

## IMPLEMENTING AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT ON STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING (A Case Study in One of Senior High Schools in Tasikmalaya)

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**Abstract:** This is the study of how teachers implement the authentic assessment on students' English writing. Two English teachers and their students are involved in this qualitative study. The data are collected through three techniques, namely; observation, interview toward the teachers, and documentation study toward lesson plans and syllabi of the teachers. The collected data were then analyzed based on the theory of the process of assessing writing by NSW Department of Education and Training (2007) by using the data analysis process of Miles and Huberman (1984) in Sugiyono (2012). The findings show that both teachers conducted all steps of the process of assessing students' writing consisting of collecting evidence, making judgments, planning learning experience, teaching, monitoring and recording student progress, and reviewing and replanning teaching/learning programs. The steps of the process were not conducted chronologically from the beginning till the end, but some of them were conducted at the same time. Besides, the activities in each step were conducted in several similar and different ways between the teachers. However, the primary purpose of each step was accomplished.

**Keywords:** *Authentic assessment, assessment of writing, process of assessing writing*

### Introduction

The development of curriculum has resulted the shift in the assessment aspect. Nowadays, the era of traditional assessment, particularly in the form of multiple-choice and other standardized test type, has been replaced by nontraditional so-called alternative or authentic assessment. This kind of assessment is still unfamiliar among teachers particularly for they who do not develop their knowledge and understanding. O'Maley and Pierce (1996) In authentic assessment, what the teachers should produce is the assessment tasks that reflect their students' learning, achievement, motivation and attitudes toward the classroom instructional activities. Moreover, the interrelation between instruction and assessment makes it impossible to work without the collaboration between them. As a result, the process of assessment cannot be separated with the teaching learning process. Bennu and Purnomo (2009) The assessment is a part of the teaching and learning. Hence, it makes language assessment as a complicated work. In this case, teachers should go through the process of assessing writing skill elaboratedly in instructional process.

Another confusion faced by the teachers happens when they face the different term stated by Bennu & Purnomo (2009) about assessment, test and measurement. The differences between assessment and test can be viewed based on the case of duration and purpose. Assessment is the all activities containing the process of collecting the information about the students' achievement toward the learning objective in a wider domain continually (Airasian, 1991 in Bennu & Purnomo, 2009; NSW Department of Education and Training, 2007; Brown, 2004). Meanwhile, a test is a subset of assessment used by the teacher to know about the students' achievement in certain time and for certain purpose (Brown, 2004).

The assessment of writing as one of language assessments conducted by the teachers is regarded as an uneasy work to assess (Brown, 2004). The problem can be easily found when the teachers analyze the students' writing one by one with different length, handwriting quality and neatness. It clearly takes time and effort. Besides, the whole process of assessing writing is not clearly known by the teachers. Therefore, many teachers still have the confusion resulting the variation of the process of assessing writing (Bennu & Purnomo, 2009). As a result, they sometimes conduct an assessment based on their intuition.

Despite the confusion of the teachers in case of the assessment of writing in ESL/EFL classroom, the fact shows that there is no different treatment or technique to apply for both native and foreign students. Silva (1993) in Brown (2001) advises the practice including the assessment used in L1 writing classroom to adopt by the teachers in their ESL/EFL classroom. For the process itself, NSW Department of Education and Training (2007) describes the process of assessing writing consisting several steps; collecting evidence, making judgments, planning learning experience, teaching, monitoring and recording student progress, and reviewing

and replanning teaching/learning programs. Therefore, it is expected that the teachers become sure in conducting assessment for their students.

An investigation on the teachers' assessment on writing conducted by Hartono (2013) only reveals the variation on the teachers' perception about good writing, the method or technique used to assess students' writing, and the way the teachers correlate teaching and assessment. On the other side, the present study is to figure out the process of assessing writing. It has not been discussed before, so that, it is for this purpose the present study is carried out.

## **Method**

Employing a case study qualitative design (Moleong, 2013; Berg, 2001), this study involved two English teachers from one of the senior high schools in Tasikmalaya as the respondents of this study. The English teacher who becomes the respondent 1 (R1) in this study is fifty two years old, graduated from University of Education, and has more than thirty-year experience in teaching English at several schools. Another English teacher who becomes the respondent 2 (R2) in this research is thirty five years old, graduated from a Faculty of Education in West Java, and has more than ten-year experience in teaching English. Beside the individuals who are the subject of the research, the other data are obtained from the teachers' document in form of the teaching administration documents. The documents are the syllabus and lesson plan of the teachers who become the subject of the research.

Three data collection technique used in this study were observation, interview and documentation study. Observation used in this study was in the form of passive participation observation in which the researchers observed the activity of the teachers in the classroom. Interview used in this study was in the form of structured interview technique in which the researcher asked the respondents by using interview guideline. Documentation study was used to gather the specific information from the teachers' syllabus and lesson plan.

Data analysis used in this study was Miles and Huberman model in Sugiyono (2012) consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction was conducted by sorting the most important data related to the focus of this study by using categorization of the data from the process of assessing writing stated by NSW Department of Education and Training (2007). Data display was conducted by displaying the reduced data in the form of description of the process of assessing students' writing. Conclusion drawing/verification was conducted by making conclusion based on the result of the analysis.

## **Findings And Discussions**

The findings displayed answer the research problem on this research. The findings are organized based on the process of assessing the students writing conducted by respondents.

### ***Collecting Evidence***

The findings show that collecting evidence step was conducted by both of the respondents. From the results, the respondents collected the evidence through different activities. However, the sources were the same. They were the students and their writing both in the form of full text or exercise.

