THE INVOLVEMENT OF ENGLISH TEACHERS ON MINIMUM COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT (AKM)

by

Prativi Khilyatul Auliya
UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH GRESIK
prativi.auliya@umg.ac.id

(Received: 27-09-2021; Review: 27-10-2021; Revised: 19-11-2021; Revised: 05-01-2022; Accepted: 23-01-2022; Published: 28-02-2022).

Abstract:
Minimum Competency Assessment or AKM is one of instruments used by Indonesian government to evaluate the education system. A number of studies have been done related to AKM, however there is no studies about English teachers’ involvement on AKM. Therefore, this study aimed at investigating English teachers’ involvement on AKM which covers; (1) English teachers’ perception on AKM, and (2) English teachers’ action plans to support students facing AKM. This is a survey study with 23 English teachers from secondary and high schools in East Java as participants. Online questionnaire and phone interview were used as instruments to collect the data. The result shows that most English teachers have positive perception towards AKM. They show their positive emotion, motivation and belief on AKM. Furthermore, the English teachers have created action plan as a form of their readiness to support students facing AKM. The planning covers teaching material, AKM exercise, teaching media, and teaching method. Further investigation about those aspects is still needed.

Keywords: Minimum Competency Assessment, AKM, English lesson, Teachers’ involvement

INTRODUCTION

Minimum Competency Assessment or Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum (AKM) is one among 3 instruments used in National Assessment, as part of curriculum reform (Kemendikbud, 2020). This assessment is designed for all Indonesian students in primary, secondary and high schools. The majority of teachers are already familiar with AKM (Fauziah et al., 2021), even clearly stated that they are ready in facing AKM (Rokhim et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020). In Fauziah et al., (2021) & Rokhim et al., (2021), most of teachers understand well that literacy and numeracy are the two skills assessed on AKM. Furthermore, teachers stated that schools already socialized AKM and provided teacher training related to questions that will be tested on AKM. One preparation that could be done by teachers are giving try-out to students based on the AKM content outline (Rokhim et al., 2021). However, according to students, the tested questions are not in line with the material given by teachers during the teaching and learning process (Perdana, 2021).
Several studies related to teachers’ perception and their readiness to face AKM have been done (Fauziah et al., 2021; Rokhim et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020), however, there is still no studies that elaborate the English teachers involvement on AKM. English teachers are teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia. The English subject itself is not tested in AKM. Furthermore, teachers should not only provide the try-out (Rokhim et al., 2021) to prepare the AKM, but also have to create action plan that could be done during teaching-learning process. The action plan is purposely created to avoid the mismatch between AKM test and the material given during the teaching-learning process (Perdana, 2021). So that, the teaching method and material given are connected with the questions tested on AKM. That is why, it is necessary to investigate the involvement of English teachers on Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum (AKM).

This study leads to investigate English teachers’ involvement on AKM. The teachers’ involvement could be seen through their perception toward this new assessment system. The second point to examine teachers’ involvement is through their action plan. A study by Oloruntegbe (2011) showed that teachers were reluctant in implementing new curriculum since they were hardly ever involved in the development and even how best way to implement it. This study, therefore, is intentionally conducted to provide real picture of English teachers’ involvement on AKM. It is expected that this study will enrich teachers, especially English teachers to embrace AKM as the new assessment system and to provide action plans using current methods and material that meet students’ need.

Minimum Competency Assessment or Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum (AKM) is used to assess students’ cognitive skill. There are two minimum or basic aspects that will be assessed; literacy and numeracy (Kemendikbud, 2020). The competences that assessed on literacy and numeracy include logical and systematic thinking skill, making inference based on concept and knowledge that already learnt, and also the skill to sort and process information (Kemendikbud, 2020). AKM has already known by educational parties; including stakeholders, teachers, students, and parents as well (Aisah et al., 2021). Most of teachers and students support this new assessment system (Fauziah et al., 2021; Munthe, 2020; Nurjanah, 2021; Rokhim et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020) because of various reasons. Students were happy to embrace AKM since it creates no fears of being failed (Munthe, 2020). However, in a study by Yuliandari & Hadi (2020), it is shown that the implementation of AKM is still need to be optimized in term of
teaching-learning system management. Some teachers are still using the old standard learning framework which focus on testing memory (Meriana & Murniarti, 2021).

