The Development of Portfolio Evaluation Tools to Improve Expository Writing Skills

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ABSTRACT

This research is intended to help English teachers both at the college and high school levels in using portfolios as an evaluation tool in writing skills. Portfolio assessment was chosen in this research because of its wide use and easy adaptation to various needs. This study used Research and Development method. The development stage is based on the IQF curriculum implemented in English Language and Literature Department, Universitas Negeri Surabaya. The exploratory writing skills held for students are expected to help them in further writing, namely Thesis Proposal Writing and Academic Journal Writing where students will write down their thoughts about a concept or phenomenon and present an explanation accompanied by adequate research data. The results of the study show that the use of portfolio is quite positive. There is an improvement in students' writing after applying a portfolio as an evaluation tool for writing skills. However, some additions need to be made to improve the quality and format of the portfolio as an evaluation tool for writing skills.

1. Introduction

Portfolio assessment is a form of assessment that can be carried out independently or jointly between students and lecturers or between students and classroom teachers in the context of teaching in secondary schools. Portfolio assessment was chosen in this research because of its wide use and easy adaptation to various needs (Flower & Hayes, 2008). The use of portfolios in academics field has provided many benefits. In the assessment of writing skills for example, the various works could be easily reach and assess. In fact, it could help to assist students' readiness in doing paper writing or journal writing for the next agenda. Readiness to start academic writing work will be very helpful if students can mark the difficulties or progress, they have made while taking exploratory writing courses. Portfolios use as an evaluation tool can help students to find out how far they have produced writing in the exploratory genre. Prihandoko, et al., (2021) state that students can also find out the positive progress or mistakes they made when they compiled ideas in the expository genre essay. Writing skills literally mean cognitive processes which are the embodiment of everyone's creative process, therefore, it is necessary to be equipped with an adequate evaluation sheet. Evaluation in teaching writing skills is useful for students to look back or reflect on various writings that have been done during one semester. Assessment in writing skills is also useful as a form of appreciation for teachers or lecturers to students who have allocated their time to improve and change sentences or grammatical arrangements that are acceptable so that it does not make it difficult for readers to understand the ideas the author wants to convey (Zamel, 1985).

In teaching writing, most students have to work individually, and this causes discomfort for novice writers because they have to rely on their limited linguistic knowledge and cognitive abilities, without intensive guidance (Arjulayana, et al., 2018; Rahman, et al., 2019; Nur Intan Ode & Suherman, 2022). Research conducted by Alwasilah in 1999, concluded that writing activity is considered the most difficult skill to be mastered by students and taught by teachers because writing is a process as well as an equally important product. In the academic writing process, many references mention the four stages of writing, namely prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. These steps must be carried out continuously and not separately (Shields, 2010). Gebhard (2000) describes it as a 'recursive process'. This process can be illustrated as follows:
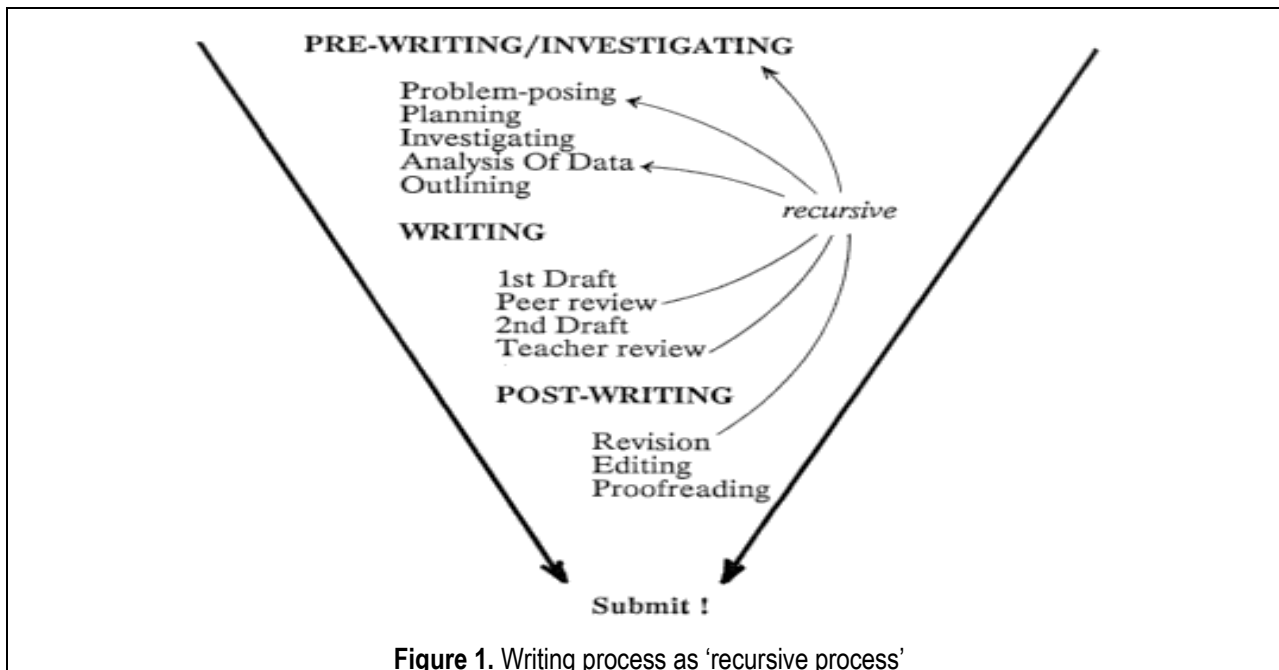
Figure 1. Writing process as 'recursive process'

