **The Perceptions of Authentic Assessment Practices for Assessing Students' Productive Skills**

Findings on teachers' perceptions were divided into three themes that were related to the perception of authentic assessment practice for assessing students' productive skills. The first theme was about teachers' beliefs or points of view on authentic assessment. The second theme was about the knowledge of the key concept of authentic assessment and their understanding of planning and implementation of authentic assessment. It referred to teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge of authentic assessment particularly for assessing students' productive skills. The last one was the theme that discussed teachers' attitudes toward the convenience and challenges faced during the planning and implementation and how they planned and implemented authentic assessment for assessing students' productive skills. All the three themes were described as follows.

## **Theme 1: Teachers' Belief in Authentic Assessment Practice for Assessing Students' Productive Skills.**

This theme discovered teachers' beliefs or points of view about authentic assessment practices for assessing students' productive skills. The collected data showed that there were some findings that emerged as sub-themes included in this theme. They were described as follows.

### **Sub-theme 1.1 The Importance of Authentic Assessment Practices**

The first sub-theme that emerged in teachers' belief of authentic assessment was the perception of teachers about the importance of having an understanding of authentic assessment for assessing students' productive skills in both planning and implementation. T1 believed that it was important to have the knowledge of authentic assessment planning in order to be ready and assessment could be done by the student. T1's answer is revealed in the following expert.

Consequently, from this sub-theme, it could be seen that teachers' beliefs of the importance of authentic assessment practice were authentic assessment planning was important to be recognized by teachers. First, both teachers believed that the planning of authentic assessment was important to be mastered by the teachers. It was because it helped them to be ready and supported the implementation of authentic assessment effectively. In addition, having a clear understanding of authentic assessment in both planning and implementation, also assisted the teachers in improving students' speaking and writing skills since it allowed the students to have a lot of opportunities to apply those skills.

### **Sub-theme 1.2 Authentic Assessment Improve Students' Productive Skills.**

The sub-theme described teachers' beliefs of the importance of authentic assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum for improving students' productive skills. Based on the data, it was found that T1 saw authentic assessment as an effective way to improve students' productive skills, particularly writing.

In short, the researcher highlighted a big idea of teachers' beliefs of authentic assessment for assessing students' productive skills in the Merdeka Curriculum. The idea was authentic assessment in Merdeka Curriculum supported the development of students' speaking and writing skills. T1 and T2 believed that authentic assessment could help the development of students' speaking and writing skills as it was supported by the Merdeka Curriculum. They further explained that the Merdeka Curriculum provided topics that were related to real-life situations and allowed the students to explore and apply their comprehension in real practice. Thus, it would let the students have more opportunities to practice their skills.

## **Theme 2: Teachers' Knowledge of Authentic Assessment for Assessing Students' Productive Skills in Merdeka Curriculum**

This theme explains teachers' knowledge in terms of content and pedagogical knowledge of authentic assessment practice for assessing students' productive skills in the Merdeka Curriculum. In this theme, there were 2 sub-themes which were emerged namely teachers' content knowledge of authentic assessment which described their understanding

related to the key concepts of authentic assessment, and pedagogical knowledge which emphasized their knowledge of knowing how to design and implement authentic assessment. The two sub-themes were described as follows.

### **Sub-theme 2.2: Teachers' Content Knowledge of Authentic Assessment**

The collected data from the interview revealed the teachers' knowledge of key concepts of authentic assessment for assessing students' productive skills in the Merdeka Curriculum. T1 defined authentic assessment as a way to assess the students by providing authentic tasks to assess their progress in productive skills. T1's answer is described in the following excerpt.

The authentic assessment that I knew is when we assess the students by giving authentic tasks like presentations, projects, and etc. By giving this kind of task, they could practice their writing and speaking skills in real-life situations. So, it is not only assessing their knowledge like assessing their result of quizzes, for example. (T1)

Moreover, relating to teachers' knowledge of authentic assessment, their answers related to the difference between authentic assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum and K13 were also explored. T1 conveyed his point of view about the difference in practice of authentic assessment in the Merdeka Curriculum and Kurikulum K13 for assessing students' productive skills.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this study, English teachers at Senior High School 2 Kuta provided insights into their perceptions and practices regarding authentic assessment for evaluating students' productive skills, particularly in speaking and writing. The findings revealed three main themes: teachers' beliefs in the importance of authentic assessment, their understanding of content and pedagogical knowledge needed for effective planning and implementation, and the benefits of authentic assessment in enhancing students' real-life application of skills.

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