English teachers’ involvement on AKM needed to be explored since it is a new system in Indonesia in which no studies discussed about it. Oloruntegbe (2011) in his study entitled “Teachers’ Involvement, Commitment and Innovativeness in Curriculum Development and Implementation”, stated that teachers often show their reluctance and have less commitment to implement a new curriculum. In fact, teachers’ involvement in teaching-learning process, including designing activities, motivating students, and persuading them to join class activities is in line with students’ performance (Joshi et al., 2020). It means that students’ performance is influenced by teachers’ involvement on teaching-learning process. Teachers need to create action plan to draw their involvement for students.

The aim of this study is investigating the involvement of English teachers on Minimum Competency Assessment or AKM. The involvement is including teachers’ perception towards AKM and teachers’ action plan to support students facing AKM. The research questions are:

1. How is English teachers’ perception on AKM?
2. What are English teachers’ action plan to support students facing AKM?

**METHOD**

*Design*

This is survey research that employed descriptive qualitative approach. Survey research is used by researchers to investigate people’s beliefs, opinions, characteristics, and behaviour (Ary et al., 2009). It is in line with this study’s purpose which is investigating English teachers’ involvement on Minimum Competency Assessment or AKM. There were six steps taken; (1) planning, (2) defining the population, (3) sampling, (4) constructing the instrument, (5) conducting the survey, and (6) processing the data (Ary et al., 2009)

*Participant*

In survey research, the subjects should be selected (randomly, if possible) from the population of interest (Fraenkel et al., 2012,p.398). In this study, therefore, 23 English teachers (13 teachers from secondary school and 10 teachers from high school) were chosen as the
participants. The teachers were from 11 different schools in some cities in East Java, such as Surabaya, Sidoarjo, Gresik, Mojokerjo, and Jombang. The secondary and high school English teachers were chosen because English is taught as compulsory subject on those two levels.

**Instrument**

The most common instruments that utilized in survey research are the questionnaire and the interview (Bhattacherjee, 2012; Fraenkel, Jack R., Wallen, 2009). The combination of close-ended and open-ended questionnaire were used in this study. Moreover, semi-structured interview was used after that. There were ten close-ended and open-ended questionnaires that covers English teachers’ familiarity of AKM, English teachers’ understanding of AKM components, English teachers’ experience on AKM workshop training, English teachers’ opinion about the use of AKM, English teachers’ perception about connection between AKM and English lesson, English teachers’ perception of learning English to support AKM, English teachers’ effort in assisting students facing AKM, English teachers changes on teaching material, media, and method before and after AKM, and English teacher’s plan to support AKM. To get in depth data, five semi-structured interview questions given to the participants. The two instruments were validated by the expert before administered to the participants.

**Data Collection and Analysis Technique**

The data were collected on February – March 2021. Firstly, all the 23 English teachers completed the questionnaires that administered through google form. Data taken from the questionnaire then analyzed descriptively. To gain in depth information about the issue, follow-up interviews was held. There were 7 English teachers who participated in phone interview. The recorded data from interview then transcribed to ease the analysis process. Coding was done after that to help drawing a comprehensive conclusion. Finally, the whole process of citing and listing of references employed offline model using Mendeley desktop (Turmudi, 2020).

Further, descriptive statistics is applied in form of charts and others.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Result**

**English Teachers’ Perception on AKM**
The first thing that investigated was whether English teachers are already familiar with AKM or not. Based on the questionnaire given, almost all participants (96%) are familiar with Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM).

Figure 1. English teachers’ familiarity of AKM

Even though the percentage of English teachers who are familiar with AKM is high, only 57% of English teachers who truly understand the 2 components (literacy and numeracy) that will be tested on AKM. Some teachers answered both academic and psychological ability, knowledge and skill, and also questions-based thinking that designed to be tested on AKM.

Figure 2. English teachers’ understanding of AKM components

Based on the questionnaire, 57% of English teachers have not got any trainings related to the implementation of AKM. Only 43% of them who have already got training on AKM either from their working school, teachers’ association, or Education unit. Based on the
interview, some English teachers who have not got trainings about AKM were confused what to do next. They had no ideas on what actually AKM is, how to implement this kind of assessment, how English teachers should participate in supporting this new assessment system and how to run English lesson properly.

