



EXPLORING WAYS OF LEARNING ASSESSMENT OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS DURING TEACHING PRACTICE

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The purpose of this study was to explore ways of learning assessment of pre-service teachers during their teaching practice. The participants involved 25 pre-service teachers who did an internship in the second semester of the 2015 academic year at the Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand. The data were collected by semi-structured interview and review of instructional plans. The results revealed that 1) the participants focused mostly on summative assessment, and 2) most test items were multiple choice test items. Moreover, most open-ended test items were drawn from the exercises assigned to their students in the classroom. The results reflected that the teacher preparation program should put more effort on training the students about assessment for learning.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers, Formative assessment, Summative assessment.

Introduction

“What is important for citizens to know and be able to do?” That is the question that underlies the world’s global metric for quality. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) provided reliable and timely data on the mathematics and science literacy of students around the world. The PISA results in 2012 found that the scores of Thai students were below the average scores of many countries. Nowadays, students need to know not only the basic reading and arithmetic skills, but also skills that will allow them to face a world that is continually changing. They must be able to think critically, to analyze, and to make inferences. Changes in the skills base and knowledge our students need require new learning goals; these new learning goals change the relationship between assessment and instruction. Teachers need to take an active role in making decisions about the purpose of assessment and the content that is being assessed. It is important to find the way to improve the Thai students’ literacy. Both instruction and assessment are important. Assessment is an integral part of instruction, as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Assessment affects decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs, curriculum, and, in some cases, funding (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2015).

Studies analyzing classroom tests, over many decades, have found that most teacher-made tests require only recall of information. However, when teachers are surveyed about how often they think they

assess application, reasoning, and higher-order thinking, both elementary and secondary teachers claim that they assess these cognitive levels quite a bit. The reason that recall-level test questions are so prevalent is that they are the easiest kind to write. They are also the easiest kind of question to ask off the top of your head in class. Teachers who do not specifically plan classroom discussion questions ahead of time to tap particular higher-order thinking skills, but rather ask extemporaneous questions “on their feet” are likely to ask recall question. Contrary to some teacher’ beliefs, the same thing also happens with performance assessments. Students can make posters or prepare presentation slides listing facts about elements, planets, or stars without using higher-order thinking, for example. Of course, what amount and what kind of higher-order thinking should be required for a classroom assessment depend on the particular learning goals to be assessed (Brookhart, 2010).

Assessment is one of the many concerns pre-service teachers have when entering teacher development programs (Simon, M., Chitpin, M., & Yahya, R., 2010). Graham (2005) uncovered five categories of concerns pre-service teachers have regarding classroom assessment: a) designing learning goals, b) rubrics, grading and fairness, c) grading and motivation, d) assessment validity and e) the time required to assess. As a result, this research aimed to explore ways of learning assessment that the pre-service teachers used during their teaching practice. The results of this research would be significant information for teacher preparation programs.

Research Objective

The research objective was to explore ways of learning assessment that the pre-service teachers used during their teaching practice.

Research Methodology

Participants

Participants of this study were 25 pre-service teachers who did internship in the second semester of the 2015 academic year at the Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand.

Research Instruments

The research instrument was the semi-structured interview form.

Data Collection

Data were collected by 1) the interview of the 25 pre-service teachers and their advisors, and 2) the review of their instructional plans.

Data Analysis

Collected data were analyzed using mean and percentage.

Findings

1. The percentage of mean score from formative assessment and summative assessment

Figure 1 showed the percentage of mean score from formative assessment and summative assessment. The participants used 18% of score based on formative assessment and 82% of score based on summative assessment.

