ELT in Asia in the Digital Era: Global Citizenship and Identity

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ELT in Asia in the Digital Era:
Global Citizenship and Identity

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THE ANALYSIS OF AUTHENTIC ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENT IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT UNIVERSITAS ISLAM RIAU

Sri Yuliani
Universitas Islam Riau

Abstract: The main point in this paper is to analyse the authentic activities and assessment process in teaching English at Mechanical Engineering program in the Universitas Islam Riau in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The purpose of authentic activities and assessment process is to decide its effectiveness as an integrated part in the EFL teaching process since effective assessment makes effective teaching. Third semester students were chosen to be the sample of the research and were given an assessment assignment sheet to be analysed to find out its effectiveness. The findings of the study showed that the present assessment process has not been effective enough to do its functions in English teaching. The exams were lack the criteria of the effective language exams and tests. Some data showed that the authentic activities and assessment may be reliable but their validity and efficiency were inappropriate. As the conclusion, the assessment in teaching English process needed to reform to meet the standard competence in each skill.

INTRODUCTION
The most current issues for graduate students are finding jobs. Employment and labor market seem against part in real image of fact that vacant positions are limited contradict with the labor force. The inability of hiring more graduates leads big number of unemployment curiously questions raised to find out the discrepancies.

The number of unemployment increases does not only cause problems in economics, but also raise many problems in the society. The situation of employment is one of the reasons which can describe the economic, social, and even the level of welfare of residents in an area and within a certain time or period of time. In recognition of the changes in the workplace and the type of knowledge expected of new graduates there should be balanced
approach to learning the new types of knowledge and skills. The above statement is supported by Gallacher and Reeve (2000) explain that this is as part of a wider set of changes to reform higher education to meet the needs of workers who on the one hand have limited time yet need to develop skills that are occupationally relevant. The knowledge associated with a work-based higher education and the competency achieved in university which focus would include knowledge of practice (Boud &Solomon, 2001).

The world of education today faced with the challenge of technology development. Therefore, the paradigm and education system must be adapted to the demands of the times. These changes are expected to be a better education in the future. The first educational change related to the education system, progressing education system is reform to empower human resources with the appropriate skill to meet the demands of the challenge.

The second reform relates to educational orientation. Education now should be oriented to the world of work, so that the emphasis is not solely on cognitive aspects, but also on other aspects of personality that actually more important, such as affective aspects and psychomotor. Thus, education now should be oriented on life skills. To prepare human resource through the education patterns, concepts, and new models that can develop a personality. Education should help the development students in the life skills concept to prepare them to have meaningful life skills and useful in the future. With these orientations, paradigms, and the education system, are expected to overcome current unemployment problem in Indonesia. Various ways have been sought by government through education, among them are the development of education’s orientation is link and match with the demands in the workspace. It aims in accordance with the needs of the workspace, so the absorption graduate students of the working world is high.

To determine the relevance and educational effectiveness in providing labor market needs, it seems the educators together with the government find the best solution to prepare the graduate human resource. As it is noted by the paper on the field at Universitas Islam Riau especially mechanical engineering that formally operated with SK No. 023/BAN-PT/Ak-XIII/S1/X/2010 dated 29 October 2010 having vision is to prepare the graduate to be skilled human resources both in machine competency and advance technology and also to equip them with good attitude. The missions are first, operating and developing educational system professionally with excellent quality, dynamic, and Islamic graduate. Second, improving and developing on mechanical engineering to prepare students to compete locally and nationally in workspace. Third, the implementing authentic activities at mechanical engineering to providing change of welfare. Fourth, improving and developing the quality of graduate students to be perfect professionalism. And last, continues collaborating with society.

Realizing that the expectation of some companies towards mechanical engineering graduate from Universitas Islam Riau to be skilled human resources, the researcher interviewed the Head of Machine Engineering Department at Universitas Islam Riau to overview the current condition. Some problems appeared at mechanical engineering graduate are first, some graduates did not get the relevant job in machinery because they were not
able to perform the additional competence. He added that the graduates could answer the preliminary test and machinery test, but in performance of English test, they failed. They had weaknesses in delivering speech in explaining the process of machinery. Actually English subject was provided in Semester I with 2 sks but it seemed that it was not enough. He expected better improvement to meet the demands of the workspace. He suggested that it was better to provide good model of teaching and learning and authentic activities also assessment for trial in evaluating English subject.

