



# Alternative Assessment and Its Impact in the Classroom of English at Elementary School

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## Abstract

This paper aims to investigate how the students in Elementary school have an impact after the teacher doing an alternative assessment in the classroom of the English language. The author conducts this research about alternative assessment at Elementary school. The participant in this study was an English teacher. Elementary school students are a very basic student in learning English. That is why an English teacher should use alternative assessments in teaching. For this reason, the author chose the elementary school as the subject of this study. The author wants to know how the impact of alternative assessment in the classroom of the English language. To do so, the author gained the data in-depth interview by giving questionnaires using a structured questionnaire technique. Further, the analysis reveals that the English teacher adds an alternative assessment because the students do not feel bored with the assessment given by the teacher. Moreover, if the student gets a different assessment, the teacher can see the talent that the students have. The result found that the students' experience after the English teacher uses alternative assessments are that the students are more appealing and more interested. It also motivates almost all of the students and gives an important learning style. In addition, this report shows that students demonstrate a willingness to perform well in the classroom particularly, preparing a lesson.

**Keywords:** Alternative assessment; Elementary School; Impact in the Classroom

## Introduction

Assessment, as a school of thought which is progressively obtaining acceptance, argues that it is important for not only learners but also teacher being involved and having control in the classroom activity (Derakhsan, 2011, p. 173). In the previous study, there is some article related to alternative assessment. According to Linn and Miller (2005) says that Alternative assessment is a systematic process of collecting information about the improvement of the students towards the learning goals. Brown and Hudson (1998, p654-655) convey that students need alternative assessments to perform, create, produce, or do something.

Alternative assessments that are also pointed to performance tests or genuine assessments are employs to decide what students can and cannot do on the contrary with what they do or do not know. However, an alternative assessment measure applied proficiency more than measure knowledge. The exemplary of alternative assessments include project study, portfolios, and many activities involving some types of a rubric. (Brigham Young University). Based on Valencia & Pearson (1994: 355) explain that alternative assessment is composed of all of those efforts that do not follow to the traditional specification of standardization, objectivity and machine-scorability, and cost effectiveness,

Alternative assessment is a progressively common and well-liked discourse in education. The possible benefit of the practices of alternative assessment is based on notable changes in assessment practices. The alternative assessment stated by Brawley (2009) has various kinds that are portfolios, projects, diaries, self-assessment, peer assessment, computer-assisted learning, etc. The phrase alternative assessment points to "almost any assessment type other than the test of standardization". Basically for elementary school, the point of any assessment practices or tools that are contrasting with traditional practice, more particularly and contrasting with a paper-and-pencil test is called alternative assessments. (Custer, 2000).

An assessment has been described variously in the literature and labeled as the outcome of the 20th century. According to Linn and Miller (2005) says that Alternative assessment is a systematic process of collecting information about the improvement of the students towards the learning goals. Similarly, Assessment characterized by Dhindsa et al. (2007) is a teaching and learning key component. It is a systematic process of data collecting about the progress of the students (p. 1261). However, Linn and Miller (2005, p.26) maintain that the performance of students can be measured in many ways like traditional paper and pencil tests, essays, the

performance of an authentic task, student self-report, and teacher observation. In addition, the author differentiates between terms lined with assessment: 1) test "a measuring instrument of behavior sample and 2) measurement, "the obtaining process of degree numerical description to which an individual has a specific characteristic".

Nowadays, in western countries, students are motivated to participate entirely in classroom activities. Based on Herrera, Murry, and Cabral (2007, p. 22-23), students are being asked today to employ their academic knowledge, cognitive development, and language skills to read, comprehend, synthesize, analyze, compare, contrast, relate, articulate, write, evaluate and many more. (p. 23). This motivation builds the base for formative assessment to be applied in the classroom so that the teachers can measure incremental gains (p. 22).

Nevertheless, many definitions of alternative assessment are provided in the literature, Crawford, and Impara (2001), Cooper (1999), Diaz-Rico and Weed (2006), Linn and Miller (2005) and Hancock (1994) preserve those alternative assessments:

- Are commonly developed straight from the instruction of classroom, group work, and related classroom activities, as well as provide a traditional assessment as the alternative.
- It can be well-thought-of valid and reliable in that they truly and constantly assess the classroom performance of the student.
- Simplify the participation of the student in the evaluation process.
- Include measurements and evaluations related to not only teachers but also students. Emphasize real-world problems, tasks, or applications that are related to the community of the student. (Herrera, Murry & cabral, 2007, p. 23)

Alternative assessment is introduced by William and Thompson (2008) to a newer paradigm as a shift from the forms of traditional assessment. Especially, the formative and summative assessment appearance as two dissimilar formats has attracted the attention of teachers in literature today. The authors argue that the assessment utilization for student learning is the primary feature of formative assessment. Based on William and Thompson (2008), Scriven (1967) and Bloom (1969) argues the terminology formative and summative assessment that is given the reason to distinguish the evaluation role. William and Thompson (2008) also introduce Formative assessment as an ongoing process of evaluating the learning of the students, providing feedback to adapt instruction and learning, and increasing the curriculum. On the other hand, Summative assessment is attached to administrative resolutions, as well as assigning grades to the tests.

