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**Implementation of Online portfolios
in an Indonesian EFL Writing Class**

By:

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Volume I

Abstract

In the era of globalisation with the rapid development of science and technology, the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for language learning has become one of the prominent challenges in language teaching, including in the Indonesian context (Kariman 2005). This study aims to investigate how online portfolios as part of ICT tools could be used to facilitate the learning of EFL writing in an Indonesian EFL writing class.

This study is concerned with my own teaching experiences due to the growing demand for teachers' competence to integrate technology for the purpose of facilitating students' learning. The implementation of the online portfolio over one semester was examined through action research. Students' experiences in learning EFL writing using the online portfolio were explored with regards to their writing skills development, learner autonomy and motivation. In addition to the action research, the study drew on case study and ethnographic approaches. As for methods for generating data, this study involved questionnaires, interviews, teacher's reflective journals, and an analysis of online portfolio entries.

The findings of the study show that the online portfolios have been beneficial in developing students' EFL writing skills. Concerning learner autonomy, the online portfolios have facilitated students' to develop their metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive strategies, social strategies, and critical thinking. As for students' motivation, the findings of the current study suggest that the use of a blog as the online portfolio platform and the online portfolio elements comprising self-revising, feedback

activities and reflection enhanced students' motivation to learn how to write. They achieved this by raising students' expectation of success in their learning, making students feel comfortable in working with their writing tasks, and challenging students to write to a higher standard as their writings were published online, read and commented on by others. Moreover, the study suggests that the success of the online portfolio implementation in facilitating students' learning of EFL writing requires teachers' understandings of their own roles as well as their willingness to undertake and develop their roles as facilitators in an e-learning environment.

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Abbreviations Used in this Thesis

AR	-	Action Research
CALL	-	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CMS	-	Content Management System
EFL	-	English as a Foreign Language
ESP	-	English for Specific Purposes
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technology
SDT	-	Self Determination Theory
SPD	-	Service Programme Design
TOEFL	-	Test of English as a Foreign Language

Table of Contents

Contents

Volume I

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgement.....	iii
Abbreviations used in this thesis.....	v
Table of contents.....	vi
Organisation of the thesis.....	xiv
List of tables.....	xv
List of figures.....	xvi
List of appendices.....	xviii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background and context of the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	11
1.3 Aims of the study	12
1.4 Research questions	13
1.5 Significance of the study	14
1.6 Organisation of the thesis.....	15
1.7 Summary and reflection.....	16
Chapter 2: Review of related literature.....	17
2.1 Approaches in teaching foreign language writing.....	18
2.1.1 Product approach.....	18

2.1.2 Process approach.....	22
2.1.3 Genre approach.....	24
2.1.4 Process genre approach	27
2.1.5 Summary.....	29
2.2 E-learning and blended learning.....	29
2.2.1 Online portfolio and Blog.....	31
2.2.1.1 Online portfolio.....	31
2.2.1.2 Blog as the online portfolio platform.....	34
2.2.1.3 Feedback as a form of assessment for learning in the online portfolio.....	35
2.2.1.4 Reflective learning and reflection in the online portfolio.....	39
2.2.2 Studies on the use of online portfolios in EFL writing.....	43
2.2.3 Summary.....	48
2.3 Learner autonomy.....	49
2.3.1. Definition and dimensions of learner autonomy.....	49
2.3.2 The cultural issues of learner autonomy in the Indonesian context.....	56
2.3.3 The process of fostering learner autonomy in the classroom context.....	59
2.3.4 The roles of the teacher in fostering learner autonomy in the classroom context.....	63
2.3.5 Learner autonomy and e-learning.....	65
2.3.6 Summary.....	67

2.4 Motivation.....	68
2.4.1 Definition and overview of motivation.....	69
2.4.2 Self-determination theory of motivation.....	71
2.4.3 Motivation and autonomy.....	80
2.4.4 Motivation and e-learning.....	83
2.4.5 Summary.....	85
2.5 Summary and reflection.....	85
Chapter 3: Research methodology.....	88
3.1 Constructivism	88
3.2 Action research.....	92
3.2.1 Definition of action research.....	93
3.2.2 Characteristics and procedures of action research.....	93
3.3 Case study	97
3.4 Ethnography and autoethnography	100
3.5 Data collection and procedures.....	102
3.5.1 Researcher’s journals	104
3.5.2 Interviews	107
3.5.2.1 Preparing the interviews.....	109
3.5.2.2 Conducting the interviews.....	110
3.5.3 Questionnaires	113
3.5.4 Documents.....	115
3.6 Gaining access.....	116
3.7 Participants	118
3.8 The academic writing course design using online portfolios.....	120

3.8.1 Objectives.....	121
3.8.2 The writing instructional materials.....	121
3.8.3 The incorporation of the online portfolios.....	124
3.8.3.1 The use of WordPress as the online portfolio platform.....	124
3.8.3.2 What was required of the students.....	125
3.9 Data analysis	132
3.9.1 Transcribing the interviews.....	134
3.9.2 Translating the interview transcriptions.....	136
3.9.3 Analysis of the interview transcriptions, students’ reflections and teacher’s journals.....	137
3.9.4 Analysis of students’ writing assignments and comments/feedback.....	139
3.10 Method of reporting the data analysis.....	141
3.11 Trustworthiness of the study	143
3.12 Ethics	146
3.13 Summary and reflection.....	148
Chapter 4: The teacher’s experiences and emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation.....	150
4.1 The teacher’s experiences in the online portfolio implementation	151
4.1.1 Preparation of the instructional materials	152
4.1.2 Action research cycles	155
4.2 The emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation....	187

4.2.1 The emerging problems with the use of blog as the online portfolio platform.....	187
4.2.1.1 Unfamiliarity with the blog.....	188
4.2.1.2 Internet connectivity.....	190
4.2.2 The emerging problems during the online feedback activities.....	192
4.2.2.1 Difficulties in writing comments.....	199
4.2.2.2 Commenting procedures.....	201
4.2.3 The emerging problems in reflection activities.....	202
4.3 Summary and reflection.....	204
Chapter 5: Online portfolios and students' writing development.....	205
5.1 Students' perceptions of the development of their writing ability throughout the online portfolio implementation	205
5.1.1 Improving organisation of the writing.....	206
5.1.2 Improving grammar and sentence structure.....	207
5.1.3 Improving the content of their essay.....	207
5.1.4 Improving overall writing aspects.....	208
5.1.4.1 Contributions of self-revising.....	209
5.1.4.2 Contributions of teacher's and peers' feedback.....	210
5.1.4.3 Contributions of reflection.....	211
5.2 The impacts of online portfolio on students' writing draft revisions.....	212
5.2.1 Students' revisions on their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation.....	213

5.2.2 Contribution of self-revising and different feedback types on students' writing.....	216
5.2.3 Highlighting interesting issues in the contribution of feedback.....	254
5.3 Summary and reflection.....	256

Volume II

Chapter 6: Learner autonomy and motivation in the online portfolio implementation.....	257
6.1 Learner autonomy in the online portfolio implementation.....	257
6.1.1 Metacognitive knowledge.....	258
6.1.1.1 Person knowledge.....	260
6.1.1.2 Task knowledge.....	261
6.1.1.3 Strategy knowledge.....	269
6.1.1.4 Summary.....	273
6.1.2 Metacognitive strategies.....	273
6.1.2.1 Planning.....	274
6.1.2.2 Monitoring.....	278
6.1.2.3 Evaluation.....	284
6.1.2.4 Summary.....	289
6.1.3 Social strategies.....	290
6.1.4 Students' critical thinking.....	295
6.2 Online portfolios and students' motivation.....	298
6.2.1 Interest.....	300

6.2.2 Convenience and flexibility	303
6.2.3 Relevance.....	304
6.2.4 Expectancy	306
6.2.5 Challenge.....	307
6.2.6 Satisfaction and confidence.....	310
6.2.7 Curiosity.....	313
6.2.8 Summary.....	313
6.3 The relationship between learner autonomy and motivation.....	314
6.4 Summary and reflection.....	318
Chapter 7: Conclusion.....	320
7.1 Summary of the responses to the research questions.....	320
7.1.1 Regarding my teaching experiences and emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation.....	320
7.1.1.1 How do I experience teaching writing using the online portfolio?.....	320
7.1.1.2 What problems emerge during the online portfolio implementation?.....	323
7.1.2 Regarding students' writing development.....	324
7.1.2.1 How do students perceive their writing development throughout the online portfolio implementation?.....	325
7.1.2.2 How do students revise their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation?.....	325
7.1.3 Regarding learner autonomy and motivation.....	326

7.1.3.1 What aspects of learner autonomy do students exercise throughout the online portfolio implementation?.....	326
7.1.3.2 What motivates students in learning writing skills using the online portfolio?.....	330
7.1.3.3 What is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation?.....	331
7.2 Contributions of the study to literature.....	332
7.3 Implications of the study findings.....	333
7.3.1 Implications for EFL writing teachers.....	333
7.3.2 Implications for the institution.....	334
7.3.3 Implications for policy makers.....	335
7.3.4 Implications for me as a teacher.....	336
7.3.5 Implications for developing practice.....	337
7.3.6 Implications for further research.....	337
7.4 Limitations of the study.....	338
7.5 Reflections on me as a researcher.....	340
References.....	342
Appendices.....	385

Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into two volumes. The first volume comprises chapter 1 (introduction), chapter 2 (literature review), chapter 3 (methodology) and two of the findings and discussions chapters (chapter 4 and chapter 5). Volume II comprises the rest of the findings and discussions chapter (chapter 6), conclusion chapter (chapter 7), references and appendices.

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Stages in the development of learner autonomy in classroom context...	61
Table 3.1 Research questions-methods matrix	103
Table 3.2 Information of the participants in the in-depth study.....	120
Table 3.3 Contents of the writing course	123
Table 3.4 Coding categories of the data analysis	139
Table 4.1 Cycles of my action research	156
Table 5.1 Categories, number and percentage of revisions	214
Table 5.2 Revisions made by self, peer and teacher feedback	217

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 A taxonomy of human motivation suggested by Deci & Ryan	74
Figure 3.1 Action–reflection cycle	94
Figure 3.2 Sequences of action–reflection cycles.....	95
Figure 3.3 Screenshot of a student’s blog page	126
Figure 3.4 Steps in the writing process throughout online portfolio implementation	127
Figure 4.1 Number of comments in assignment 1	195
Figure 4.2 Number of comments in assignment 2	196
Figure 4.3 Number of comments in assignment 3.....	198
Figure 5.1 Arin’s revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment	223
Figure 5.2 Arin’s revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment....	226
Figure 5.3 Arin’s revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment.....	228
Figure 5.4 Vina’s revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment.....	230
Figure 5.5 Vina’s revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment ...	232
Figure 5.6 Vina’s revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment	233
Figure 5.7 Wawan’s revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment	237
Figure 5.8 Wawan’s revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment ..	239
Figure 5.9 Wawan’s revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment ...	241
Figure 5.10 Gita’s revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment.....	243
Figure 5.11 Gita’s revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment....	245
Figure 5.12 Gita’s revisions after receiving feedback in third assignment	247
Figure 5.13 Tia’s revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment	250
Figure 5.14 Tia’s revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment....	252

Figure 5.15 Tia’s revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment.....	254
Figure 6.1 Screenshot of Tia’s blog	301
Figure 6.2 Screenshot of Arin’s blog	302

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Ethical approval letter.....	387
Appendix 2 Letter of approval for data collection.....	389
Appendix 3 Participant consent form	391
Appendix 4 Participant information sheet.....	393
Appendix 5 Questionnaires (English version).....	398
Appendix 6 Questionnaires (Indonesian version).....	402
Appendix 7 Matrix of research questions, interview topics and interview questions.....	406
Appendix 8 List of interview questions (English version).....	410
Appendix 9 List of interview questions (Indonesian version).....	415
Appendix 10 Sample data analysis – coding categories and samples of data extracts.....	420
Appendix 11 Academic writing class syllabus.....	425
Appendix 12 Scoring rubric for paragraph and essays.....	429
Appendix 13 Guidance for self-revising.....	432
Appendix 14 Guiding questions for peer commenting.....	436
Appendix 15 Guidance for reflecting on the writing draft.....	439

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This thesis presents a study that has been conducted to examine the implementation of online portfolios to facilitate students' learning in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing class through an action research project. Students' experiences in learning EFL writing using the online portfolio and my experiences as the teacher have been explored with regards to students' writing skills development, learner autonomy and motivation. This chapter presents the background and context of my study, a statement of the problem, aims of the study, research questions, significance of the study and organisation of the thesis.

1.1 Background and context of the study

The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in language learning has become one of the prominent challenges in language teaching. Specifically in the Indonesian context in the globalisation era, with the rapid development of science and technology, it may, with its potential, engage students in language learning (Kariman 2005). The availability of the internet which can serve as a source of various materials, and a medium for publication as well as for intercultural communication makes its value in language teaching undeniable. Due to the potential benefits of ICT in education, the utilisation of ICT to support teaching and learning process has been encouraged in the education field including in higher education institutions in Indonesia.

The university in which the current study was conducted is one of the higher education institutions in Indonesia with a strong commitment to utilising ICT to support teaching

and learning activities. Sophisticated ICT facilities are provided as part of the university's commitment to respond to the necessity of using ICT to support teaching and learning activities. Running eight faculties with thirty four undergraduate study programmes and six graduate school programmes, this university has a mission to provide education which embraces the principles of lifelong learning, to develop research with respect to freedom of thought, and to enhance entrepreneurship for the welfare of society.

This study was carried out in one of the graduate school programmes, which is in the English education department. In this programme, students learn Linguistics subjects such as Advance Linguistics and Semantics, and English teaching subjects such as Curriculum and Materials Development, Approaches to Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and Philosophy of Education. Students also learn the language skills of Academic Speaking and Academic Writing. This study was conducted with sixteen first semester students in one of the academic writing classes in the academic year 2013-2014.

In line with the university's commitment, and more importantly due to its goal to educate graduate students to master the theory and the practice of English linguistics and education, the graduate school of the English department has been utilising the available ICT facilities to support teaching and learning activities. However, there is still a need for the lecturers in the department to develop their skills in utilising ICT to facilitate students' learning.

In relation to the necessity of teachers' skills when dealing with ICT facilities to support students' learning, Kariman (2005) stated that, in order to maximise the advantage of ICT to fulfil students' needs and support their learning, professional development of teachers is necessary. This is in line with Yuwono and Harbon (2010), who also emphasised the necessity of English teachers' professional development in Indonesia. Problems in English language teaching in Indonesia "faced years ago in terms of choice of approaches, teachers' qualifications and material designs still seem to be present nowadays" (Yuwono & Harbon, 2010, p. 149). Referring to the Indonesian government regulation (no. 74/2008), Abdullah (2015) mentioned that pedagogical competence is an aspect of teacher quality which is emphasised by the Indonesian government. This competence involves "understanding of educational concepts and foundation, curriculum and syllabus development, instructional practices, and learning evaluation" (Abdullah, 2015, p.34). The rapid development of ICT produces a growing demand for teachers' competence to integrate technology in teaching and learning.

The need for teacher professional development had motivated me to pursue my PhD, which was supported by my institution and government. The process of determining my research area to propose to my research supervisor when applying for my PhD programme brought me to reflect not only on my teaching experience, but also on my learning experience as a past student. Moreover, it became an important turning point for me, an opportunity to become more up to date and enhance expertise in recent developments in English language teaching.

Having experience in teaching English as a foreign language for nearly 10 years, I realised that teaching itself is a learning process, and there is still much to learn.

Teaching is not merely a matter of transferring knowledge to the students. For me, teaching is itself learning, teaching is an art of communicating ideas to different kinds of people, teaching is making friends, teaching is creating a culture of teamwork between students and teacher to reach a goal together, and teaching is helping other people to have a better quality of life. Specifically, by teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia, I have learned a lot of lessons. Among them are the English language itself, and how to facilitate learning amongst different kinds of students in different situations.

One day, after finishing my Masters programme, I was called by the head of the English department, who used to be my lecturer, who really surprised me by asking me to assist him in teaching his class. I immediately accepted the offer because I thought it was a good opportunity for me to learn many more new teaching techniques. I knew it was not an easy task because at that time I was not experienced in teaching at university level. I believed that my willingness to learn more teaching knowledge and skills for my personal and professional development would help me handle the class.

Initially, my lecturer assigned me to teach his Information and Communication Technology (ICT) class in a computer lab. I was really nervous because I did not know much about the class I was assigned to teach, and I did not have ideas of what and how to teach that particular class at that time. Then he gave me a handbook to use in the class and told me that the main goal of the course was to develop students' knowledge of the potential of ICT in language learning. The course was more specifically focused on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). In order to develop students' understanding of the potential of CALL, students were given the opportunity to

experience some computer programmes which were designed to facilitate English learning, and examine their strengths and weaknesses. The course itself utilised ICT facilities to facilitate students' learning by introducing students to the use of a blog. Students were required to create a personal blog on www.wordpress.com and post all their ICT course assignments on their personal blog. I noticed that most of the students were very excited and eager to do it, while a few of them felt nervous every time it came to touching and using computers and the internet because they had not had much previous experience with them. Even though the process of learning was not as fast as expected due to students' different computer skill levels, their eagerness was nevertheless very impressive.

Assisting students in creating the blog and considering its potential to support language teaching and learning (as I will discuss in chapter 2 section 2.2.1) inspired me to learn and explore possible ways to utilise it in English teaching, more specifically in teaching EFL writing skills. Writing has been an area of English skills that has been of concern to every lecturer in the institution. The lecturers who had been supervising students with their dissertation had raised issues of the need to provide greater support to students in order to improve their academic writing skills in their first year study through the academic writing class. At the university level in Indonesia, particularly in English departments, students need good standard academic writing skills in English not only for their dissertation, but also for working with paper assignments in various courses throughout their study. Moreover, some universities even require their students to reach a certain standard level of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) in order to graduate (Johnstone, 2010).

According to Richards and Renandya (2002), writing has been viewed as the most difficult skill for second and foreign language learners to master. The skills involved in writing are highly complex as foreign language writers have to be concerned with higher level skills of planning and organising as well as lower level skills such as spelling, punctuation and word choice (Richards & Renandya, 2002). The complexity of skills required in foreign language writing requires writing teachers to explore and examine innovative tools with the potential to support EFL writing.

In the English departments of different universities in Indonesia, there are various practices of teaching writing as “the objectives and contents of writing courses are shaped by the needs of the students and the institutions” (Widiati & Cahyono, 2009, p. 143). In the institution in which my study was carried out, academic writing has been made a compulsory subject for students of the English department. Given freedom by the university to design their own teaching practices, writing lecturers in the university make their own decision about how to teach the courses. As a result, various characteristics of the lecturer such as their education background, teaching and learning experiences, their personal beliefs and principles about learning and teaching writing influence the approaches they apply.

By reading literature on tools to assist writing development and considering the commitment of my university to utilise ICT to support teaching and learning as well as my experiences in teaching the “ICT in language learning” course for the first semester Masters students of the graduate school, I came up with an idea to introduce and facilitate the use of online portfolios in an EFL writing class. An online portfolio is part of online space where learners purposefully select and store diverse evidence of what

they have learned at particular times and which they have reflected on and designed for a particular audience (Barrett 2005; Hartnell-Young, Harrison, Crook, Pemberton, Joyes, Fisher & Davies, 2007; Joyes, Gray & Hartnell-Young, 2010). The use of the online platform enables students to publish their work and develop learning activities such as giving constructive comments and input to their peers' work. Online portfolios can be created and developed in various online platforms such as a blog, which is a personal web page that is easy to use and gives the users the opportunity to present information and interact with other users (Sim & Hew, 2010).

Having my own experiences in using an online portfolio and reading literature on the use of online portfolios to assist writing, I believed that the availability of space for working together using the online platform would be an incentive for students to learn writing, a skill that students need to keep practising in order to develop. Moreover, as a teacher I believed that in order to support successful learning, teachers should continually improve the way they facilitate lessons by, for instance, utilising the potential of technology as mentioned earlier.

Reflection on my own learning experiences has shaped my belief about the determining factors of students' successful learning. In addition to the teacher's support, I believe that learners play important roles in their own successful learning. When I was a student at my undergraduate study in an English education study programme, there was a compulsory course entitled SPD (Service Programme Design) which all students had to take and pass before they graduated. During this course, the undergraduate students of the English education study programme were taught the concept of curriculum. Students were also trained how to develop teaching materials and design an English course

programme. Moreover, students were given various tasks for their personal and professional development. Even though the goal of the course had been determined, students were given a lot of freedom to manage their own learning. Students were also required to complete some projects as group tasks. One of the group tasks in the course was teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a group project. In this project, students were required to design an English for Specific Purposes programme to be offered to potential clients that could include hotel staff, hospital staff or staff of any potential companies. Students were given freedom to choose their group, plan their programme (prepare any necessary skills to run the programme, write a proposal, set the deadlines, write a project report, etc.). It became a valuable new experience for me to manage my own learning with the teacher functioning as a guide. As a group, my friends and I experienced success after a proposal of my group for an ESP programme was accepted by one company. This feeling of success energised and motivated my group to give our best efforts. Every member of the group engaged in various activities to improve our teaching English skills. We used English in our group meetings to help us with our English speaking fluency, and we wrote our group progress report in English as part of writing practice. Since the programme involved a development of teaching ESP skills, we experienced a valuable learning process that we managed ourselves. This course became an important turning point for my professional life as a teacher. It formed a belief that in order to be successful in learning, the learners must be actively engaged in their learning process, able to motivate themselves, able to evaluate their own learning and understand the importance of others in achieving their language learning goals.

My personal beliefs about learning have truly influenced my perceptions on teaching and my teaching practices. This kind of belief about learning which was shaped by my experiences and which had a deep impact on my perception about teaching and my teaching practices raised my interest and intention to take into account learner autonomy and motivation in my attempt to support EFL writing students using technology through action research. Even though the concept of learner autonomy was not clear or even familiar to me until I read relevant literature, I have recognised through my learning experiences different aspects of learner autonomy as a capacity beneficial for my learning such as the ability to manage one's own study, ability to self-motivate, and awareness of the importance of others to achieve the learning goals. My literature reading has also guided me to develop my interest in reflective learning and feedback as well as develop my understanding of the necessity of those concepts in my attempt to teach an EFL writing class using the online portfolio and to investigate the impact of the online portfolio implementation on learner autonomy and motivation.

A number of research studies show the significance of learner autonomy in language learning. Jiao (2005) mentioned that learner autonomy enhances the learners' motivation and leads to more effective learning. Besides, learner centredness and autonomy are necessary because it is impossible for instructors to offer the individualised help students need at all times (Cotterall, 1995; Dias, 2000, Porto, 2007). Even when learner autonomy is not stated explicitly as an objective of the curriculum, teachers need to think of ways to raise students' awareness of their responsibility for their own learning due to the existence of new technologies that stimulates "the demands of more recent modes of learning (distance learning, flexible learning, blended learning etc.)" (Lamb, 2008, p.270).

Learner autonomy has been claimed as a western concept that is based on western ideology and thus irrelevant to all non-western contexts (Adamson & Sert, 2012) such as in the Indonesian context. The practices of English teaching in the Indonesian context, which tend to be highly teacher-centred and emphasise on adherence to curriculum and testing, “contrast with Western approaches which emphasise that learning should be student-centred, contextual, life-long and promote self-regulation” (Mbato, 2013, p.3). However, I believe that autonomy is an innate capacity which learners already have in varying degrees (Smith, 2003) regardless of the cultural contexts that might either promote or hinder the capacity. This study is intended to investigate the concept of learner autonomy in the Indonesian context with some cultural issues which I will elaborate in chapter 2 section 2.3.2.

My intention to conduct action research project is due to my position as an English teacher who has been sent by my institution to take my doctoral study as part of the teacher development programme, as I stated earlier. Through action research, it was expected that I could make a contribution to the institution by developing myself personally and professionally, and to bring about changes in the organisation (Anderson & Jones, 2000). Bearing this situation in mind, my positionality then requires me to stand as an insider and outsider, that is a practitioner involved in a doctoral research within my own institution. In this regards, Anderson and Herr (2005) argued,

With the advent of highly educated professionals who have acquired research skills and are enrolled in doctorate programmes, action research dissertations are often done by organisational insiders who see it as a way to deepen their own reflection on practice toward problem solving and professional development. In such cases, the researcher and the practitioner may be one and the same (p.29).

I believed that as a practitioner with research skills I have developed as a result of my PhD study, I would be able to contribute knowledge in my field. Knowledge would be constructed by my experience of conducting action research with all participants involved in my specific context. Wallace (1998) stated that knowledge is informed by practice and conversely, practice is guided by knowledge. Moreover, I believe that teachers with their understanding of their roles are able to bring about change resulting in better education.

In summary, the increasing need for higher education students' EFL writing competence, the existence of technology to support language learning, my intention to improve my teaching practice and my my interest in learner autonomy and motivation guided me to conduct research on the use of online portfolios to facilitate students in developing their EFL writing skills through an action research project by taking into account their autonomy and motivation.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Although writing is an important skill to which all EFL programmes at Indonesian universities give a high priority, based on my experience, many students still face serious difficulties in achieving good competence in this skill. My observations and experiences as an EFL learner and teacher in Indonesia suggest some possible reasons why it is difficult for many Indonesian students to achieve a good competence of EFL writing. Among the possible reasons I highlight is students' lack of enthusiasm to learn and practise the EFL writing skills. Learning tools that enable students to develop enthusiasm and continuously improve their writing competence need to be developed and implemented.

There is a well-established body of literature focusing on the use of technology to facilitate students' learning EFL writing. However, relatively limited research has been conducted which focuses on the exploration of students' experiences in using an online portfolio to develop their writing that takes into account learner autonomy and motivation in the Indonesian context. Considering the tools which it has such as posting, documenting and commenting tools, I assumed that the online portfolio has great potential to facilitate students' writing development and promote learner autonomy in an Indonesian EFL writing class. Any effort to examine the potential of an online portfolios in the EFL writing class would, I believe, be worthwhile. Moreover, I believed that implementing such technology tools in the Indonesian context would have unique challenges which would be revealed through this research.

1.3 Aims of the study

As I mentioned earlier in the background of the study (section 1.1), my intention to research the use of the online portfolio for teaching EFL writing in my own class began with the desire to support students to develop their EFL writing by utilising the technology tools that I believed had potential to support the writing learning process. Moreover, my personal learning and teaching experiences had raised my interest in learner autonomy and my professional development as a teacher. As an EFL teacher with my previous learning and teaching experiences, I believed that it was necessary to examine my own teaching in order to succeed in supporting students to achieve their learning goals.

After learning myself about online platforms (blogs), using the tools and understanding their potential to support students' learning, particularly EFL writing, I became

interested in introducing the blog to my students, facilitating students to use it as a platform for their online portfolio, and explore students' experiences in utilising the online portfolio to improve their EFL writing. Learner autonomy and motivation became my other areas of interest due to my belief that students' ability to manage their own learning and their engagement in the learning process are necessary for their successful learning. Moreover, the significance of learner autonomy in foreign language learning success has been evidenced as discussed previously. Action research was used as I had been concerned with how I could improve my teaching practice, particularly, in teaching EFL writing using technology.

1.4 Research questions

In relation to the above research aims, this study is intended to address the following questions:

1. Regarding my teaching experiences and emerging problems in the process of online portfolio implementation
 - a. How do I experience "teaching writing" using the online portfolio?
 - b. What problems emerge during the online portfolio implementation?
2. Regarding students' writing development
 - a. How do students' perceive their writing development throughout the online portfolio implementation?
 - b. How do students revise their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation?
3. Regarding students' autonomy and motivation
 - a. What aspects of learner autonomy do students exercise throughout the online portfolio implementation (if any)?

- b. What motivates students in learning writing skills, using the online portfolio?
- c. What is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation?

As I mentioned earlier in the previous section (section 1.3), the main purpose of this study is to support students to develop their EFL writing skills by utilising the online portfolio. However, I presented the research questions concerning my teaching experiences during the study before the other research questions as this enabled me to describe my activities during the action research in detail and provided more narrative about the research in general.

1.5 Significance of the study

Considering the importance of EFL writing skills for university students in Indonesia, the availability of information and communication technologies and the significance of learner engagement in the learning process, efforts to facilitate students' learning of EFL writing using the available technology in different contexts, need to be made. With its potential, technology can be a beneficial tool which can support learning. However, it must be examined not only for its promise and intended purpose, but also "in terms of its actual implementation and consequences and its actual uses and their side effects and outcomes, in its social, political, economic and cultural context" (Papagiannis, Douglas, Williamson & Le Mon, 1987, pp.113-114). This study is intended to investigate, in an Indonesian context with its unique characteristics, students' experiences in using online portfolios as a means of learning EFL writing. Moreover, the aspects of learner

autonomy and motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation, as well as possible obstacles and how to deal with them will be explored in the study.

This research focused on my own class in order to provide in-depth qualitative data. It was also intended to enhance my own teaching ability. However, it was expected that there would be implications for other classes and to different stakeholders in English education in Indonesia and beyond. I provide these in the conclusion to my thesis, so that other teachers can use them to reflect on their own practice.

1.6 Organisation of the thesis

The thesis comprises seven chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, teacher's experiences in the online portfolio implementation and the emerging problems, online portfolios and students' writing development, learner autonomy and motivation in the online portfolio implementation, and conclusion. The introduction has explained the background and described the context of my study, statement of the problem, aims of my research, research questions, significance of the study and organisation of my thesis. The literature review chapter discusses the body of literature in which my study is located and intended to make a contribution, and also the theoretical framework of my study. Research Methodology contains my justification of approaches and methods used to generate the research data to address my research questions. The findings and discussions are presented in chapters four, five, and six with reference to the literature. The conclusion chapter summarises important research findings with regards to their educational implications. Limitations of the research and suggestions for future research are also outlined in this last chapter.

1.7 Summary and reflection

In this chapter, I have presented the background and context in which my research has been carried out. I have touched upon important concepts involved in the study which include EFL writing, online portfolio, learner autonomy and motivation. I reflected on my past learning and teaching experiences, which had led me to my areas of interest and understanding of the key concepts within my interest. Even though determining the focus of my research took me a considerable time and effort, and it required me to keep changing the focus along my research process, retaining my primary goal of conducting my research, which is to help my students improve their EFL writing skills by utilising the technology, helped me to understand that, in my attempt to achieve my primary goal, it is necessary to take into account learner autonomy as a means rather than as an end. Having determined my primary goal and focus, I formulated my research questions, which focus on my experiences in facilitating students' learning and the emerging problems throughout the online portfolio implementation, aspects of students' writing development, and learner autonomy and motivation. I then presented the significance of my study and the organisation of my thesis in the subsequent sections.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Reading literature in areas related to my research aims and questions has broadened my horizons, but at the same time it has been a challenging process in my research journey. Firstly, because I started from the position where I still had to specify my research focus, and at the same time I had to be open for any new ideas emerging from my reading. Secondly, the relevant theories of my research areas needed to be organised and linked to give clear boundaries for my research scope and to guide me to answer my research questions. Moreover, it was necessary to identify what my study can contribute to the existing literature. As stated in chapter 1, I was interested in implementing the online portfolio as an e-learning tool to teach EFL writing and in investigating learner autonomy and motivation during the implementation. In order to have an understanding of the theories within my areas of interest, this chapter is devoted to a review of the literature in the areas of teaching foreign language writing, e-learning, learner autonomy and motivation. Moreover, as the online portfolio implementation incorporated feedback activities and reflection, theories of reflective learning and feedback as a form of formative assessment will also be discussed in this chapter.