Figure 3. AKM workshop training

The next point that investigated was whether English teachers agree or disagree with the government’s policy in using AKM as the new assessment system to evaluate education quality in Indonesia. Majority of English teachers agreed with AKM. It could be seen from some of the teacher’s opinion here:

Participant opinion

T8  “It sounds better than National Exam based curriculum”

T14  “I do agree that the government intent to use it to measure ALL of the education quality in Indonesia since it is not only cover the administration things, but also the teacher's quality and the environment of the school itself, where most of the previous minister failed to see the problem. The teacher's quality itself need to be boostered since many teachers still illiterate in preparing their teaching learning material.”

T23  “Agree. AKM is addressed to schools not to students personally. If schools have done the process very well, the outcome automatically will be good. If I may consider to AKM to conducted by government last year, I can say that the questions provided in AKM is very good. Students do not need to memorize a certain material which is not used in their daily life. The questions/case is closely to their life. Read a product information, calculate the need of, and so forth which I think it is good question”
One among two English teachers who disagreed with AKM as the new assessment system reasoned that “… the result in AKM doesn't represent the whole quality of each student. It only measures the knowledge but how about the character, how about their daily attitude.” Furthermore, one teacher was in neutral position because according to him “… in one side literacy and numeration is very important for students but in other hand, not all subject appropriate with assessment based on literacy and numeration.”

![Figure 4](image-url)

**Figure 4.** English teachers’ opinion about AKM

When the researcher asked whether there is a connection between AKM and English lesson, most English teachers said “yes”. They believed that there is connection between AKM and English lesson in these aspects:

**Participant opinion**

- **T1** “The connection is on the literacy area”
- **T2** “English can trigger the students' high literacy and numeric competences through various activities, especially which promote their HOTS”
- **T6** “English has reading comprehension and so has AKM”
Auliya

Figure 5. Connection between AKM & English lesson

If most of English teachers argued that there is a connection between AKM and English lesson, then, can learning English support students to gain good score on AKM? Most of teachers said “yes”. They stated that;

*Participant opinion*

**T15**  “English is quite difficult lesson for high school students who don’t have any great skill on it. So, with “literasi membaca”, we can ask students to read a lot of books in English. Ask them to read, having a lot of functions. Make them skillful in reading English, add their vocabs, comprehend them more about the content and give them knowledge to be applied as the context which is not only gotten from Bahasa Indonesia. But can be gotten from English books via English lesson. “

**T21**  “Literate both in mother language and in foreign language is needed as well”

**T23**  “When students doing AKM especially in form of understanding passages, the theory of understanding the text may be gained in English Lesson, although it is written in Bahasa”.

**T9**  “Actually, the competences in English lesson include several texts or even numbers, so it influences students’ literature”.

*Figure 6. Learning English to support AKM*

**English Teachers’ Action Plan**

Investigating what have been done by English teachers in embracing AKM; 8 teachers stated that they focused on improving students’ interest on reading, 7 teachers maximalised in providing AKM try-out, 5 teachers done nothing, and the rest of teachers answered vary.
Majority teachers focused on improving students’ interest on reading since reading could help them develop their critical thinking skill. Here are some teachers’ excerpt;

**Participant opinion**

T4  “Let them read more and more everything in English. No matter what subject as long as in English, it may help them”.

T11  “Fostering the students to read because it can develop their critical thinking”

T15   “Right now, still ask them to read simple books and rewrite the summary of what they have read. It will improve their critical thinking skill”.

Some teachers still did nothing to welcoming AKM because of several reasons. One among them is because they have not got training on AKM, so they did not know what to do.

**Participant opinion**

T18  “Not much, still preparing for the final exam up until now, not so with the assessment”

T23  T23: “Because I have not gained training yet. I know nothing exactly what I’m supposed to do to help students gain good score on AKM. But as I know, students' score on AKM is not matter for students because AKM basically is not to measure students' ability/understanding but more to evaluate the learning process conducted by a certain school.”