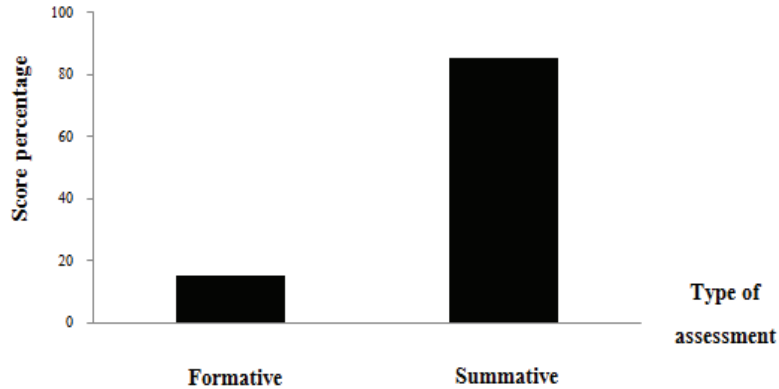


Figure 1. The percentage of mean score from formative assessment and summative assessment

2. Types of achievement test items

Figure 2 showed types of achievement test items that the participants used for achievement test. Percentage of score based on each type of test items such as essay, true-false, completion, matching and multiple choice was 5%, 5%, 10%, 5%, 75% respectively.

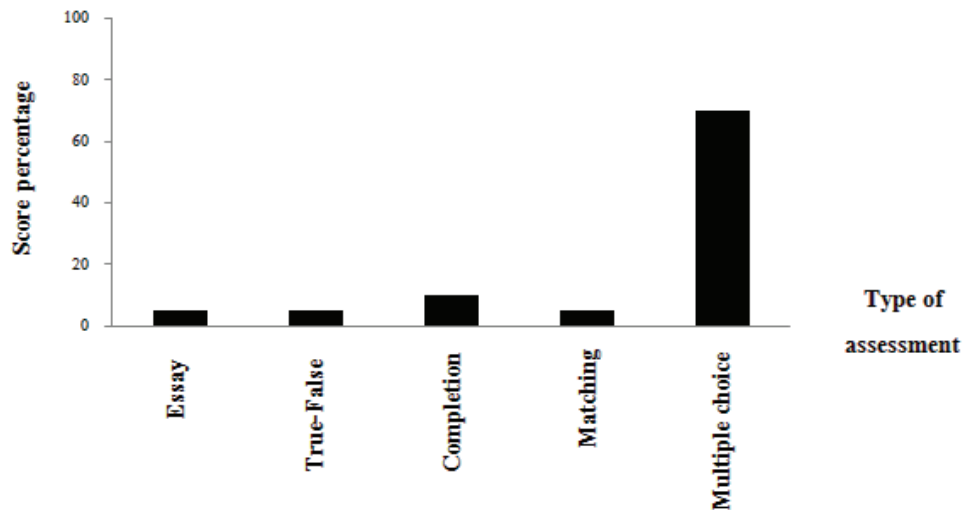


Figure 2. Types of achievement test items

Conclusion and Discussion

This research focused on exploring ways of learning assessment of 25 pre-service teachers during their teaching practice in the second semester of the 2015 academic year at the Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand.

Findings showed that 18% of the score for classroom assessment in each subject were based on formative assessment and 82% of the score were based on summative assessment. The participants focused mostly on summative assessment. Like Volante and Fazio (2007), they found that teacher candidates offered summative assessment as the main purpose of assessment. Generally, the participants

should focus more on formative assessment in order to improve the students' learning. Assessment is the process of gathering data. It is the ways instructors gather data about their teaching and their students' learning. Formative assessment assists the teacher in forming new lessons, while summative assessment comes at the end of a lesson, semester or year for a summary of what the student has learned. Moreover, the goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning, but the goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against standards and/or benchmarks (Volusia county schools, Online).

According to the percentage of score based on each type of test items such as essay, true-false, completion, matching and multiple choice were 5%, 5%, 10%, 5%, 75% respectively. The participants focused mostly on multiple choice test items. In addition, it was shown that 100% of open-ended test items were drawn from the exercises that the participants assigned to their students in the classroom. Complex achievement targets should be measured with an appropriate variety of classroom assessment tools: selected response and essay test, performance assessment, and personal communication. The types of assessment tasks may affect motivation. Appropriate tools should depend on both the students and the subject matter (Brookhart, 1997). However, it is of importance what cognitive levels of the students are measured. The teachers should pay more attention on higher-order thinking skills. What amount and what kind of higher-order thinking should be required for a classroom assessment depend on the particular learning goals to be assessed (Brookhart, 2010). This research did not identify what types of the question the participants used. It might be another interesting research question. The findings of this study at least suggested that the teacher preparation programs should foster deeper understanding and knowledge of assessment, particularly formative assessment, probably through professional development.

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