Approaches to teaching foreign language writing will be reviewed in the first section and include previous studies regarding the implementation of the approaches in the Indonesian context. In the second section, e-learning, which shapes the context of this study, will be elaborated. The concept of the online portfolio as the e-learning tool applied in this study will be discussed under this section with a review of some previous studies concerning its implementation in teaching EFL writing. Theories of feedback

and reflective learning will be explored in the sections after the literature review of the online portfolio. The discussion will then be followed with theories of autonomy in language learning and motivation. The discussion of autonomy starts with its definition, and is followed by its relationship to e-learning. Theories of motivation will be discussed with regards to autonomy and e-learning.

2.1 Approaches in teaching foreign language writing

Writing is the most difficult skill for second and foreign language learners to master due to the difficulty that “lies not only in generating and organising ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text” (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p.303). The skills involved in writing are highly complex as foreign language writers have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organising as well as lower level skills such as spelling, punctuation, and word choice (Richards & Renandya, 2002). This complexity requires writing teachers to select appropriate approaches in teaching these skills. Prior to my decision regarding which approaches would be appropriate to my research, existing approaches and their practices including in the Indonesian context will be explored. The different approaches to teaching EFL writing derived from my literature reading involve product approach, process approach, genre approach, and process genre approach. I will elaborate on these approaches in subsequent sections.

2.1.1 Product approach

Product approach in writing was initiated by Fogarty (1959) to refer to the traditional ways of writing instruction. Casanave (2003) suggested that this approach focuses on correct form, grammar and translation. With this approach, the students wrote in

English and had their submissions evaluated by the teacher. Ultimately, students may or may not see their papers again.

According to Kinneavy (1971), components of communication that include writer, audience, and (knowledge of) the world determine the type of writing products. The text with more emphasis on the writer will have expressive features that can be found in, for example, journals or diaries. Emphasising the audience component will produce a text with persuasive features such as argumentative or persuasive essays. If it focuses more on (knowledge of) the world, referential features will be seen, as can be found in reports or expositions.

There are some approaches that shared the same characteristics as the product approach, for example, the “controlled composition” approach that views the writer as “simply a manipulator of previously learned language structures” (Silva, 1987, p.7). In the “controlled composition” approach, an English teacher plays the role of a proofreader, who is not especially concerned with quality of ideas or expression, but instead, focuses primarily on formal linguistic aspects. The text is viewed as “a collection of sentence patterns and vocabulary items, a linguistic artifact, a vehicle for language practice” (Silva, 1987, p.5). Another common approach in the product approach category involves a focus on *contrastive rhetoric* (Kaplan, 1967). According to Kaplan (1966), as EFL writing students write English as a foreign language, which differs from their first language culturally and linguistically, teaching EFL writing should involve raising understanding and awareness to students about rhetorical differences in standard English. Various learning activities can take place in this approach. Silva (1987) suggested writing exercises that include imitating the formats of paragraph/essays,

paragraph completion, sentence sequencing, and identifying elements of paragraphs/essays (topics, controlling ideas, and supporting ideas). Students in the writing class that implement this approach are asked to focus on the language form and “choose among alternative sentences within the context of a given paragraph or longer discourse” (Silva, 1987, p.6).

The product approach and other common approaches in the product approaches category, in principle, focus on the same objective which is to create a final product. Accuracy in terms of mechanical aspects (grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary) of the standard English becomes a major concern, whether it is the writing of a report, journal, paragraph, or essay. This kind of approach, in relation to the components of communication (writer, audience, or knowledge of the world) as mentioned earlier, requires conventional organisation such as in five-paragraph essay (introduction, three paragraph body, and the conclusion) and in paragraph writing, which should include a topic sentence (a sentence stating the main idea of the paragraph) and controlling idea (part of topic sentence which states the specific area to discuss). Moreover, the product approach is basically teacher-centered in nature, as in this approach

the teacher tells the students what and how to write, and all products are written for the teacher. The products are graded, corrected, and commented on without any additional input, and then returned to the students (Jones, 2006, p.34).

In the same vein, Badger and White (2000) stated that in the product-based approach, the task of writing deals mainly with students’ knowledge of the language structure, and students develop their writing through imitating the input in the form of texts given by the teacher.

Indicating the strength of the product approach, Badger and White (2000, p.157) view the approach as an approach that recognises “the need for learners to be given linguistic knowledge about texts, and they understand that imitation is one way in which people learn” (Badger and White, 2000, p.157). Moreover, Myles (2002) stated that native-like models of writing will minimise students’ errors in writing.

There have been various studies of the implementation of the product-based approach. In the Indonesian context, a study was conducted by Cahyono and Mukminatien (2002) to examine the impact of structure-based writing assignment, an assignment based on product-approach, on students’ argumentative essay in an English department. The approach proved to be effective in reducing students’ grammatical errors. Another study conducted by Setyono (2014) shows that a number of high schools in Indonesia employed the product approach of writing instruction, which was characterised by “the linear model of instruction in which learners do not receive adequate time and opportunities to produce the final product of writing through revising process” (p.481). Students were expected to follow a certain rhetorical style prescribed by the teacher, show accuracy in grammar, and produce well-organised pieces of writing. The study indicates that the use of the product approach in teaching writing, results in some improvements in the grammatical accuracy of the students’ writing. However, as the skills to organise ideas is equally important in the formation of writing, the approach implemented in teaching writing should be able to facilitate the development of both language skills and the skills to organise ideas. The studies researching the implementation of product approach mentioned earlier show that the product approach could not fulfil the need to improve both important areas of writing skills. The weaknesses of the product based approach have been confirmed by Badger and White

(2000) who stated that the product based approach does not give sufficient roles to the process skills (such as planning a text), and it tends to undervalue the students' existing "knowledge and skills they bring to the classroom" (p.157).

2.1.2 Process approach

As one of the pedagogical approaches in the foreign language writing context, the "process approach" was introduced by Vivian Zamel in 1976 (Matsuda, 2003). The emergence of the "process approach" was due to the fact that none of the existing approaches during that time ("controlled composition" and "traditional rhetorical" approaches which were product based), adequately fostered thought or its expression (Silva, 1987). Unlike the approaches focusing on the final written product, the process approach (in its various formats) is concerned with the process of writing.

In the process approach, "the composing process was seen as a non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (Zamel 1983, p.165). In other words, the process approach of writing views the writing process as a complex problem-solving process. The process-based approach does not view writing as a reproduction of syntactic or discourse structures which learners had learned previously. Instead, "it views writing as a process of developing organisation as well as meaning" with invention strategies, multiple drafts, and feedback from both teacher and peers (Matsuda, 2003, p.21). This view indicates that interaction and communication take place in the process of writing. Moreover, Matsuda (2003, p.21) mentioned that "advanced L2 writers are similar to L1 writers and would benefit from instruction emphasising the process of writing".

In line with Matsuda's views, Silva (1987) previously argued that in the classroom context, the process approach of writing encourages a positive learning environment that enables the learners to cooperate with others and to try different ways through the process of their writing. The teacher's role is

to help students develop viable strategies for getting started (finding topics, establishing audience and purpose, generating ideas and information, focusing and planning structure and procedure), for drafting (encouraging multiple drafts), and for revising (adding, deleting, modifying ideas; rearranging; and editing with attention to vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics (Silva, 1987, p.8).

Some authors suggested the typical features of the process approach in many English writing classes which involve prewriting exercises, reflection on writing, teacher and peer formative feedback, multiple redrafting cycles, and interactions with teachers and peers through conferencing and group discussion (Auerbach, 1999; Ortega, 1997; Susser, 1993). Moreover, Jones (2006, p.38) stated that, though not everyone works on the same process, "basically the various phases of writing include; prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing."

In the Indonesian context, the process approach has been examined in various studies. Widiati and Cahyono (2009), reported some studies that examined various strategies in the process approach of writing such as peer feedback and conferencing. In a study conducted by Antoni and Gunawan (2004), the process-oriented approach was revealed as an effective approach that encourages students to revise their writing drafts throughout their process of producing the final product. Another study conducted by Laksmi (2006) also incorporated feedback for students to revise their writings and suggested that students felt more confident with their writing through the rewrite-revise process before they submit the final draft of their writings. Although the process based

approach offers some advantages such as fostering thought and encouraging cooperation among learners, as mentioned earlier, this approach has been lack of concern on the kinds of text the learners are expected to write. Moreover, focusing on the same set of processes, the process approaches do not give sufficient input concerning linguistic knowledge which is crucial for writing learners to write successfully (Badger & White, 2000).

2.1.3 Genre approach

According to Badger and White (2000), “Genre approaches have strong similarities with product approaches and, in some ways, genre approaches can be regarded as an extension of product approaches” (p.155). Both product and genre approaches view writing as essentially linguistic. The stages involved in the product and genre approaches in the classroom practice are also similar. However, the genre approach is different from the other two approaches discussed earlier in that the genre approach puts the emphasis on the various social contexts in which the text is produced. According to Dudley-Evans (1997), there were three stages in genre approaches to writing. In the first stage, students were introduced to a model of a particular genre to be analysed. In the next stage, students are given exercises to manipulate language forms that are relevant to their needs of the necessary language forms. After becoming familiar with the genre through analysing the text model and exercising the relevant language forms, students then try to produce their own text. Flowerdew (1993) indicated different kinds of writing associated with different situations such as research articles, sales letter and report. The need of social contexts to emphasise differs amongst learners in different institutions, and thus there will be implications on the syllabus of the writing class.

Moreover, the genre approach pays attention to the cultural and linguistic resources necessary for the learners to engage in critical texts (Hyland, 2003; Johns, 2002).

Some authors view genre as a synonym of *text type*, which is the language types used in writing such as narratives, descriptions, compare and contrast, processes, cause and effect, expositions, persuasion, and argumentation (Paltridge, 2002). On the other hand, other authors distinguish between genre and text type (Jones, 2006); they refer genre to a specific purpose of a text which is written or spoken in a particular social and cultural context (e.g newspaper, a Web site and other genres suggested by Flowerdew (1993) as mentioned earlier,) and viewed by a discourse community (Hyland, 2003; Silva, 1987). There are various examples of genre, such as novels, essays, scientific and lab reports, research reports, lectures, resumes, legal texts, different types of letters, e-mail messages, and so on (Adam & Artemeva, 2002; Johns, 2003, 2002). Distinguishing genre and text type is particularly important when it deals with English for academic purposes (EAP) and English for specific purposes (ESP) as those two fields deal with different aspects of language (Paltridge, 2002).

As reported by Widiati and Cahyono (2009), some studies focusing on the genre-based approaches to teaching EFL writing in the Indonesian context have been carried out. For example, Rozimela (2004) examined the effects of the genre-based approach toward the development of students' EFL writing and revealed that explicit teaching had enabled students to improve their understanding of aspects of language needed to develop argumentative essays. Applying the genre-approach, students were taught writing in some stages. It was started with the introduction of two model texts of argumentative essays for the students to understand some features of argumentative genre. Following

that, students developed and organised their ideas to be a basis for them to write their essay. After having introduced features of argumentative essay, then developed and organised their ideas, students eventually produced their own text. Guidance about general characteristics of the argumentative essay was provided throughout the process of writing. Through the study, it was also revealed that, by practising the use of language in context, students were able to activate and use effectively their knowledge of the language for communicative purposes. Another study was conducted by Emilia (2005) in an EFL tertiary teaching context in Indonesia. The study revealed that a programme of teaching EFL writing using a genre-based approach was successful. The genre-based approach helped students enhance their understanding of the target argumentative genre with clear schematic structure. Moreover, the approach improved students' ability to use evidence and information from various resources to support their arguments. After being taught to write with the genre-based approach, students' skills of argumentative writing improved. However, the study revealed some issues to do with "students' low motivation to read and their lack of familiarity with reading texts critically", the need for more comprehensive exploration of grammar relevant to argumentative essay, and the need to teach "critical reading to EFL beginner learners due to their language restrictions" (Emilia, 2005, p. 278).

The studies discussed above revealed the advantages of the genre approach including the success of the implementation of such an approach in the Indonesian context (see Rozimela, 2004). However, students from different backgrounds might have different levels of the writing skills they need to produce a particular genre of text. Badger and White (2000) have identified the need for an approach that takes into account the skills

needed to produce a text and the active roles students play in building the skills. They suggested an alternative approach, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.1.4. Process genre approach

As discussed previously, product approach, process approach and genre approach each has its own strengths and weaknesses. As the weaknesses and strengths of each approach have been identified, it became apparent that the three approaches are complementary (Badger & White, 2000).

Badger and White (2000) suggested that the incorporation of the three approaches can be done by starting with one approach and then adapting it. According to White and Arndt (1991), the lack of input, as a weakness of the process approach could be solved by for example, group work, where learners can give and receive feedback from their peers. Moreover, a model of a text can be given after students write their first draft in a process based approach writing class (White 1987). Even though adapting an approach has resulted in important developments in teaching second language writing practices, Badger and White (2000) identified an approach that synthesises the product, process and genre approaches which they refer to as process genre approach. In this approach, the writing class essentially recognises that

writing involves knowledge about language (as in product and genre approaches), knowledge of the context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing (as in genre approaches), and skills in using language (as in process approaches) writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential (as in process approaches) and by providing input to which the learners respond (as in product and genre approaches)" (Badger & White, 2000, p.157-58).

In more recent literature, Pasand and Haghi (2013) postulated that an integration of the three approaches to EFL writing enables the learners to gain the skills from each

approach, transfer them to different learning modes, and lead them to achieve better writing performance. Moreover, he suggested some steps in teaching writing practices starting with teaching rhetorical patterns in a product-based approach. It is then followed with familiarisation of different organisations of text by showing models of text and work on them. Peer feedback activities involving interaction amongst learners can be made part of the teaching practice in the process-based approach.

Students from different groups who start their writing from various stages will develop their writing differently, and the need for input as well as the kinds of input will be different amongst them. Learners who are knowledgeable and skilled in producing a certain genre may not need much input and can proceed with the process of writing. In other cases, a group of learners may lack knowledge of language forms that are appropriate to a particular audience, and thus need more input on language knowledge in relation to the particular audience to whom they write the text. The input in a process genre approach can be drawn from the teacher, other learners and text (examples of the target genre).

Drawing on the process genre approach suggested by Badger & White, Nordin and Mohammad (2006) emphasised the need to make learners aware that they write in a social context and situation to achieve a particular purpose before proceeding to a process of multiple drafts and ending it with a finished product.

The students of EFL writing class in the current study enrolled onto an academic writing class to equip themselves with necessary skills for academic purposes, such as writing various essays for different courses they took during their study and writing

their thesis as the final project for their Masters programme. In this learning environment, writing class is expected to fulfil their academic writing needs. Instructions focusing on a range of text genres (comparison-contrast, narrative and argumentative), but at the same time taking into account the process of writing, need to be considered. Moreover, students learned English as a foreign language which is different from their first language in terms of culture and linguistics. For these reasons, this study drew on the process genre approach in order to fulfil the students' needs for skills of writing different genres and give equally high attention to the process of writing with available supporting technology tools (blog) in the EFL writing class in a particular context.

2.1.5 Summary

This section examined the existing approaches to teaching EFL writing. Different approaches to teaching EFL writing which involved product approach, process approach, genre approach, and process genre approach were elaborated. The discussion also involved the implementation of these approaches in some previous studies including those in the Indonesian context. This review has been very useful to inform me of the most appropriate approaches to draw on in teaching EFL writing using online portfolios. The next section will discuss e-learning and blended learning, which shaped the context of the current study.

2.2 E-learning and blended learning

As I stated in the background to my study in section 1.1, the availability of advanced Information and Communication Technology (ICT) that has touched the education field has driven the stakeholders in education to utilise the ICT tools to support teaching and

learning activities. Approaches in teaching and learning that have commonality with the use of information and communication technology have been referred to as e-learning (Clarke, 2004). However, there are various terms for “e-learning” that share ICT-based nature. In this regard, Jones (2003, p. 66) stated, “e-learning, digital learning, computer enhanced learning, no matter which tag is applied, all aim to exploit web-based technology to improve learning for students”. I will discuss further in other sections the literature on e-learning in relation to the theories of learner autonomy and motivation (see sections 2.3.5 and 2.4.4). The current study puts e-learning as one of the main areas in this theoretical review chapter since I need to consider the underlying principles of e-learning in my attempt to implement the online portfolio to facilitate learning.

With regards to my intention to implement the online portfolio to support students’ learning in an EFL writing class, blended learning, as a form of e-learning, became very relevant for discussion. The term “blended learning” is used for describing “a hybrid model of e-learning that allows coexistence of conventional face-to-face teaching methods and newer e-learning activities and resources in a single course” (Littlejohn & Pegler, 2007, p.26). Blended learning was expected to be an approach that could facilitate the implementation of the online portfolio in the writing class. In this regard, Nicol et al. (2003) asserted that, in higher education context, students felt that face-to-face communication provided a bridge into online communication. In the same vein, Little (2006) argued that blended learning approaches provided easier communication for the purpose of collaboration and facilitated a social element that is important to sustain motivation online.

2.2.1 Online portfolio and blog

In this section, the concept of the online portfolio and blog will be elaborated. The discussion of the online portfolio will include some interrelated concepts; online portfolio, digital portfolio and electronic portfolio. The concept of the blog as the online portfolio platform will be explored in the section that follows. The discussion will then move to a review of previous studies focusing on the implementation of online portfolios to teach writing.

2.2.1.1 Online portfolio

The concept of a portfolio has been established by different authors in relation to the availability of supporting technology. Before moving to the discussion of different online portfolio platforms, I will discuss the definition of the term portfolio and its components. The National Learning Infrastructure Initiative (2003), as cited in Barrett (2005, p.438) defined a portfolio as

a collection of authentic and diverse evidence, drawn from a large archive representing what a person or organisation has learned over time, on which the person or organisation has reflected and designed for presentation to one or more audiences for a particular rhetorical purpose.

According to Barrett and Carney (2005), there are three general components of a portfolio; content, process, and purpose. Based on the purpose, a special emphasis is given by educators to the *Assessment (Summative) Portfolios*, and *Learning (Formative) Portfolios* (Barrett and Carney, 2005). Assessment portfolio focuses “on the *product* or outcomes exemplified in documents aggregated over time to meet the expectations of a particular institution as in the case of graduation or certification” (Darling, 201, p.108). Unlike the assessment portfolio, the learning portfolio has a major purpose to enhance learning and document learners’ growth over time. Since the

focus is on the *process* of learning, students improve by experiencing the journey of recording, reflecting, and analysing their documents (Darling, 2001).

Some interrelated terms including online portfolio, digital portfolio and electronic portfolio will be discussed in this section. The online portfolio is defined by García Planas, Taberna Torres, Domínguez García, and Palaua (2015) as a collection of electronic evidences such as text, electronic files, images, multimedia and blog entries, which are stored and managed by a user on an online platform. They suggested that, in the context of learning, the online portfolio contains

different types of productions by students through which they can evaluate their abilities in the context of a discipline or field of study. Moreover, the student productions are reviewed by the staff with evaluation criteria previously established, allowing the student (and others) to see their efforts and achievements into the learning objectives (p.1353).

Barrett (2005) used the term electronic portfolio when it refers to the use of technology providing media types (audio, video, graphics, text) as the container that allows students or teachers to collect and organise the portfolio artefacts. Unlike the online portfolio, the concept of electronic portfolio as defined by Barret (2005) indicates that, the platform on which the portfolio artefacts are stored and managed is not necessarily online. However, the electronic portfolio has been defined in various ways by different authors.

Another definition is suggested by Hartnell-Young et al. (2007). They stated,

An e-portfolio is a purposeful selection of evidence by the learner at a point in time, with a particular audience in mind. It is part of a personal online space, where learners can store their work, record their achievements and access personal course timetables. This space can provide digital resources relevant to a learner's own study (personalised information) and links to other learners (for collaboration and feedback) (p.1).

The definition added more emphasis on the online platform that facilitates collaboration and feedback, compared to the previous definition. In this notion, the electronic portfolio can be used interchangeably with the online portfolio.

Sharing similar main principles of the electronic portfolio concept discussed earlier, Joyes, Gray and Hartnell-Young (2010) define an electronic portfolio as a collection of digital artefacts which articulate learners' experiences, achievements as well as learning. They highlighted that behind the presentation of students' learning products, "lie rich and complex processes of planning, synthesising, sharing, discussing, reflecting, giving, receiving and responding to feedback" (2010, p. 487). With this definition, the concept of an electronic portfolio interrelates with a digital portfolio, another term that has been broadly used. A digital portfolio is referred to as a portfolio where the "materials are produced and shared in digital format such as a Web site" (Kilbane & Milman, 2003, 2005 cited in Milman, 2014, p.7). Another definition of the term digital portfolio was suggested by Wiedmar (1998). He defined it "as a purposeful collection of work, captured by electronic means, that serves as an exhibit of individual efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas" (p.586). Moreover, he stated that a digital portfolio can also be referred to as an online portfolio. This is in line with Barrett's (2000, p.1) statement that the term "online portfolio" is often used interchangeably with the "digital portfolio".

Different concepts of portfolios in e-learning environments established by different authors I have discussed previously indicate that, even though they used different labels (online portfolio, digital portfolio, and electronic portfolio), they all can be referred to as online portfolios that use an online space as the platform. Having identified the

commonalities of the various definitions of the three concepts of portfolio found in the literature, it shows that different authors viewed the concepts as interchangeable. Initially, I used the term electronic portfolio for the confirmation review of my research. In this thesis, however, I draw on the concept of online portfolios after reviewing the three interrelated concepts of portfolios I discussed earlier and considering my intention to use the blog as the online platform of students' portfolio. I view online portfolios as the most specific concept of "portfolio" in the e-learning environment I have discussed, in the sense that they only refer to those that use online spaces for their platform.

2.2.1.2 Blog as the online portfolio platform

A 'blog', an abbreviation of the term weblog, is a personal web page that is easy to use and gives users the opportunity to present information and interact with other users (Sim & Hew, 2010). Holinka (2004) identified several characteristics of blogs as follows:

- they are web sites for asynchronous discussion
- like bulletin boards, users can submit their information directly through the Web site as postings
- it is archivable and searchable (by keyword, by category, or by date)
- they have online discussion space, links and downloadable documents
- blogs can serve as hosts for either group or single conversation in a format that are linkable and permanent.
- chronological postings in the blogs allow a reader to know immediately when and what updates are made in the blog.

In the same vein, Kennedy (2004) highlights the availability of a full content management system (CMS) necessary to facilitate learning such as pages to post news,

learning materials, and a syllabus. As for the types of blog, different types have been developed. Users can choose from online to download versions, from free to paid, for group or individual use and from simple to complex ones, depending on their purpose and budget (Hawkins, 2002; Winer, 2003).

The above characteristics of the blog indicate that it has most features currently implemented in the online portfolio tools. According to Zubizarreta (2009), what is needed to determine the way of administering a portfolio system is the availability of a platform to store various file formats, and provide a space for comments to each entry. Additionally, for ensuring the privacy of the portfolios, the platform should provide security tools such as password protection. Lastly, it should be “user friendly” and attractive in its appearance (Zubizarreta, 2009, p.42). According to Chuang (2010), due to the widespread use of blogs in Education and the features that it offers such as self-publishing, categorisation of postings by topic and or date, easy maintenance and access, and immediate comments that can encourage social interaction as well as facilitate reflection, the blog can serve as an ideal portfolio platform for learning.

This study is focused on the use of online portfolios with a blog as the platform. My choice of the weblog site to use in the study will be discussed in chapter 3 section 3.8.3.1. The next section will discuss the concept of feedback as a form of assessment for learning in the online portfolio.

2.2.1.3 Feedback as a form of assessment for learning in the online portfolio

As discussed in the previous section, the online portfolio can link students to other learners for collaboration and feedback. Specifically in a writing context which is the

focus of this study, Freedman (1987) suggested a comprehensive definition of feedback.

She stated,

feedback on students' writing includes all reactions to writing, formal or informal, written or oral, from teacher or peer, to a draft or a final version. It can also occur in reaction to talking about intended pieces of writing, the talk being considered a writing act. It can be explicit or less explicit (p.5).

The definition is suitable within the current study as the online feedback activities incorporated in the online portfolio implementation became a process of communication through which learners involved in dialogues about their writing performance and writing criteria. In this context, the feedback is intended to provide input for students to develop their writing performance. In this regard, the purpose of feedback is relevant to the concept of assessment for learning. Assessment for learning is intended to provide information on students' performance which is useful to support students' learning and to improve teaching (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Parr & Timperley, 2010). In the context of EFL writing, Lam (2015, p.4) maintained that assessment for learning is aimed to facilitate student learning of writing by means of "alterative assessments" that could include observation, conferences, self- and peer assessment, and portfolios. Furthermore, Lam (2015, p.4) argued that assessment for learning also "serves to provide useful feedback information for students and teachers to improve their learning and instruction, respectively".

The potential benefits of feedback as a form of assessment for learning required teachers and students to understand what the goals of learning are, and to create opportunities for students to receive and give feedback on progress towards intended goals. As argued by Parr and Timperley (2010), if feedback is intended to contribute to students' development in writing, it should allow them "to see where they are currently

positioned relative to the quality performance desired” (p.70). Feedback should indicate “what the key features of a quality performance are, and what is needed to bridge the gap between current and desired performance” (Parr & Timperley, 2010, p.70). In the same vein, Sadler (1989 as cited in Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) argued that, in order for students to benefit from the feedback, they need to understand the standard of a good performance, their current performance in comparison to the good performance, and strategies to reduce the gap between their current performance and the good performance. In their synthesis of literature on good feedback practice, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006, p.205) suggested that good feedback practice should:

1. help clarify criteria of good performance
2. facilitate reflection in learning;
3. provide high quality information to students’ learning;
4. encourage teacher and peer dialogue;
5. encourage positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem;
6. give students opportunity to achieve the desired performance;
7. provide information to teachers which is useful to help shape their teaching.

The principles of the above good feedback practice indicate that the feedback must, in an encouraging way, show the strengths and weaknesses of the students’ work, and give direction of how to improve the weaknesses. When teacher and students become sources of feedback, they are required to have knowledge of the subject matter (Parr & Timperley 2010). In the context of the teacher and peers’ feedback on writing, Parr & Timperley (2010) stated that teachers and students are supposed to know

how texts work to achieve their communicative, rhetorical purposes, including knowledge of the features of text most commonly employed to support writing for a particular purpose. This involves a detailed knowledge of language and of text structures (p.71).

The importance of feedback in the process of writing has been confirmed. For example, Muncie (2000) asserted that feedback is crucial for facilitating students to develop their writing skills as it, in whatever form it takes, can raise within students a sense of reader awareness and give them an outside view of the text. In terms of sources, both peer and teacher can be feedback sources that should not be regarded as contradicting each other, but rather be complementary to each other (Paulus, 1999). The importance of peer feedback has been recognised; however, a study conducted by Yang, Badger and Yu (2006) indicated that the “students valued teacher feedback more highly than peer feedback” (p. 193), and thus they incorporated more teacher feedback than peer feedback.

Other studies confirm that peer feedback enhances students’ learning (Falchikov, 2001) through their engagement in articulating their developing understandings of the materials being learned (Liu & Carless, 2006). Moreover, peer feedback processes are beneficial to

develop skills such as critical reflection, listening to and acting on feedback, sensitively assessing and providing feedback on the work of others. Students can learn not only from the peer feedback itself, but through meta-processes such as reflecting on and justifying what they have done (Liu and Carless, 2006, p.289).

Reviewing the theories concerning the importance of both peer and teacher feedback in students’ learning as well as the requirements of feedback sources has guided me to examine how both sources of feedback (teacher and students) contribute to learners’ writing developments and what problems might emerge when applying the teacher and peer feedback in my students’ learning of EFL writing using the online portfolio. The next section is devoted to a discussion of one of the underlying principles in the

implementation of the online portfolio, which is reflective learning. Along with this, the discussion of reflection as an important element of reflective learning will be included.

2.2.1.4 Reflective learning and reflection in the online portfolio

As the study is intended to examine the utilisation of the online portfolio to facilitate students' learning through documenting and reflecting their learning experiences throughout the course, discussion of the reflective learning concept that underlied the online portfolio implementation is crucial. Boyd and Fales (1983) defined reflective learning as

the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in a changed conceptual perspective (p. 100).

In reflective learning, reflection is used naturally by individuals as a primary means of learning through their own experiences (Boyd & Fales, 1983). There are a number of definitions of reflection stated by different authors. Boyd and Fales (1983) stated that reflection is “the process of creating and clarifying the meaning of experience (present or past) in terms of self (self in relation to self and self in relation to the world)” (p.101). The process results in “changed conceptual perspective” and “has always been the focus of those who seek to understand human growth” (Boyd & Fales, 1983, p.101).

Another definition was suggested by Moon (2001) who stated that reflection is

a form of mental processing – like a form of thinking – that we use to fulfil a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome. It is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge and understanding and emotions that we already possess (p.2).

Both definitions refer to the mental process in order to make sense of experiences.

However, Moon's definition emphasised the types of experiences or ideas to which the

activity of reflection is to be applied. Reflection is to be applied in the ideas that are viewed as complex by the one who reflects on the ideas/experiences. In the context of learning, it can be applied to make sense of new learning experiences. As for the process of reflective learning, Boyd and Fales (1983, p. 106) identified the following steps:

- A sense of inner discomfort that is triggered from some life experiences.
- Identification or clarification of the concern that becomes a key characteristic of reflective learning from other types of mental activity (thinking or problem solving) as in this phase, the problem is conceptualised in relation to the self.
- Openness to new information from internal and external sources, with the ability to observe and take in from a variety of perspectives.
- Resolution expressed as “integration,” “coming together,” “acceptance of self-reality,” and “creative synthesis.” This is the relief stage at which people experience themselves as changed, having learned, or having come to satisfactory point of closure in relation to the issue.
- Establishing continuity of self with past, present, and future. In this stage, the individual is faced with the challenge of relating his or her changed self to the past self, to other areas of his or her present life, and to future behaviour.
- Deciding whether to act on the outcome of the reflective process. In this phase, the new perspective is analysed in terms of its operational feasibility.

In line with the process of reflective learning suggested by Boyd and Fales above, Moon (2001) highlighted the outcomes of reflective process in the learning context which included

learning and material for further reflection; action or other representation of learning; critical review; reflection on the process of learning/functioning; the

development of theory; self-development; decisions or the resolutions of uncertainty; empowerment and emancipation; other outcomes that are unexpected such as images or ideas that may be solutions; feelings/emotion/knowledge about emotions (p.5).