![Figure 7. English teachers’ effort in facing AKM](image)

Investigating whether there is a difference in teaching material, media, and method before and after the government announcing AKM as the new assessment system in Indonesia, 13 English teachers said “yes” and 10 said “no”. The teachers said “yes” because
they have several reasons such as; the material and media that can be used is not merely stick to the book and teachers no need to focus only on passing certain test.

**Participant opinion**

**T2**

“The materials and media used after the implementation of AKM are more innovative, flexible, and not restricted to the book”.

**T14**

“Of course, before the AKM announced I intent to make more scientific classes using scientific passage combined with passive learning since my target is to get the students pass the UTBK and SNMPTN. Moreover, I used many ice-breaking material to get the students’ attention to my class rather than engaged them in a series of Problem Based Learning mixed with Contextual Learning (which I currently use since the beginning of AKM). The AKM announced by the government surely takes me to understand that they (the pupils) are required to be aware of contextual learning and problem-solution things as well as understanding picture, diagram, charts, and many things that they will find on their higher education and career path.”.

**T13**

“Yes, There is. When UN was still exist, my school focused to the UN Score. They targeted the teacher to "help" the students to gain high score, so that the school rank will be up. They hope people would think that the school has a good quality with a "sim-salabim" from the teacher, even the dump students would be clever if they send their kids to our school. Honestly, it was very stressing for me as a teacher. Every day we supposed to teach the students by giving them UN questions, questions again and again. So boring. Although I teach them in a fun way, but questions never be so much fun. After the government stated that AKM will be used, of course it is agood news. We don't need to prepare many things (especially questions prediction) to prepare the students. All I need is to teach my students happily”.

While teachers who said “no” also have several reasons as follows;

**T8**

T8: “It won't change much since I teach the classes that don't use National Curriculum for the English subject. But now I feel that the current National Curriculum (AKM) is in line with the curriculum we use for English”.

**T23**

“No. Because AKM is not for students. It is for school. The thing that I always emphasize to my students is to get better understanding every text they read. So, they can get the point precisely”.
The next investigation is about English teachers’ plan to support students facing AKM. Among 23 English teachers, 8 of them stated that they will modify the teaching materials by more focusing on reading skill which can support students’ literacy and numeracy.

**Participant opinion**

T2  “Creating innovative materials for the students so that they can be more interested in learning English and achieve the best result to accomplished the AKM”

T10 “Have a new module about English that make our students get maximum score”

T18 “Give more students the opportunity to read a lot of text to improve their vocabulary mastery, and also their literature”

Five English teachers argued that providing AKM exercises will make students more familiar with the questions and make them get good score.

**Participant opinion**

T1  “Next time I will try to give them more exercises related with AKM, in English of course”

T6  “Practice makes perfect so by practicing everyday it'll give everything perfect”

Five English teachers”

T15 The next five teachers planned to find out the appropriate teaching method that could support students in facing AKM.

“I still try to find out the way of teaching to make them having maximum score for AKM. So, this week I'm gonna join the webinar about this. Instead of, I had joined the program of Guru Belajar for AKM”.

T19 “Sharing with others teacher about their method....”
While the 3 other teachers will be more creative in utilizing teaching media, “Be creative in media, and the most important thing is prepare everything before we teach. If we fail to prepare, it means that we prepare to fail”, said T12. The rest of English teachers stated that they have no planning because “AKM is not like judgement things like UNBK. It aims to measure the whole component of education in Indonesia”, said T14.

Discussion
The result shows that English teachers’ have positive perception toward Minimum Competency Assessment or AKM. It could be seen from these reasons;

First, most of English teachers are already familiar and acknowledge the two components of AKM (literacy and numeracy). It is in line with the previous study that showed high percentage of teachers’ familiarity and readiness in facing AKM as the part of National Assessment (Fauziah et al., 2021; Novita et al., 2021; Nurjanah, 2021; Rokhim et al., 2021; Sari et al., 2020). When teachers are familiar dan have good knowledge of AKM, it possibly makes this part of curriculum reform will be implemented well. Teachers’ familiarity should be followed by various trainings and preparation to create teachers’ readiness.