In this process, students do brainstorming, grouping/mapping, sketching and questioning, free writing, interviewing and gathering information. Beginner writers are not yet at the writing stage, but this activity has a huge impact on the quality of their writing. Drafting will be done a lot after getting writing ideas. The students compose the full text by referring to the ideas and information collected. Students will be more confident to write because they have a lot of information as writing material. The next step of the writing process is to revise, in this process students begin to change the content and organization of ideas. In this step, the teacher should guide the students how to explore the revision process because revising and editing is considered the most challenging part of writing by students with limited language skills. The last process before the product is published is the editing process. Editing or proofreading is the process of making a final written copy. Students will edit all language components related to sentence patterns and writing mechanisms which include punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. In order to evaluate this process, portfolio used by teachers to measure the process by documenting all assignments given by the teacher in a structured manner. This assessment technique consists of 5 stages, namely: Announcing the objectives and focus of learning to students, agreeing on the assessment procedure used and the assessment criteria, discussing the ways that need to be done to achieve maximum results, carrying out portfolio assessments, providing feedback on work and evaluation.

The assessment also focuses on documents about productive student work, namely evidence of what students can do. Thera are three stages adapted to this process: planning, implementation, and analysis (Sofie, et.al 2022). At the planning stage, objectives and focus are determined (competency standards, basic competencies, success criteria), planning portfolio content, which includes selecting assessment procedures, determining topics and determining the frequency of assessments, designing ways to analyze portfolios, namely by setting assessment standards or criteria, setting how to combine assessment results from various sources and determine the time of analysis, plan the use of portfolios in the form of providing feedback and determine the procedure for testing. Through the development of portfolio evaluation tools, the examination on student's writing is significantly improve and teachers can see the progress of the students' achievement in writing. Meanwhile, For the students, using portfolio assessment, they are facilitated to practice writing more and they can also see their own progress in writing by doing self-reflection and revision.

2. Methodology

This research method uses Research and Development (R&D). In the field of education, R&D research aims to produce and develop an educational product effectively (Sugiono, 2010). The development that is focused on this research is the development of a portfolio evaluation tool in writing skills for students of the English Education study program. In the process, there are several stages to determine the operational definition of the portfolio as an evaluation tool, the design of an evaluation tool based on an analysis of student needs and an analysis of the tasks assigned to students. Next, the development stage is to determine the quality of the portfolio as an evaluation tool in writing skills. The determination of the portfolio as an evaluation tool for writing skills in the English Language and Literature Department is based on the IQF

curriculum implemented in universities. The exploratory writing skills held for students are expected to help them in further writing, namely Thesis Proposal Writing and Academic Journal Writing where students will write down their thoughts about a concept or phenomenon and present an explanation accompanied by adequate research data. In the design stage, the researcher will determine the tasks that will be carried out by students in stages using a portfolio assessment. The collection of assignments along with an assessment rubric in accordance with the portfolio will be used in this stage. Further, a product portfolio evaluation tool will be carried out through expert assessment and development trials. Expert assessment will be carried out by lecturers who teach exploratory writing skills in the English Education study program. The trial development of the evaluation tool will be carried out in the exploratory writing class for students of the English Education study program.

