Classroom-based assessment in Vietnam: An investigation into teachers' beliefs and practices

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Content

1. Background and rationale
2. Research questions and methodology
3. Findings and discussions
4. Conclusion

Background and rationale

- Project 2020 calls for reform in 3 main areas of ELT:
  - Teacher training (pre-service and in-service)
  - Curriculums and teaching materials
  - **Testing and assessment → establishment of a strong English assessment system which will create a positive impact on the quality of ELT in Vietnam**

Background and rationale

- 4 critical elements of a strong assessment system: validations; secured assessments; classroom-embedded assessments; composite records (*Lewin and Shoemaker, 2011:4*) [1]
- Increasingly, the importance of classroom-based assessment is recognised. It is the only element in an assessment system "that enhances, empowers, and celebrates student learning" (*Farrant, 1980*). [2]
- Project approval document and interim reports show that classroom-based assessment (CBA) seem to be left out (see next slide).

Background and rationale

The Project approval document, known as Decision 1400/QD-TTg signed in 2008, states the following aims

Paragraph 7, Section II, Article 1:

- Innovation of testing and assessment methods in language education;

- Construction of test item banks to support the assessment of foreign language proficiency of learners;

- Improved efficiency and effectiveness of proficiency testing and quality assurance of foreign language education.

Background and rationale

- Is it possible that the low quality and effectiveness of ELT in Vietnam has been the result of a lack attention and expertise in CBA?
- Do Vietnamese teachers of English know the important role of CBA in promoting student learning, and do they have the ability to conduct effective CBA in their own classroom?

→ These questions, which have never been thoroughly researched and answered, points to a big gap in ELT research in Vietnam. This study is an attempt to fill that gap.

Research questions and methodology: Overview

Aims	Explore beliefs and practices of assessment of English language teachers in HCMC.	
Research questions	How is CBA conducted in the Vietnamese classroom? What beliefs underlie the current practices? What difficulties do teachers have in conducting CBA in their own teaching context?	
Subjects	15 high school teachers from 11 high schools in HCMC, 5 teachers from 3 universities in HCMC	
Data collection methods	Interviews	Semi-structured one-to-one interviews with teachers
	Document review	• Interim tests created by the teachers • Course syllabi • Course books

Selection of Subjects

- Voluntary participation, a total of 20 teachers
- 15 high school teachers from 11 high schools in HCMC, categorised into low- and high- SES schools based on locations
- 5 university teachers from 3 private universities, categorised into low- and high-SES universities based on tuition fees
- The teachers vary in teaching experience and managerial role

Subjects (high schools)

Group	Teacher	District	Description
1	A	5	Head teacher; 15 years of teaching experience
1	B	5	4 years of teaching experience
1	C	5	2 years of teaching experience
1	D	3	Head teacher; 22 years of teaching experience
1	E	3	5 years of teaching experience
1	F	Binh Thanh	3 years of teaching experience
1	G	Phu Nhuan	4 years of teaching experience
2	H	Go Vap	Head teacher; 17 years of teaching experience
2	I	Go Vap	3 years of teaching experience
2	J	Tan Binh	6 years of teaching experience
2	K	Tan Binh	8 years of teaching experience
2	L	Thu Duc	2 years of teaching experience
2	M	Binh Tan	3 years of teaching experience
2	N	Phu Nhuan	9 years of teaching experience
2	O	7	3 years of teaching experience

Subjects (universities)

Group	Teacher	University	Description
3	P	1	15 years of teaching experience
3	Q	2	Dean, 23 years of teaching experience
3	R	2	11 years of teaching experience
4	S	3	8 years of teaching experience
4	T	3	6 years of teaching experience

Data collection: Interviews

- Conducted with individual teachers.
- Aim to explore teachers' beliefs and current practices of classroom-based assessment
- The main questions are on assessment practices, based on the three dimensions of McNamara & Hill's (2011) framework (5 questions on Evidence, 4 questions on Interpretation, 3 questions on Use – 12 in total)
- Another 4 questions to probe the beliefs that underlie teachers' assessment practices

