



ADULT EFL STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

Performance-based assessments such as portfolios, presentations, and participation are now widely used in many English language education programs in public and private universities. There is significant research in the literature on teachers' attitudes toward these types of assessment approaches, but few have explored students' views on these types of assessment techniques. The aim of this study was to find out the attitudes of adult students towards performance based assessments and traditional tests and to see the relationship between length of study and performance based assessments and tests. This research applied a questionnaire to explore the opinions of adult English students (N=110) regarding performance-based assessments (portfolios, presentations and participation) and traditional types of test assessments. The quantitative findings indicate that the four forms of assessment were positively perceived by the participants in this study. The analysis of the background variables revealed that the length of the study had an interactive effect on students' opinions regarding this assessment method. Other background characteristics did not influence the students' attitudes.

Keywords: Assessment, Attitudes, Performance-Based Assessment

INTRODUCTION

Educational assessment is an important element of teachers' activities involving the process of drawing reasonable conclusions based on evidence or a collection of information, observing the students' behavior to analyze their words, actions, and knowledge in certain situations in their context of learning (Gouli et al., 2003), improving students' development and learning achievement (Yahaya et al., 2020) or making a final decision in determining whether the expected learning objectives have been achieved (Anderson et al., 2005; Kifle Mekonen & Anja Fitiavana, 2021; Nitko & Brookhart, 2007). Assessment is seen as an important factor in determining the success of the process and learning outcomes so that teachers can improve the quality of student learning. Therefore, assessment is very important to be carried out by teachers to measure student achievement in their learning. In this case, the teacher must maximize the assessment conducted by each student.

Assessment is also needed to provide educators with an overview of student policies and ensure success in implementing assessment instructions in class. Thus, assessment is an important part of education and must be taken seriously. As teaching and assessment go hand-in-hand, teaching cannot be effective if it is not directly related to effective assessment (Evalinda et al., 2020). In addition, in the learning and teaching processes, the teacher is expected to prepare the assessment process as a tool to measure students' abilities in the learning process.

The purpose of this assessment is not only to measure students' abilities but also to include cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects. Therefore, the assessment process carried out by the teacher puts pressure on cognitive aspects in the form of multiple-choice tests, such as daily, midterm, and final exams (Rachmawati, 2021). Based on the problems above, teachers must be able to develop assessments that not only improve students' abilities in terms of cognitive aspects but also students' affective and psychomotor abilities.

In performance-based assessment, there seems to be no agreement that specifically defines this assessment, but many synonyms are used, including alternative and authentic assessments. In language assessment and various language-related programs, in designing tests educators must have a more student-centred way of assessing not only through paper and pencil tests (Shohamy & Menken, 2015) but also through performance-based assessment, which refers to student assessment models that develop oral or written responses (Prastikawati, 2020; Rachmawati, 2021). Performance-based assessments can help to develop students' critical and creative thinking competencies (Rachmawati, 2021).

Because performance-based assessment is broad in scope, it was then decided to limit the questions to three areas of performance-based assessment (portfolio, presentation, and participation) and compare the students' attitudes toward these three types of assessment with their attitudes toward more traditional tests. Therefore, the questions asked in this study were as follows: What is the student's attitude on the three forms of student performance-based assessment—portfolio, presentation, and participation?, What is the Students attitudes on traditional test versus performance based assessments?, and What is the relationship between the background variables of students and their attitudes toward performance-based assessments and tests?

This research is expected to provide answers to these questions regarding student attitudes toward various forms of teacher assessment. From the results of this study it is hoped that teachers can provide the type of assessment that is in accordance with what students want or need after seeing students' attitudes towards performance-based assessments and traditional tests. Because assessment practices must reflect curricular goals and performance-based assessment tends to have a positive feedback effect, this assessment method will likely continue to play an important role in many English language programs in the future. However, it is important to know how students' attitudes as being assessed in performance-based assessments, because this may assist in the application of the assessment procedure or the decision on whether or not to apply it.

Another reason for conducting this research was to give students the freedom to give their opinions during the assessment process. As Cray and Currie (1996, p. 117) stated in their journal, encouraging learners in teacher education "Despite the rise of the learner-centred approach, we still tend to do what we think is best for the learner. Even when these learners are adults, we tend to act for them rather than ask what they think" (p.117). Much of the research on performance-based assessment has focused on teacher perceptions and little on student perceptions.

METHODS

This study is quantitative. This research was conducted by surveying EFL

students' attitudes toward performance-based assessments and tests in STKIP Muhammadiyah Southwest Aceh. Each program requires an evaluation to improve teaching practices in certain places. Typically, a survey is used to determine the actual conditions in question. In this survey, students filled out a questionnaire asking about their attitudes toward three forms of performance-based assessment and traditional tests often used in lecture programs: portfolios, presentations, participation, and tests.

This study recruited 137 participants from an English language education program at the Southwest Aceh Muhammadiyah Institute of Education (STKIP Muhammadiyah). They consisted of four different semester levels: semesters two, four, six, and eight. This study included 137 participants. However, 25 students did not participate because they were not present in the day of questionnaire distribution and some were currently carrying out the village development program outside the campus. In total, 112 questionnaires were completed, but 2 were discarded due to incomplete filling, leaving a sample size of 110 volunteer participants from a potential population of 137 who were enrolled in English language education program classes.

There are four-semester levels of the participants being analyzed, namely 2nd-semester students who have studied for one year (N=47), 4th-semester students who have studied for two years (N= 30), 6th-semester students who have studied for three years (N=19) and 8th-semester students who have studied for four years (N=13).

The instrument used in this research is a questionnaire. The questionnaire is based on students' attitudes towards various types of assessment. The questionnaire was adopted from Brooks (1999). Participants and students completed the questionnaires. The Likert scale uses several items to measure individual behavior by responding to five choice points for each question: strongly agree, agree, do not decide, disagree, and strongly disagree (Budiaji, 2013). In the questionnaire there are 13 sub-items where each sub-item shows students' attitudes towards four types of assessment such as tests, portfolios, presentations, and participation. As a result, because students answered each of the four types of assessments, they answered a total of 48 items, and the last item consisted of only one response, bringing the total for the entire questionnaire to 49 items. Students are also asked to fill in background information about themselves, namely the length of study (semester) to determine whether this background can influence their attitude towards the type of assessment above. This study used quantitative methods in data collection and analysis. Questionnaire data for each Likert-type scale item is scored and each negative item is scored inversely. Therefore, the higher the average value of each item, the higher the positive attitude toward each type of assessment tested. To obtain quantitative data, the SPSS computer program was used by performing statistical analysis. Each item is analyzed accompanied by calculating the alpha coefficient to obtain the reliability of each item tested. Descriptive statistical tests were also carried out for each item to test the variable length of study or semester to find out student attitudes from the four types of assessment and to find out the relationship between the variables and the four types of assessment, both student attitudes with performance based assessment and traditional tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To obtain and examine the reliability of each subscale according to the four types of assessment studied, the Cronbach alpha is calculated by deleting item 7, therefore the test subscale coefficient is 0.77, the portfolio subscale coefficient is 0.82, and the presentations and participation subscale coefficients respectively. Are 0.84 and 0.82. The alpha coefficient obtained with the remaining 7 previous items is lower with values 0.72, 0.79, 0.80 and 0.77 for the test, portfolio, presentations, and participation subscales. All alpha coefficients indicate that the value is good enough according to (Nunnally, 1978) which states that the minimum limit for the reliability of the scale used for research is 0.70. Therefore the subscale is declared to have good and acceptable internal coefficients.

In examining all items, each item is given an average score for each of the four types of assessments that are calculated. The most positive attitude was given a score of 5, namely strongly agree, followed by giving a score of 4 to agree, and the most negative attitude was given a score of 1 to strongly disagree, followed by a score of 2 to disagree, and a score of 3 was given to don't know and neutral answers. Therefore an average score above three indicates a positive attitude toward this type of assessment. The mean scores for the test items, portfolio, presentations, and participation were 3.88, 3.68, 4.00, and 3.98 respectively.

After looking at the overall average value using SPSS 25 with statistical descriptive analysis. So that it can include the ranking of the individual's average value. Calculations of various forms of assessment were also carried out using frequency analysis and then obtaining the highest average score for each participant. The results of these calculations can be seen in Figure 2. This assessment is based on students who rate the most positively which is marked with a score of strongly agree where according to the Likert scale points have the highest paoin, namely 5, from this it shows that the presentation value is rated the highest by 19 participants followed by participation was rated highest by 17 participants, with the test and portfolio rated highest by 6 and 9 participants, respectively. out of a total of 110 participants, 59 other participants rated it with 4 points mostly, 3, 2 and 1 almost none.