R1 conducted the collecting evidence step by observing the students' answer from several exercise at class. Besides, R1 discussed the exercise with the students. In addition, R1 conducted the evidence by analyzing the students' utterance both in oral and written form. Then, R1 made a note of the information about the students' difficulties. The note is used as a record for making a judgment of how to solve them.

Whereas, the process of collecting evidence of R2 was almost the same with R1. R2 conducted the observation to the students' activity when they were asked to do the assessment task or exercise. Besides, R2 approached directly to the students who seemed to have a difficulty in writing. Then R2 asked the students about their difficulty. In addition, R2 made several discussions with the students about the difficulties they had.

### ***Making Judgments***

The findings show that both R1 and R2 first conducted the process of making judgments from the evidence gathered from the previous step. It is in accordance with the activity of making judgments stated by NSW Department of Education and Training (2007).

### ***Planning Learning Experience***

Based on the findings, both R1 and R2 planned how to meet the students' needs and how to cope with the difficulties through whole class instruction. It is in line with what NSW Department of Education and Training (2007)

### Teaching

Based on the findings, after the teacher planned the learning experience, they conducted teaching as a means for meeting with the students' needs and coping with their difficulties particularly in writing. This activity is the same with what NSW Department of Education and Training (2007)

### Monitoring, Recording Student Progress

The findings show that both R1 and R2 conducted this step simultaneously with the teaching step by asking the students to do the exercises at class. They used the exercises stated on the textbook. Therefore, they can monitor the students' progress quickly. After that, they discussed them with the students as a feedback giving activities. In addition, based on the findings, both respondents gave the assessment task of the writing by using their own creation. The task belonged to the task for direct writing assessment in which the students were asked to write a spoof text.

After that, in determining whether the students did progress or not, both respondents scored the students' writing. Based on the findings, R1 and R2 used a holistic scoring in which they made judgments toward the students' writing holistically. This activity was clearly conducted individually by the respondents.

### Reviewing, Replanning Teaching/Learning Programs

The activities conducted in this step by each respondent were different. R1 used the result of the test or assessment task as the indicator of the success of the teaching and learning activities. R1 compared the students' test or assessment result to the MAC (Minimum Accomplishment Criteria) and re-plan the remedial teaching for solving the problem. Therefore, the students' difficulties causing fault of the test could be resolved earlier. It is in accordance with what NSW Department of Education and Training (2007)

Meanwhile, R2 reviewed the teaching and learning by using an authentic way. R2 conducted a discussion with the students about how good or bad the teaching was and corrected it based on the result of discussion. This activity is regarded as an effective way of reviewing or reflecting the teaching. It is in line with Tice, Julie (2011) who agrees with the use of question answer technique for reflecting teaching

In addition, the respondents conducted different plot of the process of assessing students' writing, as follow:

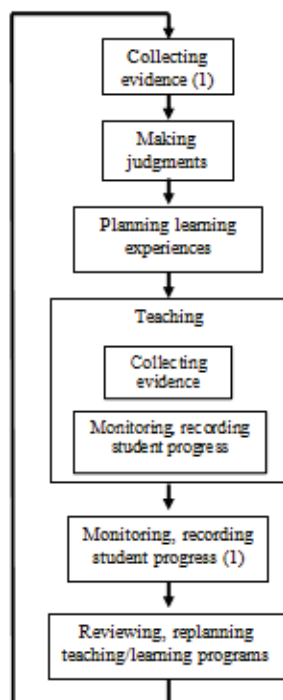


Figure 1.1 R1 Assessment Process

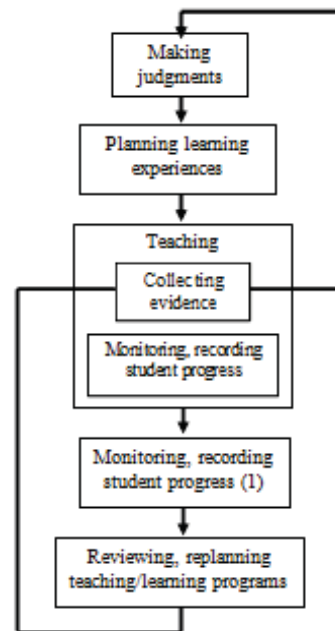


Figure 1.2 R2 Assessment Process

## Conclusions and Sugesstions

After analyzing the collected data from the previous section, it is concluded that the respondents of the research conducted several step of the process of assessing students' writing. The steps consist of the steps of collecting evidence, making judgments, planning learning experience, teaching, monitoring and recording student progress, and reviewing and replanning teaching/learning programs. However, the activities of each step vary between the respondents and the step was not conducted chronologically. Some of the steps which are collecting evidence and monitoring, recording student progress overlapped another step. Even, one of the respondents conducted them twice.

The entire activities of the step of the process of assessing students' writing conducted by both respondents have one purpose. It is to improve the quality of the students, particularly in writing, by enhancing the teaching and learning. Therefore, the teachers can create the good output of the education.

The conclusion shows that actually the teachers have done the right way of assessing writing skill. Unfortunately, they subconsciously realize what they did. So, it is recommended that the readers, particularly for the English teachers, to enrich deeper understanding of assessing students' writing. The further researchers are also recommended to find out the process of assessment for the other language skills which are listening, speaking, and reading. Besides, a large number of respondents are supposed to involve in the research of investigating a writing assessment in order to measure the transferability of the research result because this research only focuses on two English teachers as the respondents. In addition, respondents' factors causing the differences or similarities of the process of assessing writing such as background, gender, age, experience can be deeply discussed. The effectiveness of the assessment itself can be discussed also.

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