Interviews questions (1)

Evidence	**Data (What is assessed?)**	• What do you focus on when conducting classroom-based assessment? (eg. grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking…)
	Approach (How is evidence collected?)	• How often do you assess students? • What types of assessment tasks are used?
	Target (Who is assessed?)	• Do you assess individual students, groups of students, or the whole class?
	Agent (Who assesses)?	• Does anyone else besides yourself conduct assessment of your students?
Interpretation	**Reflection**	• Do you reflect on the results of assessment? • What do you do with the reflection?
	Criteria	• How do you interpret/attach meaning to the scores that students receive? • Do your students share the same understanding?

Interviews questions (2)

Use	**Purpose (How is evidence used?)**	• For what purpose do you use the results of assessment? • Do you discuss the results with your students?
	Agent (By whom?)	• How do people you inform about the test results usually behave?

Interviews questions (3)

- Do you think that classroom-based assessment has an important role in promoting student learning?
- Are you satisfied with your current practices?
- What changes would you make in conducting classroom-based assessment if you had the opportunity?
- Are there any obstacles which prevent you from conducting classroom assessment in the way you would like to?

Findings: CBA Practices (1)

Evidence	**What is assessed?**	• What do you focus on when conducting classroom-based assessment?
	How is evidence collected?	• How often do you assess students? • What types of assessment tasks are used?
	Who is assessed?	• Do you assess individual students, groups of students, or the whole class?
	Who assesses?	• Does anyone else besides yourself conduct assessment of your students?

1. Formal classroom-based assessment (eg regular interim tests) is tightly controlled by the system. Informal assessment tasks are left entirely in the hands of teachers, and not paid enough attention to.

- High school teachers follow assessment regulations imposed by DOET. The number of tests per semester, when to conduct the tests, time allocation for each test are already dictated.
- Universities set their own regulations, but the control is just the same for teachers.

CẤU TRÚC VÀ MA TRẬN ĐỀ THI HK2 – NH 2016-2017
KHỐI 10

GV soạn theo ma trận sau:

STT	Nội dung / chủ đề		Mức độ				Số câu	Số điểm
			Nhận biết	Thông hiểu	Vận dụng	Vận dụng cao		
TRẮC NGHIỆM 4 LỰA CHỌN (7 ĐIỂM)								
1	Phonetics	- Sound - Stress	3 2					1.0
2	Vocabulary	- Meaning - Word form	3 3	2 2				2.0
3	Grammar	- Tenses - Passive -Comparison -Articles - If clauses - To infinitive of purpose - Wh-questions - Attitudinal adjective - It is/was not until	4	5	2			2.2
4	Reading	Reading comprehension hoặc Cloze test	3	1	1			1.0
5	Error Identification			2				0.4
6	Speaking			1	1			0.4
TỰ LUẬN								
7	Sentence transformation	- Passive - Comparison - If clause	2	2	1			2.0

ĐỀ KIỂM TRA 15 PHÚT – KHỐI 10

I. Choose the word whose underlined part is pronounced differently from that of the other three.

1. A. peasant B. breakfast C. leader D. ready
2. A. last B. palm C. place D. guitar

II. Choose the word whose main stressed syllable is different from the rest.

1. A. thirsty B. fellow C. repair D. quarter
2. A. technology B. biology C. history D. geography

III. Give the correct tense of the verbs in brackets.

1. The earth (turn)_____ around the sun.
2. I (have)_____ a rest when the volcano erupted.
3. She (work)_____ as a manager assistant in this company from 2001 – 2004.
4. By the time they came, we (finish)_____ our dinner.

IV. Give the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

1. It was getting dark when they finished (decorate)_____ the room.
2. He was amazed (receive)_____ his friend's letter yesterday.
3. Do you want this right shoe (repair)_____?
4. I remember (meet)_____ him before but I can't remember his name.

V. Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions.

1. I often set the alarm clock to go_____ at 5.30 in the morning.
2. In the afternoon, Mr. Lam pumps water_____ the field.
3. "What do you do_____ a living?" Mrs. Anderson asked the man.
4. These students are nervous_____ the Maths exam.
5. They live in bad condition. I think they can't go_____ living like this.