Second, majority of English teachers agree on government’s policy to use AKM as the new assessment system to measure the education quality in Indonesia. This positive respond toward AKM means that most teachers support it. The support from various parties, including teachers are needed to determine the success of AKM. It is in line with Cheung & Wong (2011), who declared that teachers’ agreement and support results in good progress in the restructuring

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Premise Journal Volume 11 No 1, February 2022, e-ISSN: 2442-482x, p-ISSN: 2089-3345, page 82-98
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items on teaching and learning. When teachers support the new system, they make changes in their teaching practices based on the policy usage.

Third, teachers show positive motivation on AKM. It can be seen on their participation in joining AKM training, Guru Belajar for AKM program, and AKM webinar to gain more knowledge about it. The positive motivation shown be English teachers indicates their interest and support toward this new assessment system. When teachers are supported by many information related to AKM, they will be more aware and ready to implement it. It is evident by Purwati et al., (2021) that AKM workshop training could increase teachers’ comprehension on AKM.

Fifth, English teachers convey positive emotion toward AKM. It is stated in the result that teachers are happy when the government announcing AKM as the new assessment system to evaluate the education quality in Indonesia and no longer using Ujian Nasional which is stressing. Teachers are freer in conducting teaching-learning process because not stick to pass Ujian Nasional. This positive emotion leads up to another positive attitude in facing AKM.

Sixth, most English teachers believe that there is connection between English lesson and AKM. Moreover, they also believe that learning English could support students in facing AKM. This positive belief leads teachers to make best plan on their teaching by linking English lesson and AKM. The teachers’ plan will result in students’ performance because students’ performance is always in line with teachers’ involvement in designing their teaching.

Related to the second research question, most of English teachers have already done several efforts to support students facing AKM such as; improving students’ reading interest and providing AKM try-out often to build students’ critical thinking skill. It is because AKM consist of 2 components (literacy and numeracy) questions that require critical thinking to solve them. It is in line with Yuliandari & Hadi’s (2020) study which concluded that teaching-learning process on AKM implementation should be done in solving High Order Thinking (HOT) questions to improve students’ literacy and numeracy.

Furthermore, majority teachers have created planning to support students facing AKM. In fact, teachers’ involvement in planning teaching-learning process is really needed and influence students’ performance (Joshi et al., 2020). On this study, teachers’ planning is focusing on several aspects on teaching-learning process such as, teaching material, AKM exercise, teaching media, and teaching method. Based on the result, teachers create difference
in those aspects to suit the AKM policy. It is already predicted before by Nehru (2019) that teaching material, media, and method will change due to the implementation of AKM.

On the other hand, there are still some numbers of English teachers who have no plan to support students facing AKM. It is due to the lack of workshop and training related to AKM. It is also because some teachers argued that AKM is not a judgement for students, so it needs no preparation. Government as the stakeholder should provide teachers with the sufficient pedagogical content knowledge to help teachers designing the lesson (Huizinga et al., 2014) because teachers need to comprehend how is the best way to implement a new system like AKM (Oloruntegbe, 2011).

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

AKM is going to be done around September 2021 in Indonesia and most of English teachers have got the workshop training about it through schools where they work, teachers’ association, and education office. Most English teachers have positive perception towards the use of AKM to evaluate the education system in Indonesia. English teachers show their positive emotion, motivation, and belief on AKM. By having this new system, students will no more focus on Final Examination scores, instead of developing literacy and numeracy as part of critical thinking skill.

English teachers’ involvement in the implementation of AKM could be seen through their readiness to support students facing it. It could be seen from teachers’ action plan that describe their planning in designing different teaching-learning process. The planning covers teaching material, AKM exercise, teaching media, and teaching method. By having such planning, teachers are more ready to support students in facing AKM. It means that the success of AKM depends on teachers’ action plan in their teaching-learning process.

However, this study is limited to investigate English teachers in some area of East Java only. The result may not be holistic to apply for all English teachers in Indonesia. Further investigation on each aspect that mention in teachers’ action plan is needed since AKM is just started this year.
Auliya

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
I would like to say thank you for LPPM Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik that support the funding of this article. Moreover, the deep gratitude for all English teachers who participated in this study.

BIO-PROFILE
Prativi Khilyatul Auliya holds her Master Degree in Language and Literature Education from UNESA Surabaya. Right now, she is a lecturer at English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik. Her research interests are in literacy, reading, and ICT. Corresponding email: prativi.auliya@umg.ac.id
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