Bloom (1969) emphasizes that when an assessment is in harmony with the teaching and learning process. While William (2008, p. 58-59) says that alternative assessment will have a good effect on students' learning and their encouragement. Assessment in common accounts is used for supporting learning (formative), certifying the individuals' potential and achievement (summative), and evaluating the characteristic of educational programs or institutions (evaluative). Moreover,

Black and William (2004) give more emphasis on assessment utilization to support learning; however, they also understand the importance of assessment utilization for evaluation and certification. In addition, there is an increasing consensus among teachers that assessment should be required to diagnose the achievement of the students, measure the performance, sort students, etc. (Delandshere, 2002).

Nowadays, the literature on assessment and instruction sees assessment as a longitudinal process occurring during the lifelong learning of instruction and supports. Dochy (1997, p. 3) states that the lifelong learning concept appears from the sector of business and industry when people start arguing that the labor should be adaptable to the new technology and learn new skills by their working lives. Birenbaum (1996) differentiates the testing and the assessment in which testing measures achievement, primarily cognitive skills such as remembering factual-information. It is also considered separate from the instruction. However, the new assessment paradigm offers assessment an integrated part of instruction as an alternative for testing culture characterized by so-called objective like standardized tests focusing on knowledge atomized bits at the more complex expense (Gulikers, Bastiaens, Kirshner & Kester, 2006, p. 382; Dochy, 1997).

In spite of interpretations of formative assessment varies greatly, William and Thompson (2008) convey that formative assessment is used to serve information on the potential students' performance and to reflect and to give feedback to the students telling them the number they answer correctly (p. 60). This argues the response way that is selected to measure the achievement of the students, as well as given the scores of the students instead of feedback. Based on Wiggins and Mc Tighe (2007), formative assessment comes about during the instruction that becomes part of instruction rather than a separate activity. It has either formal or informal formats including improved quizzes, oral questioning, peer feedback, self-reflection, think-aloud, etc. Wiliam & Black (1998) and Wiliam & Thompson (2008) show that a difference is made between learning assessment describing the process and support learning assessment describing the product. Similarly, Chappuis & Stiggins (2004) concur that the main features characterizing formative assessment are that it affects the teaching and learning quality and persuades students in the environment of self-directed learning.

Alternative assessments can be implemented to the children as early as possible especially in the elementary school. That is why the author chooses elementary school as the target setting of this paper.

Summarizing from the theory above about alternative assessment, this paper

examines that alternative assessment has a common practice for teachers to develop alternative assessment teaching which will help them become good implementers throughout time on any kind of teaching and learning strategies. This paper particularly points out: What is an alternative assessment? What is the practice of alternative assessment in elementary school? And what are the impacts of alternative assessment after the English teacher does it in the classroom? To answer all these questions, the author will discuss in this paper.

## **Method**

The researcher conducts this research about alternative assessment at the Elementary school of SDN Palur 1, Mojolaban, Sukoharjo, and Central Java. The participant in this study was an English teacher. Her initial name is JS. She also lives in Central Java too.

The technique used in this paper is by giving some questionnaires to the teacher. In order to conduct the purpose of the present study, the English teacher was given a questionnaire as the measuring instrument to provide data for this research report. Because of the pandemic due to Corona Virus, the researcher conducts this questionnaire online, it means that the researcher gave a questionnaire via WhatsApp application then sent it to the English teacher. The English teacher answered the questionnaire and sent back to the researcher.

The technique of the data analysis used in this report is descriptive analysis. The structural elements of the questionnaire given to the English teacher and the collected data will be described and analyzed in detail.

There are 16 questionnaires given to the English teacher at elementary school by the author. The list of questionnaires is in the appendix below. The English teacher answered one by one the questionnaires.

## **Results and Discussion**

The objective of the present study is to describe the alternative assessment in the classroom of English at Elementary School. The goal of this article is to describe the impact of alternative assessment in the classroom of English at Elementary School.