The contexts of the job markets, according to Head of Mechanical Engineering Program that mechanical engineering’s graduate the most required by industries were welders, metalworkers, technicians, and machine specialists who could design and made a numeric tool or device, and could repair mechanic elements. Those professions were based on qualified workers and those positions were also prepared for creating an innovation in current work and looking for new ideas and solutions. Moreover, those works were connected with considerable risks, responsibility and the necessity of making quick decisions. While all the instruction and standard operation procedure in handling machines were written in English.

Based on these contexts, it intrigued the researcher to find solution to create new standard of assessment and authentic activity to equip the students with the relevant skill and competency in learning English. The authentic activity objectively to the students in accordance with the demands of the job market for mechanical engineering department graduation of Universitas Islam Riau provided skills and competencies which included a work-based authentic activities practical component. The purpose was to help a gap bridge between theory learnt at university and work-based knowledge and skills. While, at the current situation in this department the work-based authentic activities did not support the work based. It was suggested by some companies that the content of subject was relevant to their future careers. Moreover, the current conditions mentioned above are hoped to have solutions taken by the curriculum developer to construct the format of the teaching and learning strategies in English subject.

**METHOD**

This research was aimed to analyze the authentic activities and assessment process in teaching English at Mechanical Engineering program in the Universitas Islam Riau in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The research used descriptive method which is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens, it may be used to justify current practice and make judgment and also to develop activities.

The analysis of authentic activities and assessment in teaching English, the researcher used three basic steps in collecting the data, they were analyzing the defining of purpose, analyzing the activity of assessment, and analyzing the scoring criteria used in the assessment. In defining the purpose as the first step in authentic activities and assessment
in teaching English involved determining which concepts, knowledge, and/or skills should be assessed. The researcher defined types of decisions was made with the information from the assessment in term of first, cognitive skills of mechanical engineering students should be acquired, second, affective skills in developing the students’ work independently, third, metacognitive skills in monitoring progress while working on an independent project.

The second step in choosing the activity the development of a performance assessment was to select the performance activity that should first consider several factors including a real work based situation in mechanical workshop of engineering, the elements of the activity must correspond with the objectives that were specified in the first step, performance assessments should be fair and free from bias. Activities that were given some students an unfair advantage over other students should not be selected.

The last step was in analyzing the scoring criteria. A rubric can be defined as “a criterion-based scoring guide consisting of a fixed measurement (4 points, 6 points, or whatever is appropriate) and descriptions of the characteristics for each score point. Rubrics describe degrees of quality, proficiency, or understanding along a continuum. The researcher analyzed two types of rubrics are used to evaluate performance assessments: “Analytic scoring rubrics which divided a performance into separate facets and each facet was evaluated using a separate scale and holistic scoring rubrics used a single scale to evaluate the larger process.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Analysis the Authentic Activities in Learning and Assessment in Teaching English at Mechanical Engineering Program at Universitas Islam Riau.

The analysis of authentic activities in learning and assessment in teaching English at Mechanical Engineering Program at Universitas Islam Riau was analyzed at third semester at Mechanical Engineering Program at the Universitas Islam Riau. All of the students were taking this subject were completing English subject as a prerequisite subject that they had to pass the score as it was compulsory.

The analysis of the authentic activities in analyzing the defining of purpose learning on cognitive skills of mechanical engineering students should be acquired, the affective skills in developing the students’ work independently, the metacognitive skills in monitoring progress while working on an independent project.

Students in Mechanical Engineering at Universitas Islam Riau got English subject to accommodate the goal of purpose learning. Many efforts had been given to the students in giving authentic activities. The researcher as the lecturer formulated the goal of obtaining English subject by giving various activities. Five meetings were in workshop area to comprehend the terminology of the tools used in workshop area, then by giving assignment
as a final project they should acquire the process of each machine to be used in mechanical engineering area. The students got a simulated reality model of jobs at workshop. Many efforts to develop students in doing this program, like explaining the process of machine in simulated way in the workshop, however, their attendance and attention were involved in the process of machine as a valuable process to get comprehension in machine procedures. As the last activity, the skill of operating machine was presented by student in presenting the standard operation procedure by employing graphic organizer as a group project. In group project, students were required to complete an assignment task which links their experiences and the mechanical engineering disciplinary knowledge through authentic activities.