Reflection is helpful to be used when dealing with fitting together diverse ideas; “when we are trying to relate new ideas to what we already know or when new ideas challenge what we already know” (Moon, 2006, p.5). In the same vein, Kohonen (1992) argued,

...theoretical concepts will not become part of the individual’s frame of reference until they have been experienced meaningfully on a subjective emotional level. Reflection plays an important role in this process by providing a bridge, as it were, between experience and theoretical conceptualisation (p.17).

In the academic writing class context that incorporated online portfolios, reflection would be very helpful for students as they deal with new complex ideas and theories of academic writing in addition to the existing knowledge acquired. Moreover, in the context of higher education programme, Moon (2004) stated,

Reflective writing will usually have purpose (e.g., you will be writing reflectively about something that you have to do or have done). It will usually involve the sorting out of bits of knowledge, ideas, feelings, and awareness of how you are behaving and so on. It could be seen as melting pot into which you put a number of thoughts, feelings, other forms of awareness, and perhaps new information (p. 187).

Reflective writing could be applied to anything that is relatively complex (Moon, 2004).

Among the subject matter for reflective writing mentioned by Moon (2004) relevant to this study is that which focuses on how well students complete writing assignments.

Regarding the implementation of reflection in learning, the issue of learners’ ability to write reflectively was a concern for Moon (2001) whose frequent observation showed that

not all students find reflection easy when it is introduced as a specific requirement. Some will simply ‘take to it’, understanding its role in their learning and managing the process well. Some, however, who may be good students otherwise, will not understand what is meant by it – and will ask ‘what is it that you want me to do?’ (p.9)

In facilitating students to learn to reflect, Moon (2004, p.133) suggested stages involving ‘presenting reflection’ and ‘deepening the process of reflection’. Presenting reflection is concerned with students’ understanding of the definition of reflection, why reflection was being used to facilitate their learning, and how reflection is different from more familiar forms of learning. ‘Deepening the process of reflection’ can be done as students practise writing their reflection.

Understanding of the concept and process of reflective learning and reflection is necessary due to the purpose of the study to facilitate reflective learning through the online portfolio implementation. Moon (2001, p.8) mentioned that “among methods for integrating reflective activity into the curriculum” is the use of portfolios. She stated that there are various concepts of portfolio, most of which involve some reflective activity, and “they span a range of methods from the unreflective compilation of work, to collections of coursework and reading with reflective comments, to coursework with an attached overview, to something very akin to a learning journal” (Moon, 2001, p.8). The discussion of reflection is relevant to this study not only because of my intention to implement the online portfolio, but also because of my concern with learner autonomy, a concept which I will discuss in the next section. Reviewing reflection has informed me how it links to learner autonomy. Breen and Mann (1997, pp. 134-136) mentioned that one of the characteristic of autonomous learners is having the “ability to step back from what they are doing and reflect upon it in order to make decisions about what they

next need to do and experience.” Moreover, if learner autonomy development becomes a concern in formal learning, “conscious reflection will necessarily play a central role from the beginning, for the simple reason that all formal learning is the result of deliberate intention” (Little, 1997, p. 94).

This review of theories of reflective learning and reflection informed me of the challenges of incorporating reflection in students’ learning. Regarding the issue of learners’ ability to write reflectively, as I discussed earlier, it is important to help them to understand clearly what reflection is and why it is important in their learning. Giving students insights into reflection could be done through discussing the concept, giving examples and giving them opportunities to reflect on their learning experiences. Providing the record of the students’ learning journey, the online portfolio was expected to support students in reflecting on their learning experiences. With regards to my intention to utilise online portfolios to support my students’ learning of EFL writing, the next section will review previous studies on the implementation of online portfolios in EFL writing.

2.2.2 Studies on the use of online portfolios in EFL writing

The review of previous studies on the online portfolio are expected, as much as possible, to inform me of any potential that online portfolio can offer in my attempt to support students’ learning of EFL writing. As I previously discussed (see section 2.2.1.1), considering the main principle of portfolio and the use of online space as the platform, the term of online portfolio is used interchangeably with electronic portfolio and digital portfolio by different authors. Previous studies on the online portfolio in the EFL writing will therefore involve studies of electronic portfolios and digital portfolios

that are essentially also referred to as online portfolios. There have been a number of research projects concerning the implementation of the online portfolio in language learning, particularly in EFL writing in different contexts, which revealed that the tool has been beneficial in facilitating students' learning.

A study on the implementation of electronic portfolios was conducted by Hung (2009) with EFL college-level students in Taiwan. This study showed that "compiling electronic portfolios promoted learners' self-assessment practice and thus encouraged self-directed language learning" (p.129). Another study was conducted by Valdez (2010). He investigated the use of digital portfolio in students' academic writing in a Philippine University. The students' progress during the course could be seen from the range of topics which were covered in the different essays, and the students' adjustment with regard to the feedback and revision. Their role as writers improved "by carefully structuring their outlines, selecting sources for supporting points for their thesis and selecting appropriate language to fit their purposes" (Valdez, 2010, p.165).

Burner (2014), in his review of recent studies (Chang, Wu & Ku, 2005; Barret, 2007; McLaren, 2012, Hung, 2012) concerning the implementation of electronic portfolios in foreign language writing contexts using an action research approach, identified not only positive results, but also some problems that must be taken into account by those who intend to use the tool to facilitate learning. Electronic portfolios provide useful evidence for formative and diagnostic assessment (McLaren, 2012). Moreover, electronic portfolios generate a positive contribution on learning by "building a community of practice, facilitating peer learning, enhancing learning of content knowledge, promoting professional development, and cultivating critical thinking" (Hung, 2012, p.21). On the

other hand, some problems were identified in the electronic portfolio implementation. In their study, Chan et al. (2005) revealed that two students who felt intimidated by writing English did not respond to the electronic portfolio positively, and almost half the students found difficulties in writing reflection as part of the electronic portfolio. Moreover, Hung (2012) revealed a negative washback of the electronic portfolio concerning learner anxiety which is caused by larger audiences and students' resistance to technology. With regards to the conditions required for successful electronic portfolio implementation, Chang (2012 as cited in Burner, 2014) emphasised the need for the school administrators to support action research by maintaining the school server and administering the portfolio websites. This is supported by Barret (2007) who also highlighted the importance of school support when a teacher intends to implement the electronic portfolio to support students' learning. In addition, McLaren (2012) suggested the need for teachers to develop students' skills to give and receive feedback.

Another relevant study is concerned with whether electronic portfolios differ from the traditional version of portfolios in their contribution to supporting students' learning. Aliweh (2011) investigated the effects of electronic portfolios on students' writing competence and autonomy in an Egyptian EFL college. The study involved sixty students who were randomly assigned to two groups: an experimental group with the implementation of electronic portfolios, and a control group with the implementation of traditional paper portfolios. Even though the study has an ethical issue as two different groups were not treated fairly (Wellington, 2000), it is worth reviewing the impact of the electronic portfolio on the experimental group. The study found that there was no significant difference on students' writing competence between the two groups after the treatment. The finding could be a consideration for teachers before implementing the

electronic portfolio in their teaching. But it must be noted that the study had some weaknesses that might have affected the results of the electronic portfolio implementation, as admitted by the researcher. In the context in which the study was conducted, technology was relatively new, and students had limited online participation due to lack of computer access. Moreover, as developing an electronic portfolio is a process that demands time and effort, twelve weeks might not have been an ideal period of time for this particular group of students to result in a significant impact. Participants still worked hard on technology skills, while they were supposed to focus more on portfolio content. The result cannot be generalised since different groups of participants with different technology skills might produce different results. If an attempt to utilise online portfolios in a different context is expected to be successful, the potential of online portfolios in facilitating students' learning should be supported with careful planning and implementation. The required precondition of technology facilities, students' technology skills, teacher's facilitation and appropriate period of time must be taken into account.

The concept of the online portfolio has been implemented in the learning of EFL writing facilitated by blogs, and this implementation has been examined by different authors. However, the research focus on blogs has expanded not only into the writing skills but also into other variables of learning EFL writing, such as students' motivation, autonomy and students' perceptions of learning using blogs (Hung, 2009; İnceçay & Genç, 2013; Lowe and Williams, 2004; Sari, 2014).

İnceçay and Genç (2013) investigated the impacts of blogs on the writing efficacy levels of advance foreign language learners in a university in Turkey. Thirteen students

enrolling English Composition Course took part. They were required to create a student blog, complete weekly writing assignments, and write comments on their peers' blogs. The students were trained to create and organise their blogs prior to the writing assignment. The study revealed that the blog had enhanced students' reflectivity and monitoring skills. Students' writing self-efficacy levels have to some extent increased as a result of peer-feedback facilitated by the blog.

In the same vein, Lowe and Williams (2004) highlighted the value of blogs in facilitating the writing process. In their study, blogs were used to facilitate personal reflections, write their drafts, post their drafts, and read the readers' responses. The results of the study suggested that student writers benefited from the readers' comments in the process of producing their writing as the use of blogs creates a collaborative learning environment in a very supportive way. Other authors (Love, 2004, Olson, 2004) have also confirmed that blogging could support the writing instructional goals by encouraging students to write and participate in the blogging activities.

In an Indonesian context, Sari (2014) examined student-bloggers' attitudes towards the application of the blog in an informal learning situation. She conducted a descriptive case study using interviews as a method to gain in-depth information on the contributions of blog both towards students' process and product of EFL writing. The study involved two student-bloggers as the participants. The two participants were selected due to their devotion, effort and consistency in blogging they showed. The results of the study show that the blog is beneficial and gave positive contributions to students' EFL writing. Students' perceived blogging as a fun writing activity since the blogging activities enabled students to learn autonomously, receive comments as

feedback from readers, and in the context of this study a complete freedom in writing. Sari (2014, p.91) highlighted the contributions of blogging for EFL writing including “multi-literacy, direct feedback from readers, motivation, autonomous learning, critical thinking and language awareness, networking, freedom to write, and self-confidence”. Regardless of the positive contributions of the blog on students’ writing that the study has shown, it must be noted that the study involved students who had been consistently engaging with blogging activities prior to the study. Due to its potential, it is worth examining the use of blog in the formal learning environment involving not only students who had been consistently engaging with blogging, but also those who are not experienced with blogging.

2.2.3 Summary

With regards to my intention to implement the online portfolio in an EFL writing class, particularly in order to inform me the underlying principles of facilitating students in learning EFL writing which involved blended learning environment, theories of e-learning and blended learning were reviewed in this section. The theories of online portfolio and blog as the online portfolio platform were also discussed under this section. The discussion of online portfolio included some interrelated terms (online portfolio, digital portfolio and electronic portfolio). The discussion was then followed with a review of blog as an online portfolio platform including its definition and characteristics. As the online portfolio in this study incorporated feedback and reflection, the concept of feedback as a form of assessment for learning, as well as the theories of reflective learning and reflection were also explored. The last part of this section reviewed previous studies on the use of online portfolio in EFL writing.

2.3 Learner autonomy

In this section, I will review the theories of autonomy in the context of language learning. With regards to my attempt to investigate learner autonomy in an e-learning environment in an Indonesian context, it is necessary to review and examine the existing definitions and other areas comprising the cultural aspect of learner autonomy, the process of fostering learner autonomy in classroom context, the roles of teacher in fostering learner autonomy in classroom context, and how it links with e-learning. A review of learner autonomy is expected to provide me with the key principles for investigating learner autonomy in language learning context. With regards to my teaching agenda, the benefit of such a review is to enable me to develop students' engagement throughout the online portfolio implementation.

2.3.1 Definition and dimensions of learner autonomy

Defining learner autonomy is a complex task (Benson, 2009, Reinders, 2010) due to its multidimensionality (Benson, 2011). However, various definitions of autonomy have emerged during the history of autonomy. The definition of learner autonomy in language learning was first suggested by Holec (1981). He defined autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning” (p. 3). The ‘ability’ in this definition refers to a potential capacity to act in a given learning situation, but not necessarily the actual behavior in that situation. To take charge of one’s own learning means to be responsible for all the decisions related to all the learning aspects that includes determining the objectives, defining the learning contents and the progressions, selecting methods and techniques of learning to be used, monitoring the procedure of acquisition , and evaluating what has been acquired (Holec, 1981). In addition to the capacity to manage

one's own learning as emphasised in Holec's definition, Little (1991) added cognitive aspects of learning underlying one's learning management by defining autonomy as

a capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning. The capacity of autonomy will be displayed both in the way the learner learns and in the way he or she transfers what has been learned to wider contexts (p.4)

Little (1991) gave more descriptions on how an autonomous learner is able to exercise autonomy as a complex capacity. He stated that autonomy is not a synonym of self-instruction that ignores the roles of a teacher. He indicated the importance of the social aspect in autonomy. In the same vein, Dam (1995) highlighted the social aspect of autonomy by stating that autonomy involves “a capacity and willingness to act independently and in cooperation with others, as a socially responsible person” (Dam, 1995, p.102).

Littlewood (1999, p.71) described the capacity of ‘taking responsibility’ as taking ownership (partial or total) of many learning processes such as deciding learning objectives, selecting methods and evaluating. He asserted that students should take responsibility for their own learning not only because all learning can in any case only be carried out by the students themselves but also because they need to develop the ability to continue learning after the end of their formal education. In addition to the previous concepts of learner autonomy, Littlewood put more emphasis on the necessity of autonomy for life-long learning.

Another definition of autonomy has been suggested by Benson (2011, p.58) who stated that “autonomy is the capacity to take control over one's own learning”. The

dimensions of 'control' involve "control over learning management, control over cognitive processes and control over learning content" (Benson, 2011, p.92). Learner autonomy will take different forms according to the person and the context, and a learner can be said to be autonomous when his/her learning has some but not necessarily all of the learner autonomy components (Benson, 2011). In other words, it cannot be said that autonomy is about zero or full capacity. Rather, autonomy involves degrees of capacity depending on the components of the capacity that the learner has.

For Benson, control over learning management is "described in terms of behaviours involved in the planning, organisation and evaluation of leaning" (Benson, 2011, p.92). While learning management refers to observable behaviours, control over learning management refers to cognitive competences underlying the observable behaviours (Benson 2011). The focus of control over learning management is mainly on the cognitive and attitudinal aspects underlying learning management. Learning strategies that are classified as indirect strategies involving metacognitive, social and affective strategies (Oxford, 1990) were identified as an important component shaping the control over learning management (Benson, 2011). Metacognitive strategies include "thinking about the learning process, planning for the learning, monitoring the learning task, and evaluating how well one has learned" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 137). In an extensive taxonomy of social and affective strategies, Oxford (1990) defines social strategies as actions taken in relation to others, while affective strategies are actions taken in relation to self. Social strategies are behavioural, and a learning task that is intended to enhance the social strategies must give students opportunities to interact and cooperate with others.

Control over cognitive processing is purely cognitive as it does not focus on the direct control of behaviour, but rather on “the control over the cognitive processes through which management and content are processed” (Benson, 2011, p.100). He asserted that the capacity that links to this dimension of control includes metacognitive knowledge. Metacognitive knowledge is defined as “stable, stable and sometimes fallible knowledge learners acquire about themselves as learners and the learning process” (Wenden, 1995, p.185). This knowledge is a prominent dimension to the understanding of control over cognitive processing (Wenden, 1998). The three main strategies identified in the literature on autonomy and self-regulation comprising planning, monitoring and evaluation are weak if they fail to connect with a rich knowledge base referred to as metacognitive knowledge (Wenden, 1995). Drawing on Flavell (1979), Wenden (1998) classified this knowledge into person, strategic and task knowledge. Flavell (1979, 1987, as cited in Jiménez Raya, et al., 2007, p.35) described each category of metacognitive knowledge as follows:

- Person knowledge that refers to general knowledge about how human beings learn and process information, as well as individual knowledge of one’s own intellectual strengths and weaknesses in language learning.
- Task knowledge, which is knowledge about the nature and requirements of the different language learning tasks learners are asked to perform in lessons (e.g. listen and complete, read and summarise) as well as knowledge regarding the nature of language learning and its complexity.
- Strategy knowledge that refers to knowledge about the role of strategies in the learning process, that is, knowledge about the best way to tackle language learning. It also includes principles for the choice of learning strategies.

Among the categories of metacognitive knowledge, task knowledge is the most relevant to the idea of control over learning process (Wenden, 1995). This type of knowledge is also defined as “what learners need to know about (i) the purpose of a task, (ii) the task's demands, and (iii) implicit in these considerations, a determination of the kind of task” (Wenden, 1995, p.185). In the language learning context, a task can be “as narrow as learning a new word or as broad as the entire process of learning a target language” (Benson, 2011, p. 110).

Control over learning content is a part of control over learning management concerned with the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of language learning, instead of ‘where’, ‘when’ and ‘how’ (Benson, 2011, p.112). Since language learning is generally enhanced by interaction with others, “there is also a social aspect to control over learning content, which involves the learner’s ability to negotiate over goals, purposes, content and resources with others” (Benson, 1996, as cited in Benson 2011, p. 60). Taking control over learning content in the institutional context is problematic due to potential conflicts students may have with teachers and institutions. Therefore, control over learning content often involves “control over the collective situation of students’ learning and the use of capacities for social interaction that are distinct from those required in the individual management of learning methods” (Macaro, 2008, p. 58-59). In the same vein, Reinders (2010), in relation to the issue of individual freedom of choice, highlights the political element of learner autonomy. He stated that at a practical level in the educational contexts, the development of autonomy might be hindered by government education policies, school curricula and textbooks which must be implemented.

Various dimensions of the capacity for learner autonomy have also been identified by Jiménez Raya et al (2007). They highlighted the multidimensionality of learner autonomy and suggested a conceptual tool of learner autonomy to help teachers examine their own practice. They broke down the capacity for learner autonomy into three main components; learning competence, competence to self-motivate, and competence to think critically. They suggested various sub-competences forming the capacity of autonomy that should be seen as interrelated. The learning competence consists of metacognitive knowledge and beliefs about learning, learning strategies and attitudinal competence. In relation to learners' ability to manage their own learning, which I believe is crucial for students' learning success, the importance of metacognitive knowledge and learning strategies has previously been emphasised by Lamb (2005). Attitudinal competence is referred to "the ability to generate positive attitudes towards the assumption of responsibilities in learning" (Jiménez Raya et al, 2007, p.38). Competence to self-motivate is associated with "creativity, responsibility, healthy behaviour, and lasting change" (Deci & Flaste 1995, p.9). The link between learner autonomy and motivation has been identified by different authors and will be discussed in section 2.4.3. The competence to think critically emphasises the need for an autonomous learner, not only to be able to make his/her own choice, but also to be able to base their choice on rational assessment and criticism (Jiménez Raya et al, 2007). Due to the multidimensionality of learner autonomy, it is impossible to expect that a particular teaching approach can embrace all the components of learner autonomy. Rather, different teaching approaches will touch different aspects of learner autonomy competences.

Since someone having the ability or capacity to take charge of his/her own learning is not necessarily exercising the capacity for the benefit of his/her learning, it is not easy to investigate learner autonomy based on the learners' observable behaviours. In other words, the capacity of autonomy cannot be investigated through students' observable behaviors since, as what Benson (2011) argues, learner autonomy will take different forms according to the person and the context. There are different factors embedded in a particular learning context that can either afford or inhibit autonomous actions such as teaching method, classroom atmosphere, learning media, motivation, students' perceptions towards learning tasks, students' roles as well as teacher's roles. Lamb (2005), despite the continuous debate over the definitions of learner autonomy, emphasises the necessity of listening to the learners if the teacher intends to understand learner autonomy. He stated,

...we need not feel constrained by definitions, but must remain sensitive and open to individual circumstances and contexts. The contextual nature of autonomy suggests that it can be construed in many different ways, and that we must follow the scent rather than look for the specific. What is important is that we must try to understand how elements of autonomy manifest themselves in individuals, bringing us back once again to the necessity to listen to our learners" (Lamb, 2005, p.83).

As the current study is intended to explore students' experiences in learning EFL writing using the online portfolio and investigate how they exercise their autonomy in the particular learning context, it becomes necessary to gain students' perceptions towards that particular learning environment. There are two interrelated types of learner perceptions; perceptions of themselves and perceptions of the learning situation (Weseley, 2012). Perceptions of themselves refer to students' understanding of themselves and their own learning (Williams & Burden, 1999) whereas students' perceptions of the learning situation show how students experience and understand different classroom aspects influencing their learning (Brown, 2009). Students'

perceptions will then be related to the components of learner autonomy on which the analysis of my data will be based.

2.3.2 The cultural issues of learner autonomy in the Indonesian context

In Indonesian culture, “group achievement and cooperation are valued more highly than individual performance” (Mbato, 2013, p. 5). The concept of autonomy has tended to be associated with values such as independence, self-fulfilment and freedom from external constraints which are suitable in Western context, and thus it has sometimes been claimed as having little relevance outside the “individualistic” western contexts in which it first developed (Young, 1986). In the same vein, Adamson and Sert (2012) asserted that learner autonomy has been claimed as a western concept that is based on western ideology and thus irrelevant to all non-western contexts. However, as I discussed earlier in the previous section, learner autonomy has social dimensions (Dam, 1995, Littlewood, 1999), and there are a number of studies showing that learner autonomy is a universal concept that can be applied in different contexts (Little, 1991; Littlewood, 1999, 2000; Zhoulin, 2007). Littlewood (1999) argues that the view (autonomy in language learning unsuited to non-Western context) is unfounded. Instead, it is needed “to match the different aspects of autonomy with the characteristics and needs of learners in specific contexts” (Littlewood, 1999, p.71). Therefore, different types of learner autonomy might be suitable for Asian educational contexts, including the context in which the current study has been carried out. Hart (2002) and Smith (2003) have also examined a concept of autonomy in non-western context and revealed that classroom activities which promoted group autonomy were responded well by university students in the Japanese context.

In the Indonesian context, Lamb (2004) conducted a study on language learning attitudes and activities of junior high school students in provincial Indonesia. His study revealed that “even younger learners already learn English independently of their teacher’s prescriptions, both inside the classroom and outside formal school” (p.229). The local curricula did not recognise students’ openness to the increasing learning opportunities in the local environment. Instead, it “imposed a rigid diet of language items transmitted by teachers and their textbooks and assessed in national exams” (Lamb, 2004, p. 229). Moreover, he suggested, “In this local context, it seems that the promotion of appropriate forms of learner autonomy is essential if the majority of school pupils are not to be frustrated in their struggle to learn English” (Lamb, 2004, p.292). The findings of such studies of learner autonomy outside western contexts suggested that any attempt to support students to foster autonomy in learning must take into account the cultural aspects of the context in which the attempt is made.

In respect of the relevance of the concept of learner autonomy in the Indonesian context, Dardowidjojo (2012, p.320) suggested modifying the concept to fit the cultural values where necessary, and modifying the teachers’ “cultural outlook” to enable them to play roles as facilitators in ways which are culturally appropriate. The adaptation of the learner autonomy concept proposed by Dardowidjojo is in line with what Littlewood (1999, p.72) suggested, which is, learner autonomy should be defined in a broader sense. He suggested that adapting Holec’s view is necessary. As discussed previously in 2.3.1, Holec (1981) stated that learner autonomy involves determining the learning objectives, defining the learning contents, selecting the methods and techniques to be used, and evaluating the learning results. In the Indonesian context, parents send their children to school expecting that their children will learn things and assuming that their

children will be “taught” by their teachers (Dardowidjojo, 2012, p.320). Requiring students to determine, define, select, and evaluate what they want to learn implies an assumption that these students already know what they want to master and also know how to go about it. With regards to this issue, Dardowidjojo (2012, p.320) argued, “asking the students to practically assume the duties of a teacher is just not culturally permitted” in the Indonesian context. However, Ki Hajar Dewantara, a prominent figure in Indonesian education, who was also the first minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia, suggested three significant roles of the teacher in Indonesia; in the front to be a model, in the middle to enhance spirit, and at the back to encourage and supervise (Wardani, 2010). This view of the teacher’s roles indicates that “the teacher needs to develop the capacity to decide when to take a role as an example (in front), when to build the students’ spirit (in the middle), and when to be at the back supporting and supervising” (Mbato, 2013, p.62). This view also indicates that, in the Indonesian context, there is a space for students to play active roles in their learning, not merely receiving information and awaiting instructions from their teachers. Moreover, Lengkanawati (2004, as cited in Mbato, 2013) acknowledges that the dominance of the teachers has been changing since the reform movement in 1998, which ended the authoritarian regime in Indonesia.

Bearing in mind the cultural aspect of the concept of learner autonomy, Littlewood (1999) introduced the concept of proactive and reactive autonomy. He referred to the form of autonomy discussed in the West as proactive autonomy. This concept is indicated by learners’ capacity to take charge of their own learning; to determine their learning objectives, select their learning methods and techniques and evaluate their learning achievement (Holec, 1981, as cited in Littlewood, 1999). The other form of

autonomy, reactive autonomy, which Littlewood (1999) also called as a preliminary step towards proactive autonomy, refers to the form of autonomy that “does not create its own directions but, once a direction has been initiated, enables learners to organise their resources autonomously in order to reach their goal” (p.75). Drawing on the theories of autonomy that takes into account the cultural appropriateness as has been reviewed in this section, it is expected that the current study could investigate Indonesian learners’ autonomy that could be justified as a culturally appropriate concept.

2.3.3 The process of fostering learner autonomy in the classroom context

Having reviewed the definition of autonomy, my next concern will be learner autonomy in classroom practice as my interest is to study the concept of autonomy in an EFL writing class, particularly to investigate how students exercise the concept of autonomy in the EFL writing class.

As stated by Benson (2011, p.123), “autonomy refers to a capacity that learners possess and display to various degrees in different contexts”. Even though it primarily refers to an attribute of learners, factors in learning situations will affect the development and display of this capacity (2011). Since autonomy cannot be ‘taught’ or ‘learned’, as agreed by most researchers, the term ‘fostering autonomy’ is often used to refer to “educational initiatives that are designed to stimulate or support the ‘development’ of autonomy among learners” (Benson, 2011, p.124).

Benson (2011, p.125) classified practices associated with the development of autonomy under six approaches:

1. *Resource-based approaches* emphasise independent interaction with learning materials.
2. *Technology-based approaches* emphasise independent interaction with educational technologies.
3. *Learner-based approaches* emphasise the direct production of behavioural and psychological changes in the learner.
4. *Classroom-based approaches* emphasise learner control over the planning and evaluation of classroom learning.
5. *Curriculum-based approaches* extend the idea of learner control to the curriculum as a whole.
6. *Teacher-based approaches* emphasise the role of the teacher and teacher education in the practice of fostering autonomy among learners.

Benson (2007, p.23), emphasises autonomy as a process and distinguishes a number of phases in the process that start with awareness raising. Drawing on and expanding four key phases to develop learner autonomy in academic learning situations (defining tasks, setting goals and planning, enacting study tactics and strategies, and metacognitively adapting studying) suggested by Winne and Hadwin (1998), Reinders (2010) identified stages in the development of learner autonomy which include identifying the needs, setting goals, planning learning, selecting resources, selecting learning strategies, practice, monitoring progress, assessment and revision. The following table shows how each stage could be implemented in the classroom.

Learning stages	How to implement in the classroom
identifying the needs	It can be done through analysing students' needs in the first week of the course by encouraging them to identify their learning needs and share their ideas with their peers. Classroom activities that follow should link the students' needs, and students should reflect on their success in completing the learning activities with regard to their learning needs. The needs should be reviewed and analysed regularly, and how they complete the activities should also be reflected regularly. This way, students are expected to be aware of the necessity of regularly evaluating the relevance of their learning output with their needs.
setting goals	Teachers and students cannot ignore the curricular requirements of their educational institutions, however, students must be encouraged to take the view that the course they study is a means to achieve their personal goals and thus they need to find any necessary support to succeed.
planning learning	While in most classes, the 'what', 'when', 'how' the students should learn are already determined, a class with a learner-centred approach should encourage students to gradually make their own decisions. It can be done, for example, by giving students different options of activity for the same learning materials.
selecting resources	Students are encouraged to get involved in the production or sharing of materials.
selecting learning strategies	Students are encouraged to identify the strategies they use, recognise the improvements they make with the strategies they choose and develop their knowledge of different kinds of learning strategies.
Practice	Students are encouraged to practice in their "outside class" lives what they have learned in class. In the language learning context, students should be encouraged to implement the language knowledge they learn in the class in their own context and bring it back to the classroom when they have difficulties. This can be part of the tasks that the teacher determines by including students' real-life experiences. It can be a way to give a choice but at the same time to provide support to the students.
monitoring progress	Learners should be encouraged to monitor their learning

	progress and make any necessary changes to their learning plans. Reflection and the roles of social strategies can come into play in this phase.
Assessment and revision	As learning is a life-long process that will continue after students finished their school, they must be given opportunities to experience alternative assessment to make them confident with their own learning.

Table 2.1 Stages in the development of learner autonomy in classroom context suggested by Reinders (2010)

Where a model of autonomy is based on classroom and curriculum negotiation as applied in the context of the current study, the concept of interdependence in the theory of autonomy as developed by Kohonen (1992) becomes relevant. Kohonen (1992, p.19) stated that autonomy involves the notion of interdependence as “personal decisions are necessarily made with respect to social and moral norms, traditions and expectations”. Being interdependent is defined as “being responsible for one's own conduct in the social context” that is “being able to cooperate with others and solve conflicts in constructive ways” (Kohonen, 1992, p. 19). Moreover, the notion of interdependence in autonomy needs to be emphasised in the context under the current study since the term *independence* was used as a synonym for autonomy by some researchers (Benson, 2011). Through the efforts of practitioners to experiment with the idea of autonomy in classroom settings, which is viewed as a ‘social context’ for learning and communication, autonomy is fostered “by a shift in relationships of power and control within the classroom” (Benson, 2001, p.13).

Reviewing the underlying principles of fostering learner autonomy in a classroom context has informed me to be aware of any potential resources and circumstances

supportive for learner autonomy development. Moreover, it has guided me to have better understanding of the roles of the teachers in a class which takes into account the learner autonomy in facilitating students' learning, as will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.4 The roles of the teacher in fostering learner autonomy in the classroom contexts

Autonomy is a “complex mix of disposition, knowledge and skills, and it requires guidance” for students to foster this capacity (Morgan, 2012, p.169). The students' need for guidance to foster autonomy indicates a role for teachers. Voller (1997 as cited by Benson, 2001, p.15) summarises the research results on the roles of teachers in the development of autonomy in the form of three assumptions:

The first is that language learning is an interpretative process, and that an autonomous approach to learning requires a transfer of control to the learner. The second is to ensure that our teaching practices, within the external constraints imposed upon us, reflect these assumptions, by ensuring that they are based on a process of negotiation with learners. The third is to self-monitor our teaching, to observe and reflect upon the teaching strategies we use and the nature of the interactions we set up and participate in.