VI. Give the correct form of the words in brackets.

1. She couldn't hide her_____ smile when she saw him appear round the
3. Eventually, the pilot managed to land the plane_____. (safety)
4. They were very_____ when they heard that there had been an accident. (worry)
5. Acting has brought me a lot of_____. (enjoy)
6. I feel more_____ about my career than I used to. (relax)

VII. Rewrite the following sentences with the meaning unchanged.

1. He is watering the flowers.

→ The flowers _____.

2. Nobody has used this room for ages.

→ This room_____.

3. I'll take you to Da Lat. You can enjoy fresh air there.

→ I'll _____.

4. You drink too much coffee, that's why you can't sleep.

→ If you _____.

5. It was late, so I did not call you.

→ If it _____.

6. If she doesn't hurry, she'll miss the bus.

→ Unless _____.

ĐỀ KIỂM TRA 1 TIẾT

I. PHONETICS.

A. Choose the word whose underlined part is pronounced differently from that of the other three.

1. A. poor B. tour C. actual D. group
2. A. tiny B. device C. krill D. migrate
3. A. gulf B surface C. submarine D. current

B. Choose the word whose main stressed syllable is different from that of the other three.

4. A. organism B. environment C. temperature D. satellite
5. A. fascinating B. behavior C. automobile D. organism
6. A. carnivore B. entrapment C. technology D. Atlantic

II. READING.

A. Read the following text and choose the best answers.

When the first white men came to America, they found vast amount of natural resources of tremendous values. Forests covered large part of the nation; later gas, oil and minerals were found in unbelievable amounts. There was a great abundance of very fertile soil. Forests, prairies, streams and rivers abounded with wildlife. So vast were these resources to make way for farmland. Grassland and prairies were ploughed and harrowed. Mineral and soil were used in great quantities to supply power company. Mammals and birds were slaughtered for food and sport.

Within a short time, the results were obvious. Floods caused millions of dollars worth of damage each year. The very fertile soil washed away or blew up in great clouds. The seemingly inexhaustible oil and mineral showed signs of emptying. Rivers were filled with wastes from factories and silt from eroding farm. Many of the rivers were made uncomfortable for fish. Several species of birds disappeared and some mammals seemed on the nearly leaving. Future timber shortages were predicted.

7. It seemed to the early American settlers that
   A. food was hard to find
   B. forest should be cut
   C. the natural resources were inexhaustible.
   D. there was a shortage of minerals.
8. The use of America's natural resources by the early settlers was
   A. careless B. scientific C. unbelievable D. predicted
9. Many rivers are no longer suitable living places for fish because
   A. too many fish have been caught
   B. floods have caused much damage
   C. a conservation program has been set up
   D. factories have dumped wastes into them
10. The sentence best expresses the main subject of this passage
   A. What the first white man found in America
   B. The causes of timber shortages
   C. The loss of topsoil
   D. The story of America's natural resources
11. It can be inferred from the passage that
   A. Nature in America is in danger.
   B. There are still a lot of natural resources in America now.
   C. People have uses up all natural resources in America.
   D. There are no natural disasters in this region.

B. Read the following passage and choose the word that best fits each space.

Conservation is the (12)_____ and preservation of natural resources, so that they can continue (13) and enjoyed. In the past, most people believed that the world's (14) could never be used up. Today, we know that this is not true. An important part of conservation is the (15) of waste - waste of forests, soil, wild-life, minerals and human lives. As important is the fight (16) _____ pollution of our environment, in particular, the dirtying and poisoning of air and water. Conservation is also concerned with the reclaiming of land by irrigating deserts, draining swamps or pushing back the sea.

12. a. destruction b. safeguarding c. prevention d. damage
13. a. to use b. being used c. to be used d. used
14. a. resources b. supplies c. gases d. property
15. a. circulation b. preservation c. prevention d. defense
16. a. for b. against c. to d. on

III. USE OF LANGUAGE (2mks). Choose the best answer A, B, C or D.

17. Sandra pretend_____ ill to avoid going to school.
   A. to be B. being C. be D. been
18. I expected _____ to Nam's birthday party, but I wasn't.
   A. invited B. inviting C. to invite D. to be invited
19. More people are suffering _____ heart disease.
   A. for B. from C. with D. that
20. Pop music usually refers _____ a non-classical type of music emerging in the early 1900s.
   A. with B. in C. on D. to
21. People who work with dolphins are often _____at how intelligent they are.
   A. surprise B. surprising C. surprised D. surprisingly
22. He asked me why I _____ to his party the day before.
   A. did not come B. had not come C. do not come D. would not come
23. They used to build their houses by mud and straw.
   A. Their houses used to be build by mud and straw.
   B. Their houses used to be built by mud and straw.
   C. Their houses were used to be built by mud and straw.
   D. Their houses are used to be building by mud and straw.
24. He left his wallet at home so he didn't have money to pay for the meal.
   A. If he hadn't left his wallet at home, he would have had money to pay for the meal.
   B. If he hadn't left his wallet at home, he would have money to pay for the meal.
   C. If he hadn't left his wallet at home, he would had money to pay for the meal.
   D. If he had left his wallet at home, he would have had money to pay for the meal.
25. _____ having a lot of difficulties in her life, she managed to study well.
   A. Despite B. In spite of
   C. Even though D. A and B are correct.
26. Because he was seriously ill, he was absent from class yesterday.
   A. Because his serious illness, he was absent from class yesterday.
   B. Because his seriously illness, he was absent from class yesterday.
   C. Because of his serious illness, he was absent from class yesterday.
   D. Because of his serious ill, he was absent from class yesterday.

IV. ERROR IDENTIFICATION.

Choose the underlined word or phrase - A,B,C or D - that needs correcting.

27. Jane doesn't speak English as good as Betty.
   A B C D
28. Unless we worked harder, we won't finish on time.
   A B C D
29. When he drove home, it started to rain heavily.
   A B C D
30. Thank to modern technology, scientists have been able to reveal many mysteries of the seabed.
   A B C D

BASIC BUSINESS ENGLISH
FINAL TEST DURATION: 60 mins

I. Vocabulary (25 items, 25 points – one point per item)

A. Choose the correct answer for each question below. Circle the letter (A, B, or C) that represents your choice.

1. To ____ a task is to complete or do it successfully.
   A. accomplish B. accompany C. achieve
2. If two people have something ____, they are similar in some way.
   A. in common B. in return C. in advance
3. A/an ____ is a title awarded by a university after someone has completed a program of study.
   A. agreement B. degree C. contract
4. A ____ is an amount of money that is charged for a service.
   A. salary B. fee C. bonus
5. To ____ somebody is to assign a job or a role to that person.
   A. appoint B. decide C. establish
6. An ____ is a meeting arranged in advance.
   A. appointment B. date C. presentation
7. To ____ is to increase something to twice its original amount or size.
   A. double B. twice C. expand
8. An accountant is someone whose job is to keep or check financial records.
   A. bookkeeper B. engineer C. office worker
9. A book with spaces for a year's days, weeks and months is a ____.
   A. meeting B. diary C. date
10. Imagine you are at a conference, talking to a colleague.
    A. convention B. party C. union
11. Doing small talk with colleague helps her avoid the feeling of being left out.
    A. unhappy B. angry C. lonely
12. A/an ____ is an arrangement to meet at a particular the date or time.
    A. deadline B. appointment C. schedule
13. A/an ____ is the date or time by which something must be finished.
    A. deadline B. appointment C. schedule
14. To erase means the same as to ____ something.
    A. enter B. perform C. remove
15. To enter means the same as to ____ something.
    A. subtract B. add C. lonely

B. Find the correct words that match the definitions below. Write the corresponding word in the space next to each definition. Remember: There are THREE extra words that are NOT needed!

