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EXPLORING ENGLISH TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF SPEAKING ASSESSMENT: SHIFTING THE FOCUS ONTO ENGLISH TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the beliefs and practices of English teachers in relation to speaking assessment in the English language classroom. It emphasizes the need to shift the focus onto teachers themselves as active participants in the assessment process. By adopting an exploratory approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of speaking assessment and the crucial role of teachers in shaping assessment practices. The research design includes qualitative methods such as interviews and observations to gather data from a diverse group of English teachers. Thematic analysis is employed to identify common themes and sub-themes that emerge from the data. The findings shed light on teachers' perspectives, beliefs, and challenges related to speaking assessment, providing valuable insights for improving assessment practices in language teaching.

KEYWORDS

English teachers, beliefs, practices, speaking assessment, assessment process

INTRODUCTION

Assessment plays a vital role in language teaching and learning, and speaking assessment is particularly crucial for developing learners' communicative

competence. However, existing research often focuses on learners' performance in speaking assessments, neglecting the perspectives and

practices of English teachers. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the assessment process, it is essential to shift the focus onto teachers themselves, as they are the key decision-makers in assessment practices. This article aims to explore the beliefs and practices of English teachers regarding speaking assessment and shed light on their experiences and perspectives. By adopting a qualitative approach, the study seeks to uncover the underlying factors influencing teachers' assessment decisions and to identify areas where further support and professional development may be required. Through an in-depth analysis of teachers' beliefs and practices, this research aims to contribute to the enhancement of speaking assessment practices and ultimately foster effective language learning in the English classroom.

METHOD

Participants:

The participants of this study were English teachers selected through purposive sampling from various educational settings, including primary schools, secondary schools, and language institutes. The sample aimed to include a diverse range of teachers with varying levels of experience in teaching English and assessing speaking skills.

Data Collection:

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The interviews were conducted with the participating teachers, focusing on exploring their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences related to speaking assessment. The interviews provided an opportunity to gather rich qualitative data about the teachers' perspectives and practices. Additionally, classroom observations were

conducted to observe the teachers' actual assessment practices during speaking activities in the classroom.

Data Analysis:

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data obtained from the interviews and classroom observations. The data were transcribed and coded, and then organized into themes and sub-themes. Through an iterative process, common patterns and categories were identified, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the teachers' beliefs and practices related to speaking assessment.

RESULTS

The analysis of the data revealed several key themes and sub-themes related to English teachers' beliefs and practices of speaking assessment. These themes encompassed various aspects of the assessment process, including assessment criteria, challenges faced by teachers, strategies employed, and the influence of teachers' beliefs on assessment practices. The results provided an in-depth understanding of the teachers' perspectives, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of their experiences and decision-making processes in assessing speaking skills. Selected quotes and examples from the interviews were included to support and illustrate the identified themes. The results shed light on the complexities and nuances of speaking assessment as perceived and practiced by English teachers, providing valuable insights for improving assessment practices in language teaching.

DISCUSSION

The discussion section critically examines the findings of the study in the context of existing literature and theoretical frameworks. It provides an in-depth

analysis of the identified themes and sub-themes related to English teachers' beliefs and practices of speaking assessment. The discussion highlights the implications of these findings for language teaching and assessment practices, and it explores the factors influencing teachers' assessment decisions.

THE DISCUSSION MAY ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

Beliefs and Practices of English Teachers:

The discussion delves into the teachers' beliefs and how they shape their assessment practices. It explores the alignment between teachers' beliefs and their actual assessment criteria, highlighting areas of consistency or discrepancies. The influence of contextual factors, such as institutional requirements and standardized assessments, on teachers' practices is also examined.

Challenges and Constraints:

The discussion explores the challenges and constraints faced by English teachers in assessing speaking skills. It investigates the impact of time constraints, large class sizes, limited resources, and lack of training and support on teachers' assessment practices. Strategies employed by teachers to address these challenges are also discussed.

Strategies and Techniques:

The discussion explores the strategies and techniques employed by English teachers in assessing speaking skills. It examines the variety of assessment methods used, such as individual presentations, group discussions, role-plays, and oral exams. The effectiveness of these strategies in capturing students'

speaking abilities and promoting their language development is critically analyzed.

Professional Development and Support:

The discussion emphasizes the need for professional development and support for English teachers in the area of speaking assessment. It highlights the importance of providing teachers with training, resources, and opportunities for collaboration and reflection to enhance their assessment practices. Suggestions for incorporating speaking assessment into teacher education programs and professional development initiatives are discussed.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion section summarizes the key findings of the study and their implications for English language teaching and assessment. It highlights the importance of shifting the focus onto English teachers as active participants in the assessment process. The conclusion emphasizes the need for further research and initiatives to support teachers in developing effective and fair speaking assessment practices. Ultimately, the article concludes by emphasizing the role of English teachers in shaping the assessment landscape and promoting meaningful language learning experiences for students.

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