In order to facilitate learner autonomy development, teaching practice should encourage students' involvement, and teachers are required to consistently self-monitor their teaching strategies.

Fumin and Li (2012) conducted an empirical investigation on the roles of teachers in the context of learner autonomy in English teaching in China. The study was carried out in eight universities at different levels. In this context, they suggested more challenging

and multiple roles for teachers. Teachers should not only answer students' questions, but also provide a variety of resources for English learning and encourage students to benefit from the various resources, "organise lively and interesting classroom activities so as to bring into full play students' initiatives in learning English" (Fumin and Li, 2012, p.54). Moreover, teachers should assist students to make "feasible and individualised study plans and objectives and putting them into practice, and adopt different assessment approaches to evaluate students' actual performance" (Fumin and Li, 2012, p.54). Even though teachers are expected to play multiple roles, particularly in terms of providing learning resources, "there is still much space for teachers to act as study guides and learning regulators" (Fumin and Li, 2012, p.54). In facilitating learner autonomy, teachers have more responsibility than merely playing the role of classroom organisers. In order to enhance students' ability to learn autonomously, "teachers should provide proper guidance to students in monitoring and regulating their own study and give them explicit instructions on the strategies for learner autonomy so that they can be responsible for their own study" (Fumin and Li, 2012, p.54). In relation to the stages in fostering learner autonomy in classroom context, teachers could consider in their teaching practices the stages suggested by Reinders (2010) as discussed in section 2.3.3.

Lamb (2008) emphasised the importance for the teachers to be autonomous in the first place if they intend to facilitate learner autonomy development. A teacher needs to have a certain degree of freedom to organise his/her teaching practice in such a way to achieve his/her goal to foster learner autonomy. Moreover, a teacher's intention to facilitate learner autonomy development could be triggered by his/her awareness of the demands to learn autonomously (Lamb, 2008). In this regards, the definition of teacher autonomy as suggested by Thavenius (1999) is particularly relevant. He defined teacher

autonomy as the ability of a teacher to reflect on his/her own role and change it. In the same vein, Little (2000 as cited in Lamb 2008) stated that teachers themselves need to know what it means to be an autonomous learner if they attempt to foster learner autonomy, and determining initiatives they take in the classrooms requires them to exercise their teaching skills autonomously, self-manage and reflect their teaching practices.

2.3.5 Learner autonomy and e-learning

Since this study investigated learner autonomy in an e-learning environment, the theoretical discussion includes the theory of learner autonomy in relation to e-learning. The theories of e-learning *per se* have been discussed briefly in section 2.2 along with blended learning.

There are three main ways in which technology-based approaches, including those which incorporate an e-learning environment, have the potential to support autonomy suggested by Benson (2011). First, they place the learner as controller of the technological device in direct control of key aspects of the learning process. Secondly, they allow wider access to authentic target language sources. Thirdly, they also allow wider access to authentic interactive use of the target language. However, it must be taken into account that “technology-based approaches are likely to be supportive of autonomy only in settings where the use of technology is already a part of everyday life” (Benson, 2011, p.153). In order to ensure that technology skills do not become factors hindering students from the potential advantage of technology to foster learner autonomy, teacher’s facilitation of students’ technology skills throughout the technology implementation is very crucial.

As the e-learning concept implemented in this study involved an online environment in addition to the face-to-face teaching, “it is important to develop an insight into the complex online teaching processes and strategies to build the necessary skills and competencies to teach online” (Harasim, Hiltz, & Teles, 1997; Stephenson, 2001, as cited in De Laat et al., 2007, p. 260). Goodyear, Salmon, Spector, Steeples and Tickner (2001, p.68) suggested that a wide range of competencies and skills is needed by the online teachers to enable them to play their main roles as

- The *Process Facilitator* to facilitate the range of online activities that are supportive of student learning (contrast with content facilitator).
- The *Adviser-Counselor* to work with learners on an individual or private basis, offering advice or counselling to help them get the most out of their engagement in a course, (contrast with process facilitation, which is mainly, if not exclusively, done in the group or public setting.).
- The *Assessor* to provide grades, feedback, and validation of learners’ work.
- The *Researcher* to engage in production of new knowledge of relevance to the content areas being taught.
- The *Content Facilitator* to facilitate the learners' growing understanding of course content.
- The *Technologist* to make or help make technological choices that improve the environment available to learners.
- The *Designer* to design worthwhile online learning tasks.
- The *Manager-Administrator* to deal with issues of learner registration, security, record keeping, and so on.

However, not all of the above roles have equal importance in any particular circumstance of online teaching; some might be highly important while some others might not even be used in certain situations (Goodyear et al., 2001). In the learning which incorporates online environment, González et al. (2011) asserted a transformation in the teacher role: “from a teacher who teaches directly, he becomes an instructional designer; from being a person who teaches, he becomes a learning facilitator; from being an advisor, he becomes a motivator” (p.155). The transformation of the teacher roles is characterised by the teacher’s ability “to adopt a learning model that meets the specific needs of the student and of the institution that welcomes them” (González et al., 2011, p.155).

For e-learning environment to be supportive for learner autonomy development teachers must understand their roles of an online teacher and develop the necessary skills. In line with the roles of the online teacher discussed previously, Chan (2001) suggested two important principles in designing any autonomy-oriented e-learning environment. First, it should give a lot of space for students’ involvement. The second principle is the necessity of “a wide range of learning conditions and group activities to stimulate motivation and interest” (Chan, 2001, p.515).

2.3.6 Summary

The theories of learner autonomy were reviewed in this section (2.3) in order to identify the key concepts of learner autonomy relevant to my attempt to investigate this concept in my particular context. The discussion started with the definition of learner autonomy suggested by different authors. As the concept of autonomy was initially developed in Western context, some cultural appropriateness issues of the concept of learner

autonomy were elaborated. The discussion then moved to the process of fostering learner autonomy in the classroom context and the roles of the teacher in fostering learner autonomy in the classroom context, to give me an understanding of the aspects influencing the development of learner autonomy in the classroom context. Theories of e-learning have also been reviewed as my attempt to foster learner autonomy in the study incorporated e-learning environment that will require necessary adjustments in the side of the teachers before facilitating the students. Overall, the reviews of learner autonomy theories are intended to provide a theoretical framework for investigating learner autonomy in the context of the current study, which I will discuss in the last section (section 2.5) along with the summary of this chapter. The current study is expected to contribute to the literature/theory of learner autonomy the dimensions of learner autonomy in technology assisted language learning in a unique context of an EFL writing class in Indonesia.

As my intention in this study is to examine the implementation of online portfolio to facilitate students' EFL writing through an action research, the process inevitably involved students' engagement which required me to have knowledge of students' motivation. The theories of motivation will be discussed in the following section.

2.4 Motivation

The main focus of this study is to examine the implementation of online portfolios to facilitate students' EFL writing through action research. As I inevitably deal with students' engagement throughout my teaching practice, the review of motivation theories serves not only for my research but also my teaching agenda. As I stated earlier, in order to help students increase their motivation in their language learning,

particularly in encouraging students' engagement in their learning incorporating e-learning tools, it is necessary for me to understand students' motivation and the potential aspects of e-learning that can enhance students' motivation. In the first section, I will discuss relevant theories and research on motivation encompassing definition of motivation and self-determination theory of motivation. It is then followed with the discussion of how motivation is related to the concept of autonomy and e-learning.

2.4.1 Definition and overview of motivation

Motivation is defined as an internal desire or need which energises someone to do something and gives direction to the action (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). In the context of language learning, this definition implies the importance of students' reasons and goals to learn the language. Dörnyei (2009) sets out a model of motivation that emphasises the importance of the imagery involved in picturing the ideal L2 self. He argues that language learners' possession of a superordinate vision that kept them on track was a key of their successful learning because language learning is a sustained and "often tedious process with lots of temporary ups and downs" (Dörnyei, 2009, p.25). If learners have a clear picture about the language competence they expect to achieve and how they view themselves in the future as the language user, they will have a clear direction in their learning process. Moreover it will help them in identifying the progress of their learning.

The definition of motivation also involves a cognitive view. Ames (1984 as cited in Ushioda 1996) said that motivation may be defined in terms of thinking patterns which shape students' actions and behaviours. A student's dynamic thought processes play an important role in shaping his/her involvement in the learning process. Motivation is

viewed as “a dynamically evolving and changing entity, associated with an ongoing process in time” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.43). Since it usually takes several months or years to master most subject matters, particularly a second language, “the temporal axis of a motivational theory relevant to such sustained activities should be featured” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.45). Moreover, such a motivation theory is needed as “most learners experience a regular fluctuation of their enthusiasm/commitment, often on a day-to-day basis, even within the duration of a single course“(Dörnyei, 1998, p.45).

In educational settings, “most of the decisions and goals are not really the learners’ own products but are imposed on them by the system” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.45). Particularly in school environments, Dörnyei, (1998) stated,

the key motivational issues involve maintaining assigned goals, elaborating on subgoals, and exercising control over other thoughts and behaviours that are often more desirable than concentrating on academic work. Therefore, in order to explain a significant proportion of the variability in learner persistence in classroom contexts, we need to focus on ‘executive motivation’, that is, consider motivational influences that operate during task engagement, facilitating or impeding goal-directed behaviour (p.45).

The current study that involved an online learning environment with elements designed to facilitate students’ control over their learning in their academic writing class was expected to enhance students’ engagement in writing tasks. The study was also informed by a “belief that motivation is not so much a relatively constant state but rather a more dynamic entity that changes in time, with the level of effort invested in the pursuit of a particular goal oscillating between regular ups and downs” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.45).

Since this study incorporated online portfolios as a course requirement, dealing with students’ engagement, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation is inevitable. Self-

determination theory (SDT), a theory of motivation suggested by Deci and Ryan (1985) that includes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation becomes relevant for the study to draw on. Firstly, because in such a learning situation in the context under investigation, students could be extrinsically motivated in doing required activities in classroom, and students' engagement became an important area to be of relevance to the teacher. Secondly, intrinsic motivation is associated with learner autonomy (as will be discussed in the following section).

2.4.2 Self Determination Theory (SDT) of motivation

There have been a number of studies into online learning that adopted SDT as the theoretical framework, but the studies tended to neglect “the power of the model to explore a broader range of motivation, particularly more autonomous types of extrinsic motivation” (Hartnett, 2009, p.440). The SDT provides a broader range of motivation including extrinsic motivation to be taken into account throughout the learning process in the online environment.

Self Determination Theory of motivation categorises different types of motivation based on the different reasons that persuade someone to do an action. Deci and Ryan (2000) introduced the basic distinction between *intrinsic motivation*, and *extrinsic motivation*. *Intrinsic motivation* is referred to as “doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable”, while *extrinsic motivation* is referred to “doing something because it leads to a separable outcome” such as “gaining good grades, avoiding negative consequences or because the task has utility value such as passing a course in order to earn a degree” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.55). Being concerned with the intrinsic type of motivation in learning including factors and efforts that enhance or undermine it

became very crucial since “intrinsic motivation results in high-quality learning and creativity” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.55).

Some previous studies on motivation have revealed different sources of intrinsic motivation. Pintrich & Schunk (1996) suggested in their study that students’ intrinsic motivation was enhanced through learning activities which gave learners opportunities to control over their learning outcomes. Studies conducted by Malone (1981) in the computer-based instruction confirmed that fantasy, challenge, and curiosity are prominent components of learning instruction which enhanced students’ intrinsic motivation. In line with the two studies mentioned earlier, Lepper and Hodell (1989) identified motivation components involving challenge, curiosity, control, and fantasy as major characteristics of learning tasks which enhance intrinsic motivations for learning. Besides the components of intrinsically motivating tasks mentioned earlier, some emotional states such as interest, curiosity, and enjoyment can have positive impacts on students’ intrinsic motivation (Reeve, 2000 as cited in Kim, 2005). Bearing in mind the motivation components in the online learning environment, the current study is intended to investigate whether learning tasks incorporating the online portfolio influence any components of students’ motivation in learning writing.

In the educational context, particularly in the institution in which the current study was conducted, students faced learning situations in which not all class activities are designed to be of intrinsic interest to them. An important issue the teacher must take into account is how students can be motivated to value and self-regulate externally regulated activities and to do the activities without external pressure. Deci and Ryan (1985, as cited in Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.60) described this problem “within SDT in

terms of fostering the *internalisation and integration* of values and behavioral regulations”. Internalisation refers to “the process of taking in a value or regulation, and integration is the process by which individuals more fully transform the regulation into their own so that it will emanate from their sense of self” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.60). Deci and Ryan (2000, p. 60) illustrated the internalisation concept as a continuum describing motivation of one’s behaviour that “can range from amotivation, to passive compliance, to active personal commitment”. Moreover, “with increasing internalisation (and its associated sense of personal commitment) come greater persistence, more positive self-perceptions, and better quality of engagement” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.60). The concept illustrated in a taxonomy of motivation types suggested by Deci and Ryan (2000) in figure 1 involves “a continuum of regulation that incorporates amotivation (lack of motivation) at one end through to intrinsic motivation at the other, with different types of extrinsic motivation sitting between them“ (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.60).

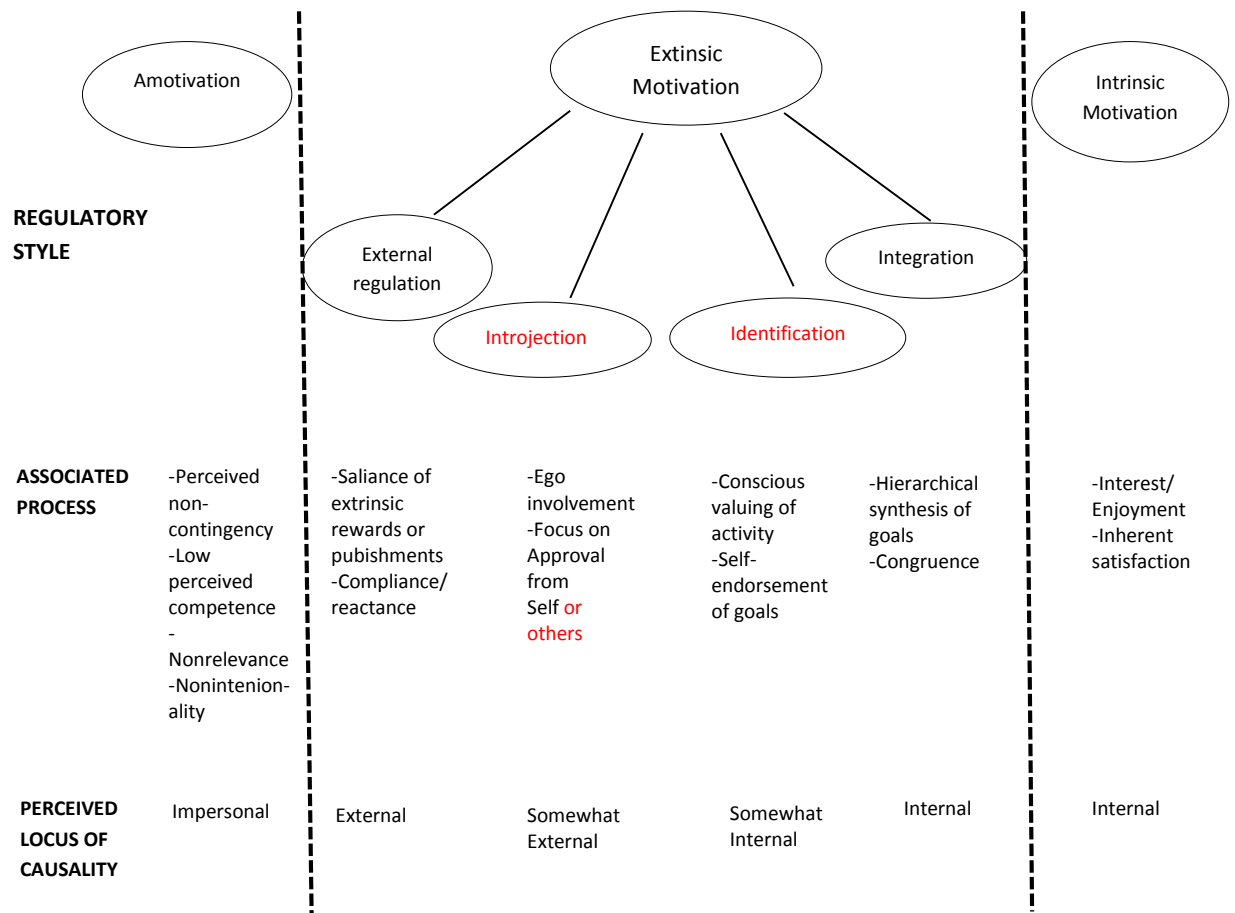


Figure 2.1 A taxonomy of human motivation suggested by Deci and Ryan

Amotivation which refers to the situation of lacking an intention to do something is at the far left. An amotivated person is a person whose “behavior lacks intentionality and a sense of personal causation” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.60). A person can become amotivated due to several possible reasons, which Deci and Ryan (2000) summarised into three factors; because he/she does not value an activity (Ryan, 1995), because he/she does not feel competent to do the activity (Deci, 1975), or because he/she does not believe it will result in a desired outcome (Seligman, 1975). As can be seen in figure 1, various types of motivation are organised to the right of amotivation to show their different degrees of self-determination. As I discussed in the previous section (section

2.4.1), in a classroom setting and, more specifically the blended learning environment in the current study which was intended to support students' learning with the online portfolio implementation, students were not necessarily internally motivated or even amotivated in the first place in doing the online portfolio activities. This literature review informed me about the possible reasons for such a situation. Furthermore, it gave me guidance on how to design my instructional plan so that students who were amotivated in the first place could have better extrinsic motivation with the form which could shift from the least autonomous to the most autonomous form. Some important aspects which I took into account in designing the instructional plan supportive for shifting the least autonomous to the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation will be elaborated later in this section.

The least autonomous form of extrinsic motivation which is categorised as *external regulation* is just to the right of *amotivation*. With this type of extrinsic motivation, someone behaves in order to fulfil external demand or to get a reward which is imposed externally (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The second type of extrinsic motivation is *introjected regulation*, which is “a type of internal regulation that is still quite controlling because people perform such actions with the feeling of pressure in order to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego-enhancements or pride” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.62). A further type of extrinsic motivation is a more autonomous or self-determined form, which is regulation through *identification*. In this type, the person has identified the values of a behaviour with regards to personal importance. In a school context, the student identifies the values of learning activities and accepts its regulation as his or her own (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The last type of extrinsic motivation is *integrated regulation*. This is the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation which occurs when the person

has fully assimilated the identified regulations to him or herself (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This integration could occur “through self-examination and bringing new regulations into congruence with one’s other values and needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.62). The more the reasons for an action are internalised and assimilated to the self, “the more one’s extrinsically motivated actions become self-determined” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.62).

Intrinsic motivation is placed at the far right hand end of the figure, closest to the most autonomous form of extrinsic motivation (integrated regulation), and this placement is intended to emphasise “that intrinsic motivation is a prototype of self-determined activity” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.62). However, “this does not mean that extrinsic regulations that become more internalised are transformed into intrinsic motivation” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.62).

The internalisation process of external regulation occurs throughout life, and the process does not necessarily progress through each stage following the sequence of the continuum in the motivation taxonomy in figure 1. In other words, “one can initially adopt a new behavioural regulation at any point along this continuum depending upon prior experiences and situational factors” (Ryan, 1995 as cited in Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.62-63). Some behaviours could begin as introjects, while others as identifications. For example, a person could initially get involved in an activity because of a potential external reward. Further on in the process, if the person does not perceive the reward as too controlling, the involvement in the activity could allow the person to experience a shift of the orientation; externally regulated activity becomes intrinsically interesting activity (Deci & Ryan, 2000). On the other hand, “a person who has identified with the

value of an activity might lose that sense of value under a controlling mentor and move backward into an external regulatory mode” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.63).

As mentioned earlier in this section, students are often faced with the fact that they are required to get involved in externally imposed activities. In such a situation in the classroom context, when extrinsically imposed activities are not interesting for them in the first place, and thus must initially be externally encouraged, Deci and Ryan (2000) suggested some different aspects to be taken into account.

The first factor is what they called *relatedness*. The main reason for people to be willing to do the activities that are not intrinsically motivating “is that they are valued by significant others to whom they feel (or would like to feel) connected”, such as peers or teacher (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64). Facilitating internalisation in the classroom context involves “providing a sense of belongingness and connectedness to the persons, group, or culture disseminating a goal”; students need to feel respected and cared for by the teacher to be willing to accept the values of the classroom activities (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64).

The second issue to consider when supporting students to internalise the externally regulated behaviours is perceived *competence* (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64). With regards to this issue, Deci and Ryan (2000, p.64) stated that “students will more likely adopt and internalise a goal if they understand it and have the relevant skills to succeed at it” and thus, provided some suggestions that support for competence to facilitate internalisation; “offering optimal challenges and effectance-relevant feedback” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64).

Since an internalised regulation can be only introjected but not necessarily self-determined, autonomy support as another prominent factor in facilitating internalisation becomes crucial (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64). In other words, people can feel satisfied with an internalised regulation as the needs for competence and relatedness are fulfilled. The presence of an autonomy supportive environment could result in integrated self-regulation. The students must have understanding of the meanings and worth of the regulation in order to fully internalise it, and thus “to become autonomous with respect to it” as the meanings that become internalised and integrated in classroom “environments provide supports for the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64).

The quality of motivation expressed by students will be determined by “the extent to which social and environmental factors allow a learner to experience feelings of autonomy (as well as competence and relatedness)” (Vallerand, Pelletier, & Koestner, 2008, as quoted in Hartnett, 2009, p.440). When the supports for relatedness and competence facilitate internalisation and the support for autonomy that additionally facilitates the integration of behavioral regulations are given, students “not only feel competent and related, but also self-determined, as they carry out extrinsically valued activities” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.64).

With regards to the designed classroom environment in the current study which was intended to enhance students’ engagement in the learning activities involving online learning tools, it became necessary to review the motivation framework in the learning situation level, “which is associated with situation-specific motives rooted in various

aspects of language learning in a classroom setting” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.125). Among the motivation components in this framework, *Course specific motivational components* are the most relevant motivation components category since they are “related to the syllabus, the teaching materials, the teaching method and the learning tasks” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.125). The components in this category are well described in the framework of four motivational conditions which were initially proposed by Keller (1983) and subsequently by Crookes and Schmidt (1991), which include “*intrinsic interest*; the *relevance* of instruction to the learner's personal needs, values, or goals; *expectancy* of success; and *satisfaction* in the outcome of an activity and the associated intrinsic and extrinsic rewards” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.125). In addition to the intrinsic motivation components in online learning environments discussed earlier, I drew on the *course specific motivational components* in understanding students’ motivation during the online portfolio implementation.

Reviewing the different types of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) as well as different types of extrinsic motivation was expected to provide insights into how teachers could create a learning environment that facilitated students’ intrinsic motivation and helped students “internalise the responsibility and sense of value for extrinsic goals or, alternatively, how they can foster the more typically depicted ‘alienated’ type of extrinsic motivation that is associated with low student persistence, interest, and involvement” (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.56). The review informed me that extrinsic motivation has different forms which can shift from the least to the most autonomous. Having reviewed some possible reasons for amotivation and how to shift the least autonomous form to the more autonomous form of extrinsic motivation, I then took into account such knowledge in designing the instructional plan for the online

portfolio implementation to support students' learning of EFL writing. As discussed earlier in this section, in order for learning regulations in the classroom context to be self-determined and thus supportive for motivation, autonomy became one of the important aspects to consider. The next section will discuss how motivation relates to autonomy seen from different perspectives.

2.4.3 Motivation and autonomy

After reviewing the definition and theories of motivation I intended to draw on in this study, this section shows how motivation relates to autonomy. However, discussion in the previous section has touched upon some issues of the relationship between autonomy and motivation and will be emphasised along with other different views. Moreover, I will review some relevant theories on how to engage students' intrinsic motivation in addition to what I have discussed very briefly in the previous section.

An issue arising when dealing with the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation is related to which comes first, whether autonomy facilitates motivation or vice versa (Lamb, 2005). Spratt, Humphreys and Chan (2002 as cited in Jiménez Raya et al., 2007) argue that students need to be autonomous in order to be motivated, and then in turn students' motivation lead students to succeed in their language learning. Deci and Ryan (1985) also argued that autonomy leads to motivation. As I discussed in the previous section, in their study on intrinsic motivation, Deci and Ryan (1985) argued that intrinsic motivation would be operative when action was experienced as autonomous. Moreover, they stated that a learning environment that supports autonomy provides conditions helpful for developing intrinsic motivation. With regards to Deci and Ryan's SDT of motivation and learner autonomy, Lamb (2009, p.71) put it this

way, “it is the process of self-determination itself which stimulates intrinsic motivation, more than the underlying need (such as the need to learn)”. Students who are self-determined will be led to become intrinsically motivated. However, in their study, Deci and Ryan (1985 as cited by Jiménez Raya et al., 2007, p. 39) concluded that “motivation also facilitated autonomy and might indeed be pre-condition for it”. It indicates that the relationship between autonomy and motivation is dynamic and depends on the context. Moreover, it shows that this issue still needs further investigation in different contexts. For this reason, part of my study goals is to find out the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation in the context under investigation.

Ushioda’s publication on learner autonomy and motivation was distinguished by its focus on how to self-motivate and how the self-motivation leads to the development of autonomy. Little (1991 as cited in Ushioda 1996) emphasised that as a capacity of the learner, “self-motivation implies taking charge of the affective dimension of learning experience”, while “autonomy implies being involved in and taking responsibility for one’s learning in all its aspects” (p.45). Moreover, Ushioda (1996) argued that self-motivation is essentially a capacity for effective motivational thinking that can be developed by giving positive evaluative feedback, using absolute performance criteria and evaluation systems, setting short-term learning goals, and modifying attributional processes.

Evaluative feedback can have the desired effect of focusing the student’s attention on perceptions of developing competence only if the focus of learning itself is on skill mastery and task performance. In other words, if teachers wish students to enhance their

self-perceptions of competence and intrinsic learning motivation, they need to define learning goals and values in terms of absolute performance criteria and personal mastery of target skills, rather than in terms of how well or how badly students perform relative to one another (Ushioda, 1996).

According to Ushioda (1996), self-motivation fulfils an active functional role in promoting and maintaining autonomous learning. The capacity of self-motivation is realised in terms of how learners think and how they interpret experiences relevant to their learning in order to maximise their involvement in learning. Moreover, “it is a capacity for maintaining positive belief structures and self-perceptions, mediating the subjective impact of negative experiences, and generating success and positive outcomes” (Ushioda, 1996, p.45). A degree of motivation in the learning situation and self-management capacity is required for learner autonomy. In other words there is no autonomy without motivation (Ushioda, 1996).

With regards to developing intrinsic motivation, Jiménez Raya et al. (2007) argued that creating an atmosphere where learners feel motivated to learn, is important for effective learning. These are all characteristics that teachers need to foster in their students to make their learning more effective. Furthermore, they found challenge, control, responsibility, curiosity, fantasy, cooperation, and recognition among the factors that promote intrinsic motivation. In the same vein, Ushioda (1996, p.46) argues,

Essentially, the business of classroom language learning needs to be mediated in such a way that students believe they are doing what they want to do, exercising choice and freedom, following their curiosity, creating their own challenges, and generating their own positive learning experiences and successes, in a supportive learning environment.

Language functions, most importantly, as a means of communication and a medium of social interaction that involves other people in its use. In this regard, collaborative learning can create the appropriate psychological conditions for intrinsic motivation by explicitly putting the learning initiatives and control of the learning process in the hands of the students themselves, by utilising “their sense of peer-group solidarity and shared responsibility, and minimising their perception of external direction and control from the teacher” (Ushioda, 1996, p.46).

Different views of whether autonomy or motivation comes first have been discussed in this section and suggest further empirical research to investigate this issue. Part of the discussion also included suggestions on how to engage intrinsic motivation process which gave a very useful insight particularly in relation to my attempt to facilitate students’ learning using the online portfolio tools. The next section will review theories of motivation in relation to e-learning, technology tools with potentials to facilitate collaborative learning, feedback and reflection for autonomous learning.

2.4.4 Motivation and e-learning

Drawing on Dörnyei’s (2001) dynamic model, Raby (2007, p.185) proposed a definition of motivation for language learning in autonomous, technologically enhanced contexts as the dynamic and changing mental situation that generates a desire to

1. acquire a foreign language
2. take and keep the initiative for work
3. maintain one's effort until the work is completed

4. regulate and evaluate one's work through interactions with electronic tools and interactions with peers or tutor
5. renew the learning experience

The motivational process is achieved only if the autonomous, technologically enhanced language learning context fulfils these five criteria (Raby, 2007). According to Raby (2007), a number of ICT researchers such as Chapelle (2003), Egbert (2005) and Warschauer (2005), claim that

the computer provides the students with the necessary resources to achieve the task and to regulate it on-line (cognitive or linguistic tools, on-line dictionaries, spelling correctors, data banks); the hyper-media representation of knowledge makes it possible for the students to carry out different treatments involving a variety of procedures which enhance the learning process (p.187).

In line with Raby's argument concerning the potential of e-learning in enhancing students' motivation particularly in higher education, El-Seoud, Taj-Eddin, Seddiek, El-Khouly and Nosseir (2014) asserted that many studies have revealed that effective use of e-learning could help enhance students' motivation, engagement, and attendance. However, students need to be supported with their digital enhanced learning in order to enable them to maximise the e-learning potential in their learning process. As a consequence, teachers need to develop and restructure their courses in a way that suits online requirements.

Keller and Suzuki (2015) identified four conditions required in order to improve students' motivation in an e-learning environment. Lessons involving an e-learning environment must gain and sustain the learner's *attention*, establish the *relevance* of instruction to learner goals and learning styles, build *confidence* by establishing positive expectancy of success, and build *satisfaction* in order for the learners to have positive

feeling about their learning experiences (Keller and Suzuki, 2015). Students will have not only a high level of motivation to learn but also a continuing motivation to learn if all of the mentioned conditions are met (Keller and Suzuki, 2015).

2.4.5 Summary

This section has explored theories of motivation including the definition of motivation, self-determination theory of motivation, and how motivation relates to the concept of autonomy and e-learning. In the context of language learning, particularly in learning EFL writing using online portfolios, the review of motivation theories in this section has informed me the importance of students' reasons to learn the language, the existence of intrinsic and various types of extrinsic motivation, the dynamic relationship between learner autonomy and motivation, and some aspects to take into account in enhancing students' motivation in e-learning environment.

2.5 Summary and reflection

This chapter has elaborated and given clearer understanding of the key concepts involved in the study with regards to existing literature. The review of theories of teaching foreign language writing, e-learning, feedback, reflection, autonomy and motivation, has suggested that a systematic teaching and learning approach in EFL writing is needed particularly when it incorporates e-learning tools and takes into account students' autonomy and motivation. Understanding of the roles of a teacher as a facilitator in implementing e-learning tools especially in encouraging students' engagement and dealing with any possible problems have also been developed through this theoretical discussion.

