THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING PORTFOLIO IN ASSESSING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AT SMPN 2 SUSOH

Mawardah[1], Zuhri Efendi[2]

[1,2]STKIP Muhammadiyah Aceh Barat Daya

[1]Email: mawardahajaa@gmail.com
[2]Email: Zuhrisps@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examines how well portfolios work at SMPN 2 Susoh as a tool for evaluating students' English language competency. Assessment plays a crucial role in the learning process, and in order to maximize student learning results, teachers must administer tests that are consistent with learning objectives. This study aims to evaluate the efficacy of portfolios in evaluating SMPN 2 Susoh students' English language competency. Research of this kind is descriptive and qualitative. The researcher chose one teacher who employed portfolio evaluation to gauge students' writing abilities using the purpose sampling technique. During the odd semester of 2024–2025, in-depth interviews and observation were used to gather data. The results demonstrated that, in the early stages of the portfolio review process, the English teacher successfully conveyed to the students the goal of the portfolio. An engaging classroom environment is created when teachers clearly explain the learning objectives and evaluation criteria, inspiring students to take an active role in their education. The study also highlights the value of professors providing students with systematic support in creating their portfolio content, which includes compilations of their work, feedback on drafts, and personal remarks. Portfolios are a useful tool for skill improvement as well as assessment.
Keywords: Assessment, portfolio, learning

INTRODUCTION

Assessment is a very important component in learning activities learning activities. Assessment is one of the activities that teachers must do and learners from a series of teaching and learning activities that they do. As the party responsible for the success of learning activities, teachers are required to be able to prepare and conduct good teachers are required to be able to prepare and conduct assessments properly so that learning objectives that have been set can be achieved optimally. One of the process-based assessment techniques is of course portfolios. A constructivist approach is presented based on portfolio studies. Because the student needs a construction in his mind for every learning and activity that will be included in the portfolio. He reflects his learning into his learning. From this perspective, it can be said that the application of portfolios contributes to constructivist learning theory (Mihladiz, 2007).

Budimansyah, Dasim (2002) explained the meaning of portfolio, "Portfolio can actually be interpreted as a form of physical objects, as a pedagogical social process, or as an adjective". As a form of physical objects, the portfolio is a bundle, which is a collection or documentation of the student's work that is stored in a bundle. For example, the results of the pre-test, assignments, anecdotal notes, award certificates, information on carrying out structured tasks, final test results (posttest), and so on. According to Zaenal Arifin (2009), portfolio assessment is an approach

or assessment model that aims to measure students' ability to build and reflect on a job/task or work through the collection of materials that are relevant to the goals and desires built by students so that the results of the work can be assessed and commented on by teachers in a certain period. Meanwhile, according to Muhammad Hatta (2006), Portfolio Assessment is a class-based assessment of a set of students' works that are systematically organized and taken during the learning process within a certain time bracket. So we can conclude that the portfolio assessment is a place for educators to explore and show the competency abilities that students have, in other words that they are able to improve learning outcomes.

Regarding foreign language instruction and acquisition, they serve as an alternative assessment method that provides opportunities for both genuine and active language engagement as well as for assessing student advancement. Additionally, in the 2013 Curriculum, teachers are required to assess students' skills through portfolio assessment, meaning they must implement authentic evaluations to determine students' writing abilities. According to this fact, the teacher is anticipated to evaluate students through authentic assessment (Ministry of National Education of Indonesia, 2013). This can be achieved through portfolio assessments, enabling teachers to assess students thoroughly. Lilis (2021) stated that portfolios are highly effective for evaluating students' English abilities.

According to Barton and Collins in S. Surapranata and M. Hatta (2004) there are several essential characteristics of portfolio assessment, namely multi-source, authentic, dynamic, explicit, integrated, ownership, and diverse objectives. According to Johnson (1996), a portfolio is a comprehensive compilation of the work that students have completed from the start to the conclusion of a specific term. Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that a portfolio is not just a collection of a student's written work, but its usefulness can be quite advantageous. Hamps-Lyons (2000) suggested that there are at least three implications of portfolios: (1) as a teaching instrument, (2) as a development tool for teachers and students, and (3) as an evaluation tool. Moreover, HampsLyons (2000) argued that "the highest theoretical and practical advantage of a portfolio, utilized as an assessment tool, lies in how it discloses and enhances teaching and learning."