2.1 Time and place

The implementation of portfolio assessment activities will begin at the beginning of the even semester of 2018/2019. Students of the English Education Study Program class of 2017 who are taking exploratory writing courses will be introduced to forms of exploratory writing before they are introduced to portfolio assessment. The introduction to exploration writing is useful for preparing students as writers as well as teachers who will teach students how to write (Hyland, 2007). Students need to know the grid for exploration writing so that when they start to conduct an assessment, students can identify their own shortcomings in exploration writing and identify their strengths in writing exploration writing.

2.2 Data and Data Sources

The main data in this study is a portfolio evaluation tool for exploratory writing skills. Considering that the main data is a prototype for developing evaluation tools, the qualitative research design will support the success of presenting data obtained from observations in class and interviews with students who program exploratory writing courses. To obtain data on the development of portfolio evaluation tools in writing skills, data collection techniques will be carried out through observation, interviews and reflection sheets that will be given to students. In addition, a portfolio evaluation sheet will be given to teachers of exploratory writing skills courses to obtain a valid evaluation tool.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedures will be carried out through observation and interviews so that researchers will ask permission to carry out observations of learning activities in the classroom to teachers of exploratory writing skills courses. Observation activities are carried out to see the use of portfolio evaluation in daily lecture activities and when students receive their writing assignments returned. Furthermore, the researcher also wanted to observe the classroom atmosphere when the portfolio evaluation tool was applied. In addition to making observations, the researcher will also conduct interviews with students about the use of portfolio evaluation in writing skills so that the right benefits will be obtained regarding the application of the evaluation tool in the classroom.

2.4 Data Analysis

Analysis of the data that will be used in the process of developing a portfolio evaluation tool is carried out descriptively. Descriptive technique is a data analysis technique used to process qualitative data in the form of sentences, comments, and suggestions. The analysis is related to data collection activities from the definition stage to the development stage.

3. Result and Discussion

From the observation of the use of portfolio evaluation tools, students seem to really enjoy learning and teaching expository writing skills with a title that has been determined by the lecturer in charge of the course. The lecturer in the expository writing course gives a title that students can choose to develop further. There are various titles that can be chosen such as "What are the differences between learning English in a Class and self-learning?", "Learning English in a Class is Better than Self-Learning or Homeschool", "My Experience of Learning English in a Class", "Homeschooling", "Learning English in Course is Preferable", "Instragram as Teaching", "Homeschooling Movement", "Homeschooling", "Men and Scifi", and "Movie-goer". Students can also choose titles and other topics they like because the focus of the assessment is on improving writing composition. Improvement of writing composition in the absence of grammatical errors, cohesion and coherence errors in the preparation of topics and other supporting sentences contained in writing composition.

As many as 16 students choose the title they will write, either the title that has been prepared by the lecturer in charge of the course or the topic they choose themselves. Generally, students choose a topic that has been prepared,

namely learning English with a teacher or learning English independently. Students write about the topic continuously by mentioning the thesis statement and supporting arguments in the form of sentences that are written in an exposition or argumentative manner. After they finished writing, one by one they came to the front of the class to collect the writing assignments they had just completed. Then the supporting lecturer will provide feedback in the form of oral and written on the students' writings that are collected. Furthermore, students will revise the draft which has been given suggestions for improvement by the supervisor.

Drafts that have been collected should not be thrown away, but should be stapled neatly so that the writer knows the improvements that occurred in the first draft to the best draft. The indicator of the best draft is that there are no grammatical errors, cohesion errors and writing coherence. Student writers may experience three to five revisions of the draft they are working on. After the student writers have obtained a complete draft and there are no more mistakes, they must write down their writing experiences in the portfolio evaluation tool that has been prepared by the research team.

Examples of students' expository writing:

MEN AND SCI-FI

Based on the website of The Statistics Portal, almost every seat in cinemas is filled with men. The percentage is 2% higher than women because of the movie genre that went out lately which is science fiction or sci-fi. Men are all over the cinema when it comes to Marvel Cinematic Universe and Star Wars franchise than romance genre. They are filling the seats, lining up in front of the ticket booth, and their fingers scrolling through their smartphone because of it.

Sci-fi genre serves the moviegoers what it's like to be in the future with a really high quality technology, the atmosphere on earth and other planet, and the conflicts that will probably happen in the future with all robot stuff. All about advanced technology and different worlds that has a more futuristic vibes that made any men interested and highly anticipated in this kind of genre. For example, Black Panther by Marvel Cinematic Universe served the moviegoers so many details on technology that possibly could happen in the near future.