Now, we discuss the result of the questionnaires. The first question we know that the teacher already understands what alternative assessment is. The second question we know that teacher has ever given an alternative assessment to their student. In the third question, the teacher concurs that the teacher should add alternative assessments in her learning activities to overcome the boredom of the students. It also helps the teacher to see the talent of the students by giving the different assessment

Moreover, the fourth question shows us that alternative assessment makes her students getting more interested because students get a different assessment in which usually, they only get traditional assessments like a paper test. This is relevant

to the study of Maslovaty & Kuzi (2002) that finds alternative assessment increasing the interest and enthusiasm of the students.

The questionnaire number five, the teacher said that alternative assessment motivates almost all of the students. The fifth question, the teacher shows that alternative assessment almost gives motivation to the student. This is relevant to the theory of Harter (1981) saying that alternative assessment had a higher motivation. It is also relevant to Nasab's (2025) theory saying that alternative assessment provides new ways to motivate and inspire students in exploring and exploiting their dimension and the world around them as well. In the sixth question, we get the answer that the students see the short feedback as a positive thing because of presenting meaningful feedback. It also can facilitate and improve the learning of the students

The eighth question shows us that the teacher also sees difficulties in using alternative assessments. She argues that the assessment also has advantages and disadvantages. She says that it is difficult to implement alternative assessments for primary school especially in teaching English. It is relevant to Yang's (2007) statement that primary school teachers reported some factors affecting the alternative assessment implementation like implementation difficulties. This answer refers to the ninth question that students have not assumed the successful after the teacher uses alternative assessment. If the teacher gets difficulties in running the assessment, it is possible making the students fail with the assessment, especially for grades 1, 2, 3 that are too young using this assessment. Watt (20015) says that alternative assessment emphasizes higher-order thinking skills that are older learners' quality. We already know that primary students do not study using higher-order thinking because they, students at grades 1, 2, 3, usually develop their psychomotor skills neither the cognitive nor effective skill.

In the eleventh question, the teacher answers that alternative assessment gives an important learning feature. This is relevant to the theory of Genesa and Upshur (1996) saying that the importance of alternative assessment is to get the avail information on students' learning strategies and styles, students' behavior, and students' reactions to the course that finally affect their achievement.

Last but not least, the twelfth question shows us that the teacher says alternative assessment does not give reliable and valid results even though it should need to satisfy a similar standard or the qualities of psychometric as a conventional test like validity, reliability, and practically. It also should be critically evaluated (Brown & Hudson, 1998). In this report, the teacher answers that the alternative

assessment that she does makes students showing a good attitude although the alternative assessment does not depend on the students' social behavior. The teacher in this report uses performance and discussion in her alternative assessment.

## **Conclusion**

In this article, the writer concludes that alternative assessment gives a positive impact on society. Torrance (1995) posits alternative assessment as a paradigmatic shift from traditional assessment and argues that such an alternative assessment is instead a process that is firmly integrated with and positioned for the enhancement of teaching and learning.

The alternative assessment gives positive impacts. The impacts are that the moral values of students increase so they have a more certain attitude. If an alternative assessment is implemented in the educational world, especially in the elementary school as the basic school, it will help develop their emotional ingenuity.

In Conclusion, alternative assessment is different from traditional assessment in many ways. Alternative assessment, as an essential part of the learning process, embodies a different concept of assessment, a new understanding of learning itself, and a different relationship between student and teacher. It is not simply that tasks are different and require the student to produce a response but it does indeed comes from and requires a different way of thinking about assessment.

This report, related to the alternative assessment's impacts, expresses that students get more interested when they are in their learning process of alternative assessment rather than when they are in their routine schedule. It is relevant to Baker's (2010) theory saying that it is made of the meaningfulness and challenge of alternative assessment as intent to renew the interest of the student and their commitment to study. In addition, this report presents that students reveal a willingness to perform well in preparing a project in the classroom.

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## **Appendix**

Answer this questionnaire below based on your experience in alternative assessment!

1. Do you know what alternative assessment is?
2. Have you given some or one of the alternative assessments to your students?
3. Do you agree if you as a teacher add alternative assessment? If you agree, why?. If disagree, why?
4. Does Alternative assessment make students more appealing or not?
5. Are students motivated by alternative assessment or not?
6. Do Students see immediate feedback as a positive thing or not?
7. Do the students really find alternative assessments more interesting and motivating?
8. Do you face difficulties when you as a teacher give an alternative assessment to the student?
9. Do your students able to be assumed successful after you add an alternative assessment?
10. Should Alternative assessment be primarily used in the classroom in order to support the English teaching-learning process?
11. Does Alternative assessment give importance to learning styles or not?
12. Does alternative assessment give reliable and valid results to teachers?
13. Are your alternative assessment depending on your student's social behavior in the school?
14. What is the student's attitude towards the use of alternative assessments?
15. Are your students interested in your alternative assessment or not?
16. What kind of assessment do students prefer?