The form below was a kind of authentic assessment for students in mechanical engineering to be evaluated by the lecturer. The evaluation’s contents are based on the criteria in performance task applied only for mechanical engineering. The students are using English language in term of mechanical engineering field based on the topics prepared by lectures and performance task is done by students by choosing their own chosen topic which they had got in the simulated machine process in the workshop area. The form should be filled during the performance task in the classroom and workshop. The form is attached below.

Table 1. Assignment Assessment Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT ASSESSMENT SHEET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Name: ________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic: ______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Use of Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use of Tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Content and Coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Quality of Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Opening / introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible / gesture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat and sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The Discussion of the Assignments and Tasks Given to Students in Teaching Activities in Mechanical Engineering Program at Universitas Islam Riau.

For the assignment, each student completed to follow the English subject in term of 6 months or one semester. The assignment for students was undertaken by the students at Mid Semester and Final Semester. In this case, the researcher as an English lecturer in Mechanical Engineering Program did some activities in completing the subject both in the middle of semester and at the end of semester. The assessment was focusing on aspects of engineering matters in all skills (Listening, Speaking, reading, and writing).

Every meeting, the lecturer planned program that should be done in the classroom activities. The activities were divided into some sub topics to be discussed. Not only content of engineering’s matter but also performance task to be gained by the students. The authentic learning experiences done by the writer are as follow: The lesson started by explaining the objective of the topic of Engineering. The researcher mentioned the lesson preparation about basic competences which the students gained after completing this learning, students were expected to have basic competence to understand engineering matters to define mechanical engineering; to describe the subfields of mechanical engineering; and to distinguish mechanical engineering from other types of engineering.

Next, the researcher explained the contents objective of learning that students were able to mention the definition of engineering, to describe and divide the characteristics of engineering field, and to differentiate mechanical engineering compare other types of engineering. Then, the researcher explained the language objective that students were able to read the engineering text and comprehend the reading texts given by using multi-leveled reading group texts. Then the researcher continued the activity by continuing the Reading Activity.

The Activity of Reading in Task One, the researcher showed the pictures and video about Engineering activities through in focus. The students watched video and observed the activity of engineering. Then, the researcher stopped the video and stimulate the students by observing the following pictures in the students’ textbook (in group). The pictures showed some areas of engineering works. Then, the students worked in group to describe the following pictures and the activity of the pictures performed.

The researcher next asked the students to continue with activities in the textbook about reading activity. In reading activity the student got multi-leveled reading groups based on reading level and language proficiency. The researcher used SQPRS strategy in teaching this reading activity then each students got the researcher’s guidance in using this SQPRS strategy while reading text 1 and text 2 in the students’ book.
First, in the survey activity, the students were asked to look for the key words vocabularies in the reading text about Engineering. The researcher worked together with the students to find the key words in the passages.

Second, in the questions activity, the researcher attracted the students to raise questions that the students had about the text of Engineering. Shared them with the group and wrote down a few questions that the students answered while reading.

Third, in the predicting activity, the lecturer asked the students thought about what the most important idea and information of the reading about Engineering and wrote prediction of temporary summary. In the reading activity, the lecturer and students were reading the text to find the key information and idea.

Fourth, in the respond activity, the activity held by lecturer and students in form of discussing in groups to answer the questions that they found while reading the text about Engineering. The discussion about questions that were difficult and hard to be answered. Last, in the summarize activity, the students wrote to summarize the information that was read throughout the text about Engineering.

In writing activity, the researcher used the graphic organizer were used during both writing and listening activities. The lecturer read the reading passage aloud to the students, while each group member completed the graphic organizer in listening activity. The group members listened and jotted down the answer by writing true or false based on the main idea as well as the supporting details in the reading text. The graphic organizer helped the students to write the process and procedures of material used. It was useful strategy for students because it was a collaborative learning strategy which it promoted the students active in classroom.