Moreover, the literature reviews have provided a theoretical framework which became the basis for the research design and discussion of the research findings in order to provide responses to the research questions, as can be seen in the following bullets:

- The design of the academic writing course in this study drew on the framework of process-genre approach suggested by Badger and White (2000). The process of writing with this approach in this study incorporated self-revising and feedback both from teacher and peers.
- The literature review of e-learning informed me of the potential of online portfolios to support the teaching of EFL writing using process-genre approach.
- Reflection became an integral part of online portfolios, which was intended to support learning. It plays an important role in students' learning to process theoretical concepts as these theoretical concepts become part of the individual's frame of reference when they are experienced meaningfully on a subjective emotional level (Kohonen (1992).
- Learner autonomy was investigated throughout the online portfolio implementation by referring to the concept of learner autonomy and the components of learner autonomy suggested by different authors (Benson, 2011; Dam, 1995; Flavell, 1979, 1987; Jiménez Raya, et al., 2007; Lamb, 2006; Littlewood, 1999; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).
- As for the investigation of students' motivation, this study drew on the framework of course specific motivational components (Crookes & Schmidt 1991, Dörnyei, 1998, Keller 1983), while the SDT of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000) informed me how to support students' motivation throughout the implementation of the online portfolio.

- The knowledge I mentioned earlier, as well as the theories concerning teachers' roles in facilitating e-learning and the process of fostering learner autonomy in a classroom context, informed me how to design the instructional plan for the online portfolio implementation which took into account learner autonomy and motivation. Moreover, it guided me to understand my experiences and any emerging problems, which were other aspects I intended to investigate in this study.

The process of reviewing and organising literature related to my study was a challenging process. As I stated early in this chapter, it was not easy for me to identify the boundaries of theories that are relevant to my study as this study involved many relevant theories which were necessary for my research and teaching agenda. Through a comprehensive process of writing the literature review, with guidance from my supervisors, I came up with the boundaries and organisation of the literature review as presented in this chapter. The review of the theories related to the key areas enabled me to identify the contribution which this current study is intended to give, that being to fill the gap in the knowledge base of EFL writing instructional design principles with a technology based approach, particularly e-learning, that takes into account learner autonomy and motivation in the Indonesian context.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This methodology chapter will elaborate how I generated responses to my research questions. Wellington, Bathmaker, Hunt, McCulloch and Sikes (2005) defined methodology “as the theory of (generating) knowledge and the activity of considering, reflecting upon and justifying the best methods” (p.97). Another definition is suggested by Sikes (2004) who states that “methodology is concerned with the description and analysis of research methods rather than with the actual, practical use of those methods” (p.16). Method is therefore a part of methodology implying the action of generating data whereas methodology provides justification of the methods. The discussion will begin with my research paradigm of constructivism that leads me to draw on the action research and case study approach. Other aspects of this chapter will include ethnography and autoethnography, data collection and procedures, participants, the academic writing class design, data analysis, methods of reporting the data analysis, trustworthiness and research ethics.

3.1 Constructivism

Thinking about a paradigm as a set of beliefs or assumptions someone is willing to make is very useful since this set of beliefs “serve as touchstones in guiding our activities” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.80). In conducting the research, a researcher is directed by research paradigms; it is how the researcher sees the world and acts in it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, Patton, 1990). I believe that the students’ experiences in learning EFL writing, which is the phenomenon that my research is concerned with, could be constructed as knowledge only by interpreting and reflecting upon them. The

process of understanding the students' experiences in learning involved my interaction with them and is affected by my personal point of view. My beliefs about the world and how knowledge is constructed are reflected in a research paradigm which is referred to as constructivism. This paradigm is also called a naturalistic or interpretive paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The constructivist belief systems that will be discussed in this section involve the ontological question (what is there that can be known?), the epistemological question (What is the relationship of the knower to the known?), and the methodological question (What are the ways of finding out knowledge?) (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The discussion will include positivism as the contrasting paradigm and justification of my choice.

In terms of the ontological question, the constructivist paradigm asserts that there exist multiple realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Moreover, they argued that in research, knowledge is actively and socially constructed (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This knowledge is constructed by individuals through their effort to make sense of their experiences, and thus it requires them to recall their experiences through an interactive process. In the same vein, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) argued that a social reality "can be understood only from the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated" (p.19). As a consequence the construction is influenced by the researcher's cultural and historical background, and inquiry is value-bound (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Prior knowledge of the constructors and the "sophistication" level they bring to the process of making sense their experiences determine the definition of the phenomena" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.86). In the constructivism paradigm, the studies of social reality could involve different perceptions of reality by different researchers (Bryman, 2012). The constructivist paradigm defines

truth as “the most informed and sophisticated construction on which there is consensus among individuals most competent (not necessarily most powerful) to form such a construction” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.86). On the other hand, the positivist paradigm asserts that an objective reality exists apart from the interest of an inquirer (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). As I believe that knowledge can only be constructed through interaction with the phenomena and is influenced by my positionality, positivism was not the paradigm that directed my research. The positivist paradigm believes that what things happen in the world and how they happen are entirely determined by certain natural laws (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Moreover, Guba and Lincoln (1989, p.85) stated,

Many of the underlying laws take the form of cause-effect relationships. Prediction can, after all, be accomplished on purely statistical-correlational-bases, but control requires that natural phenomena be managed – be made to act in desired ways.

In line with Guba and Lincoln’s statements mentioned earlier, “positivism’s concern for control and thereby, its appeal to the capacity of behaviourism and for instrumental reason is a serious danger to the more open-ended, creative, humanitarian aspects of social behaviour” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.15). In positivism, human behaviours are viewed as passive, controlled and determined; there is no space for individual intention and freedom (Cohen et al., 2007). Moreover “it fails to take account of our unique ability to interpret our experiences and represent them to ourselves” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.15).

How the ontological question has been answered, as discussed previously, determines the response to the epistemological question. Positivists, who assert that an objective reality exists irrespective of the enquirer’s interests, require the inquirer to keep an objective distance from the phenomena being studied (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). On the

contrary, as my ontological position believes that “reality consists of a series of mental constructions, objectivity does not make sense” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.87). It is only through interaction by individuals with the social reality that knowledge can be constructed (Cohen, 2007). Moreover, “it is impossible to separate the inquirer from the inquired; it is precisely their interaction that creates the data that will emerge from the inquiry” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.87).

The response to the methodological question depends on the ontological and epistemological position. The methodological question in constructivist paradigm is answered by asserting “that the inquiry must be carried out in a way that will expose the constructions of the variety of concerned parties, open each to critique in terms of other constructions, and provide opportunity for revised or entirely new constructions to emerge” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.89). On the other hand, the methodological question in the positivist paradigm is answered by confirming that “inquiry must be mounted in ways that strip the context of possible contaminating influences” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.89). In positivism, it is important to structure the inquiry “to be able to discover (or test presumptions about) causal mechanisms” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p.89). In order to achieve assertive conclusions about causes or reasons, inquiries must be controlled either physically or statistically, and both controls require intervention to accomplish (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Since my research involves humans as the participants, controlling them or asking them to act or behave in a particular way for the purpose of the research is problematic.

The constructivism underlying my research paradigm and my intention to bring about changes in my own practices as well as the classroom as I have discussed in my

background in chapter 1, have informed me to draw on an action research approach in conducting my current study, as will be discussed in the next section.

3.2 Action research (AR)

My constructivism paradigm and my research questions that have a practical aspect relating to my concern about how to improve my practices have guided me to draw on an action research approach in this study. The rationale behind my decision is also related to my personal situation. I am a practitioner who is undergoing my PhD programme and will conduct my research in an institution where I started my teaching career and will be my workplace when I finish my PhD.

McNiff (1988) reviewed the ontological, epistemological and methodological issues of action research. Action researchers have an ontological perspective that people are able to construct their own identities, and thus multiple perspectives can be accommodated. The epistemological position of action researchers sees knowledge as a living process. This view suggests that action researchers are able to construct their own knowledge based on their living and learning experiences. Knowledge is developing as new understandings are constructed, and it is never complete (McNiff, 1988). Dealing with the methodological issue, action researchers view learning and experience as processes which enable individuals to choose their own identities and negotiate different perspectives that often conflict (McNiff, 1988). Action research in a classroom environment then involves contributions from the teacher and students and a negotiation between them to formulate their ideal roles for the sake of improvement in the teaching and learning practice. Further discussion encompassing definition, characteristics, and procedures of action research will be presented in the following sections.

3.2.1. Definition of action research

McKernan (1988, p.6 as cited in Anderson, 2005, p.4) defined action research as “a form of self-reflective problem solving, which enables practitioners to better understand and solve pressing problems in social settings”. Referring to this definition, action research enables me to investigate and evaluate my work, and create new theories about my practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2005). As a practitioner, I am committed to continuously improve my own knowledge and at the same time must be able to offer explanations for how and why I am doing what I do (McNiff & Whitehead, 2005).

3.2.2 Characteristics and procedures of action research

As mentioned earlier, action researchers believe that knowledge is never complete and it involves continuing development process as new understandings are constructed. This epistemological position implies that action research shares some characteristics with other research in that it generates knowledge, provides evidence to support this knowledge, makes “explicit the process of enquiry through which knowledge emerges” and links “new knowledge with existing knowledge” (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 1996, p.15). Moreover, “it can employ both qualitative and quantitative research techniques” (McNiff et al., p.15). On the other hand, it is different from traditional research because it entails “action as an integral part of the research process itself, being focused by the researcher’s professional values rather than methodological considerations and it is necessarily insider research, in the sense of requiring practitioners to research their own practice” (McNiff et al., 1996, p.15).

Wallace (1998) argues that action research often emerges from specific issues or problems in teachers’ professional practices so that its approach is very problem-

focused and its intended outcomes are very practical. Action research involves the collection and analysis of data related to some aspects of teachers' professional practice. This is done to enable teachers to reflect on what they have discovered and apply it to their professional action. This is a cyclical process that involves reframing the problem, collecting fresh data, rethinking analysis, etc. until a satisfactory solution has been found (Wallace, 1998).

Many models of action research exist; however, an action research inquiry generally focuses on an educational setting which is defined by the practitioners themselves, and the inquiry topic is centred on a *looping* process or cycle (McNiff, 1988; Wallace, 1998). Lewin (1946 as cited in McNiff & Whitehead, 1996, p. 40) developed "a theory of action research as a spiral of steps involving planning, fact-finding (or reconnaissance) and execution (Lewin, 1946), and which later came generally to be understood as an action–reflection cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting" that can be seen in the following figure:

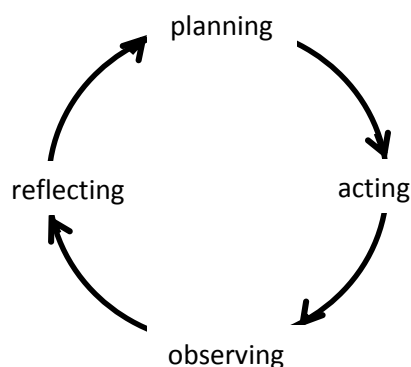


Figure 3.1 Action–reflection cycle

Following this cycle, there would be the next cycle of replanning, acting, observing and reflecting, and possibly produce a new cycle.

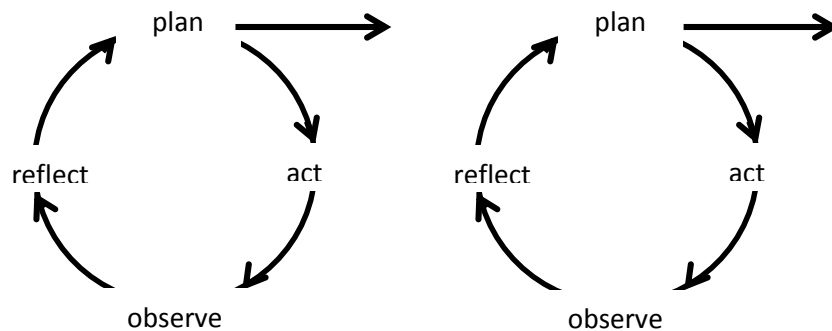


Figure 3.2 Sequences of action-reflection cycles

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), *Planning* refers to formulating the question to be answered and the strategy to answer it. *Acting* is examining the strategy. *Observation* involves recording the results of the strategy implementation, thoughts and reactions towards the experiences. Based on the records of the entire experiences, the step is then continued with *reflection* to conclude the experiences and become the basis to revise the original plan for the new cycle.

The stages in the action research indicate the significant roles which the teachers can play in improving not only the teaching and learning activities but also the curriculum design as they know the classroom situations much better than any other stakeholders in the education field. In this regards, Stenhouse (1975) took the idea of teacher as researcher as central. He viewed that teaching and research are closely related, and teachers were supposed to critically and systematically reflect on their teaching as a way of theorising curriculum. Teachers should be able to examine and become the best judges of their own teaching practice. As part of their responsibility, teachers should also be able to examine how they influenced educational processes. Furthermore, Stenhouse (1975) stated,

all well-founded curriculum research and development, whether the work of an individual teacher, of a school, of a group working in a teacher's centre or a group working within the co-ordinating framework of a national project, is based on the study of classrooms. It thus rests on the work of teachers (p.143).

McNiff & Whitehead (1996) developed a theory of the nature of action research and saw it as a spontaneous, self-recreating system of enquiry. They argued that action research involves a systematic process of observing, describing, planning, acting, reflecting, evaluating, modifying, but the process is not necessarily sequential. The process enables the action researcher to start at one point and end up at some point which can be entirely unexpected (McNiff & Whitehead, 1996).

The theories of action research mentioned above emphasise the incorporation of critical and systematic reflection towards the teacher's practice in order to bring about change for the improvement of the teacher's practice, institutional policy or national curriculum. While Wallace indicates that the action research is led by some particular issues or problems in the teacher's practice, McNiff's theories also imply that in order to bring about a change, a teacher does not have to wait until a problem emerges. His theory enables an action researcher to start at any particular step, be it observing, planning, acting, reflecting, modifying etc. Stenhouse (1975) highlights that teaching and research are closely related and thus suggested that teachers constantly reflect their teaching practices for the basis of curriculum development.

With regards to my attempt to bring about changes in my own practice as well as in my classroom through the implementation of online portfolios to teach an EFL academic writing class, I drew on the action research approach in this study. In other words, I intended to develop my skills in teaching, particularly in facilitating students to use

technology to learn EFL writing, through an action research project, in which problems and my attempts to solve them would be part of the process contributing to my professional development. The academic writing course was planned, acted, observed, reflected on and modified, following the action research cycles. I based my plan in the first cycle on the existing theories of teaching L2 writing, incorporation of e-learning environment, and principles of learner autonomy in classroom context. The reflection on my practice became the basis for my next plan in the next cycle. Since the action research involved participants in a particular context and situation, which is relevant to the definition of action research by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) mentioned earlier in this section, a case study is an appropriate approach to be applied in this study, as will be discussed in the following section.

3.3 Case study

This study involved a unique situation of an academic writing class at a particular university in Jakarta. An academic writing class with its students as participants taking part in the study became a source of data generation and constituted a unit of analysis. For this reason, the current study drew on a case study approach. The term case study is defined as “a single instance of a bounded system, such as a child, a clique, a class, a school, a community” (Creswell, 1994, p.12). However, Yin (2009, p.18 as cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011, p. 289) argues that the boundary line between the phenomenon being investigated and its context is blurred since a case study is a study of a case in a particular context and “it is important to set the case within its context i.e. rich descriptions and details are often feature of a case study”.

Rather than presenting ideas with abstract theories, a case study gives a unique example of real people in real situations to make readers understand the ideas more clearly (Cohen et al., 2011). Sturman (1994, p.61) defined 'case study' as "a generic term for the investigation of an individual, group or phenomenon". Moreover, he argued,

... the distinguishing feature of case study is the belief that human systems develop a characteristic wholeness or integrity and are not simply a loose collection of traits. As a consequence of this belief, case study researchers hold that to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalise or predict from a single example requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge (Sturman, 1994, p.61).

Even though I did not intend to generalise the study, there is a possibility for readers to relate the current study to other contexts depending on the degree of similarities.

Various writers have described different types of case study. Stenhouse (1988) classified case study into four categories, which have characteristics applicable to the current study; ethnographic, evaluative, educational, and action research case studies. In term of ethnographic case studies, Stenhouse (1988, p. 49) stated,

a single case is studied in depth by participant observation supported by interview, after the manner of cultural or social anthropology ... Of ethnographic case study it may be said that it calls into question the apparent understandings of the actors in the case and offers from the outsider's standpoint explanations that emphasise causal or structural patterns of which participants in the case are unaware.

More discussion on ethnography as an approach that the study drew on is presented in section 3.4. Of the *evaluative case studies*, Stenhouse (1988) described that they investigate a single case or collection of cases in depth in order to provide educational actors or decision makers (administrators, teachers, parents, pupils, etc.) with information useful for them "to judge the merit and worth of policies, programmes or institutions" (p.49). In the *educational case study*, researchers are not concerned with

either social theory or with evaluative judgment, but rather with their understanding of educational practice. Their concern is to enrich the educators' thinking and discourse either by developing educational theory, or by improving policy through "the systematic and reflective documentation of evidence" (Stenhouse, 1985 as cited in Bassey, 1999, p.28). In line with what has been discussed in section 3.2 concerning the action research approach, case studies on action research are concerned with "contribution to the development of the case or cases under study by feedback of information which can guide revision and refinement of the action" (Stenhouse, 1985 as cited in Bassey, 1999, p.28).

The characteristics of each case study show that all types have commonalities in that they study in-depth a single case. In educational contexts, the ethnographic, evaluative, educational and action research case studies can provide useful information about educational actions on which the educational policies are based. However, each type has different aspects of emphasis. Action research has more emphasis on the direct contribution of the study in providing feedback necessary for improvement of the action. Ethnographic case studies emphasise the involvement of the participant researcher with an understanding of the cultural aspects of the case or group being observed.

As the current study is intended to provide thick description of students' experiences in implementing the online portfolio in a particular context, and the student participants' perceptions were investigated in depth through interviews, the study can then be seen to draw mainly on the action research and ethnographic types of case study.

3.4 Ethnography and autoethnography

Ethnographic methods are particularly appropriate for researching the relatively bounded system of school or classroom though they also have their place in the research of the the family role, social organisations, or ethnic communities in education (Keeves, 1988). In his further view on ethnography, Keeves (1988, p.59) stated,

Ethnographic research consists essentially of a description of events that occur within the life of a group, with special regard on the social structures and the behaviour of the individuals with respect to their group membership, and an interpretation of the meanings of these for the culture of the group. The ethnography is used both to record primary data and to interpret its meaning.

This study drew on the ethnographic approach as it was guided by “educational questions, purposes, needs and concerns” which is a characteristic of ethnography in education (Green & Bloome, 1996, p.6). They suggest the concept of ethnographic perspective to “study particular aspects of everyday life and cultural practices of a social group” (Green & Bloome, 1996, p.6). Ethnography and ethnographic studies in education are “heuristically defined as studies grounded in knowledge derived from the field of Education and the historical background of ethnography in anthropology and sociology” (Green and Bloome, 1996, p.6). Ethnography in education can be conducted by those inside this academic field (e.g. teachers, students, teacher educators, or administrators) “using ethnographic perspectives and ethnographic tools for Education's purposes” (Green and Bloome, 1996, p.8). They argued that “students and teachers have taken up the role of social scientists and adopted ethnographic perspectives and practices in order to explore their own communities” (Green and Bloome, 1996, p.2). In the education field,

ethnography and ethnographic perspectives have become a language of education, a productive resource for students for academic study, a way of taking action while learning content, and a way of bridging the proverbial gap between theory, research and practice that has characterised much education resaerch” (Green and Bloome, 1996, p.26).

While conducting ethnography, “the researcher participates in some part of the normal life of the group and uses what he or she learns from that participation to produce the research findings” (Keeves, 1988, p.59). Ethnography enables the investigators to understand “the culture and the interactions between the members that are different from that which can be obtained from merely observing or conducting a questionnaire survey or an analysis of documents” (Keeves, 1988, p.59).

As I have mentioned previously, this study also involved reflection on my own personal experiences (teaching and learning) throughout the research project due to my desire to improve my teaching practice as well as my students’ learning. For this reason, I decided to also draw on auto-ethnography. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) defined auto-ethnography as “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse personal experience in order to understand cultural experience” , (p.273). Ethnography gives a space for the investigator to concentrate on making sense of his/her personal experiences grounded in a particular social and cultural context. In the same vein, Wall (2006) in his summary of how different ethnographers conducted different studies stated that ethnographers study relational practices, shared values, beliefs and experiences of a culture to help its members as well as outsiders have better understanding of the culture (Maso, 2001), and they conduct the study by becoming participant observers; taking field notes of cultural occurrences and how they as well as other participants engage with the occurrences (Geertz, 1973; Goodall, 2001).

Autoethnographers acknowledge that the research process is influenced by personal experiences (Wall, 2006). For example, the decision of a research area, participants, methods and site is made by a researcher with regards to his/her personal circumstances

(e.g.. as in my context, I have been researching a foreign language learning pedagogy due to my job as an English teacher).

3.5 Data collection and procedures

The study applied qualitative research methods to generate data from various data sources. The methods included: (a) researcher's journal; (b) semi-structured interviews; (c) questionnaires; and (d) documents (the course description, syllabus, classroom materials, and online portfolio entries incorporating students' writing assignments, received and given comments, students' reflection). The variety of data were used to respond to the research questions and fulfil the purpose of the study. According to Wellington, (2000, p. 50), it is important to consider the selection of the research methods from the early stage of research, and he suggested 'a question-methods matrix (horses of courses)'. The following matrix of research questions and research methods shows which research methods are intended to provide data to respond to the research questions.

Research questions	Research methods
1. Regarding my teaching experiences and emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation	
a. How do I experience “teaching writing” using the online portfolio?	Questionnaires, interviews, teacher’s reflective journals
b. What problems emerge during the online portfolio implementation?	Interviews, teacher’s reflective journals, students’ reflections, comments/feedback, online portfolio entries (writing assignment drafts)
2. Regarding students’ writing development	
a. How do students perceive their writing drafts development throughout the online portfolio implementation?	Interviews, students’ reflections.
b. How do students revise their writing throughout the online portfolio implementation?	Analysis of online portfolio entries (writing assignments), comments/feedback
3. Regarding students’ autonomy and motivation	
a. What aspects of learner autonomy do students exercise throughout the online portfolio implementation (if any)?	interviews, students’ reflections,
b. What motivates students in learning writing using the online portfolio?	interviews, students’ reflections,
c. What is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation?	interviews, students’ reflections,

Table 3.1 Research questions-methods matrix

As can be seen in the table, in order to respond to the research questions dealing with students' perceptions on the implementation of the online portfolio, data were generated from the students' interviews and reflections. For example, data on students' perceptions toward their writing development during the online portfolio implementation were generated from the students' interviews and reflective writing in order to provide the responses for the research question 2a. In the same way, the data on learner autonomy and motivation to respond the third research questions were embedded in and generated from students' perceptions on the online portfolio implementation. The subsequent sections will discuss each of the methods I applied in this study and how I came to the decision of implementing or drawing on the methods.

3.5.1 Researcher's journal

Journals as a form of reflective writing have been widely acknowledged as prominent "tools in promoting both the development and the understanding of teachers" (Borg, 2001, p.156). Furthermore, Borg (2001) argued that incorporation of a reflective journal is beneficial not only for teachers in their professional development, but also for educational researchers to deepen their understanding of all facets of the research processes.

In terms of the journal contributions in the research process, Borg (2001, p.169) identified the following points:

- With reference to the conceptual framework of the research, the journal can assist the researcher in exploring concerns and identifying ways of addressing these.

- The journal allows anxieties (in this case related to fieldwork) to be aired and examined, hence opening the way to possible solutions.
- The journal provided a medium through which I was able to distance myself from a difficult situation, to make explicit the problems I faced and to gain a fresh perspective on these which allowed me to overcome them.
- It allowed undeveloped thoughts to be transformed into a tangible form amenable to further analysis and development.

With regards to the contribution of a reflective journal for the teacher, a number of writers have indicated the roles that reflective writing (diaries and journals) play in teachers' professional growth (Borg, 2001). Holly (1989 as cited in Borg, 2001, p.157) argued that documenting and reflecting on their experiences, "writers enhanced awareness of themselves as people and as professionals, an awareness which makes for more informed professional decision making". A journal contains whatever thoughts or feelings occurred to the teacher in their practice, and therefore it is suitable especially to explore affective data (Wallace, 1998).

Throughout my teaching practice in the action research project, I kept a journal as a reflective record of my teaching experiences on a daily basis, and I will discuss my teaching experiences in chapter 4 to address the research questions 1.a and 1.b. The journal entries can vary from one day to the next, and be either short or long (Wallace, 1998). I wrote my journal immediately after a teaching event, when the details were still fresh in my mind. In line with the contributions of the reflective journal suggested by Borg as mentioned earlier, Brock, Yu and Wong (1992) mentioned that using a journal as a data gathering method has some advantages; they raise teachers' awareness of the

way they teach, they are an excellent tool for teacher and learner reflection, they are simple to conduct, “they provide a first-hand account of teaching and learning experiences, they provide an on-going record of classroom events and teacher and learner reflections” (p.63), and they promote the development of reflective teaching. I included in my journal all my experiences in my research journey that inevitably involved my intellectual and emotional aspects such as ideas, thoughts, feelings of fear, surprise, success, confusion etc. which all shaped the directions of my study (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, I recorded all my decisions about my research as well as all my actions in the context of this research.

Maintaining a reflective journal throughout my research journey was not without any challenges. In the early stage of my research, I felt that writing my journals was time consuming, and I had to struggle to encourage myself to keep writing it. Along my journey, as I experienced the benefits of writing my reflective journals, I felt more motivated to do it. I felt that writing out and making explicit a lot of my anxieties throughout my research journey could help me identify and understand the problems and then guide me to take necessary actions to move forward. Borg (2001, p.165), in regards to this issue stated that a research journal allows the researcher “to move from fear to language and hence to action”. As for my teaching practice, my reflective journals served as a medium for the reflection of my teaching experiences. Through my reflective journals, I could identify emerging problems during the implementation of the online portfolio in the academic writing class and, together with my students, seek the solutions. I therefore analysed my reflective journals to provide responses to the research questions 1a and 1b.

3.5.2 Interviews

As mentioned in chapter one, some of my research questions deal with participants' perceptions on the implementation of online portfolios in the writing class. In order to generate data of the students' perceptions, particularly to provide data for addressing research questions 1a, 1b, 2a, 3a, 3b, and 3c I asked the students to participate in semi-structured interviews. As I discussed in section 3.1 concerning my research paradigm, my ontological perspective suggests that individuals' knowledge, experiences interpretations, and interactions are meaningful properties for understanding social reality, which my research questions are intended to explore. As a consequence, my epistemological position led to the use of semi-structured interviews as

a meaningful way to generate data by talking interactively with people, asking them questions, listening to them, gaining access to their accounts and articulation or analysing their use of language and construction of discourse (Mason 2002, p. 63).

This view is relevant to Wellington (2000), who said that interviews enable a researcher to reach parts which cannot be reached by other methods, and the interviews allow the researcher to explore things which cannot be observed such as “the interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives” (p.71).

I decided not to apply structured interviews since this type of interview involves predetermined questions with exact sequence that could constrain naturalness and relevance of questions and answer (Cohen et al., 2011). Moreover, it gives less opportunity for any emerging points as it does not give much flexibility to relate the interview to particular individuals and situations. As I already had ideas of the themes and points to explore during the interviews, I did not consider applying unstructured interviews either. This type of interview was not suitable for generating the appropriate data in my research as in this type of interview the interviewer does not prepare a list of

questions or guide priorities. Instead, only the topic is introduced, and what follows will be determined by the interviewee's thoughts.

As for my decision to have individual interviews instead of focus group interviews, which is another accepted method of gathering qualitative data, I considered that, even though both methods enabled me to access and understand the participants' activities and perceptions that I could not directly observe, having the interviews individually with every participant, I could listen to their perceptions independent of group effects, either positive or negative (Minichilello, Aroni & Hays, 2008). By this, I am not implying that the individual interview is better than the focus group interview. However, in my attempt to gain students' in-depth perceptions towards their learning experiences, I needed to ensure that each individual was given sufficient space to share their experiences. Regardless of the strengths of focus group interviews as an alternative method such as more social interaction between the group members that could encourage them to articulate their perceptions (Schensul, 1999), I considered that, particularly in my context, the possibility of having dominant group members and the students' less space for sharing their complete "stories" due to the presence of their peers during the interview needed enhanced attention. According to Levine and Moreland, (1995), group interaction that requires members to share and listen to others could lead to an exchange of ideas and information, and thus the discussion may focus only on shared information. It then became my concern, that I will discuss further in section 3.5.2.2, to create a relaxing atmosphere in which students could share their opinions comfortably without any pressure.

As discussed previously, the interviews in this study were intended to identify students' perceptions towards the online portfolio implementation including any emerging problems. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as I already had ideas of what points I intended to explore, but at the same time I considered that the participants had to be given opportunities to share any relevant issues important for them. The steps of the interviews and how the interviews were conducted are presented below.

3.5.2.1 Preparing for the interviews

I started the interview preparation by formulating the interview questions based on my research questions. Drawing on the procedures of formulating interview questions suggested by Mason (2002), I broke down the big research questions into mini-research questions, developed the mini-questions into possible interview topics and considering some possible questions appropriate to an interview interaction. How the research questions guided me to determine the interview questions is illustrated in matrix of research questions, interview topics and interview questions in appendix 7.

In order to ensure the clarity of the interview questions, I shared the interview questions with my research supervisors and pilot tested the interview questions with two students who were not participating in my study. I made some revisions to the interview questions after receiving some feedback from my supervisors concerning the clarity of the interview questions and the relevance to my research questions. The feedback on the clarity and length of the interview questions from the participants during the pilot study was positive.

As the interviews were also intended to gain students' perceptions of how well the online portfolio was implemented, which was necessary for identifying the problems and finding the solutions in my action research agenda, the questions in each interview were adjusted to the phase/stage of the online portfolio implementation, while the interviews were conducted. The theoretical framework I have discussed in section 2.5 guided me to formulate the interview questions, which were intended to generate data to respond to my research questions. All interview questions can be seen in appendix 7.

After a set of interview questions were ready, I considered, discussed with the participants and decided the convenient setting of the interview with the least distraction. It was agreed that the interviews would be conducted in one of the classrooms in campus. After arranging a specific time with each participant, I then booked an available classroom. Prior to the interviews, a consent form for the whole research process was given to every participant to sign. Moreover, the participants were given an information sheet, which informed them about the whole research process including the purposes of the interviews, the term of confidentiality, the format of the interview, how long the interview would take, and the contact information of the interviewer. Further consideration concerning ethical issues will be discussed in section 3.12.