Overall 17% of participants answered they did not know for the test, 31% for the portfolio, and 17% and 19% respectively for the presentation and portfolio. Answers to test and presentation questions had the lowest frequency of "don't know" answers, this was because the participants already had experience with these two questions. Don't know answers can also show a neutral attitude from participants towards statements submitted by researchers in the questionnaire given.

Before looking for a background correlation, what must be done first is a normality test of the data that has been collected to know whether it is normally distributed or not. "The data shows that the participants had favorable attitudes toward all four types of assessment; therefore, the data is negatively skewed with the median being larger than the means" (Brooks, 1999, p. 54). After doing some normality test techniques, this data is well matched (dividing the kurtosis by standard error) so it is a multivariate test. This data is assumed to be normal if the kurtosis value and standard error are found to be in a ratio that ranges from -2 to 2 so that the normal assumption is met.

For student semester-level variables, significant differences were found in

the overall averages for the four types of assessment. This can be seen in the average score obtained from the four types of assessment which shows a significant difference in students' attitudes to presentations that are higher than participation, tests, and portfolios. There is a difference in the average score which shows the attitude of students each semester towards the four types of assessment namely, tests, portfolios, presentations, and participation.

A statistical descriptive analysis was carried out to see the average score per semester and from this analysis it was found that semester 2 and 8 students showed a positive attitude towards the assessment presentation. In the explanation, a positive attitude is shown by the average value which is above 3 where this value shows the positive attitude of students towards the assessment according to the Likert scale value which states the value for agreeing is 4. In this study, the participants had a favorable attitude towards not only performance-based assessment but the test as well, in terms of overall average scores, the test ranked third out of four types of assessment. It can be seen in the table that semester 2, 4, and 6 students have a positive attitude towards participation. For tests and portfolios, when compared to presentations and participation, the scores are less positive. High school background variables and teaching experience with the four types of assessment did not show a significant difference. This is influenced by the sample which has very little teaching experience and it is difficult to get the appropriate result

From the data above it can be seen that the average student shows a positive attitude towards performance-based assessment both from the overall average value and based on the semester. According to Issler (2009), attitude has a very important role important in determining and influencing the way people behave and respond to a problem an event that confronts them. In implementing performance-based assessment there are advantages and disadvantages as said by Kumalasari et al. (2020) that students show a positive attitude towards performance-based assessments. This increase is influenced by the involvement of cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses when students develop this assessment.

(Umam et al., 2022) his research also stated that students had a positive attitude in responding to performance-based assessments, the application of performance-based assessments put pressure on performance skills to demonstrate ideas such as presentations, debates, writing papers, performances, etc. Its function is to attract interest in the subject given by the teacher. Not only did this type of performance-based assessment activity have a positive response from students but the results of the assessment using the test were also quite positive where the test ranked third in terms of percentage and participation as has been found in the average scores obtained by students as a whole in this study.

CONCLUSION

Attitudes of students towards Performance-Based Assessment, findings seem to indicate that participants have positive attitudes towards the three types of performance-based assessments such as: portfolio, presentation, and participation. This can be seen from the average score of the items for each of the three types of assessment, all of which are on the positive side of the scale, namely with an average of 3.68 for portfolio, 3.98 for participation and 4.00 for presentation

which received the highest rating. Of the 110 Participants in the study, by statistical descriptive analysis showed positive attitudes not only about performance based assessment but also the test i.e. with a mean score of 3.88, the Test received a favorable rating on the rating scale and ranked third overall among the four forms of assessment. So overall the student's attitude towards the four types of assessment is positive according to descriptive analysis and scale measurements.

There was no significant interaction effect for this background variable when attitudes about assessment depended on students' length of time in college. Regarding the length of study, attitudes about presentation proved not statistically significant. This is shown by students in semester 2 who rate this type of assessment higher than students in semesters 4 and 6. This determines that there is no relationship between length of study and students' positive attitudes towards performance-based assessment.

Regarding suggestions and constraints, it is suggested to make this type of assessment more attractive by conducting teacher training on performance-based assessment so that students prefer this type of performance-based assessment. In addition, this study also presents some limitations such as the number of participants. Therefore, it is urgent for further studies to address the existing gaps by involving a larger sample and other issues on students' attitudes towards performance based assessment.

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