The fact that in the past two decades, there have been 21 top-grossing sci-fi movies and it sells out and more popular also more accepted than ever. Well, most men always interesting in technology and sci-fi serves that very well. Also as you may know that there are lots of loyal fanbases on this genre like Star Wars, Marvel Cinematic Universe and DC Comic that are mainly run by men. They went on very well and detail if it's about their favorite actor, special effects, plot, and of course technologies.

Beside the theme that all about future and advanced technology, the producer of the movie always put their best special effects that allow new worlds and technologies to come to life on the screen. We can see a time machine, a machine that could connect two different dimensions, a machine that could shrink us, and a robot that possibly could destroy the world. It's more fun if a sci-fi movie comes in 3D, men totally love the idea of sci-fi with 3D effect. We can feel the atmosphere on the movie that they built when we put the 3D glasses on. It feels like we can touch anything on the movie, we can also feel the tense if a bullet or arrow is directly shoot in front of our eyes and coming towards us, it feels amazing.

Based on Wired magazine, Sci-fi genre can shape the understanding of the public on things like artificial intelligence and biotechnology, which are likely to change our lives and society more than anything else in the coming decades. Most men believe that sooner or later this world could be like in one of Marvel Cinematic Universe's movie that full of advanced technology that used by Black Panther and Iron Man.

An example of expository writing from students is their final work after going through several revisions of the draft they submitted at the time of the first writing. From the last draft, it can be seen that the student's work is starting to look perfect with minimal grammatical errors, and cohesion and coherence of writing are starting to form.

What are The Differences between Learning English in a Class and Self-learning?

English, as a foreign language, can be learned by two methods. Those are learning English in a classroom, or self-learning.

First, learning English in a class means that you learn English in formal education option. There is an English teacher who will give you the materials, train you to speak English well, help you to finish difficult things related to English, and give you a correction. This method is suitable for those who love learning with a class designed

and interacting with others. Second, self-learning is the method which people learn English on their own, such as learn the material without an instructor, using what media they want, don't need to make a timetable to study. This method is suitable for those who like to comprehend things by themselves.

Based on the explanation, I can conclude that learning English does not have to be in a class, but also by your own using self-learning method. It all depends on how the way you can learn something.

4. Discussion

From the result of data collection and observations of the application of portfolio evaluation tools in the classroom, the use of portfolio evaluation tools, students and lecturers did not experience difficulties that caused them not to be able to use the tool in the form of evaluation sheets to the fullest. Students and lecturers who support writing skills courses easily write down their experiences from the drafting stage to the draft revision stage to the maximum because students only fill out evaluation sheets if they have received the correct and error-free draft from the supporting lecturer.

The collected drafts should not contain grammatical errors, writing cohesion errors and coherent errors in setting topics and supporting sentences. The drafts of writing that have been collected have also used conjunctions and the selection of transitional signals correctly and correctly. After the student's writing meets all the conditions that are the conditions for expository writing, they can continue with other topics that they like and in accordance with the provisions of the RPS. For topics chosen by students, the procedure for using portfolio evaluation tools in the form of sheets is also treated to check student writing results from the drafting process to the complete draft completion process. After obtaining a complete writing, the students then wrote their comments about the use of the evaluation sheet to see if their writing was free from grammatical errors, coherent errors, and cohesion errors in their writing.

Barriers to the use of evaluation sheets were almost non-existent because students only wrote their comments and reflections about the drafting process until the completion of the draft perfectly. The drawback of the evaluation sheet is the score or value that is not included in the evaluation sheet. In addition, the quiet and silent class atmosphere causes students to look bored and choose to do their writing assignments at home or elsewhere on campus besides the classroom.

5. Conclusion

The portfolio assessment or portfolio evaluation tool was chosen because students can reflect on exploration writing at the beginning of the meeting until the end of the meeting in one semester. This assessment is appropriate to use considering the number of assignments and writing exercises given to students. The use of a portfolio evaluation tool by including a reflection column allows students to learn to measure their own skill development skills in terms of writing as well as their skills in developing ideas. The application of this portfolio evaluation tool did not experience significant obstacles because it was very practical to use in the classroom. However, the evaluation tool in the form of a portfolio sheet is inadequate because it is not accompanied by scoring and assessments that involve numbers. This was complained by the lecturers and students who took the expository writing class. With improvements in several ways and involving experts in the field of portfolio assessment, assessment in language skills, this portfolio evaluation tool can be used in many language skills at the university level as well as primary and secondary levels.

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