3.5.2.2 Conducting the interviews

There were three interviews with each participant conducted during the fieldwork of the study; two interviews during the online portfolio implementation (in the middle of October and at the end of November 2013) and one interview after the online portfolio implementation in the middle of December 2013.

The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to make sure that language would not be a problem for students to answer all the questions. Of course I needed to consider the implications of translating their language into English, and I will discuss this issue separately in section 3.9.2. With regards to my decision to apply semi-structured interviews, I did not talk to the participants with rigid predetermined questions. Instead of having a very formal interview with a set of predetermined questions in a planned sequence, the interview ran in a more informal atmosphere in which the participants were given opportunity to talk about certain issues being discussed more spontaneously. Even though I had prepared a list of questions to be asked, the direction of the interview could be changed by the participants as long as it was still relevant to issues being investigated. As the participants could have made spontaneous responses to certain issues, my role as the interviewer to focus the discussion when necessary became very important. I kept the interview on track and made sure it was moving forward (Cohen et al., 2011). Each interview took between 25-35 minutes.

My decision to conduct semi-structured interviews individually with every participant had its own challenges for me as the interviewer conducting the interviews. A semi-structured type of interview, particularly when conducted individually, gives participants more time to articulate their thoughts and opinions, but at the same time it could raise a feeling of anxiety in the student participant. In this situation, where I played dual role as a teacher-researcher that inevitably involves the teacher-student relationship, I needed to be concerned with any implications it might have towards the interviews. In order to make sure that students were not being controlled or feeling as if they had to give the right answer, before starting the interviews I assured the

participants that the interview was for the purpose of my research, and therefore, any answers they gave during the interviews would not affect their academic performance. With regards to this issue, I found the suggestion of Gerson and Horowitz (2002) particularly relevant for having successful interviews. They suggested that it is necessary for the interviewer to be sympathetic and encouraging so that the participants do not feel that they are being judged, and they are not tempted to give answers that they think will please the interviewer. I also informed them in the first meeting of the course that I was a PhD student who was conducting a research in the class. In order to make sure that students understood my role during the interview and the purpose of the interviews, which is to listen to their opinions about the online portfolio implementation, I offered to explain to them again all the information about the research they had received along with the consent form.

In order to help me to focus on how the interviews were running and what points to address next (Smith, 1995), I used a digital audio recorder to record the participants' responses. I tried the recording device several times prior to the interview to ensure its quality. As recording the participants' voice has ethical aspects which needed to be considered, the information that the interviews would be recorded was included in the information sheet (appendix 4), and a consent form (appendix 3) was given to the participants to read and sign prior to the investigation if they agreed to this.

Students did not mind to have their responses during the interviews recorded, and there was no technical problem during the recording. I did not see any negative reactions from the students regarding the presence of the recorder. In this respect, Speer and Hutchby (2003, p.334) argue that participants' awareness of being recorded does not

automatically hinder the interaction, “but are bound up in creatively relevant to the setting”. The recording tool was very useful for it gave me good quality of recorded interviews that I could play back for transcription. In addition to the digital recording, I took some notes on any important occurrences during the interviews as this would be helpful for me in analysing the interview data as part of my action research.

3.5.3 Questionnaires

In the current study, questionnaires were applied to reveal the students’ diversity in terms of their age range, educational background, technology experience, and writing experience, and to gain students’ thoughts, perceptions, and feelings about their experiences with EFL writing and the use of technology to facilitate their learning. Such information was necessary for me to give a picture of the EFL writing class students I would teach using technology tools. The questionnaires gave me initial information about my students such as their previous experiences in using technology particularly internet and how they perceive technology in learning. The information was useful for me to determine where and how to start my teaching practice incorporating the online portfolio. With regards to my research agenda, the results of the questionnaires provided the data to address the research questions 3a and 3b concerning my teaching practice particularly the facilitation of the online portfolio implementation. As five participants from seventeen students were to be selected (as I will discuss in section 3.6) within a short period of time to take part in the interviews for in depth study, the questionnaire survey was a suitable method to gain necessary information as mentioned earlier. Wilson and Mclean (1994, as cited in Cohen et al., 2011) stated that, to collect survey information, a questionnaire is a useful and widely used instrument as it can provide structured and often numerical data, which can be carried out with or without the

researcher being present, and analysing the results of the questionnaires is relatively straightforward. Mason (2002, p.65) suggests that questionnaires are designed to “minimise bias through the standardisation of the questions”. A semi-structured questionnaire was applied as it “sets the agenda but does not presuppose the nature of the response” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.382). This type of questionnaire presents “a series of questions, statements or items and the respondents were asked to answer, respond, or comment on them in a way that they thought best” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.382). I decided to design and use a semi-structured questionnaire as the questionnaire was also valuable as a way of enabling me to select the five participants for the in-depth study. The questionnaire enabled me to gain information about how articulate the participants were. The students’ ease in articulating their perceptions became the main criterion for me in selecting the participants for the in-depth study as the data needed to respond to my research questions were mainly generated from the students’ perceptions.

In order to be clear, unambiguous and uniformly workable, as the criteria of an ideal questionnaire suggested by Cohen and Manion (1985), the questionnaires needed to be piloted. Wellington (2000) also emphasises the need to pilot questions by highlighting that the printed word could raise problems that were not noted in the spoken communication. In order to ensure that the participants would not misunderstand or misinterpret the questions, I pilot tested the questionnaire with two students from the same department who did not participate in the study. I then analysed the questionnaires students had completed, and this revealed that both students could complete the questionnaires without any difficulties. However, I received some feedback regarding the clarity and repetition of similar points asked in two different questions, and then I revised the questionnaires accordingly.

Time for the questionnaire survey was allocated during the first meeting of the academic writing course. All students needed to do were to sign the consent form to participate in the survey and complete the questionnaires. The consent form was very important to be signed by the participants, as well as the information they needed to know regarding the research project. Respondents cannot be forced into completing a questionnaire due to ethical issues that I will discuss in section 3.12.

Even though the questionnaires had been pilot tested, and the respondents could complete them without the researcher's presence, I considered that my presence during the questionnaire completion was important as it enabled any uncertainties or questions to be addressed immediately with me as the questionnaire designer (Cohen et al., 2011).

3.5.4 Documents

According to Mason (2002), the analysis of documentary sources is “a major method of social research, and one which many qualitative researchers see as meaningful and appropriate in the context of their research strategy” (p.106). My ontological and epistemological position suggest that

text, documents and written records, visual documents, visual records, objects, artefacts, and phenomena, or visualisation (as process more than a thing) are meaningful constituents of the social world in themselves and can provide or count as evidence (Mason, 2002, p.106).

Analysis of relevant documents was used as another method in this study. The documents included description of the course, syllabus, materials used in class, students' online portfolio entries (students' writing assignments and reflection) and comments which I downloaded from their online portfolio sites. The students' reflection was initially planned to be written in students' first language (Indonesian) to avoid any language barrier in expressing their reflection. However, before the first reflective

writing activity was started, some students asked if they could write their reflections in English as they thought that it could be a good writing practice for them as well. As a researcher, I had to consider the written reflection as part of the data sources necessary to gain students' voices, and therefore there should not be any language barrier. However, as their teacher, I had to accommodate their good intention to reflect on their learning while practicing their English writing. I discussed the issue of what language to use in the written reflection, and it was agreed that students could make the written reflection in English. Since the main purpose of written reflection was for students to reflect on their learning, any errors of the language students made did not become a concern as long as they did not influence the message students intended to write.

In order to address research question 2b concerning the revisions students made in their writings throughout the online portfolio implementation, the students' writing assignments were analysed with regards to the revisions they made and the aspects of the academic essay. Moreover, the comments students received from both teacher and peers were analysed to reveal their impacts on students' writing revisions. The reflection as part of students' online portfolio entries serve to address research questions 1a, 1b, 2a, 3a, 3b and 3c.

3.6 Gaining access

As I described earlier in the background of my study, my experiences in teaching an ICT class had encouraged me to use the online portfolio to teach EFL writing. Having an opportunity and given a chance by my home university to undergo my PhD, I intended to give a contribution to the field of EFL learning particularly in my home university through an action research project. During the process of exploring possible

areas of my PhD research, the idea of implementing the university ICT facilities to support EFL learning had come to my mind, and I started looking at possibilities of conducting such research in my home university. It was necessary to make a plan as such research would require me to ensure the term/semester when the academic writing class was offered, considering that the curriculum of the study programme could change at any time. As no academic writing class had been taught using the ICT facilities in the computer lab before, and various departments in the university used the computer room, I needed to make sure that the computer room would be available for the academic writing class during that particular term.

During the first year of my PhD that required me to read a lot of literature and discuss every stage of my plan with my supervisor, I maintained communication via email with my home university with regards to my plan to involve the institution as the location of my study. Having passed the confirmation review of my PhD research proposal and had my research ethics approved, I proceeded to the next phase of my fieldwork. At the end of August 2013, I went back to Indonesia to prepare the details for my fieldwork. I met the Head of the English Education Graduate School, who was also a lecturer of the academic writing class, to follow up my application to teach the academic writing class that I had processed through email communication. I informed him of the details of my research plan such as my research objectives, how I would collect the data, how I would recruit the participants and how I would deal with ethical issues. The Head of the Department responded to my intention very positively and was willing to support my fieldwork. I got permission to do action research in an academic writing class and use one of the computer rooms in the institution to support the implementation of the online portfolio in that class.

3.7 Participants

The participants for the study were Masters students of an English education graduate school at a private university in Jakarta who enrolled in the academic writing class on the first semester in the academic year of 2013-2014. There were seventeen students enrolled in the writing class (five males and twelve females). Sixteen students took part in the survey by filling out the questionnaires. Their ages varied from between 19 to 25 years old (five students), 26 to 35 years old (seven students), 36 to 45 years old (one student), and three students aged above 45. As for their experiences with technology, particularly with internet use, two students (12.5%) were experienced with browsing, downloading learning materials, using email, Facebook, shopping online, and blogging, thirteen students (81.25%) were students with experiences in browsing, downloading learning materials, using email, and Facebook, and one student (6.25%) was only experienced with using emails. The majority of students had graduated from the English department (fifteen students) and were EFL teachers in elementary and secondary schools. Only one student had a non-English department background. One student did not take part in the survey as he joined the class after the second meeting. Of those seventeen students, five participants were selected to participate in the in-depth study based on the results of the questionnaires. Students who could articulate their ideas and experiences in answering the questionnaires and agreed to participate in the in-depth study were selected. The term selection was used instead of sampling as it “more closely describes the method for choosing qualitative data”; the people selected were not intended to be representative of the population (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 139). How articulate the students were in responding to the questionnaires became my consideration to identify articulate students to be selected for the in-depth study. However, I acknowledge that relying on the questionnaire results to select the articulate

students has a limitation. Through the questionnaire, I could gain information about students' ease in articulating their thought only in a written language. In addition to the questionnaire results, I based my decision on students' participation in the class discussion before the first interview was conducted, which gave me further input about students' ability to articulate their ideas.

With regards to the selection of the participants for the in-depth study using interviews, Polkinghorne (2005) stated that the researcher has to choose participants who are willing to describe their experiences and can adequately reflect on the experiences and verbally describe them if the data are to be produced through an interview. I decided to have five participants for the in-depth study and not a larger number since

the concern is not how much data were gathered or from how many sources but whether the data that were collected are sufficiently rich to bring refinement and clarity to understanding an experience (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 140).

Qualitative researchers most often use a small number of participants in their studies (Polkinghorne, 2005). However, using multiple participants is important "to provide accounts from different perspectives about an experience" (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 140). Having five participants enabled me to compare and contrast the perspectives. Moreover, I was "able to notice the essential aspects that appear across the sources and to recognise variations in how the experience appears" (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 140).

All the students were given a consent form to participate in the survey, and of the seventeen students enrolled in the class, nine agreed to participate in the interviews for in-depth study. Of those nine students, five were selected to participate in the in-depth part of the study based on the questionnaires results as mentioned earlier. In addition to the interviews, the in-depth study included the analysis of the work of the five selected

students. The participants who took part in the in-depth study can be seen in the following table:

Name	Gender	Age group
Arin	Female	36-45
Vina	Female	26-35
Tia	Female	19-25
Wawan	Male	26-35
Gita	Female	19-25

Table 3.2 Information of the participants in the in-depth study

The students who did not agree to participate in the interviews were not penalised for not participating. They received their grades based on the criteria used in the syllabus. Those who agreed to participate in the in-depth interviews but were not selected were informed personally that the rich information provided in the questionnaires became the consideration to determine the chosen participants for the interviews, and I reminded them that they were still part of the research. The explanation was completely understood even though they really wanted to take part in the interviews. None of the students participating in the interviews received extra credit for their participation.

3.8 The academic writing course design using online portfolios

Academic writing is a compulsory course for the first semester students of English education programme at the graduate school of the university in which this study was carried out. Theories related to approaches to foreign language writing and the utilisation of online portfolios to support writing discussed in the literature review were taken into account in designing the writing course. Moreover, the writing course design

was informed by my knowledge of the teacher's roles in e-learning environment, fostering learner autonomy in a classroom context, the importance of feedback and reflection, and how to manage different types of students' motivation. This section will discuss the objectives of the course, the writing instructional materials and the incorporation of online portfolios in the writing course.

3.8.1 Objectives

The objectives of the course were based on the academic writing course curriculum implemented in the English department of the university in the first semester of the academic year 2013/2014. The objectives consisted of general and specific instructional objectives. The course aimed at developing competency in students' writing, particularly in the academic genre. It discussed topics such as correct and effective sentences, paragraphs, and essays in academic writing. In addition, taking notes, making quotations, paraphrasing and summarising are taught and discussed. All those topics were required by students at the Masters programme in order to be able to write argumentative essays and research writing.

3.8.2 The writing instructional materials

The instructional plan of the writing class involved blended learning (both a face-to-face and an online learning environment). As stated in the course objectives, the course was aimed to develop students' competence in writing different genres of essays. For this goal, it was necessary to provide input or knowledge about the language necessary for different contexts and purposes. Moreover, I believed that students' potential to develop their writing skills needed to be explored through different processes in the online portfolio implementation. For these reasons I decided to apply the process genre

approach suggested by Badger and White (2000). I designed the instructional materials myself with reference to the curriculum applied in the institution and the potential of a blended learning approach. Materials from the text book were selected with regards to the goals stated in the curriculum. The 16-week academic writing course was intended to cover the contents, as can be seen in the following table (table 3.3).

Week	Topics
1	Introduction, Overview of Syllabus, Questionnaire
2	Sentence problems (Review) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sentence Fragments 2. Choppy sentences 3. Run-on sentence and Comma splices 4. Stringy sentences
3	Paragraph writing part 1 Three parts of paragraphs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Topic sentence 2. Supporting ideas 3. Concluding sentence
4	Paragraph writing Part 2, online portfolio Online portfolio tasks (creating blog and posting)
5	Feedback and reflection Online portfolio tasks (commenting)
6	Organisation of Essay Three parts of essay: introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, concluding paragraph
7	Comparison/Contrast Essay
8	Comparison/Contrast Essay part 2 Online portfolio task
9	Introduction to argumentative essay
10	Citation
11	Direct quotation and Paraphrasing
12	Summarising
13	Bibliography & Reference
14	Plagiarism
15	Argumentative essay part 2 Online portfolio tasks
16	Argumentative essay part 3 Online portfolio tasks

Table 3.3 Contents of the writing course

Of all the materials covered in the academic writing class during the semester, three topics were chosen for the online portfolio tasks which included paragraph writing, comparison-contrast essay and argumentative essay. The syllabus of the writing course distributed to the students in the first meeting can be seen in appendix 10. However, I informed students that I may make some changes to the initial plan stated in the syllabus, which may include altering time allocation for particular topics and tasks in order to achieve the learning goals and enriching students' learning experiences.

3.8.3 The incorporation of the online portfolios

The implementation of online portfolios was attempted to facilitate the process of students' writing. This section will discuss the use of WordPress as students' online portfolio platform and what was required of the students during the online portfolio implementation.

3.8.3.1 The use of WordPress as the online portfolio platform

In deciding on which portfolio platform to use, I considered the principles of the purpose, process and content as mentioned in chapter 2 section 2.2.1.1. In similar vein, Denton and Wicks (2013) suggested criteria to take into account when selecting portfolio platforms that include the personal information required to create an account and simplicity in accessing and managing the content. I assessed WordPress, the blog site that has been the most familiar site in the English department of the university since the first semester students enrolling in the ICT class are introduced to this blog site as part of the class tasks. WordPress provides all required features to support writing instruction using the online portfolio such as commenting tools and access to archived entries. I maintained my own blog where I provided links to all my students' blog sites.

The students could access their peers' blog sites from the link I provided in my blog page.

The existence of the ICT class in which first year students enrolled during the same semester of the academic writing class became a supporting factor in my attempt to incorporate technology in teaching academic writing. I communicated with the ICT lecturer whom I assisted before I commenced my PhD, and he was very supportive of the concept of utilising ICT to teach various English skills, particularly academic writing. He offered support from the ICT class to help the academic writing class incorporate the online portfolio in learning academic writing.

3.8.3.2 What was required of the students?

Prior to the online portfolio implementation, students were required to create their blog using the WordPress blog site as the platform of their online portfolios. Students were given instructions and guidance in creating the blog and using the blog features to create their online portfolios on their individual blog. Students were introduced to the concept of blog before they started to use it for the platform of their online portfolio. On the third week of the academic writing class, before they were asked to post their first online portfolio entry which was the first writing assignment, students were trained to create and operate their own blog. With different levels of technology skills among students, the time needed by each student to accomplish the task to create their blog varied; some students with experiences in using blog could finish the task more quickly than those without any experiences.

By having an individual online portfolio in their blogs, the students were able to maintain ownership of their blog-based online portfolios. The students were required to complete all writing tasks and post them as their online portfolio entries. The number of entries every student should have posted throughout the online portfolio implementation was 12. It consisted of 3 writing assignments with 4 entries in each assignment; original draft, draft after self-editing, final draft, and reflection. The following screenshot shows an example of how a student's online portfolio looked.

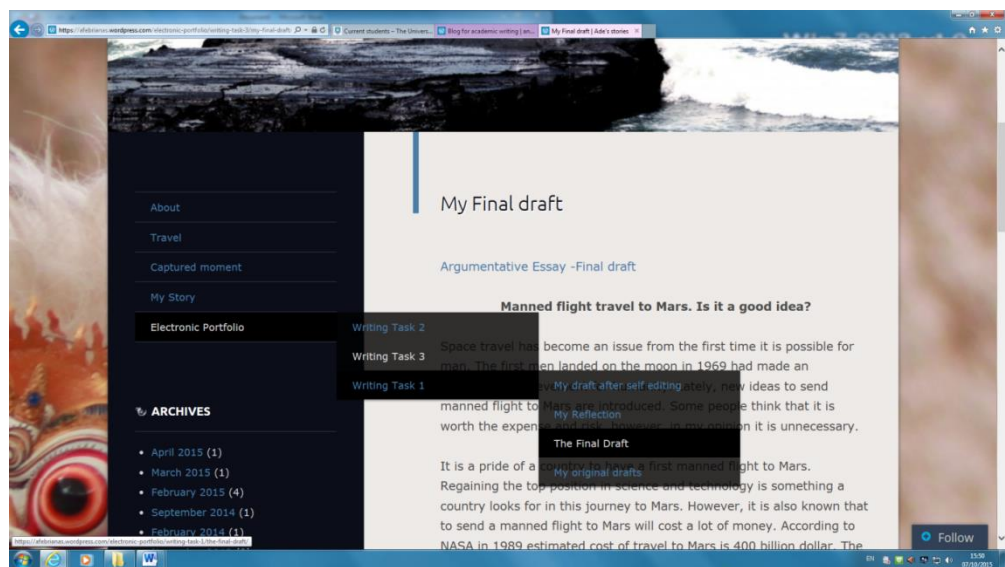


Figure 3.3 Screenshot of a student's online portfolio

With regards to the process of writing during the online portfolio implementation, the study drew on the process genre approach theories of writing that were reviewed in section 2.4. After discussing different genres of writing, providing models of the writing with different genres, students became involved in the process of writing which I formulated and implemented in this study as can be seen in the following figure:

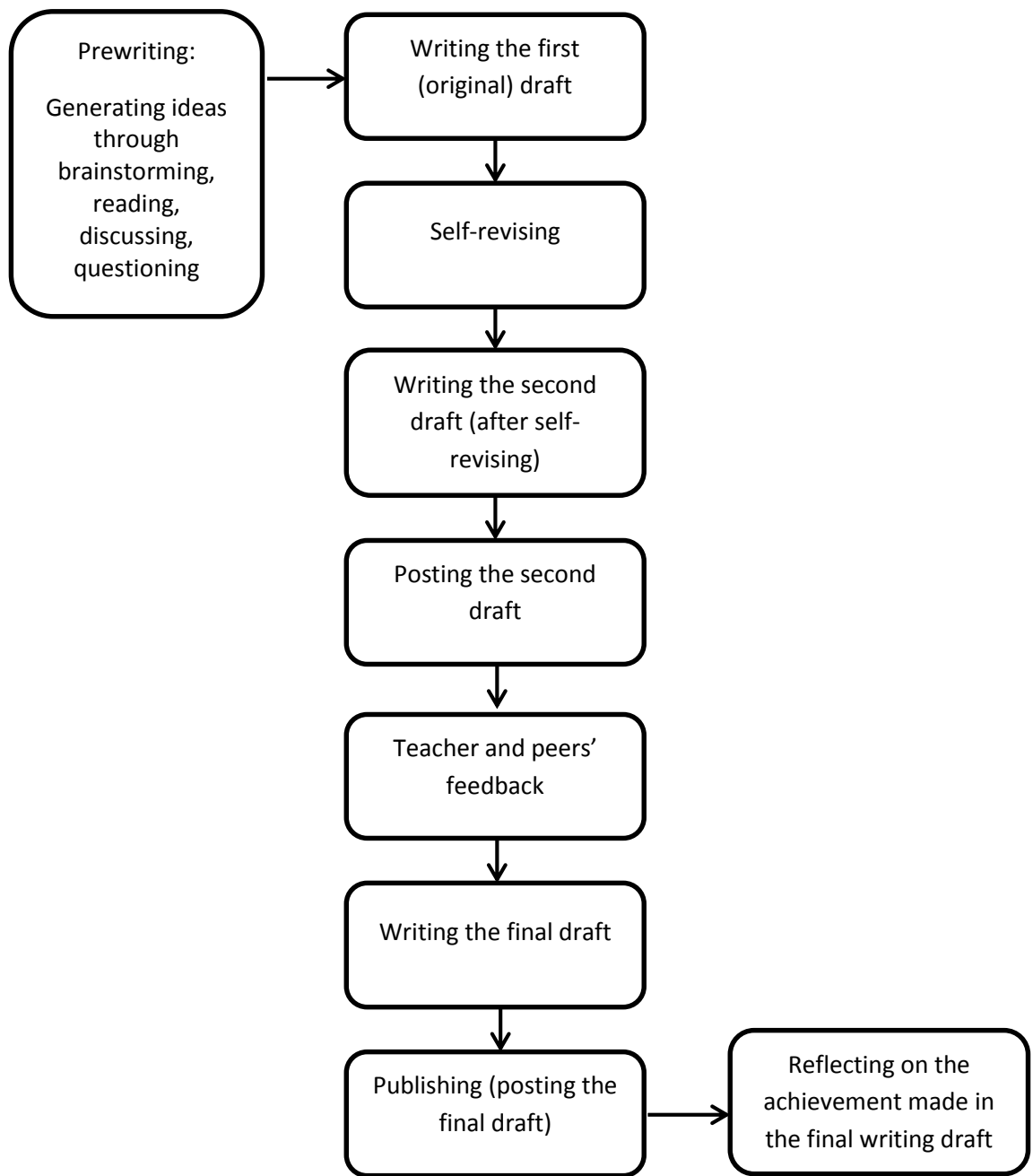


Figure 3.4 Steps in the writing process throughout online portfolio implementation

During the 16-week writing course, students were required to complete three writing assignments (paragraph writing, comparison/contrast essay and argumentative essay) involving all the steps shown in figure 3.4. As can be seen in Figure 3.4, in each writing assignment, students had prewriting activities to generate ideas through brainstorming

and discussion. For example, students brainstormed the issue of “English as a global language” as one of the topic in the writing assignment 3, by listing any words or phrases related to that topic which came into their mind and discussing them with a peer sitting next to them. In every assignment, students were given some options of topic to choose.

After choosing a topic and having ideas to develop, students then were required to write up a draft (the original draft) on one of the topic given. In this step, students were encouraged not to worry about grammar, punctuation, spelling or sentence structure. Students could develop any new relevant ideas during this process without worrying about the accuracy of the language they used. They would have opportunities to make necessary corrections on their writing draft throughout the writing process. Drawing on the process approach of writing (see section 2.1.2), the process of producing a piece of writing in the academic writing class in this study was viewed as a complex problem-solving process which involved multiple drafts.

Having written their rough draft, students then self-revised their draft. Through self-revising, students read, analyzed and revised their own original draft to produce the second draft. Some guiding questions of self-revision were given highlighting specific important aspects in academic writing such as “ a strong thesis statement, clear topic sentences, specific supporting details, coherence, and effective conclusion, and so on” (Oshima and Hogue, 2006, p. 313). The guidance to do self-revising on paragraph and essays can be seen in appendix 12. Given the guiding questions, students were expected to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of their writing in different aspects and improve them accordingly.

As students finished their second draft, they posted the draft on their blog and engaged in the online feedback activities. Students were asked to voluntarily make comments on their peers' writing drafts. They were given the freedom to choose whose work to comment on, and they were allowed to write more than one comment. By asking the students to write comments voluntarily, it was expected that they would not feel it as a burden.

As also given in the self-revision process, some guiding questions adapted from the "Writing Academic English" book were discussed prior to the peer feedback activities, and students were encouraged to write their own comments on their peers' writing drafts highlighting different aspects of writing suggested in the guidance. The guidance for writing peer feedback can be seen in appendix 13. In addition, every student received the teacher's feedback on the writing draft they posted. The feedback from both peer and teacher was intended to be a form of assessment for learning.

The next writing process after receiving the teacher and peers' feedback was to revise their second draft based on the feedback they received, and to post it as the final draft on their online portfolios. However, students were informed that they did not have to agree with every feedback they received. As emphasised earlier the use of blog-based online portfolio was very supportive to the feedback activities. The availability of online commenting tools was expected to encourage the students to engage in the activities.

As the last activity in each online portfolio assignment, students reflectively wrote about the final draft they posted. Students reflected on the final draft of their writing with

regards to the overall learning process they experienced that led them in producing their final draft. Students were initially assigned to keep their personal diary to record their weekly meeting; however, considering the limited time and avoiding too many tasks given to the students, the task to write a weekly journal was made optional. Instead, students were assigned to write a reflection on the final draft of each writing assignment with regards to the class activities and learning process they had experienced. Every student wrote three reflective writings on their three final writing drafts, and guidance for students to reflect on their writing draft was given prior to the first reflective writing task. The guidance for reflecting on the writing draft can be seen in appendix 14. Students were informed that the reflection was a part of the course requirements. It would be given a credit to determine their final mark in the academic writing class as online portfolio implementation became part of the curriculum. Referring to the necessity of reflection in learning as discussed in section 2.2.1.4, students were made to understand that doing tasks as instructed in the class was beneficial for them in achieving their learning goals. Making reflective writing mandatory for students did not necessarily mean that I took students' freedom to self-direct their learning, but rather it became part of informed practice in their learning. I believe that the benefits of a particular learning activity can be understood by experiencing it, and the teacher can play a role in informing students of what activities are worth practising.

As the reflection was to be posted in students' blogs and could be seen by others, the teacher's roles in making students feel comfortable to write and post their reflection on their blog for learning purpose became crucial. In order to respect those who did not want to share their reflection to the public, students were also given another option which was to share their reflection with the teacher by sending it to the teacher's email.

This way, only the teacher could see their reflection. However, no student had a problem with sharing their reflection to the public; all students posted their reflections to their blog.

Having considered the stages dealing with practical issues of reflection drawn from Moon (2001, 2004) as can be seen in chapter 2 section 2.2.1.4, appropriate guidance for writing reflection was given to support students. Guiding questions from the reflection sheet developed by Harford (2008) were applied as they are relevant to the subject matter of the reflective writing in this study, which is, reflecting on how well students wrote the writing assignment. The guiding questions of reflection include what students did well in the assignment, what needed to improve, what writing goals students intended to achieve in the next writing assignment, and how students were going to achieve the goals.

In terms of the language style in writing reflection, it was helpful to “talk about the manner in which knowledge is constructed with the involvement of the individual knower” (Moon, 2006, p.5). For this reason, “the use of the first person can be an acknowledgement of this process” (Moon, 2004, p.138, Moon, 2006, p.5). Discussing the language style of writing reflectively became important as most students could have learnt and experienced that they were not supposed to use the first person singular in an academic environment. They could have been confused if they were suddenly being encouraged to use ‘I’. Having had explanation about the concept of reflection and given an example of reflective writing, students were then encouraged to discuss their understanding of reflection with their friends.

The first reflective writing was done after students posted the final draft of their first writing assignment. Before writing their second reflection, students were encouraged to occasionally look for good examples of reflection written by other students in addition to the one given by the instructor. Implementing the above stages was useful for me as facilitator and for the students to overcome any potential difficulties that students might face along the online portfolio programme.

This section has discussed the academic writing course design incorporating online portfolios including the online portfolio entries that also serve as the data in the study. The next section will be devoted to discuss the procedures of data analysis.

3.9 Data Analysis

With regards to my action research agenda, the data collection and analysis became parts of my action research cycles and thus the process of collecting and analysing my data were ongoing throughout my fieldwork. As suggested by Hubbard and Power (2003) and McNiff (1988), the ongoing data collection and analysis process enabled me to have critical reflection on my teaching process, learning outcomes and the changes I made in my teaching practice. This kind of process informed me of the problems which emerged in the classroom setting and possible ways to deal with them and to encourage students' participation.

Qualitative data analysis, according to Cohen (2007 et al., p.537) “involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data”. In other words, analysing the qualitative data is a task of understanding what the data say with regards to the phenomena under investigation. This task requires me to familiarise myself with the data, recognise the

themes, categories and patterns. In the same vein, Ritchie and Spencer (2002,p.309) argued that “qualitative data analysis is essentially about detection and the tasks of defining, categorising, theorising, explaining, exploring and mapping are fundamental to the analyst’s role”. In order to have deep understanding of the data, I read each set of data from all different sources more than three times. The more I read the data, the better my understanding of what the data informed me of in relation to the issues I intended to investigate.

In this study, the data were analysed using thematic analysis, “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79). In thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested six phases of analysis; “familiarising with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, producing the report” (p.87). Familiarising with the data could be done through transcribing them (for verbal data), reading and re-reading the written data, and noting down initial ideas.