Words: avoid – commission – contract – experience – exact – figures – fraction – holiday – percentage – plan – quantity – salary – wage

Definitions

16. numbers that represent amount _____
17. a written agreement that people sign when starting work _____
18. a special day that everyone in a region celebrates _____
19. an arrangement for what is going to happen _____
20. work that a person has done in the past _____
21. an amount that is expressed as part of a 100 _____
22. percentage of a sale that a salesperson earns _____
23. to stay away from something _____
24. completely correct _____
25. a fixed amount of money you receive regularly from your employer _____

II. Reading comprehension (25 items, 50 points – 2 points per item)

Passage 1

Read the following extract from a job site. Then choose the correct word from the set given to fill in each blank. NOTE: There are THREE (3) extra words that will not be needed.

Questions 26 to 35

Words: available - equipped - clerks - experience - finish - for - opportunities - permanent – programmers - retirement – terminate - training - upon - vacancies

JOB OPENING AT EDTECH

Full time: (40 hours a week) We have 2 full-time positions for computer (26)_____ with at least 5 years of (27)_____ using C++ programming language.

Full time: (45 hours per week) We have vacancies for data-entry (28)_____. No experience needed. (29)_____ for overtime.

Part-time: (20 hours per week) There are opportunities (30)_____ for customer service operators on a (31)_____ basis. All (32)_____ will be provided. A (33)____ plan is available for permanent employees.

Passage 2

Read the following blog post about commuting to work. Then answer the questions that follow.

Like many people who live in London, my friend John commutes to work every day by taking the subway. At first he found it boring to just sit and stare out the window, but now he makes good use of his commute time. Anybody can and should learn to do the same. It doesn't matter whether you take the subway, train, or bus, or whether you carpool. You should plan out your work for the trip before you reach your final stop. John usually reads while he travels to work. Women passengers may knit or prepare their shopping lists. You can get work done even while you're stuck in traffic jams. It's amazing what you can accomplish before getting to the office.

Questions 36 to 40 - Mark the following statements as true (T), false (F), or not given (NG). Write on the space next to each statement.

36. The writer does not drive to work. _____
37. John takes the bus to work every day. _____
38. John finds it interesting to just sit and look out from the window. _____
39. Women passengers often read on their way to work. _____
40. People can even get work done while they're stuck in traffic jams. _____

Passage 3

Read the following extract from a blog giving advice about striking up a conversation with people you meet for the first time. Then answer the questions that follow.

Imagine you are at a birthday party, talking to your old friends. Suddenly a guest comes in. This person does not know anybody at the party except the host. Your host is, however, busy in the kitchen and cannot talk to the new guest. Should you leave her alone because you do not know her?

By no means! Come talk to her so she won't feel left out. Introduce yourself and your friends, and mention your relationship with the host. You can also ask the guest about her relationship with the host. After that it is time for doing small talk. Some topics that you can use is occupation, education, or your home town. But remember: Don't ever talk about religion, politics, or marital status to somebody you meet for the first time!

Questions 46 to 50 - Read the following extract from a blog giving advice about how to stay organized. Then fill in the blanks with the missing word – one word for each blank.

Note: There is NO suggestions for this task; you need to provide the correct words yourself.

HOW TO STAY ORGANIZED

You lead a busy life, and time is very valuable to you. The key to your success is effective scheduling!

Your schedule is the most important thing in your business life. Use one that you can keep with you all the time. For (46)_____ , a paper diary or electronic planner – NOT a wall calendar! Keep your (47)_____ up-to-date. Suppose your client calls and (48)_____ an appointment. Erase it immediately. Or your client makes a new appointment on June 23rd. Enter it right then. At the beginning of each month, check your schedule for (49)_____. Then, make a 'to-do' list in order of priority. Finally, don't forget to schedule time (50)_____. Everybody needs to relax. Enjoying your free time gives you more energy for business success!

III. Writing (25 points)

Write a short passage about 80-100 words to describe your current job. You should provide information about: where you work, what position you hold, whether it is a full-time or part-time job, your salary or wage and benefits, and time off policies at your workplace.

