

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN KOREAN PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Submitted by Kyu Nam SHIM

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**I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been
identified and that no material is included for which a degree has previously been
conferred on me.**

Signed:

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate Korean teachers' beliefs and their practice with respect to classroom-based English language assessment; thus it examines the teachers' current working principles of assessment and their practices. This study also sets out to uncover, and to gain an in-depth understanding of further issues which emerged from the dissonance between the teachers' beliefs and their practice. Following a discussion of the English teaching and assessment context, the first part of the study examines mainstream theories of language testing or assessment; it then considers how closely classroom-based assessment in Korean primary schools conforms to these theoretical principles. The second part of the study presents a small-scale research project. Four stages in teachers' classroom-based assessment were examined; planning, implementation, monitoring, and recording and dissemination. A questionnaire was developed reflecting these stages; its findings were analyzed statically and qualitatively. Further qualitative data was also collected and analyzed through interviews with volunteer participants. This is based on an analysis of teachers' firsthand experience and their opinions of the assessment of English as a foreign language.

The results of the study revealed that generally the teachers hold and exercise their own firm beliefs regarding classroom-based assessment, and have a good knowledge of assessment or testing principles; thus they carried out their assessment using appropriate procedures taking into account the context of English teaching and assessment in which they operate. However, there were a number of issues which emerged from their

assessment beliefs and their practice. It became clear that they did not put some of their principles into practice; a number of important factors, which are normally outside the teachers' control, were found to be responsible for this, these include: overcrowded classrooms, heavy teaching loads, the central bureaucracy of the education system which controls primary education, and a shortage of funding for foreign language teaching. Teachers were also affected by the rather complex relationship with other teachers, head teachers, and even the parents of the students. However, it is evident that the teachers are constantly developing their skills and knowledge regarding assessment in order to address any possible challenges or tasks given to them. In addition, certain areas needing further investigation were identified. Based on the literature review and the findings of the research, tentative implications and recommendations for the development of classroom-based language assessment are discussed.