A portfolio assessment, on the other hand, was the actual pattern of the new approach to evaluating students' performances that was recently introduced by education experts to be implemented in schools. In certain developed countries, the portfolio has been widely used in the field of education, both for assessing students' performance in the classroom and for regional and national assessments. The portfolio can be an alternative way to assess the learners both in individual or group performance. A portfolio should not only offer a show of the students' work, but it should also serve as an evaluation of the work which planned, implemented, evaluated, and well structured. A portfolio is a group of a students' work, experiences, exhibitions, and self-ratings (Nurkhairo Hidayati, 2021).

In previous research, according to Hairori Sahrul Hafiz et al. (2021) in his research entitled "The Effectiveness of Portfolio Assessment in English Writing Skill of Islamic Junior High School" it was found that the achievement of students' writing skills with portfolio assessment is better than that of students without assessment at the students without assessment at the 95% confidence level. Meanwhile, according to Melek Demirel and Hatice Duman (2015) in their research entitled "The use of Portfolio in english language teaching and its effects on

achievement and attitude" stated that, The portfolio positively influenced students' achievement, yet it did not impact their attitudes toward English. Moreover, it positively impacted writing, listening, and reading abilities but showed no influence on speaking skills. The examination of the open-ended queries showed that students appreciated the portfolio application and held positive feelings about learning English overall. Conversely, the discussion with the students revealed that they enjoy portfolio activities.

From some of the opinions of the experts above, we can draw the conclusion that portfolio assessment is a forum for educators to explore and demonstrate the competency abilities that students have, in other words, that they are able to improve learning outcomes. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research on the effectiveness of using portfolios in assessing English language skills. The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of the use of portfolios in assessing English language proficiency at SMPN 2 Susoh. The research question for this study is how effective is the use of portfolios in assessing English language proficiency at SMPN 2 Susoh?

METHODS

This type of research is descriptive qualitative. The researcher used purpose sampling technique and selected one teacher who applied portfolio assessment to evaluate students' writing ability. The research instruments used were: observation and interview. Data analysis used in this study according to Bogdan in Sugiyono:
1. Data reduction

Data reduction involves choosing, emphasizing, simplifying, limiting, and modifying what is presented in a written or transcription record. In this research, data gathered from the observation process, semi-structured interviews (in-depth interviews), and documentation were chosen as they were essential to back the study. Subsequently, the chosen data is examined by organizing the information in relation to the theory.
2. Data display

Data visualizations encompass numerous matrices, charts, graphs, and networks. All are intended to collect structured information into a clear and readily available format, allowing the researcher to observe occurrences and make justified conclusions or move forward with further analysis; the data view indicates that this might be useful. Once the data is categorized, the researcher presents it in sequence.
3. Conclusion drawing or verification

The third step to analyzing research data is the conclusion. As the analyst moves forward, conclusions are also checked. Verification may take the form of a quick digression back to field notes while writing, or it may be in the form of a tentative idea. It can be very in-depth and complex, including protracted deliberations and discussions among peers to create "inter-subjective consensus" or substantial work to duplicate results in different data sets.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings below are obtained from the results of observations, in-depth interviews. The observations were conducted in the odd semester of 2024/2025. As a result, the observation data will be presented below. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted after the observations. Based on the results of data collection, the

researcher observed that the teacher had clearly explained the purpose of the portfolio to the students. Based on the preliminary findings, the researcher concluded that the teacher had completed the first step of the portfolio evaluation process using Brown's theory. After conducting student attendance, the teacher explained the learning objectives to the students in the first class, and the students enthusiastically looked forward to learning. After the students agreed to start the learning process, the teacher explained the learning objectives and the evaluation of learning in the classroom. The English teacher clearly explains the purpose of the school portfolio. The teacher uses the portfolio to assess students' progress in reviewing texts and how they write and develop their ideas continuously. Portfolios are used as reusable documents to support students' improved performance in the writing process. In addition, a portfolio is used to help students succeed in the learning process by providing feedback to students' work samples from teachers.

The observation above shows that the teacher tries to communicate and explain the purpose of the portfolio to students clearly and concisely. To make it easier for students to understand the purpose of the portfolio, the teacher explains it in two languages, namely Indonesian and English. In contrast, for the interview with the English teacher at SMPN 2 Susoh, the teacher explained the purpose of the portfolio clearly:

"I explicitly stated that the goal of the portfolio is to enhance writing abilities, especially in recount texts. I will clarify it for the students. Furthermore, I utilize portfolios to record students' skills and work capabilities."

This indicates that the results show that English teachers clearly described the purpose of portfolios as a means to improve students' writing skills, with a particular emphasis on recount texts.

Based on the results of data collection, the researcher found that the teacher had given directions regarding which materials were included. In the initial observation, the interaction between teachers and students was also seen when observing the classroom atmosphere. The teacher monitored students' attendance and ensured that all students were ready for the lesson. Next, she revealed the objectives of the learning and assessment of the subject matter. After that, the teacher helped the students in designing the content of the recount text. The teacher provides an example of a recount text by using Google Power Point. In this context, students can observe the text while estimating the general structure, language elements, and social roles. The children seemed to be engaged in the text as it emphasised social life. As the instructor explained, she occasionally asked students questions about their personal experiences. Furthermore, the teacher tries to introduce the past tense to the students and the types of past verbs in a sentence. After the students received the material about recount text and they carried out the learning process according to the teacher's direction. The teacher explained the instructions about the materials to be included in the portfolio. The students are required to fill in the student portfolio with information such as student identity on the cover, student worksheet collection, student reflections, as well as feedback from the teacher after each draft of student work is completed.

The teacher's statement during the interview further supports this:

"Simultaneously, I clarify the elements of the portfolio evaluation, including student identity, student worksheet, feedback section, and reflection."

The second observation took place at the next meeting. The teacher opened

the lesson by greeting the students and then checking the attendance of each student. Before starting the class, the teacher asked the students about what they had achieved in the previous meeting. The teacher gave feedback on the students' work. The teacher appreciates the students' progress in writing recount experiences during the session. They were able to study and correct the issues of inappropriate words and misunderstandings in the recount text. The teacher also explains to the students about the evaluation related to the students' work. There are several criteria such as vocabulary, language use, content, mechanism and organisation.

In addition, in the interview with the English teacher, the researcher obtained a similar statement. The teacher concluded:

"I have provided the recount text resources to the students. I present the recount text at the start of the lesson. I attempt to assist students in grasping its significance."

Based on the explanation above, the teacher confirmed that she had delivered the recount text material to provide a clear understanding from the students' perspective. Based on data collection, the researcher encountered a similar phenomenon. The teacher did convey the assessment criteria to the students. This is evident through the results of observations and interviews. Firstly, in the observation, the teacher also conveyed the assessment criteria to the students. The teacher outlined each criterion in writing recount texts. Starting from content, vocabulary, language use, mechanism, and organisation. Portfolio assessment has been conveyed to students by providing opportunities for them to provide feedback. This is in line with Brown (2004), where teacher assessment could include questions similar to those on self-assessment to emphasise the formative side of evaluation. Both teachers and students need to utilise conferencing as a crucial measure. Assist your students in handling the feedback you provide and show them how to respond to your response when they are asked to submit a written response.

The teacher states the conclusion:

" I have created standards to evaluate the portfolios of students on recount text. The criteria for the recount text are categorized into vocabulary, language use, content, mechanism, and structure. Every criterion has a range of scores and classifications. The classifications comprise excellent, good, good, moderate, and fair to poor."

In response to the comment, the teacher has actually organised the portfolio assessment scores well. He classified them into several categories, where each category has varying levels of assessment. As stated by Brown (2004), giving direction on the type of material to be added is important. After discussing the learning process, the teacher began to explain how to use the assessment rubric on students' portfolios for recount texts. Based on the documentation, the teacher actually applies the assessment criteria taken from Weigle, which is an analytical assessment to assess students' writing based on aspects such as content, organisation, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. To make it easier for students to report their learning progress, teachers have provided a space for students' portfolios.

The teacher stated:

"I have arranged an area for students to store their portfolios. I place the portfolios on the table in the classroom, or if they are filled, I store them in the library. They can include their identities in the portfolios for my easy verification."

