

Comprehensive Assessment on Learners' Achievement based on Curriculum 2004¹

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A. Introduction

Assessing learners' achievement is one crucial thing in language teaching. Thorough and comprehensive assessment might encourage students to learn the targeted competencies. It is very often, however, that students get frustrated because of inappropriate assessment. A recent example was about the last 2004 UAN score that made many students, even many parents, feel that they could have gotten better score, because of the implementation of standardized test which was not openly socialized prior to its implementation. In short, it can be stated that although it is a crucial thing, assessment is still problems in many instances.

1. Criticism towards the student assessment in Curriculum 1994

Many experts in language learning recently said that one weakness of the implementation of assessment on the learners' achievement concerns the cognitive aspect which is very dominant, while neglecting the other two aspects, affective and psychomotor. This imbalanced assessment results in misleading information related to the real capacity and competency of the students. This happens, more particularly in subjects involving a quite significant part of either affective or psychomotor or even of both aspects. A significant gap between high cognitive score in Civics and Religion with the real behavior of some students outside the school is a stunning example. Of course, it is correct to say that not all subjects at school concern all those three aspects or even none of school subjects that teaches those three aspects in exactly the same portion. Such a criticism,

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however, needs a serious response if our concern in the coming education system is to create people with balanced cognitive, affective and psychomotor capacities.

2. Assessment system in Curriculum 2004

Curriculum 2004 seems to be aware of the shortcomings of the assessment applied in the education system in this country, more particularly in the secondary education. This is proved by the guide line proposed by the new curriculum, in which more comprehensive and continuous assessment introduced and recommended. Although it is believed that the system will stimulate problems in the implementation at school, the curriculum at least has strived to give perspective on a more appropriate assessment on the student's competencies.

As is found in the *Pedoman Umum Pengembangan Silabus dan Sistem Penilaian* as well as in the *Pedoman Khusus Pengembangan Silabus dan Sistem Penilaian*, it is recommended that there should be two ways of assessing the students, block (*Penilaian Blok*) and classroom-based (*Penilaian Berbasis Kelas*) assessments.

Penilaian blok is an assessment conducted in a special activity aiming to get some data about the learners' achievement, in this case the targeted competencies. These data include not only cognitive data, but also affective and psychomotor ones, depending on the specific characteristics of the subjects. This assessment is done based on the schedule that is made by a teacher early before the semester starts. It might be done at the end of one single basic competency or at the end of some basic competencies. *Penilaian berbasis kelas*, on the other hand, is done inherent in the learning activities. For example, while a teacher is giving a task and the students are doing the task, either individually or in groups, the teacher also makes a note that she/he will use as part of the grade at the end of the semester. Although it does not need a specially allotted time, this assessment still needs to be planned in advanced. This is because according to Curriculum 2004, and actually according to any successful curriculum, assessment

on students' achievement should be continuous, with multi ways and multi instruments and from multi resources.

B. What is a comprehensive assessment?

Comprehensive assessment, in this paper, once again is one that includes not only cognitive aspect but also affective and psychomotor, depending on the characteristics of the subjects. When our concern is English, it then means that we are talking about designing a kind of assessment that can assess not only the cognitive but also the learners' affective towards English. How about psychomotor? There are still some problems related whether psychomotor needs to be specifically assessed when dealing with English learning in secondary schools, junior and senior high schools. There is an agreement saying that psychomotor is important aspects in English learning, but should it be considered as discreet part? Before talking further about ways to assess learners' achievement in English school subject, let us have a look in brief at the competencies recommended by the new curriculum.

C. English Communicative Competency Model in Curriculum 2004

Competency model suggested by Curriculum 2004 is closely related to one proposed by Michael Canale dan Merrill Swaine in 1980, which was then updated in Canale's (1983). Canale says that there are four competencies that together form the communicative competency, those are 1) *grammatical competence* (Hymes' *linguistics competence*), 2) *discourse competence*, 3) *sociolinguistic competence* dan 4) *strategic competence*.

Although some differences exist, both conceptually and literally, it can be said that the new curriculum adapts such a model. In Curriculum 2004 of English, there are five competencies that are believed to build the communicative competency of the students, 1) actional competence (*kompetensi tindak tutur (dan retorika)*), 2) discourse competence (*kompetensi wacana*), 3) linguistic competence

(*kompetensi linguistic*), 4). sociocultural competence (*kompetensi sosiokultural*) dan 5) strategic competence (*kompetensi strategis*). Now look at how such five competencies are ordered in the curriculum, see Figure 1. As the figure suggests, the core competence in the curriculum is the discourse competence. It means that the core goal of learning English in senior high school is actually to make students able to use English in a communication by paying attention also at the context of situation and context of culture. The question that might soon arise is how such five competencies relate to the three aspects of cognitive, affective and psychomotor.

