In the world of pedagogy, teaching and learning are two sides of a coin. Where one side involves the principles of teaching, the other side showcases the science of learning. It seems to follow that the two sides coexist to establish a complicated relationship that the differences between the two sides are starkly recognizable at times, and similarly uncanny at other times. So that, like a coin when flipped and tossed hard enough, for a moment the boundaries between its head and its tail can become blurry and unrecognizable in front of the naked eyes. Guessing which side to favor should be left alone to chances and sports, but defining both sides as part of a whole should be influenced by many factors concerning pedagogy. And one of the many factors that ties up the heads and tails of it all is the assessment of both the teaching and learning experiences.

Under the K-12 program, the Philippine education system found itself under the recent trends and focus of educational assessments. And among the acceptable many, “Standards-Based Education” and “Outcome-Based Education” are the front runners of trend concerning the methods of assessments that should be in place. It is also necessary to mention that these trends and focus of educational assessments are dictated by the contemporary world. Needless to say, the methods of assessments in place years ago were less likely the same compared to the ones in place and deemed necessary for the current globalized education system. Although one may posit that labels and meanings are the only things that change through time, thereby creating a framework of education that is more of a permanence of stationary concepts. Yet, what should be under SBE and what should be an OBE remains to be carefully defined to determine concrete goals that the K-12 program intends to attain. Semantics would literally give that standards-based assessments are limited only to what meanings and labels of standard are actually laid on the table, which also give the impression that the assessment’s concreteness or broadness depends on what standards were arbitrated. Whilst outcome-based assessments on the other hand, have the ability to command a simpler or more defined result or goal. Yes, the outcomes to be
expected still depend on the agreed outcomes intended to be achieved. But, the intended outcomes are already to be expected nonetheless.

Perhaps, SBE and OBE are also two sides of one coin. Like teaching and learning experience that are both part of pedagogy as a whole; where an assessment of the learning process is also an assessment of the teaching style applied. So, if defined in a way, that OBE is actually the agreed standard trend or focus of assessment – does it make sense to ask if K-12 is a “Standard-Based Education” or an “Outcome-Based Education”?

References: