

EFL TEACHERS' OF AUTHENTIC WRITING ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN TEACHING VHS STUDENTS

Abiadi Rahmat

English Language Education Study Program,

Universitas Negeri Jakarta

abiadirahmat@gmail.com

Abstract

Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture regulations no. 66 of 2013 on National Educational Assessment Standards suggests that authentic assessment practices be employed in performing learning assessment in schools. However, former Minister of MONE reveals that many teachers find this a great challenge to them (Kompas.com, 2014). This study explores VHS EFL teachers' authentic writing assessment practices in their classrooms. Twenty EFL marketing teachers from nine VHS in East Jakarta have been involved as respondents for the study. A set of questionnaires for teacher respondents, a checklist for analysis of their lesson-plans, and semi-structured interviews for teacher respective students have been employed to collect data for the study. Discussion on findings of the study will be aimed at mapping the observed authentic writing assessment practices of the target respondents. The data obtained from teachers' questionnaire, students' interview and checklist document analysis, it can be concluded that EFL teachers from nine different vocational schools in teaching marketing students practice authentic assessment for assessing students' output. The type that teachers chose is intensive. It means teachers concern with students' vocabulary and grammar. Then the technique that they provide for assessing students' writing is essay.

Keywords: *Teachers' practices, Authentic Writing Assessment*

INTRODUCTION

Assessment becomes an integral part of teaching and learning process. Assessment is used by teacher to gather information and evidence of students' achievement. Assessment is not same with test. While testing is formal and often standardized, assessment is based on a collection of information about what students know and what they are able to do. Test is used as one of tools for teacher to assess students' performance in EFL classroom. Moreover, teachers spend from one-quarter to one-third on conducting assessment activities. Although assessment is just one of various elements that exist in an education eco-system, it is a key element for measuring and improving learning outcomes. (ACDP, 2013) The first step to enhance education result is using assessment to measure the outputs.

Based on *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 66 Tahun 2013* about assessment standard. One of educational assessment which should be used by teachers is authentic assessment. Authentic assessment is not only recommended but also stipulated. Moreover, authentic assessment is assessment which is used by teachers to assess their students comprehensively; starts from input, process and output of learning. Teachers not only consider the result but also the process. Authentic assessment is one of educational assessment on *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 66 Tahun 2013*. Authentic assessment a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential

Knowledge and skills. (Mueller, 2008) So, authentic assessment is a kind of assessments that require students to perform their knowledge into the meaningful real life task. As English teacher, authentic assessment is used to assess students because these types of assessments are designed to measure students' high order thinking and problem solving skills and show the students can apply these skills into real world situation.

Nevertheless, many teachers find assessment is a great challenge to them. Teachers face the difficulty when conduct assessment in teaching and learning process. The previous Minister of Education and Culture, Muhammad Nuh, stated that assessment is what mostly being complained by teachers in implementing The 2013 National Curriculum (Kompas.com, 2014). Now, teachers are directed not only assess the result of learning process or assess students numerically but also the learning process itself or descriptively. Authentic assessment as one of educational assessment types makes some teachers confuse because they are not familiar with that. Muhammad Nuh also said that authentic assessment is the new concept and method for teachers. (Republika, 2014). Teachers have to conduct the assessment which are start form the process and result.

A major problem of education is the fact that there are gaps between teaching in school and the real world and between assessment tasks and what occurs in the world of work. (Achieve, 2006) Authentic assessment refers to assessment which is look like reading and writing activities in real world and in school. (Hiebert, 1994) Authentic assessment requires students to read text that related to real word and also to write the authentic meaningful topics as natural possible. Unfortunately, teachers are not able to provide meaningful assessment to measure reading and writing skills. So, how do students master in writing for real world while they are not familiar with authentic materials which is included in teacher's authentic writing assessment.

The researcher found some problems relate to authentic assessment in EFL classroom. Most of teachers are demanded to use authentic assessment as one of assessment types based on *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 66 Tahun 2013* about assessment standard. Nevertheless, How do teachers use authentic assessment appropriately in teaching and learning process if they do not understand the concept of authentic assessment. Moreover, some teachers state they have implemented authentic assessment in teaching and learning process but it does not concurrent in the reality.

Teachers are required to give assessment not only the result but also the process. In authentic assessment, teacher assesses student by using objective and reality aspects, not only focus to the result. Furthermore, many students' performance that demonstrates during the teaching and learning process so teachers have to assess students on going with teaching and learning process.

Most of teachers are not able to provide students with meaningful assessment related to the authentic assessment, especially writing skill. They are using classroom based task such as text-book and work-book for students. So that student does not receive what is real life task in authentic assessment. In authentic assessment, students have to write the meaningful authentic topics in real world.

Last problem, students are asked to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and strategies with developing the response or result. In traditional assessment, students are required to respond the result, but authentic assessment demand students to be able for developing and producing the response which is based on theoretical knowledge. The problems on teachers' authentic

assessment can be caused by their lack of understanding and knowledge of the concept of authentic assessment that may affect their English language learning process.

The purpose of the study is exploring teachers' practice in relation to authentic writing assessment employed in teaching and learning process in classroom. Specifically, this study purposes to obtain the purposes of their authentic assessment practice in the classroom, and the authentic writing assessment types and techniques that they use in the classroom.

METHOD

In this study, the writer focuses on exploring EFL teachers' authentic writing assessment practice in teaching marketing VHS students. She discussed the implementation of teachers dealing with authentic writing assessment with focusing on the three aspects which are purposes, types and techniques in EFL classroom. There were 20 EFL teachers become investigated teachers in nine different Vocational High School majoring marketing program. The writer spread questionnaire to the investigated teachers to collect the data. Then, the writer also collected and analyzed lesson plans from all respondents. The writer conducted interview with 20 groups of students that consist of three students for each group. One group represented one respondent.

The writer decides to use exploratory descriptive study to answer research question. Exploratory research discovers insights, ideas and understanding of an issue or condition (Rifanto, 2013). Exploratory research is undertaken as preliminary when few or no previous studies exist. The aim is to look for patterns, hypotheses or ideas that can be tested and will form the basis for further research (Collis & Hussey, 2003).

The study conducted to investigate English Vocational High School teachers' practice on authentic writing assessment employed in teaching and learning process at classroom. The data of this study were teachers' practice of the authentic writing assessment which is teachers implementation taken from questionnaire and document analysis. The writer also conducted interview with 60 students. The respondent of this study was 20 EFL teachers who teach marketing nine different VHS's students in East Jakarta. The writer analyze the result and draws conclusions about the population from the samples.

The exploratory descriptive study discovers insights, ideas and understanding of particular issue or condition of a population. The insight being investigated was related on teachers' practice of authentic writing assessment. The objective of this study is to explore the implementation of a population by collecting the information concerning teachers' practice.

The population of this study is Vocational High School EFL marketing teachers from East Jakarta. Meanwhile, the samples were 20 EFL school teachers drawn from nine different vocational schools in East Jakarta. The teachers have different personal background. They consist of 8 males and 12 females, 6 (<5 years teaching experience), 3 (5-10 years teaching experience), 3 (10-15 years teaching experience), 8 (>15 years teaching experience). All of teachers have S1 degree from English Education. 12 of them are certified teachers while 8 are not yet. Most of the teachers have 30-40 students per classroom while 2 teachers claim 20-30 students per class.

The questionnaire was spread to the 20 EFL teachers who teach Marketing Vocational High School students in nine different schools. The questionnaire used to gain the data about the teachers' practice of authentic writing assessment in classroom. It was adapted based on the theories from the literature review and Standar Penilaian Nasional as a test blueprint for

the development of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of four main parts; they were personal information of respondents, purposes of authentic writing assessment, types of authentic writing assessment and techniques of authentic writing assessment. Teachers' personal information was mentioned in the first part of the questionnaire. The next part is purposes of authentic writing assessment. The writer used Likert scale to grade the practice held by the EFL teachers related to authentic assessment.

The writer collected the lesson plan in this study to add some information related to the topic of the study and to support the data gained from the questionnaires. It was also designed to confirm and add the EFL teachers' answer from questionnaire about the practice based on their EFL classroom.

Last instrument used in this study was interview. The writer conducted the interviews with the students to gain the data in more detail of EFL teachers' practices of authentic assessment in their classroom. There are 60 marketing students or 20 groups. A group consists of three students. The writer already prepared interview protocols and arranged into semi-structured interview. But the writer elaborated the questions in order to gather clear information. The 14 questions were constructed from the result of the questionnaires. The interview was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to avoid misinterpretation.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

The data percentage can be showed through the following chart

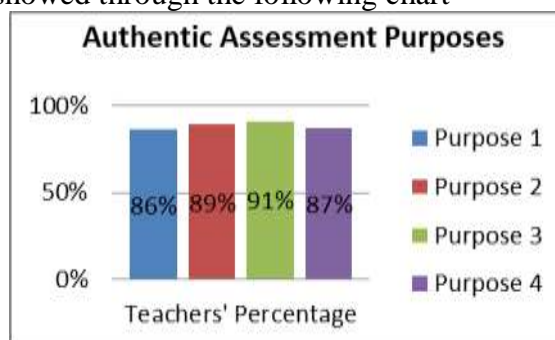


Figure 1. Chart of Authentic Assessment Purposes

The data percentages of EFL teachers' authentic writing assessment purposes show that all teachers or 20 respondents agreed about using the four authentic assessment purposes. 91% of 20 teachers strongly agreed use authentic assessment to measure students' output of writing skills. 89% teachers strongly agreed about purpose 2, using authentic assessment to improve teaching and learning process. For purpose 4, 87 % of total respondents agreed that they practice authentic assessment to place students' achievement.

Meanwhile, 86% of 20 EFL teachers agreed use authentic assessment to monitor students' process of writing skill in classroom.



Figure 2. Chart of Authentic Assessment Purposes

From checklist document analysis, 100% of total teachers strongly agreed that practice authentic assessment to assess students' achievements. Another 100% of them also provide authentic assessment to improve teaching and learning process. Meanwhile 70% from all teachers' lesson plans agreed to monitor students' process by using authentic assessment. There were 65% of total respondents revealed that they practice authentic assessment for grading each student.

Both of teachers' questionnaire and checklist documents analysis, it reveals that the purpose of EFL teachers' authentic writing assessment that they serve in teaching marketing VHS students is assessing students' output or achievement. It was supported from 91% of 20 teachers and 100% of 20 lesson plans.

The charts below show the data percentage of teachers' questionnaire and checklist document analysis about the types of EFL teachers' authentic writing assessment practices. The writer compares the data gained from accumulation of teachers and students and checklist document analysis. Each chart was analyzed as follow :

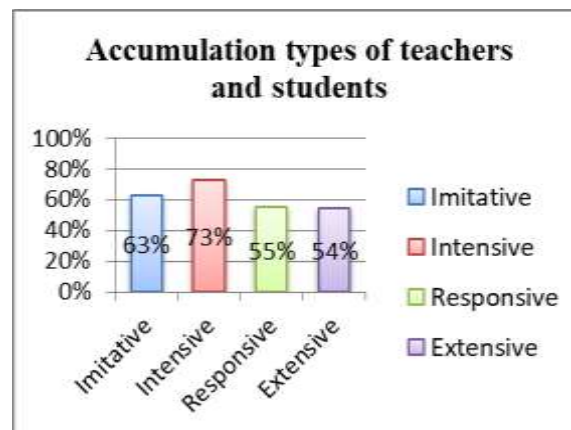


Figure 3. Accumulation Types of Teachers and Students

From the accumulation data percentage teachers and students, there were 73% of data accumulations agreed that while assessing students' writing, teachers concern in vocabulary and grammar. 63% of all teachers and students agreed that teachers focus on words and mechanics while assessing students' writing. Meanwhile 55% of them also claimed that 20 EFL teachers and groups of students focus on organizing sentences and paragraphs. Another 54% of data accumulation stated that teachers focus to assess students' developing ideas.

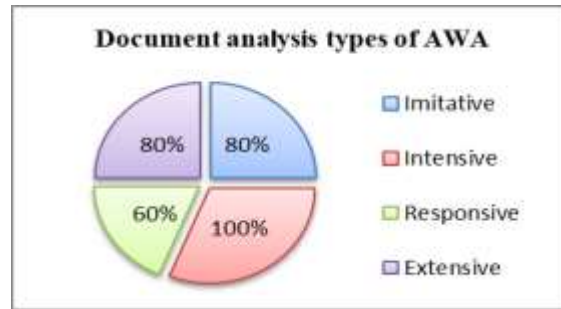


Figure 4. Document Analysis Types of AWA

Based on data gained from document analysis above, it shows that most of teachers or 100% agreed following intensive type while assessing students' writing. It can be seen from the lesson plans, there was clearly stated that teachers have to focus on students' vocabulary and grammar. 80% of all documents explained that teachers focus on students' words and mechanics. Meanwhile, 80% of all lesson plans explained that teachers focus on students' developing ideas. Another 60% of its also explained that teachers focus on students' organizing sentences and paragraphs when assess students' writing.

From the data accumulation of teachers and students show that EFL teachers choose intensive type to serve in their classroom while assessing students writing focus on vocabulary and grammar. There were 73% of teachers' and students' agreed about this type. It was supported by the data of document analysis, there were 100% of all lesson plans stated that all teachers focus on vocabulary and grammar.

The charts below show the data percentage of teachers' questionnaire and checklist document analysis about the techniques of EFL teachers' authentic writing assessment practices. The writer compares the data gained from accumulation of teachers and students and checklist document analysis. Each chart was analyzed as follows:

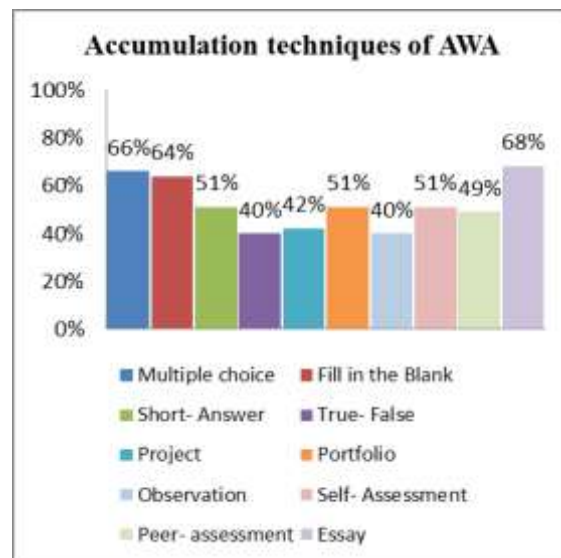


Figure 5. Accumulation Techniques of AWA

Response to the accumulation percentage of teachers and students above (fig. 4.5), it describes that 68% of total teachers and students agreed that EFL teachers implement essay in their classroom. Another 66% of all teachers and students also agreed that teachers provide multiple choices to assess students. For next technique, 64% of data accumulation claimed that teachers implement fill in the blank. 51% of each data accumulation stated that teachers use short- answer, portfolio and self- assessment. Meanwhile, 49% of all teachers and

students stated that teachers practice peer- assessment. There were 42% of them claimed teachers provide project in assessing students' writing. Both of true- false and observation, there were 40% of each data accumulation stated that teachers provide those techniques.

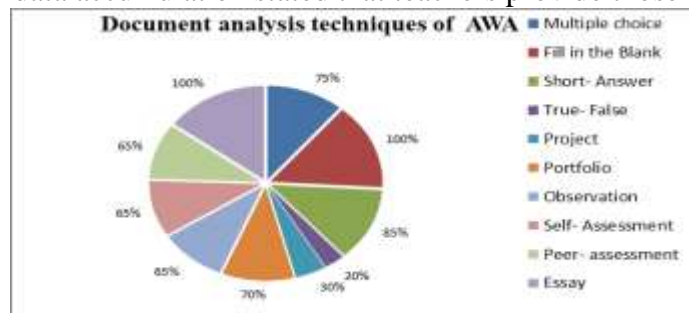


Figure 6. Document Analysis Techniques of AWA

From the chart of document analysis above, (fig. 4.6) it shows that 100% of all documents stated that teachers practice essay as one of their techniques to assess students' writing. 100% of its also described that fill in the blank was used by teachers. 85% of all lesson plans stated that teachers use short- answer for assessing students' writing. Another 75% of its stated that teachers provide multiple choices in classroom. There were 70% of all lesson plans described that teachers provide portfolio. For observation, self- assessment and peer- assessment, there were 65% of each document described that teachers use those techniques. 30% of all documents stated that teachers practice project in their classroom. Whereas, 20% of its stated that teachers implement true- false as one of their techniques.

Response to the data accumulation of teachers and students above related to what authentic writing assessment technique that teachers practice in their marketing program in VHS students. The technique that they implement is essay. There were 68% of all teachers and students agreed about this technique. It was also supplied from the data of document analysis. 100% of all documents stated that teachers provide essay to assess students' writing.

CONCLUSION

From the data compared to teachers' questionnaire, students' interview and checklist document analysis, it can be concluded that EFL teachers from nine different vocational schools in teaching marketing students practice authentic assessment for assessing students' output. The type that teachers chose is intensive. It means teachers concern with students' vocabulary and grammar. Then the technique that they provide for assessing students' writing is essay.

The writer has found that EFL teachers of VHS practise authentic assessment particularly follow the literature and policy. Most of them have already practiced the purposes, types and techniques. However, teachers were not truly while answer the questionnaire. Based on the findings, teachers claimed they have practices all of statements about purposes, types and techniques. Nevertheless, after the writer conducted students' interview, many misconceptions appeared. Such as teachers claimed that they used portfolio to monitor students' process but while the writer conducted interview with students, there are 2 groups of students did not know what portfolio is. They thought portfolio as an essay which written in folio paper.

Teachers have good percentage for questionnaire while lower percentage in students interview. Moreover, after the writer matched with lesson plans, there were also found several unbalanced data percentage. Some teachers also have the same lesson plans even in same school. Because of this study only focus on marketing program, the writer collected the data from EFL teachers who teach marketing VHS students. However, in the real situation when collecting the data, all teachers used same lesson plans if they taught same grade. Most of

teachers provided the same techniques of authentic writing assessment. They do not have more time to provide all of techniques. This study found that several teachers only gave essay and multiple choices in every single time.

REFERENCES

- ACDP. (2013, October). Assessing Student Learning : Policy Options Relating to National Assessments, Public Examinations, International Assessments, and Continuous Classroom Assessment. *ACDP Policy issues* , 2-17.
- Allen, M. J. (2004:9-13). *Assessing academic Programs*: Anker Publishing.
- Arikunto, Prof. Dr. Suharsimi. (2006). *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktik (Edisi Revisi VI)*. Jakarta:PT. Rineka Cipta.
- Berry, R. (2011). *Assessment Reform in Education: Policy and Practice*. (B. Adamson, Ed.) New York: Springer Science Business Media B.V.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment : Principles and Classroom Practicies*. California, San Fransisco: Longman.
- Collis, J. & Hussey, R. (2003) *Business Research: a practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*, second edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Frey, B. B. (2012). Defining authentic classroom assessment. *Practical Assessment, Research, & Evaluation. A peer-reviewed electronic journal* , 17 (2), 1-18.
- Gulikers, J. T. (2004). A five-dimensional framework for authentic assessment. *Educational Technology Research and Development* , 52 (3), 67-86.
- Heritage, M. (2007). Formative Assessment:What Do Teachers Need to Know and Do? *Phi Delta Kappan* , 89 (2), 140-141.
- Kompas (2014). Available:
<http://www.edukasi.kompas.com/read/2014/03/04/2001502/Mendiknas.Akui.Kurikulum.2013.Menyulitkan.Guru>
- MONE. (2013). Educational Assessment Standards . *Ministerial Decree No. 66/2013*. Jakarta, Indonesia: MONE.
- Mueller, J. (2005). The Authentic Assessment Toolbox: Enhancing Student Learning through Online Faculty Development. *Merlot : Journal of Online Learning and Teaching* , 1, 1-7.
- O'Malley, J. M. (1996). *Authentic Assessment For English Language Learners: Practical Approaches For Teachers*. United States of America: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Republika. (2014), Available:
<http://www.republika.co.id/berita/pendidikan/education/14/07/22/n92vqz-guru-sulit-lakukan-penilaian-otentik>
- Rifanto, W. (2013, 08 11). Exploratory Research Design. Retrieved May 6th, 2014,

from Rofianto files: http://rofianto.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/mr_02.pdf

Sheila W. Valencia, E. H. (1994). *Assessment: Practices and Possibilities*. California: International Reading Association, Inc., Newark, DE.

Spandel, V., & Stiggins, R. J. (1980:29). Direct Measures of Writing Skill: Issues and Applications.

Stiggins, R. J. (1995:4). Assessment Literacy for the 21st century.

Thomas, M. (2012). Teachers' Beliefs about Classroom Assessment and their selection of Classroom Assessment Strategies. *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education* , Vol.6 (2), 103 -112.

Wiggins, G. (1990). The Case for Authentic Assessment. *ERIC Digest* , 2-6.