The analysis process in this study involved data sets of questionnaires, interviews, teacher’s journals and online portfolio entries (students’ writing assignments, comments and reflection). In this section, I will discuss the process of data analysis which was started with transcribing the interview records and translating the interview transcriptions. The process then proceeds to analysing the interview transcription, students’ reflection, teacher’s journal, students’ writing assignments and students’ feedback/comments.

3.9.1 Transcribing the interviews

Having recorded the interviews, it was necessary to transcribe the interview records before interpreting them. During the transcribing process, I played the recording several times and familiarised myself with the content of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As stated by Polkinghorne, (2005, p. 142), converting the original oral form into written form through transcribing the recorded interviews is aimed “to allow the detailed and to-and-fro reading required in the analysis of the qualitative data”. Moreover, “transcription has been described as central to the process of analysis in that it represents what the researcher and transcriptionist preserve from the taped speech” (MacLean, Meyer & Estable. 2004, p.113).

There is no particular standard of interview transcription even though some transcription systems have been suggested by different authors (Flick, 2002). Some analysis may need selected sentences, paragraphs, passages, or stories which are relevant to the research question or theory (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995, as cited in McLellan et al., 2003). This is supported by Strauss (1987), who stated that transcribing only the required parts informed by the research questions is more reasonable. However, McLellan et al. (2003, p.67), stated,

If an analysis focuses on providing an in-depth description of the knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs, or experiences of an individual, a group of individuals, or groups of individuals, a greater number and possibly lengthier units of text need to be included in the transcript.

I decided to include all the spoken parts of the interviews in the transcription as the purpose of my interviews was to generate data of students’ perceptions and experiences on using online portfolio to support their learning in academic writing class. In addition, I kept field notes throughout the transcribing process.

Even though transcribing the interviews was a time and energy consuming process, it was very beneficial for me to familiarise myself with the data that was to be used for data analysis. It was tempting though, for practical reasons, to transcribe and translate the interviews simultaneously. However, I decided to transcribe them in their original language so that the transcriptions still had the complete contents of students' verbal responses. By translating Indonesian written language to English written language, I felt more confident that the possibility of missing any important aspects of students' recorded responses could be minimised. In order to transcribe the recorded interviews accurately, I needed to listen to each recording at least three times; to familiarise myself with the utterances spoken by participants in a particular contexts, to listen while transcribing, and to check the accuracy of the transcription. For interview records with unclear pronunciation or very low volume, I had to listen more than three times. As has been indicated by Easton et al. (2000, p. 706),

A common type of error involves the misinterpretation of a word, or mishearing of a word, on the part of the person transcribing the tape. Other errors occur when the person transcribing the interview does not hear the word correctly and transcribes it the way he or she interprets it. Such changes in even one term can alter the entire meaning of the phrase and result in missing key themes or including themes that were actually nonexistent.

I decided to transcribe the interview records myself as Easton et al. (2000, p.707) has suggested; to avoid some of the pitfalls of transcribing as mentioned earlier, "ideally the researcher should also be the interviewer and the transcriber". To review for the accuracy of the transcription, I checked (proofread) "all transcriptions against the audiotape and revised the transcript file accordingly" (McLellan et al., 2003, p.80). Moreover, my decision to do the interview transcription myself was due to the participants' confidentiality and anonymity as part of my ethical commitment. As transcribing the interviews required me to listen to the recorded data several times, the

process was helpful for me to get to know my data and thus served as an initial phase of my data analysis.

3.9.2 Translating the interview transcriptions

The translation of interview transcriptions is another important process to do with the interview data as a result of my decision to use the participants' first language in the interview. Translation is not merely representation or reproduction as it creates something new and unique (Müller, 2007). I translated the interview transcripts myself. In this regard, Shklarov (2007, p.531) suggested that "a research project may employ a bilingual researcher translator, who is meaningfully involved, has a right and responsibility to freely exercise his or her judgment, and is fully aware of the ethical implications of combining the two roles". My position as a bilingual researcher with "knowledge of the target culture and general familiarity with cross-language experiences" enabled me to "identify and understand adequately the concerns" (Shklarov, 2007, p.234). However, my position as a researcher translator in a dualistic context of cross-language research had ethical responsibilities; "to protect the participants from any possible harm (in a broad sense)", and "to produce honest and sound scientific results free of any distortion that might result from language challenges, with respect to maximising benefits of research" (Shklarov, 2007, pp.534-535). One of my greatest responsibilities as a researcher and translator is then to make sure that the voice of the participants in the study could be conveyed adequately in the translated data.

With regards to the situation when the meanings of central concepts being translated are arguable (Tsai, Choe, Lim, Acorda, Chan & Taylor, 2004), Shklarov (2007, p.535)

suggested that “explicit articulation of all ideas and subtle meanings that might cause misunderstandings” are necessary to solve the ethical issues in the bilingual researcher-translator position. Moreover, the researcher needs to be open to the opinions of others regarding the “debatable meanings in cross language exchange to avoid uncertainty or doubt” (Shklarov (2007, p.535). In translating the interview transcriptions, I negotiated meanings with the participants, my research supervisors and colleagues in order to prevent misunderstandings of the participants’ perceptions.

3.9.3 Analysis of the interview transcriptions, students’ reflections and teacher’s journals

After familiarizing myself with the interviews through the transcribing and translating process, with all the written data (interview transcriptions, students’ reflections and the teacher’s journals) by reading and rereading them, I then started the coding process by categorizing them with initial codes which I determined based on the literature I have reviewed and my research questions. Some predetermined themes derived from my literature review and research questions included:

1. Students’ perceptions concerning their writing skills development
2. Students’ perceptions concerning learner autonomy components
3. Students’ perceptions concerning their motivation in the online portfolio activities
4. Emerging problems throughout the online portfolio implementation
5. The roles of facilitator

Having the pre-determined themes derived from my research questions and literature, I read my entire data and categorised them into the appropriate themes. As I was reading all my data sets thoroughly, categories or sub-themes of the main categories I predetermined began to emerge, and therefore I needed to develop a second level of the categories. After having all my data from the interview transcriptions coded in different categories and sub-categories, I organised my data sets by themes in a matrix form. As suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994), various data display formats including matrices, diagrams, charts and graphs can be used to organise categories, patterns, and themes. The coding categories and sub-categories in the data analysis can be seen in the following matrix, and examples of how I analysed the data extracts can be seen in appendix 9.

Main coding categories	Sub-categories
Students' perceptions on their writing development	Grammar and sentence structure Organisation Content Mechanics
Components of Learner autonomy	Metacognitive knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person knowledge • Task knowledge • Strategy knowledge Metacognitive strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Monitoring • Evaluation Social strategies Critical thinking
Motivation	Interest Relevance Expectancy

	Challenge Satisfaction and Confidence Convenience and flexibility Curiosity
Emerging problems	Emerging problems with the use of the blog <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' unfamiliarity with the blog • Internet connection Problems during the online feedback activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in writing comments • Commenting procedures Difficulties in writing reflection
Roles of facilitator	Allocating more time Giving more assistance to students in operating the blog Improving the commenting procedures Giving guidance in writing feedback Giving guidance to write reflection Bridging students' differences Assuring the readiness of the facilities Facilitating the learning writing itself

Table 3.4 Coding categories of the data analysis

3.9.4 Analysis of students' writing assignments and comments/feedback

The students' writing assignments were analysed with regards to the categories of revisions students made on their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation. The categories of writing draft revisions were predetermined based on the criteria for evaluating an academic essay suggested by the academic writing handbook. The criteria involved different aspects of writing; grammar and sentence structure, organisation, content, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation and capitalisation). Moreover, the analysis of students' writing assignments was intended to identify if different online portfolio tasks (self-revising and feedback/comments) had

contributed to the writing draft revisions. This analysis will show quantitatively the extent of the contribution that self-revising, teacher and peer feedback gave to students' writing draft revisions. In addition to the quantitative data, the writing drafts of each student involved in the in-depth study and the comments they received were also analysed to provide in-depth qualitative information. For example, what feedback types the students incorporated in their writing draft revisions and possible causes for not incorporating particular feedback they received. The academic writing rubric from the academic writing handbook on which the analysis of the students' writing draft was based can be seen in appendix 11.

In addition, the number of comments received and given by students will be presented in chapter 4 to indicate students' participation in the commenting activities. The data of the number of comments provided information for me as the facilitator to evaluate the commenting activities, reflect on my practice, and together with the students, find a way to improve the procedure of the online feedback activities.

In this section I have discussed how I analysed the data and organise them. Having the data organised by themes in the matrix form, I was then able to reread and check whether the data had been categorised appropriately. I added new sub-categories or shifted data between the data categories and sub-categories where necessary. The process of analysing the data also involved identifying similarities and differences among categories and finding similarities and differences among participants. In order to provide responses to my research questions, the next step I made was to interpret the data with regards to the issues under investigation.

In order to confirm the findings, this study applied various data sources and triangulated the multiple data sources, in line with what Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.283) suggested, which was that triangulation is crucial and that “no single item of information should ever be given serious consideration unless it is triangulated”. Triangulation will be discussed also in the next section when dealing with trustworthiness of the study.

3.10 Method of reporting the data analysis

There are different methods in presenting the results of qualitative data analysis. Cohen et al. (2011) suggested seven different ways to present qualitative data analysis with regards to the aims of research.

- By groups, when analysis is focused on ‘collective’ responses of individual groups and how they vary with the responses of other groups.
- By individuals, when the focus of analysis is on presenting the whole responses of each individual participant and how they contrast with those of other participants. This method enables the researcher to present the whole picture of every participant that is considered important.
- By research issue/theme, when the analysis and presentation of the research findings were based on and guided by themes that are derived from the research. Whoever applies this method must be more concerned with the pre-ordinate categorisation and to the necessity to include the whole set of an individual responses.
- By research questions, when all various data sets are collected and drawn to “provide a collective answer to a research question” (p.552).

- By instrument, when the analysis is organised and presented based on each research instrument and followed by all relevant documentary data and field notes.
- By one or more case studies, when the research is intended to select materials from different case studies to illustrate a specific common theme.
- By constructing a narrative, when it is considered that “humans make meaning and think in terms of ‘storied text’ which catch the human condition, human intentionality, the vividness of human experience very fully (Bruner, 1986, pp. 14-19) and the multiple perspectives and lived realities (‘subjective landscapes’) of participants” (p.552).

There are some considerations I needed to take before deciding what kind/s of data presentation methods are appropriate to my study. First, the analysis of the data in this study was started by determining the initial themes guided by the research questions. In the issues of students’ writing development and the commenting activities, I saw a necessity to focus on individual participants. Different factors relating to individual participants were involved and I needed to look at different data sources to investigate possible causes of such occurrences. For example, a student made only a few revisions on her writing due to the lack of feedback she received while another student made more revisions as he got more feedback in the commenting activities. Another issue I needed to be concerned with was my intention to draw on an action research approach in this study. Through this approach, I experienced and reflected on my teaching practices involving various perspectives, such as students’ perceptions toward the learning activities and my reflective journals. Bearing in mind these circumstances, it was impossible to adopt a single method to present my data analysis in my study.

Instead, I combined different approaches incorporating the methods of data presentation by individuals, by research theme and by constructing narrative. This way, the considerations I mentioned earlier could be accommodated. With regards to combining different approaches of data presentation, Cohen et al. (2011) stated that of the seven methods he suggested, none is mutually exclusive, but rather, they could be combined to serve better for answering the research questions.

Another prominent issue I am concerned with in presenting the data analysis is dealing with the ethical issue. With regards to my ethical commitment, as informed to the participants in the consent form prior to their agreement to participate in the study, the participants' identities would be anonymised in the data presentation. I used pseudonyms as the identifiers of the subjects (Pfitzman and Köhntopp, 2001) to ensure anonymity.

3.11 Trustworthiness of the study

Since human behaviour is never static and what many experience is not necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences, reliability is problematic in social sciences (Merriam, 1998). Replication of a qualitative study will not yield the same result, but this does not discredit the results of any particular study; there can be numerous different interpretations of the same data (Merriam, 1998). Morgan (1983), as cited in Guba and Lincoln (1989, p. 236) stated that the quality criteria of a particular study “are themselves rooted in the assumptions of the paradigm for which they are designed; one cannot expect positivist criteria to apply in any sense to constructivist studies”. Hence, it becomes crucial for researchers to indicate clearly what research

paradigm underlying their study and what criteria are appropriate for judging the quality of their study.

Since this study is guided by a constructivist approach, the criteria used to judge the quality of positivist studies was not relevant to make judgement of its quality. This study used the term trustworthiness to be a more appropriate indicator of its quality. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), an essential element of constructivist research is establishing trustworthiness of which the criteria include the combination of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989, pp.236-237), the “credibility criterion is parallel to internal validity in that the idea of isomorphism between findings and an objective reality is replaced by isomorphism between constructed realities of respondents and the reconstructions attributed to them”. Several techniques to ensure credibility of a study involve prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In this study, I applied persistent observation as I was with the class for a full semester. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.314) stated that member checking is “where data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stake holding groups from whom the data were originally collected”. To enable member checking, which is an important technique to achieve credibility as mentioned earlier, I verified the content and my interpretations of the interviews with the participants. I have in fact been maintaining communication with the participants since the time when I had my data collection. I also organised a discussion group of fellow doctoral students in order to examine the data collection and analysis process. Triangulation is another technique to ensure the credibility in this study. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.305) suggested that “triangulation of data can come from four different

sources: theories; methods; sources; and investigators”. In this study, data generated from different methods were triangulated, though I had to admit that triangulation also has its limitation in that people might not behave consistently.

Transferability in the constructivist paradigm is parallel to external validity or generalisability in the positivist paradigm even though the establishment of each criterion in each paradigm is very different (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Instead of judging external validity which is only applicable for the positivist, this study which is underlaid by constructivism, provided the thick description necessary to enable anyone “interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 316).

Dependability is the next criterion in the constructivism paradigm which is “concerned with the stability of the data over time” (Guba & Lincoln 1989, p. 242). Since there can be no credibility without dependability, the demonstration of credibility is sufficient to establish dependability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In other words, having assured the credibility with the techniques discussed earlier, “it ought not to be necessary to demonstrate dependability separately” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p.316).

The last criterion, confirmability, is concerned with assuring that research findings are grounded in the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In this study, the integrity of the findings is assured through tracing “back to the raw data - interview notes, document entries, and the like – upon which they are based” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p.323). Throughout the study, I kept a reflexive journal, “a kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about self (hence the term

“reflexive”) and method” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p.327). With regards to the method, the journal “provides information about methodological decisions made and the reasons for making them” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p.327). The data in this study is made available for the external reviewer to trace back for confirming the integrity of the findings.

3.12 Ethics

Since an ‘ethic’ is a moral principle which directs and controls what people do, it then plays an important part both in educational and scientific research (Wellington, 2000). A careful plan is necessary in conducting research to minimise any risks that the participants could face during the research process. Moreover, a researcher should take into account the ethical issues, which could arise throughout the investigation, as ethical issues relate directly to the research integrity (Bryman, 2012).

In conducting this study, the rules of ethics outlined by Wellington (2000) need to be taken into account. The rules include:

- No parties should be involved without their prior knowledge or permission and informed consent.
- No attempt should be made to force people to do anything unsafe or do something unwillingly.
- Relevant information about the nature and purpose of the research should always be given.
- No attempt should be made to deceive the participants.
- Avoid invading participants’ privacy or taking too much of their time.

- All participants should be treated fairly, with consideration, with respect and with honesty.
- Confidentiality and anonymity should be maintained at every stage, especially in publication.

In line with what Wellington suggested, Leedy and Ormrod (2005) emphasised that a participant should strictly be a volunteer in participating in a study. As the University of Sheffield has particular procedures in ensuring research ethics, I needed to apply for research ethics approval according to the university regulations. Before conducting the fieldwork, I submitted the research ethics application forms including a Participant Information Sheet and a Participant Consent Form. After being reviewed, the forms were approved by The University of Sheffield Research Ethics Committee. The approved ethics application form can be seen in appendix 1.

In order to address the points dealing with the ethical issues, including those discussed above, through the Participant Information Sheet (appendix 4), the participants were informed of the essential issues, such as the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, anonymity, confidentiality, and their right to contact the researcher to ask for support. Having given the necessary information about the study and their roles as the participants, they were asked to sign a consent form (appendix 3) stating that they had understood the information and agree to participate in the study. Considering my position as an insider-researcher with my students as participants and the power relationships which this entails, there were challenges in generating data from the student participants particularly when dealing with students' perceptions of the classroom practice. In order to reduce the possibility that students

may not share their perceptions honestly, they were informed that all their perceptions about the classroom practice would not influence their scores. Other ethical issues concerning how the interviews were conducted have been discussed in section 3.5.2.2. Concerning my responsibility to protect the participants' identities, I kept all the data records confidential. I used pseudonyms for the participants in my study and informed the participants through the information sheet that the data would be analysed and reported anonymously. I have also discussed anonymity in reporting the data analysis in section 3.10. As for the use of analysis of students' online portfolio entries in this study, students were informed through the consent form that their online portfolio entries would be included in the research. Since students used the blog as the online platform of their portfolios, I informed them that any entries they published on their blog could be seen by anyone with online access. All students were fine with the situation that anyone could access and read their blog entries.

Research ethics approval given by the University of Sheffield for data collection was not the only approval obtained. During the fieldwork I also gained approval from the University in which I conducted the study, to be the location of my data collection and obtained permission for me to use the university ICT facilities to support my study (see appendix 2).

3.13 Summary and reflection

In this chapter, I have presented my research methodology with my justification of the research methods I chose. I started the chapter with some philosophical issues including the constructivism as my research paradigm which led me to my ontological, epistemological and methodological positions in this research. The process of writing

the philosophical issues has raised my understanding of the fundamental issues before conducting research; the basic questions of what I would like to know and how. Having these issues understood and discussed clearly, I then could justify my choices of methods. The discussion then moved to the appropriate research approaches which my study drew on, specific methods (questionnaires, online portfolio entries, interviews and teacher's journals) I applied to generate the data, and information about the participants. As this study involved an implementation of the online portfolio in an academic writing class, the design of the academic writing class was also discussed in this chapter. This academic writing class design included the discussion of the online portfolio entries as part of students' requirements, which were used as part of the data collection methods. Other issues covered in this chapter include trustworthiness of the study, research ethics, procedures of the data analysis and method to present the data analysis. Writing this chapter has given me more understanding, not only the philosophical aspects, which I acknowledge as an important issue that I was only concerned with after embarking on my PhD, but also some technical aspects concerning the data analysis and ethics that must be made explicit and transparent that can be the basis for the readers to judge the quality of the thesis. The following three chapters will discuss the findings of this study, which I organised based on my research questions.

CHAPTER 4

THE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCES AND EMERGING PROBLEMS IN THE ONLINE PORTFOLIO IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter is aimed at addressing the first research question dealing with my experiences and problems which emerged in the online portfolio implementation, which I formulated in the following sub-questions:

- a. How do I experience teaching writing using the online portfolio?
- b. What problems emerge during the online portfolio implementation?

I started with the above research questions before the other questions as this enabled me to describe my teaching experiences during the action research in detail and provided more narrative about the research in general.

Data in this discussion were drawn from my reflective journals, students' questionnaires, students' interviews, and students' online portfolio entries (writing assignments, comments and reflection). In the first section I will present my experiences in a form of narrative to give a complete picture of the whole issues I encountered during my teaching. Though I intended to discuss the emerging problems throughout the online portfolio implementation separately in the second section, it is unavoidable to include some emerging problems I experienced in facilitating the online portfolio implementation in the first section.

Throughout the discussion of the findings in this chapter and the next two subsequent chapters (chapter 5 and chapter 6), I identify the sources of the data I use to illustrate my findings by writing the method through which the data were generated, a number and

the name of the participant from which the data were taken. For example, “interview #3 Wawan” means that the data comes from an interview response from the third interview with Wawan.

4.1 The teacher’s experiences in the online portfolio implementation

As my role in the online portfolio implementation project was as a teacher researcher, documenting my teaching experiences throughout the semester became very crucial. This section describes my experiences as a teacher and consists of my plans, my actions to execute the plans, my observation in relation to those actions, identification of any emerging problems, and my reflection to find solutions to the problems, to form the basis for my next plan. The discussion in this section is intended to provide responses to the research questions relating to my experiences in teaching writing using the online portfolio and the problems that emerged during the online portfolio implementation, using the data drawn from my reflective journals and students’ questionnaires. In addition, it will describe the procedures of my action research. It is necessary to present, in detail, a picture of my lessons as the action research is ethnographically oriented. Moreover, in order to provide the answers to the research question mentioned earlier, identifying my reflections and actions and consequent amendments is needed. This section is divided into 2 sub-sections; preparation of the instructional materials and my action research cycles. The first sub-section will be much shorter than the second as it discusses my experiences in preparing the instructional materials before I started my lesson in the first action research cycle; parts of my preparation have been discussed in chapter 3 section 3.8. In this first sub-section, initial information about students’ previous experiences and perceptions of using technology, particularly the internet for learning, will be presented briefly, since the information was very useful as one of the

considerations for me to decide where to start my action plan. The second sub-section discusses my actions, observation, reflection and necessary changes I made in the next plan as parts of my action research cycles.

4.1.1 Preparation of the instructional materials

Before starting the semester, I discussed the academic writing class curriculum with the main lecturer as a basis for me to set the syllabus and materials. This was important as I needed to fit the online portfolio implementation within the existing curriculum. The writing course design which incorporated the online portfolio was presented in chapter 3.

With regards to my professional development, the step of preparing instructional materials became a valuable experience for me. I started the instructional materials preparation by exploring references on teaching academic writing including teaching materials and approaches. I realised that I needed to have sufficient knowledge in teaching academic writing, particularly when it incorporated online portfolio, before I planned the course. I started my literature reading on action research, approaches in teaching EFL writing, e-learning and other relevant literature as I discussed in chapter 2 since my intention to conduct an action research project in an academic writing class was agreed by my supervisor, long before I started my field work. I thought that the process of finalising the syllabus and teaching materials to be covered in the academic writing course, which would involve a discussion with the main lecturer, would be easier when I had sufficient information regarding possible materials to teach and appropriate teaching approaches to implement. I expected that the discussion with the

main lecturer would be more like synchronising the online portfolio implementation with the existing curriculum.

As part of the preparation of the online portfolio implementation in my action research, I gathered some necessary information about the students through the student questionnaire. With regards to my intention to utilise technology to support students' learning, data from the questionnaires provided useful information about my students' previous experiences in using technology, particularly the internet, and how they perceived the use of the internet to support their learning. It was important to give me an insight of students' technology skills relevant to my plan and their initial perception of using technology to support language learning.

As discussed in chapter 3 section 3.7, the questionnaire results show that in terms of students' experiences in using the internet, two out of sixteen students (12.5%) had experience of using the internet for browsing, downloading learning materials, using email, Facebook, shopping online, and blogging. The two students with this internet-use experience, particularly with blogging, would benefit from the experience as they would use a blog as an online platform to create and develop their online portfolio in the academic writing class. Another thirteen students (81.25%) were students with some experience in internet use; browsing, downloading learning materials, using email, and Facebook. Even though this second group of students had not experienced blogging before, their experiences in using various internet tools would be helpful in the process of creating and developing the online portfolio with the blog as the platform. Out of the sixteen students filling out the questionnaires, only one student (6.25%) answered that he was only experienced with using emails. Regardless of students' varying degrees of

internet use experience, all of them perceived technology as a useful tool to support language learning. One student highlighted a condition through which the incorporation of technology would be beneficial for learning. She stated in the questionnaire that using technology in language learning would be useful if the technology tools are developed well and students are given clear guidance so that the use of the technology does not make language learning more complicated than the non-technology based techniques.

The information on students' various degrees of experience in using the internet was very useful for me to plan carefully the sessions of the academic writing course in which I would deal with students' technology skills to support the online portfolio implementation. As some students in the class were not very experienced in the application of computers as a learning tool, I needed to allocate special sessions to familiarise students with the technology tools used to assist learning. In order to make sure that every student would get access to the internet service provided by the university, before starting the online portfolio implementation, I ensured that the university computers lab had a sufficient number of computers and internet access. As I checked the computer lab, I was surprised that it had sophisticated facilities; a comfortable big room, 40 computers with internet access and a big screen to support tele-conferencing. Most importantly, there were still a lot of slots available to book the computer lab during the semester. The lab was provided for any classes and teachers who intended to utilise computers in teaching and learning activities, including for the academic writing class which I taught. I booked the lab for the academic writing class for the whole semester. On the one hand, I was pleased as the computer lab was still available for most of the time slots, and I could easily book and use it during the

semester. On the other hand, the low occupancy of the computer lab showed that the ICT facilities were not utilised as much as expected by the institution that had invested a significant amount of money to provide the facilities to support teaching and learning activities.

I have presented in chapter 3 section 3.8 my initial plan for the academic writing class incorporating the online portfolio including the meetings allocated for the online portfolio tasks. However, I needed to anticipate any situations and make necessary changes if my plans did not run as expected. The next section will discuss in more detail all the decisions I made throughout my action research project with the underlying principles.

4.1.2 Action research cycles

The cycles of the action research were determined with regards to my teaching practices involving the online portfolio implementation. Throughout the semester, the students were assigned to fulfil three writing assignments; paragraph writing, comparison contrast essay and argumentative essay. Each assignment included all online portfolio activities; writing the original draft, self-revising, posting the draft after self-revising, feedback, writing the final draft, posting it and writing reflection. Interviews with 5 participants were conducted after each assignment in order to gain students' perceptions on the online portfolio activities they had done. The students' perceptions on different stages of the online portfolio implementation and my reflective journal were very important to be the basis for the reflection on my own teaching practices. With such reflection, more appropriate teaching practices were planned and executed.

The action research in this study involved three cycles with one writing assignment, which students had to complete in each cycle. The following table shows the various cycles in my action research:

Cycle	Week	Purposes
Pre-semester planning		Meeting with the main lecturer Preparing the instructional materials
Cycle 1	1-5	Explaining the action research agenda and gaining students' consent Administering survey Explaining the course syllabus Teaching sentence structure Explaining the concept of online portfolios Explaining and discussing how to write feedback and reflection Completing online portfolio assignment1 (paragraph writing) Interviewing students to gain their perceptions of the first online portfolio assignment
Cycle 2	6-8	Discussing organisation of essay Essay writing Completing online portfolio assignment 2 (comparison/contrast essay) Interviewing students to gain their comments on the online portfolio implementation until the second assignment
Cycle 3	9-16	Explaining and discussing argumentative essay Explaining and discussing direct quotation, paraphrasing, summarising, bibliography and reference, and plagiarism Completing online portfolio assignment 3 (argumentative essay) Interviewing students to gain their overall comments on the online portfolio implementation on the whole 3-cycle process

Table 4.1 Cycles of my action research

My Teaching Experiences (1st cycle)

As I stated earlier, the first cycle of my action research which was covered within the first five meetings was intended to inform the students of my action research agenda, to gain necessary information about the students through questionnaires, to explain the course syllabus, to teach sentence structure, and to introduce the concept of online learning with all learning activities included (self-revising, feedback activities and reflection).

After discussing the course contents and syllabus with the main lecturer, I was assigned to handle the first meeting that was intended to inform the course outline to the students. The main teacher also attended the class to introduce me to the students and tell them that the class would be taught by both him and me. Students responded quite enthusiastically when he told them that I was a PhD student at the University of Sheffield who was conducting an action research project in their academic writing class. Some students stated their high expectations from the academic writing class and from me as their teacher. On the one hand, I was proud that I was introduced as a PhD student, but on the other hand it became a heavy burden for me because I realised that I had a responsibility to fulfil their expectations.

That introduction class ran quite smoothly as the students were very cooperative. They showed their willingness to take part by actively asking questions as I moved on to the presentation of the course syllabus. I shared my intention to facilitate the implementation of online portfolio in their academic writing class. I was a bit surprised with the students' responses as I told them about the plan to use the computer lab in some academic writing class sessions. In the first meeting, I did not expect that the

students would participate very actively in the class because the class started at 6.45 pm, the time when the students could have been tired after doing other activities during the day. But what I experienced in that first meeting was surprising. They did not show that they were tired or bored with the discussion we had, and it really energised me about the work to come. In the first meeting, I managed to run through my teaching and research agenda; to present the course syllabus and to have the students fill in the pre-course questionnaires.

My impression of the students during the first meeting which was relevant to my teaching agenda was that, not all students had the same level of English. This was demonstrated by the way they spoke English. I kept this issue in mind as I highlighted in my reflective journal which I wrote immediately after I finished the first meeting of the academic writing course.

I was really impressed with the students. They actively responded to every question I threw to the class. In the beginning of the first meeting, I planned only to have a very short introduction, but they created a very engaging discussion and expanded the discussion to various different topics. If I did not control the discussion, it could have taken all the session of the meeting only for the introduction. It was just so spontaneous that I asked a student with obviously very fluent and accurate spoken English to share her learning English experiences. She said that she could communicate very comfortably in English since she had studied in international school since her primary school and had moved to some different countries following her father who was a diplomat. On the other hand, I noticed that a few other students still had difficulties in expressing themselves in English, and I definitely needed to take into account the gap of students' English skills (My reflective journal, September 2013).

Even though the discussion during the first meeting gave me an impression of students' English speaking skills, I was aware that speaking performance involves personality as an aspect which plays an important role to help people express themselves. A number of researches have investigated the relationship between personality and oral performance (Oya, Manalo & Greenwood, 2004). For example, Dewaele and Furnham (2000)

revealed that extraverted students, whom Eysenck and Eysenck (1964) described as those who are sociable, like parties, have many friends, need to have many people to talk to, crave excitement, take chances, often stick their necks out, act on the spur of the moment, and are generally impulsive individuals, achieve greater fluency in oral production tasks compared to introverted students whom they described as those who are quiet, retiring sort of people, introspective, fond of books rather than people, tend to plan ahead, look before they leap, distrust the impulse of the moment and do not like excitement. Therefore, I could not solely rely on the way they spoke their ideas during the discussion in order to judge their overall English skills. I had to be ready though with a big challenge to bridge their English skills and personality in order to create a learning atmosphere that was comfortable to everyone.

The communication with my students on the first meeting and reading briefly their responses to the questionnaires was very helpful for me in starting the second meeting. I had a picture about what kind of students I faced, what levels of English skills they had, how articulate they were, and what writing and technology experiences they had.

After the first meeting, I was called by the main lecturer to discuss some changes to my initial action research plan. He asked me to teach all lessons until the implementation of the online portfolio was completed while my initial plan was actually only to handle the writing classes when dealing with the online portfolio implementation. I agreed with the offer and discussed extensively with him the academic writing materials to deliver before teaching the class.

In the second meeting, we had the subjects of sentence types and sentence problems review. It was included as part of the materials to be reviewed because the lecturer had recognised that students in the previous academic writing class still had problems in those areas. A review was needed before they came to practise writing.

Having activities such as discussion, question and answer session and doing some book exercises showed that the materials review was really needed by the students, and students were also aware of that. They engaged well in the class discussions especially about the review of the sentence structure. All of them took part in the discussion, and they did not hesitate to ask any questions.