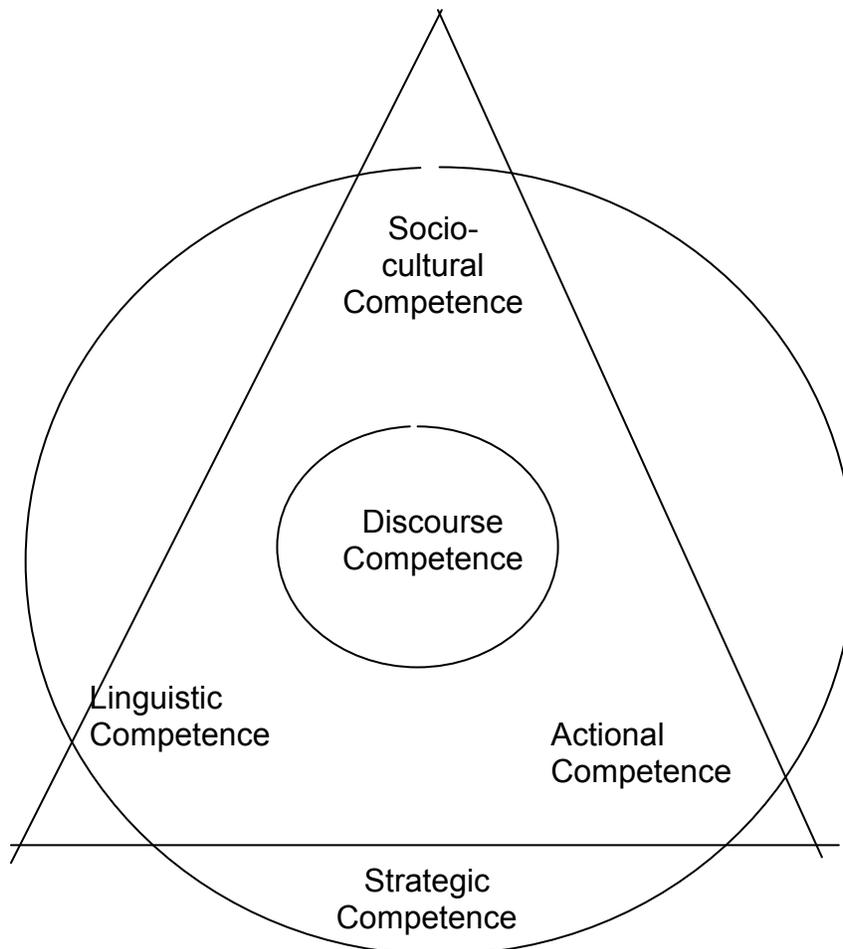


Figure1. English Communicative Competency Model based on Curriculum 2004

D. Devising assessment instruments

When a teacher wants to devise an instrument to assess the learners' achievement, he/she cannot simply think of what to use. There are some activities that need to be done in doing so. This is also suggested in the new curriculum. The activities that need to be done by a teacher when developing the instrument are as the followings.

1. Map the basic competencies and the indicators in each semester. This will result in the possible blocks that you are going to have during the semester. This will be easy if you use a certain book that you believe is relevant to the curriculum. If you do, you simply follow the units in the book.
2. Make a plan of all kinds of assessment that you will do during the semester and arrange the schedule. The form of this, which is usually called the *Format Rancangan Penilaian Berkelanjutan* is provided by the curriculum (See Figure 2).
3. Choose aspects that are going to assess (together with the instrument to use, scoring techniques, and what activities or task your students should do).
4. Make the instruments

No	Units/Basic Comp.	July				August				Sept.				Oct.				Nov.				Dec.			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1.	Unit 1			T I		B																			
2.	Unit 2							T K		B															
3.	Unit 3										D			B											
4.	Unit 4																	B							
																								P	

Note: B : Block tests, TI: Individual Assignments, TK : Group Assignment, P: Portfolio

Figure 2. Example of Format *Rancangan Penilaian Berkelanjutan*

E. Types of Activities, Instruments and Aspects to assess

To make it sort, observe the following table.

No.	Activities	Competencies to assess	Aspects to Assess	Instruments
1.	Test	Actional Competence, Linguistic competence, Socio-cultural Competence, Discourse competence, strategic competence	Cognitive	Paper and pencil test
2.	Individual Assignment (Telling experiences in either written or spoken)	Actional Competence, Linguistic competence, Socio-cultural Competence, Discourse competence, strategic competence	Cognitive Affective	Rubric or Scoring guide Portfolio and rubric
3.	Group discussion	Actional Competence, Linguistic competence, Socio-cultural Competence, Discourse competence, strategic competence	Cognitive Affective	Worksheet Observation sheet
4.	Outing	Actional Competence, Linguistic competence, Socio-cultural Competence, Discourse competence, strategic competence	Cognitive Affective	Worksheet Observation sheet

F. Mastery Learning in Curriculum 2004

One principle in the implementation of Curriculum 2004 is mastery learning. The basic philosophy of mastery learning says that anyone can learn anything. What differentiates between quick students and the slower ones are the amount of help and the amount of time provided. Furthermore, the used of mastery learning in Curriculum 2004 is based on the following consideration.

1. Because learners are the subject of learning process, every individual learner should arrive at the mastery level.
2. Although students have their own capacity in learning, they have the right to get the mastery learning.

As the consequences, learning process that is based on the mastery learning principle should pay significant attention on the individual differences. The learning program should also accommodate the slow learners. There are other logical consequences of mastery learning where school should provide remedial program for students who have not arrived at the mastery level, and enrichment and acceleration programs for those who have.

Based on the mastery learning, a student will pass the subject only if she/he is successful to get the score above the mastery level. In general the mastery level is determined as seventy five percent of the predetermined competencies. Seventy five percent, however, is not a fixed number. The level of mastery in one region might be different from other region. Even, one school could have different mastery level from other school. This is because it is school that determines the standard of mastery level for its students.

G. Conclusion

As is widely believed, assessment is actually alternative. It means that there quite a lot of ways to assess learners' achievements. Thing worth noting, therefore, is that we, as teachers, need use more ways so that we can really know what our students are really like. Another important thing is that, although there are quite a lot ways to assess, it is not good to use instruments which we do not know well how they work, we cannot use an instrument without letting our students know what they are going to assess about.

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