Based on the observation in the last meeting, the teacher collected the learners' portfolios after the lesson was over. After that, students' portfolios were placed on the classroom table so that students could easily access the portfolios. The identity of each student is clearly stated on the portfolio cover so that students can find their portfolios without disturbing other students. In this section, we will discuss the learning process through the use of portfolio assessment. This includes the methods used by teachers to provide feedback on student learning outcomes. The researcher found that portfolio assessment encouraged students to participate in the lesson. This can be observed from the teacher's reaction in giving feedback and responses to the students' writing in the recount text. The teacher stated that she not only gave corrections to the students' assignments, but also gave compliments such as outstanding, impressive, good, and others. She proposed that by giving these comments, learners can give good responses. They strive to improve their writing. This supports students in reflecting on their portfolios.

The teacher explains:

"I see my students making efforts to improve their recount text writing after receiving good feedback.' This can be seen by checking the second draft to the completion of their recount text"

Based on the information presented above, portfolio assessment provides positive encouragement to students. In addition, portfolio assessment gives students the opportunity to see their learning progress. In addition, students can provide a brief review of the lesson as a form of reflection. This is in line with Nezakagtoo, who showed that portfolio writing and assessment methods (portfolio-based learning and evaluation) had a significant correlation with students' final exam results. This is due to the portfolio assessment that provides students with an opportunity for final judgement and allows them to continuously improve the written work.

Based on the observations made, teachers gave positive feedback after students completed their assignments. Thus, the results of observations, interviews, and documentation show the same conclusion, namely the presence of washback in students' portfolios. The teacher gives positive feedback (washback) on students' worksheets. The teacher continuously gives feedback on the students' recount writing. The feedback is delivered orally and in writing in the feedback section below the assignment. Positive feedback was given by the teacher in written form by providing corrections and appreciating students' work through motivational words. Examples of positive feedback include outstanding, great, impressive, amazing, and others.

CONCLUSION

As a second-grade pupil at SMPN 2 Susoh, the use of portfolio assessment for recount text writing abilities can assist in evaluating student work. The educator employs nearly all components of the portfolio assessment idea as outlined in Brown's guide. The teacher establishes the goal of portfolio assessment to assess students' writing abilities in recount texts and supplies the components of the portfolio. Furthermore, the educator communicates the evaluation standards in the recount text lesson plan. She additionally arranged a timetable for reviewing materials, set up an area to keep the assessment portfolios, and carried out the final evaluation. The aim of the portfolio, as defined by the English teacher, is to assess

the students' writing skills, particularly in recount text. The English teacher detailed to the students the particular items to be included in their portfolios, which encompassed identification, worksheets, feedback areas, and reflections. Time was structured based on the students' situations and requirements. The review timetable was split into four Portfolio objectives set by the English instructor, designed to enhance students' writing abilities, with a particular focus on recount texts. The English teacher tells students about the particular components required in their portfolio, including identification, worksheets, feedback area, and reflection. Time was arranged based on the circumstances and needs of the students. The evaluation timeline is categorized into four drafts of recount texts created by students. Once the students submitted their assignments, the teacher reviewed their worksheets. The assessment standards encompassed content, language usage, vocabulary, mechanics, and organization. The instructor also designated a spot on the classroom desk for the portfolios and offered positive feedback during the final evaluation. Positive feedback from teachers in their portfolios can help students write recount texts more effectively, thus enhancing their skills via portfolio assessment.

REFERENCES

Budimansyah, Dasim. (2002). *Model pembelajaran dan penilaian berbasis portofolio.* Bandung: Genesindo.

Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. Pearson Education.

Demirel, M., & Duman, H. (2015). The use of portfolio in English language teaching and its effects on achievement and attitude. *Journal of Education and Training Studies, 3*(6), 1–9.

Hamp-Lyons, L., & Condon, W. (2000). *Assessing the portfolio: Principles for Practice, Theory, and Research*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton.

Surapranata, S., & Hatta, M. (2006). Penilaian Berbasis Kelas: Penilaian Portofolio, Implementasi Kurikulum 2004. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Johnson, B. (1996). *Performance Assessment Handbook.* Volume 1 Porfolios and Socratic Seminars. Princeton: Eye on Education, Inc.

Sahrul Hafiz, H., et al. (2021). The effectiveness of portfolio assessment in English writing skill of Islamic junior high school. *Journal of English Education, 7*(1), 55–70.

Surapranata, S., & Hatta, M. (2004). *Penilaian Portofolio.* Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.

Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing writing*. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.