Write below:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

****

Findings: CBA Practices (2)

Evidence	**What is assessed?**	• What do you focus on when conducting classroom-based assessment?
	How is evidence collected?	• How often do you assess students? • What types of assessment tasks are used?
	Who is assessed?	• Do you assess individual students, groups of students, or the whole class?
	Who assesses?	• Does anyone else besides yourself conduct assessment of your students?

2. The discrete-point, multiple choice format dominate classroom-based assessment in both high school and university environment. Interestingly, younger teachers who have less experience and do not have added administrative responsibility usually employ more diverse, innovative task types compared to their senior colleagues.

3. Everywhere, the main focus is on vocabulary, grammar and reading. At university level, listening and writing are added, usually in final exams. High school tests, especially at grade 12, faithfully reflect what is in the National High School Graduation Examination.

4. Only individual students are assessed, and only teachers are assessors. No group testing, no peer assessment.

Findings: CBA Practices (3)

Interpretation	Reflection	• Do you reflect on the results of assessment? • What do you do with the reflection?
	Criteria	• How do you interpret/attach meaning to the scores that students receive? • Do your students share the same understanding?

5. No reflection on assessment results seem to exist at high school level. At university level, if assessment results are not as good as expected, the problem is believed to be either the students (*their levels are too low*) or the course books (*the course books are too difficult or too boring*).

6. Scores have fixed and absolute meaning and reflect how well students do on a particular test. On a scale of 10, 10 means excellent, 9 means very good, 8 means good, 7 means fair, 6 means average, 5 is borderline, 4 and 3 are weak, 2 and 1 mean fail. The interpretation is not linked to the intended learning outcomes (which, in turn, is very rarely referred to). Everyone shares the same understanding.

Findings: CBA Practices (4)

Use	**Purpose (How is evidence used?)**	• For what purpose do you use the results of assessment? • Do you discuss the results with your students?
	Agent (By whom?)	• How do people you inform about the test results usually behave?

7. Results are used to inform students of their progress and to report to the administration. It is NOT used to guide teaching.

8. Results are rarely discussed with students. Students receive their results to see how well they did on a particular tests. Some teachers correct mistakes that many students make and provide some further practice, but most don't.

Findings: Teachers' beliefs

- Do you think that classroom-based assessment has an important role in promoting student learning?
- Are you satisfied with your current practices?
- What changes would you make in conducting classroom-based assessment if you had the opportunity?
- Are there any obstacles which prevent you from conducting classroom assessment in the way you would like to?

1. **Good classroom-based assessment really promotes student learning**, but **teachers do not have enough time to create good assessment** due to the heavily-loaded and tightly controlled curriculum.
2. Not really. **If students need further help, there is no time for it**. It feels frustrating.
3. **More time to talk about mistakes that students make in their tests, and to re-teach what students have not learned.**
4. **Obstacles are many and different for different groups (see next slide).**

Findings: Teachers' beliefs

- Do you think that classroom-based assessment has an important role in promoting student learning?
- Are y satisfied with your current practices?
- What changes would you make in conducting classroom-based assessment if you had the opportunity?
- Are there any obstacles which prevent you from conducting classroom assessment in the way you would like to?

4. Obstacles are many and different for different groups.

- For high schools, esp. low-SES schools: students need more time to learn what is in the curriculum; have low motivation because of repeated low scores on tests; big class size and heavy workload makes it hard for teachers to focus more attention on giving feedback and support to students; parents, students and school administration only care about passing tests and having good scores.
- For high-SES schools and universities: students in the same class are at different proficiency levels; low motivation because class work is boring and not directly related to exit exams (eg, general English curriculum followed by TOEIC or IELTS as a gate-keeping exam?)

Findings: Teachers' beliefs through difficulties

#1: "I don't dare or need to change my CBA practice!"

If I include writing or speaking skills which are not test in the [National] Graduation exam [in my test], my students may not have enough time to study grammar and vocabulary which are more important for them.

Teacher D

Managers only care about the test scores of my students. If the scores of my students are low, I will certainly have trouble [with my manager].