The researcher continued the students activity about Speaking activity and listening activity. In this meeting, the researcher asked the students to practice together in pairs.

Then, the researcher continued Listening activity for the students. In the book there was an instruction to answer the following questions based on the dialog that the students listened by listening to the researcher dictation by using graphic organizer strategy. In this part, the researcher used speech recognition media in the researcher computer to do listening activity instead of the researcher sound. In this speech recognition, the native speaker sound involved in this activity.

The researcher made review and assessment throughout a lesson for each meeting. The researcher began with a review of previous learning or by checking students’ knowledge of a topic. By doing this, the lecturer got feedback on correct and incorrect responses. The researcher also reviewed key vocabulary and concepts with students throughout the lesson and as a final wrap-up the lecturer reviewed the content and language objectives.
The last activity, the researcher did evaluation activity. For performance test was done together when the students did speaking activity in the teaching and learning. Listening test and Reading test was spent about 15 minutes to complete all test.

Each assessment was in form of project task which was broken down into sub-tasks for/by the students. The assignment was broken down into weekly tasks when there was English subject, which made it more manageable (for both students and lecturer). Each groups consisted of three to four students selecting their own topic to be mechanical project report on how best to operate in the machine and discussing any issues that arose. These were due near the end of the session, so that most of the issues they needed to cover had been raised in class. This meant a large marking load for the academic at the end of the session. Breaking down the assessment task into weekly small assignments spreads the work, ensures that students get regular feedback, and enables the assessment process to relate more directly on a week by week basis to the material covered in the classes.

The tasks which were designed to the real work field encouraged students to make connections to wider work and/or life issues and to their experiences. The students were able to relate what they are learning to the “real” world, and through the presentations. By researching their own specific machine they learn “specifics” not just abstract theory. This makes the subject more relevant and interesting. They also learned how to deal with imperfect information.

The tasks provided scope to critically engage with the discipline and its field. Through the students’ efforts to connect what they had learned in class to what happens in their mechanical engineering program they must link theory with practice. Tasks allow connection between a student’s current understanding and “new” information being presented. The tasks built on the work done in previous weeks.

Table 2 The table below summarizes the link between the characteristics needed in authentic learning and this assessment task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Tasks Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Complex task broken down into sub-tasks</td>
<td>Assignment broken into weekly tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Connection to wider work</td>
<td>Benchmark with the market demands surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Materials from various sources</td>
<td>Access and assess independence quality of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Multiple Process stages in machine</td>
<td>Presentation and work performance delivered in mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Connection between current and new information</td>
<td>Solve problems in group project works</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONCLUSION**

The assessment task in form of performance task of providing in mechanical engineering’s skills subjected to acquire certain skill to be fulfilled and mechanical engineering environment in a mechanical engineering subject is useful as it provides an integrated approach of learning using experiential exercises which allow students to develop, recognize, individualize and internalize relevant work skills. The tasks of researching topics such as machine and its process, safety worker, standard operation procedure critically engaging with multiple perspectives from multiple resources.

The task was assessed by written reports and presentations with the emphasis being on thought, effort, and ability to overcome obstacles such as dealing with issues from the incomplete information and biases found in the real world. Authentic learning has been shown to help connect students’ classroom learning to the outside world. By linking what students are learning in mechanical engineering classes to the real world, they got better understand the problems they will be faced with when dealing with a constantly changing environment.

Final classroom project for teaching English at mechanical engineering that used authentic learning teaching techniques to provide this link. The illustration on how the project met the requirements of an authentic learning experience using the characteristics identified by Borthwick et al. (2007). It is also consistent with the constructivist point of view by making learning an interactive process. Therefore this paper contributes to filling the gap of there being limited research on using authentic learning in mechanical engineering education and supports the notion that authentic learning contributes to assisting with the transition from the education environment to the working environment.

**REFERENCES**


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The 15th Asia TEFL – 64th TEFLIN 2017 International Conference

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that

SRI YULIANI

has participated in

The 15th Asia TEFL – 64th TEFLIN 2017 International Conference
organized by Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia, in collaboration with Asia TEFL and TEFLIN on 13 - 15 July, 2017

as

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