Teacher E

Including writing in your tests means [you are] committing suicide. I know it's good, but it is not necessary. Training your students to answer multiple-choice questions on grammar and vocabulary is enough. Full stop.

Teacher H

When I first started teaching in this school, I asked my students to make presentations for all 15-minute tests as I believed this would help them use English. Some liked it while others [who were at low level] and the head teacher didn't. I was severely critised and accused of being lazy [by the head teacher]. Why should I do something different from others?

Teacher K

Findings: Teachers' beliefs through difficulties

#2: "I don't know how to design my tests!"

Some teachers cannot even read or writing well in English, so how can they design a good writing task?

Teacher A

I wasn't taught how to write a good question for a test when training at university. I first knew nothing and learnt by observing and replicating my colleagues. Also the [National Graduation] test keep changing very year. How can we have a reliable test?

Teacher O

Most teachers cannot understand 4 criteria of the test matrix and they cannot measure their test questions

Teacher H

If we change all multiple-choice tests to free writing, how can most teachers give an accurate score?

Teacher B

Findings: Teachers' beliefs through difficulties

#2: "I don't know how to design my tests!"

Some teachers cannot even read or writing well in English, so how can they design a good writing task?

Teacher A

I wasn't taught how to write a good question for a test when training at university. I first knew nothing and learnt by observing and replicating my colleagues. Also the [National Graduation] test keep changing very year. How can we have a reliable test?

Teacher O

Most teachers cannot understand 4 criteria of the test matrix and they cannot measure their test questions

Teacher H

If we change all multiple-choice tests to free writing, how can most teachers give an accurate score?

Teacher B

Teachers' beliefs through difficulties

#3: "My students are so incapable and they don't want to study English!"

My students only care if they get 3.5 or not. They don't choose English as a subject for their [National] Graduation exam. They even don't listen to my feedback. How can I assess them when they have no motivation?

Teacher N

My students are very bad at English. How can I change to assess them speaking or writing?

Teacher M

Students of Science "bloc" don't see the importance of English. There is no use to test their speaking or writing.

Teacher B

The assigned scores for Listening make up a tiny part, only 2 out of 10, when almost all of my students need a 5 only. They don't study listening skills even when I test it.

Teacher I

Teachers' beliefs through difficulties

#4: "I have too many students to assess!"

Dare you mark 45 or 50 writing papers for a 15-minute test. That's such a waste of time!

Teacher J

You cannot focus on individual students. I have 40 students of different levels. If I did something other than "traditional" tests, there would not enough time for preparation and teaching

Teacher N

Teachers' beliefs through difficulties

#5: "I have so many things to do"

We cannot teach and assess every individual student regularly. They have only 3 periods [of English] per week while there are so many things to teach according to the syllabus.

Teacher B

I have so much paperwork to complete. My time for teaching accounts no more than 40%. How can I change my existing tests

Teacher H

I'm a new teacher to my school. I have to take responsibilities for the Youth union work in my school. Also, other workloads for a main teacher of a class occupy most of my time.

Teacher L

I think teachers now are working like a babysitter. We must care for every single thing of our students. If you were a teacher in high school, you would know that teaching well is not enough.

Teacher E

Discussions

- Most teachers think the current practices are not effective, but they are reluctant to change as they think it may be too risky.
- The final, high-stakes exams (eg, National High School Graduation Exam or the gate-keeping proficiency tests for university students) heavily dominate and negatively affect what goes on in the classroom.

Discussions

- It is very clear that all teachers need help doing better CBA. Assessment literacy appears to be extremely important for all teachers to help them design and create good assessment tasks, including class tests.
- Motivation of students greatly affects the effectiveness of CBA practices.
- Huge workload, limited teaching hours and big class size prevent teachers from improving their CBA practices.

Conclusion

- The current practice of CBA is mainly of learning (summative) rather than for learning or as learning (formative).
- Constructing a better summative test for the National High School Graduation examination is of great importance to improve CBA.
- Extra training is necessary for teachers to be able to construct good tests with validity.
- Greater support from managers is expected to encourage teachers to promote good CBA practices.

References

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