The second meeting ran as I had planned it, but I noticed that I had more students attended in the second meeting. Two students who did not attend the first meeting came to this second class. This situation became my concern in planning my online portfolio lessons, as I recorded in my reflective journal.

As the class was over, two students came to me and asked if they had missed any lessons in the previous meeting. I saw strong willingness to learn in those two students. However, the case of these two students who missed a class had made me aware of the potential problem I might face later; some students might be late or even absent during online portfolio sessions, and it could slow down the pace of my plan. I had to be ready with some solutions (My reflective journal, September 2013).

In the next meeting, I saw another new face whom I had not seen in the previous meetings. It was a bit inconvenient since he had missed the previous meeting materials that we reviewed that day. He was kind of lost, and he apologised and told me that he could not attend the previous two meetings because he was still in his hometown. Then he asked me to tell him the materials he missed and that he would catch up on them. I

asked him to meet me after the class to discuss it, and I continued to run my lesson plans on that meeting.

I delivered materials about paragraph structure, followed by question and answer session, doing book practices and discussing topic sentence with a partner. I asked the students to make a topic sentence on one of the given topics, and then discuss it with their friends. Nevertheless, the discussion did not run very well possibly because students did not really pay attention to my explanation on the paragraph structure, or they had paid attention but they still had not got clear picture about the term “topic sentence”. After being given more examples, they were able to produce topic sentences more easily.

The topic of the writing process was also discussed before students started to produce a piece of writing. Students were informed of the process of writing that they would take part in throughout the academic writing course with the online portfolio implementation, as had been discussed in chapter 3.8.

After the class was over, I had a talk with a student who missed the previous meeting’s materials and intended to catch up on them. I informed him what materials he missed in the previous meetings and encouraged him to learn those materials with different references he could find himself in addition to the text book used in the course. Moreover, I told him not to hesitate to discuss with me or his classmates any parts of the materials which were unclear to him.

The third meeting was held in the computer lab. I intended to have the class there in order to familiarise the students with the room and facilities; however, I started the technology activity in this meeting by guiding students in creating a google email account as it would be needed when they subsequently created their blog. Facilitating students to create the email account ran quite smoothly. The process of creating a google account was not difficult for students as most of them already had an email account in yahoo. They were quite familiar with the steps required to create an email account. However, I saw that two students looked confused and in need of guidance in the step by step procedure. They said that they had once created an email account, but it was a long time ago, and they never used it and had totally forgotten how to do it. From the way they operated the computer and touched the mouse, it seemed to me that they had rarely used the internet. I realised that not everyone deals with internet in their daily life. I could not assume that, even in a very simple use of the internet, the students would be able to do this easily, without any guidance. Looking at their willingness to learn, however, I was optimistic that they would be able to deal with blogging and managing an online portfolio. Before I came to that phase in the next meeting, I used this meeting to encourage them to be brave and not afraid of exploring the internet. I told them that as they get used to the internet, it will be easy for them to work with it. I felt that such encouragement on internet use was very useful especially for those who were not confident with their internet skills. It was true in that students made the most of the last minutes of the third meeting to browse the internet. Some of them kept calling and asking me about useful websites to find good English materials and blog sites. I did not intend to start blogging activities in this meeting as I wanted to give more chance for those who were not quite familiar with internet use to familiarise themselves with it.

The third meeting was, however, not exclusively used for familiarising students with the ICT facilities to support online portfolio implementation, since there was another lesson objective which involved practising and finishing paragraph writing. In this meeting, I planned to facilitate students to work on their online portfolio step by step; guiding students to create their blog, create a page and publish their first writing task (paragraph) on their blog as the first online portfolio entry. However, the time which I allocated to complete the tasks was not enough, so I planned to have another one hour in the next meeting to complete and post the first online portfolio entry.

In the fourth meeting, students started to create their blog as the online portfolio platform. I had expected to have a smooth process of guiding students to create their blog. It was quite helpful that all students had successfully made their email account which was needed to create the blog. However, there was a technical problem with the electricity. While students were working on the computer, the electricity suddenly went down. It happened several times due to a problem in the campus electricity installation. As a consequence, students had to start and restart their computers when the power was back. Moreover, the air conditioner went on and off because of that. Even though the situation was very bad, I believed that it was also part of my learning process as a teacher. I tried to reflect what happened during the class, as can be seen in the journal entry I wrote on 2 October 2013.

When the electricity went off for the first time, students were still fine and just waiting for the electricity to come back. After about five minutes the power came back, and I could hear some students shouted excitedly as they could continue the blogging activities. They seemed to be enthusiastic creating their own blog until the electricity went off again and again. Everyone started to sweat and complain as the computer room was getting hot. The classroom became noisy. Some students preferred to wait outside the class. I felt that my classroom management skills were being tested in such a condition. Good that I

had some teaching experiences involving some unpredictable condition in which I had to change my planned teaching activities. Moreover, students were all adult and quite understanding. It was not so hard to calm them down and make them understand the situation. Even though what happened with the electricity today had really changed the students' mood, I felt alright as I had made a right decision to offer them another classroom activities when I saw them getting annoyed with the electricity. Instead of doing the blogging activities I offered students to have a review and discussion of sentence problems. I apologized for what had happened today. Even though it rarely occurred, I should have anticipated such situation. I was wondering if the computer lab could have an uninterruptable power supply (UPS), so that the computer could still work even though the power from the main electricity source went down.

After some time, the electricity returned back to normal. The air conditioner and internet also worked properly. Everyone agreed to continue the blogging activities. Nevertheless, the process of creating the blog did not run as smoothly as I expected. Even though step-by-step guidance was given, some students still had problems. I had to go around the class to make sure that no student was left behind. I found two students who had difficulty in creating the email account in the previous meeting also could not follow my guidance well. Hence, I had to give extra guidance and repeated instruction to both of them. Regardless of their unfamiliarity with that technological work, I could see their eagerness to learn, and it really impressed me.

Some arguments and reports regarding the utilisation of computers to assist language learning (CALL) have shown that besides the advantages that it offers, there are also some potential constraints that a teacher must be prepared for (Jones, 2001). Among those constraints is the learners' potential lack of technical competence. Moreover, Jones (2001) stated, "Most initial CALL classes are likely to have a mixture of technical abilities, perhaps the whole range from complete or near-novices to expert users".

In the online portfolio implementation, computers with internet access would be used as a medium to document students' work as well as a means of communication for peer feedback activities. For this purpose, my role in recommending appropriate sources to use and to assist students in case of some technical problems was crucial. Kern (1996, p.108) emphasised that using the computer for supporting teaching learning activities must be viewed as utilising it as a medium "in which learners interact, ask questions, provide explanations, compare interpretations, and work collaboratively with teachers, fellow students and peers". The computer is not supposed to replace the teacher's roles. Moreover, it was necessary for teachers to participate in students' communication and learning and "provide a scaffold for their students' learning with their own knowledge and experience – even when they are not immediately involved in a communicative exchange" (Kern, 1996, p.108). I realised that integrating technology would require me to work harder as I had the dual role, not only in training students how to work with the technology tools, but also in the learning activities using the tools such as involving teacher's feedback in the writing process using online portfolio. Reports in the research show that "teachers' jobs are harder – at least in the early stages of a technology's implementation", and implementing technology in learning without thoughtful planning or continued support is rarely successful (Weiss, 1994, p.31). I was willing to take the extra work as a consequence of the technology implementation in my writing class because I perceived that as an effort for my professional development and research had shown that the technology implementation had motivated students and appeared to be effective at improving learning (Weiss 1994).

Both face to face interaction and online activities occurred during the online portfolio implementation in the study. In such a learning environment, I had to understand my

vital roles as a facilitator. The more effective process in blended learning involved the teacher's role

to provide feedback on the quality of the online discussion in the face-to-face class and activities which prepared and skilled students for their online activities. The teacher's attention in class to the new virtual environment legitimised it as part of the course and endorsed its importance for learning (Stacey & Gerbic, 2008, p.967).

To be honest, while I was supporting students with the technological skills, I felt slightly nervous as some students with low technological skills depended much on my assistance, so that I had to keep watching over them. I did not mind doing so, but I had to remember also that I needed to pay attention to other students as well to make sure that everyone learned and progressed. It was a challenge for me to personalize my teaching to students with different technology skills. It had happened that while assisting one student, I was called by another student who also needed my help. Sometimes they just asked me if they had done their work correctly and posted it to the right place on their blog.

Even though I felt worried that I could not give enough assistance to all students with different technology skills, I was sure that with my students, I would find better ways to work on the online portfolio. I had mixed feelings; challenged on the one hand and worried on the other. I convinced myself that throughout the action research project, which was initially intended to develop my skills in teaching, particularly in facilitating students to use technology to learn EFL writing, problems would become part of the process for my professional development. I did not need to worry about the emerging problems. What I needed to do in my attempt to teach my students academic writing using the technology was to give them opportunities to experience the excitement of working with technology and the benefits of using technology in their learning. Besides,

I convinced them that any emerging problems that they might face throughout the learning process would be discussed and solved together. The problems were part of the learning process that enabled students and me as a facilitator to make use of the ICT facilities and to improve both their technology and writing skills. I was sure that if the students could see the benefits of the programme, they would have more willingness to learn it, which in turn would energise them to put more effort into it. I kept reminding them that it was only a matter of getting used to it. Once they got used to it, it would be easier for them. As I wrote in my reflective journal, my teaching with all the effort I made and the learning process I experienced, made me feel satisfied, particularly when I succeeded in engaging students in the online portfolio tasks.

My effort to encourage students to face and solve the emerging problems together seemed to work well. I could see their engagement in the activities. Some students could not hide their excitement when they succeeded to create their blog, and it was contagious; other students were looking forward to finishing their blog and seeing how it would be like. Students had improved their technology competence as they, to a certain degree, succeeded working with the technology tools. This raising competence became a motivating factor for students to do the coming tasks. Today's teaching experience has taught me a lot about how to make students engaged in teaching and learning with the technology approach. Even though students, especially those with minimum experience with technology had to struggle to get used to it, and it took up a lot of my energy, I felt satisfied as students showed their eagerness to work hard and solve the problems they faced either by asking me or their peers. Everyone was ready for the next tasks incorporating the blog as the online portfolio platform.

As written in my journal entry above, students' motivation to engage in the blogging activities was partly due to the achievement of the technology skills they made. In this regard, drawing on Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory (SDT), learning activities that can develop competence, a sense of relatedness, and autonomy, are supporting the gain of intrinsic motivation, the enjoyment, or pleasure, and satisfaction (Murphy, 2014).

The online portfolio activities continued in this meeting (fourth meeting) as not all students successfully posted their first writing task in the previous meeting. Moreover, guidance for peer editing could not be given in the previous meeting. Not all students performed at the same pace in the online portfolio tasks. Some could do it smoothly, some needed a little more time, and some others really needed extra assistance. Even though all students could learn some technology skills successfully in the previous tasks and were encouraged to do the next tasks, I could still see that some students were nervous when they could not finish the tasks as quickly as their other classmates. As a facilitator who had experienced being in the students' position and knowing that such a situation could occur, I was ready for it. I really experienced the situation in which students needed sustained support from me in the technology implementation as had been emphasised by Weiss (1994). I kept convincing students that everyone would be able to finish the tasks as long as they were willing to learn and practise the skills and did not hesitate to ask for help if necessary.

Students engaged in the activities, and those who needed help did not hesitate to ask either the teacher or their more capable classmates. I could hear my name called by different students from all around the room who needed some help. I tried to manage to assist all the students who needed help and make sure that all students could work on their online portfolios. In this phase, a practice of peer teaching or what was also labelled by Kalkowski (2001) as peer tutoring in its manifestation occurred while students were working on the technology tasks involving some problems caused by some students' lack of technology skills. I had decided on the peer tutoring practice as I revealed that students had different levels of technology skills. Peer tutoring is defined as "more able students helping less able students to learn in cooperative working pairs

or small groups carefully organised by a professional teacher” (Topping, 1996, p.322). On the other hand, Topping (1996) stated that peer tutoring was not merely about transmission from the more able and experienced (who already have the knowledge and skills) to the less able (who have yet to acquire them). It had been defined more broadly as “people from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching” (Topping, 1996, p.322). I also based my decision to involve peer tutoring on Vygotsky’s view that learning is understood to occur through negotiation of meaning with others within the learning environment (Vygotsky, 1978). The benefits of peer tutoring which had been reported by researchers included

improving competence in the subject area, easing students into university life, the development of autonomous learning skills, developing networking opportunities; ... building confidence and self-esteem; enhancing team-working skills, and developing leadership skills” (Mynard & Almarzouqi, 2006, p. 14).

Moreover peer teaching had resulted in more students’ interaction and positive attitudes toward subject area (McNall, 1975).

I noticed the contribution of peer tutoring in that some students who faced problems in operating the blog features would solve them with the help of their more capable peers before I came to them. The problems of students’ different technology skills while implementing CALL had become a concern in a previous study conducted by Jones (2001). When CALL was implemented in a class with students of different levels of technology skills, and it had become a constraint to achieve the learning goals, he suggested

to place those learners who know less with those who know more, assuming that the latter are willing and patient helpers. At any rate, it is the teacher who has to take responsibility in this situation: to resolve the inequity, she or he has to

recognise the students who need training and make sure it is provided (Jones, 2001, p.1).

I revealed during my practice as a facilitator in the online portfolio implementation that, the support provided had helped students not only in solving the technology problems but also in forming their perceptions towards technology for learning. I tried to ensure that students could successfully complete every step of the learning task involving technology implementation. This is important as how they experienced on every phase and did every task in the online portfolio implementation, would form their perceptions toward the implementation of technology in their learning.

The online feedback activity was another part of the online portfolio tasks that required students to work with the technology tools. The students' blogs in which they posted their work to be commented on by the teacher and peers were chosen as the online platform for doing the commenting activities as comments students received would be part of the learning process documented in students' online portfolios. All the received comments that could contribute to the improvement of their writing drafts would be recorded on students' blogs. Moreover, with the blog as the online medium, students could leave comments on their peers' work anytime from anywhere. It seemed to me that students were initially not sure about what to write in the comments during the commenting activities even though guidance had been given. They took some time to choose their peers' works to comment on and think of the words to use. I knew that my role as a facilitator, again, became vital in the online feedback activities as commenting on others' work was a new experience for most students. As I was walking around the class to make sure that students knew what to do, they looked busy opening the handbook while looking at their friends' work on the computer. Once in a while they

checked their own blog; they were looking forward to receiving comments from their peers. Noticing that some students seemed hesitant in writing comments, I thought that they needed time to write comments in constructive ways as had been emphasised in the guidance of writing feedback. Students could feel worried that they did not use appropriate words in telling the areas of weaknesses of their peers' work, which could offend their peers and affect their friendship. However, I ascertained during the first interview conducted after the first online portfolio assignment, that all students perceived comments as beneficial feedback for them to improve their writing.

In the first assignment, I asked them to choose randomly any of their peers' work which could be accessed through my blog. Having conducted the peer comment activity that way, I found that two students did not get any comments from their friends while some received more than two comments. This became an opportunity for me to think about better ways to give comments to peers' work. I tried to give my comments as well to all the students' work which were successfully posted, and I could see some interactive communication on students' blog comment tool. To maximise the online feedback activities, I gave them some days to wait for other comments and write their final draft afterwards.

Again, this meeting did not run as it had been planned in the course outline. In this fifth meeting, students were supposed to have "organisation of essay" as the next subject, but due to the extra time needed for completing the online portfolio tasks for the first writing assignment, the agenda to have that material was postponed until the next meeting. Regardless of my teaching agenda that could not be covered as I had planned, all the students were very keen on the online portfolio activities.

Regarding my role as a researcher and my agenda for the action research, I piloted the interview questions with two students who would not take part in my real interview in order to know whether there was any ambiguity in the questions I made or any unclear questions that might cause confusion to the participants. Based on the responses and input from those two participants in my pilot interviews, I then made some changes; I modified the last question which was considered as a repetition of the previous question, and I clarified some questions by adding extra words or examples to make them clearer.

Before having the first interview, I made sure that all students had done all the required online portfolio entries for the first writing assignment; however, two students still had not posted their entries on their online portfolio page, and two students had not even made their blog yet. In fact, one student who had not made his blog did not show up in the previous meetings used for online portfolio activities, and the other one attended the meetings but did not succeed in creating his blog. Moreover, he was absent in the subsequent meetings intended to solve any emerging problems dealing with creating the blog and online portfolio works.

As a facilitator I tried my best to give extra assistance to those who really had problems with the online portfolio tasks. It was a situation when I felt the necessity of tutorial competence as suggested by Gonzales, Padilla and Rincón (2011). They stated that in online learning, a teacher must be equipped with tutorial competence, which is “the capacity and ability of teachers to provide technical assistance, advice and support to students” (Gonzales et al., 2011, p.153). While most students, including those who had difficulties with technology tools, worked hard and showed their eagerness to work on the online portfolio tasks, I noticed that there were two students who seemed not to put

in adequate effort consistently to create the blog; moreover, they could not complete all the online portfolio tasks. They clearly showed a curiosity for the blog they worked on, but once they had a problem, they could not maintain their motivation. This situation gave me another challenge of how to manage the class with students who had a different attitude. I tried as much as possible to give sufficient guidance even though it was really energy consuming. This situation required me to improve my instructional plan for the next lessons. In this cycle, I expected to get more information to be the basis for any necessary changes from the students' perspectives which I would obtain in the first interview with them. I hoped students would be able to articulate their problems and any important issues regarding the online portfolio implementation so far.

Having my first interview ready, I started arranging meetings with the participants who had stated their willingness to take part in the interview. I initially planned to have all the first interviews on the same day, but due to their availability I had to rearrange the schedule. It was quite hard to find the time that suited the students as they had different activities outside the campus and were quite busy with many assignments. I had to find the best time for them so that they would not feel that the interview was a burden. The interview procedures including how to select the participants have been discussed in chapter 3. In addition, I recorded all important events which occurred before, during and after the interviews in my journal.

Regardless of the interview schedule which needed to be rearranged, I was pleased that all the participants were enthusiastic about being involved in the interviews. It could be seen from their statements that they were willing to do the interviews anytime as long as they did not have another duty. As a result, I had to have one interview in the early

morning and another one in the late afternoon, and the other interviews on separate days. The students also did not mind having the interviews on campus, which was quite far from their homes.

The first interview was held on 17 October 2013. I had a participant named Vina as my first interviewee. She came on time as we agreed and showed her enthusiasm during the interview. It seemed to me that Vina was a confident student who could express herself very well. She could share her thoughts, opinions and perspectives very communicatively. Her answers addressed all the interview questions clearly, and she contributed some useful input for improving the learning process in the next phase of the online portfolio implementation. Overall I felt that the first interviews with all five participants went well.

The interviews with students, as part of my action research agenda after they finished their first online portfolio activities, were really helpful in informing me how students actually perceived the online portfolio implementation so far. Four interview questions in the first interview (questions 4, 6, 9 and 10), as can be seen in appendix 7, were particularly relevant to students' comments on their experiences in the online portfolio implementation. Some of their comments highlighted their unfamiliarity with the blog (Interview#1 Arin, Vina, Gita), difficulties in writing peer feedback (Interview#1 Arin, Vina, Gita, Tia), the ineffective procedures of the peer feedback (Interview#1 Arin, Tia) and difficulties in writing reflection (Interview#1 Vina, Gita, Tia, Wawan). Further discussion about students' perceptions of the emerging problems during the online portfolio implementation can be seen in the next section (section 4.2). Students shared some ideas to make the next online portfolio better. Some students expressed their

willingness to support each other in operating and managing their online portfolios with useful tools in their blog (Interview#1 Arin, Gita, Tia). Students with more capability in internet use were willing to take on the facilitator's roles to help less capable students. Regarding the online peer feedback procedures, a student (Vina) suggested to divide the class into four groups with each group consisting of four or five students. Each student was then responsible for giving comments on the work of their peers in the same group. Another student (Gita) stated that it would be better if the teacher determined who commented on whose work. She stated that, doing it this way, students could give more objective comments.

My role in facilitating students' online activities was partly informed by what Harasim et al. (1997) suggested. According to Harasim et al. (1997 as cited in De Laat et al., 2006), an online teacher is supposed to plan the upcoming learning activities, follow the flow of the conversation, and offer guidance to the students when needed. Moreover, the teacher should facilitate group activities which enable students to work on a task or solve a problem, and find strategies to regulate their own learning collaboratively.

Changes I made following the first cycle

Based on my observation, my field notes and the first interviews with the participants, I considered that some changes were necessary; the guidance for students' reflection needed to be made clearer, the organisation of students' online portfolios on their blog should be organised better as some students did not follow the guidance of how to organise them, that there should be better procedure for peer comments to make sure that all students got comments from other friends, and the guidance to write comments should be made clearer also.

Reflection is another online portfolio task of which the guidance needed to be made clearer. I planned to emphasise the points that needed to be included in the reflection, the writing style of the reflection, and how to be reflective.

Regarding the online portfolio organisation, I did not make any changes. I thought that students just needed to look at the online portfolio organisation of those who had successfully followed the guidance. Additionally, I decided to check their blogs and see if they had organised the online portfolio entries of their first writing task properly and informed them that they needed to reorganise their online portfolios. Students made a parent page titled Online portfolio, and then they made subpages titled “writing assignment one”. All the online portfolio entries comprising the original draft, draft after self-editing, final draft and reflection were posted under the subpage of “writing assignment one”. The entries of the second and third writing assignment would be organised in the same way.

The peer comments procedure was another aspect of the online portfolio implementation which I needed to improve. Considering the previous procedure that was not sufficiently effective and input I got from the students such as suggestions to form groups for peer comment activities and for me as the teacher to determine who commented on whose work, I planned to do peer comment activities another way; students would be assigned to comment on at least two of their peers’ works. They would see the list of students’ names on my blog as the link to their friends’ blogs. They would take one name above and one name under their names to comment on. This way, every student would get at least two comments. However, students would be allowed to

write more than two comments. Another thing I needed to emphasise was that students should give comments on their peers' writing draft after self-revising, not on the original draft as had happened in the previous online portfolio task. It happened that some students commented on their friends' original draft in the previous assignment because some students were late in posting their draft after self-revising. In the next assignment, students had to post the draft after self-revising on the agreed time, and I had to make sure the tasks and instructions were clear for the students. Indeed, cooperation among students was needed because any student who did not follow the agreed rule would affect the learning process of the whole class. For instance, if they did not post their work on time, other students could not comment on the work.

I planned in the beginning that I would only ask students to do the online portfolio activities while in class (computer lab), not outside the class (at home), as the activities required them to use computers with internet access. I had to consider that not every student had a computer and internet access at home. However, when students could not manage to finish part of peer feedback activities in the first writing assignment, they asked me to allow them to do the task at home. When I asked if everyone had a computer and internet access at home, they surprisingly told me that everyone had internet connection at home. Some students even said that their internet access at their home was better than the internet connection in the computer lab. Everyone agreed that parts of online portfolio activities were to be done as homework.

More teaching experiences (2nd cycle)

During “Idul firtri”, which is Moslem special celebration days, the campus had a one-week public holiday. I realised that I included the date during that week in my syllabus. As a result, I had to make a change in the course plan; the materials needed to be adjusted since there would not be any replacement meeting for the public holiday. Students were supposed to practise writing a comparison contrast essay one week after the holiday, but due to the holiday in the previous week, the meeting discussed the organisation of essay to get students ready with the writing essay practice. There was no online portfolio activity in this meeting, rather, the whole session was used for materials presentation and discussion.

As mentioned earlier, my initial plan was to handle the writing class only when dealing with the online portfolio activities. However, the main teacher had asked me to teach more sessions, including the presentation of the materials on the organisation of essays. I therefore became involved in other sessions other than online portfolio activities. I discussed every part of the lesson and material with the main teacher. On the one hand, replacing the main teacher in other writing sessions gave me more work to do dealing with the materials preparation, students’ questions on the related materials, etc. On the other hand, it was really helpful for me as I had to deal with students’ online portfolio entries, especially in giving comments to students’ writing draft. I learned a lot of academic writing aspects and how to explain them to the students. The process gave me opportunities to improve my own writing skills; moreover, I had to learn how to cope with students’ questions that sometimes required me to read more references. I enjoyed all the learning process including the process of learning how to teach.

The next meeting discussed the next subject which was a comparison/contrast essay. The term comparison/contrast was quite familiar to the students, but when it came to writing a comparison/contrast essay, most of the students said that they had no experience of it. Having an overview of the subject and explanation of aspects involved in writing comparison/contrast essays before practising their writing skills were quite helpful for the students. I noticed that some students really engaged in the question and answer session after I presented the materials. I could manage to do all the lesson plans I made including facilitating students to start writing the outline of their comparative/contrast essay as they would write their draft for the next task to be posted in their online portfolio. I ended the meeting by giving students homework to write their original draft and draft after self-editing. Students were expected to have their original draft and draft after self-editing ready before the next meeting so that they could together post their drafts to their online portfolios at the start and have peer feedback activities afterwards.

In the next meeting, I asked the students whether they had managed to complete the task I had given them in the previous meeting. I was pleased that they had been able to finish writing their original draft of comparison/contrast essay and their draft after self-editing, and some of them had posted the drafts to their online portfolios. They based the editing process on the self-editing guidance in their hand book which can be seen in appendix 12. When we were about to work on the online portfolio activities that is to post their original draft and draft after self-editing, suddenly a student called me. It seemed to me that he had a serious problem as I could see from his worried face. He had lost the file of his work that would be posted on his blog. He said he had saved it on his USB flash disk, but it was gone. He could not post his work on the agreed time, which is at the

beginning of this meeting, as the others did. I tried to calm him down and said that he could catch up with the tasks later. In fact, it would affect his planned online portfolio activities as he was supposed to receive and write feedback to other friends during this meeting. The plan must go on. All students including the one who had not posted his work yet then opened their friends' works and wrote feedback for them. As a consequence, the student who could not post his work at the beginning of the meeting did not receive any feedback from other students. However, I still gave them until the following meeting to write feedback on their friends' work.

As explained earlier, based on the students' experiences with the online portfolio activities on the first writing task, we decided to do it in a slightly different way. As agreed, all students finished their original draft and their draft after self-editing before this meeting, and then they posted their work. This time, I noted that some students had posted their work before coming to the class, and they assisted other students who had difficulties with operating the blog tools. I felt that I had some helpful assistants, and I was really impressed with students' willingness to help their friends. The atmosphere became so cooperative and supportive to all students and me as a facilitator. No student hesitated to ask either me or their friends when they faced a problem with the online portfolio work. However, I still felt bad about the student who had lost the work that he had saved in his flash drive. I did not have another choice for him as other students posted the original draft and draft after self-editing. I just asked him to get involved with all other students in the next online portfolio activity which was to give comments to other friends' work. Everyone seemed to read and comment on their friends' work while talking to each other and opening their academic writing handbook to check some materials and see the peer feedback guidance once in a while. Even though all students

worked hard with the peer feedback activities, it could not be finished as quickly as I had planned; students were not able to finish writing peer comments before the meeting was over. Some students informed me that they had not received any comments by the end of the meeting while others received more than two comments. I tried to discuss those important issues before closing the meeting. Some students said that they did not write their comments directly in the comment tool on their friends' blogs. Instead, they wrote and saved the comments on their files first before posting them to their friends' blogs. They asked to be given more time outside the class to work on this. The students and I agreed to have another three days for the peer feedback activities and then write their final draft and post it to their blog by the next meeting. Even though everyone agreed with that, I realised that some students, including the student who lost his writing assignments file, would need extra assistance. I set a schedule and booked the computer lab outside the class schedule to give a chance to any students who needed more help in operating and managing their online portfolio. The extra session was set to be held three hours before the class schedule. Five students confirmed to attend the extra session.

As just mentioned, another three days were given for peer feedback activities outside the class, and in fact it was very helpful for me as the instructor. I had time to read all the students' work and wrote my comments. I really worked hard to provide students with my comments. Unlike the previous writing task that was only paragraph writing, the current task required me to spend more time and energy to read students' essays which were much longer than just a paragraph.

My students and I managed to complete the second online portfolio task even though 3 students were late in posting their final draft and reflections due to their difficulty in

writing the essay itself. Working with the technology tools did not seem to be a problem anymore for them. Instead, working on writing the essay was much more time consuming for them. They admitted that they had to keep looking and reviewing the guidelines on writing essays from their hand book.

After completing the second online portfolio task, the second interview was conducted to gain students' perceptions on the further online portfolio implementation. As the writing task in the second online portfolio task was different from the first one, which was to write an essay, the problems faced by students throughout the second online portfolio task were also different. Students highlighted to a greater extent the writing skills rather than the online portfolio activities. They perceived that their understanding of the principles of writing a comparative contrast essay affected the quality of their comments on their friends' works. The students' perceptions of the emerging problems throughout the peer feedback activities will be discussed in the next section (section 4.2.2). As the facilitator in the online portfolio tasks, I noted that, having had experience of working with two online portfolio assignments with all the components, students had got used to the technology tools and could understand what was required from them to complete the tasks. However, as every student began the academic writing class from different starting points (different levels of academic writing skills), it was reasonable to accept that not every student's expectations regarding the benefits of collaborative learning could be achieved. For instance, some students still highlighted the peer comments they received that did not give them any guidance to improve their writing drafts.

The changes I made following the 2nd cycle

Based on my observation and the students' perceptions of the problems they faced during the second online portfolio task which they stated during the interviews, I made some changes to improve my teaching experiences on facilitating the third online portfolio task. I expected that the changes would also bring about a better learning process.

The first improvement was made on the commenting aspects. Even though students were instructed from the beginning to comment on the aspects of writing as mentioned in the commenting guidance, there were still comments on the second writing task that did not highlight specific writing aspects that were helpful for the writers to improve their drafts. In the next online portfolio task, I planned to allocate a special session to discuss useful points in giving comments. The peer feedback form involving important criteria in academic writing was discussed again, and I asked students to internalise the important academic writing aspects that could be used for the basis for writing peer comments.

More teaching experiences (3rd cycle)

I had tackled some emerging problems in the previous cycles, though a problem of writing comments was still present in the second online portfolio assignment. After reflecting on my experiences and making some necessary changes following the second cycle, my teaching agenda continued with some changes also in my instructional plan. I planned to devote more time to discuss with the students the important aspects to include in the comments on the peers' writing drafts. In this third cycle, as I discussed previously, my agenda related to the online portfolio assignment was to teach

argumentative essay and use the argumentative essay as the task for the third online portfolio assignment. Students were required to, as they did in the previous online portfolio assignments, write their original writing draft, self-revise their original draft, post their draft after self-revising, write comments on their peers' drafts, revise their draft based on the comments, post their final draft and reflect on their final draft. Argumentative essay was the main focus in the third cycle.

In the first meeting of the third cycle, I discussed the argumentative essay. The organisation, content and other aspects of an argumentative essay were explored. Compared to the other previous genres of essay students had learned, argumentative essay seemed to be the most challenging genre of essay for the students. I explained the characteristics of argumentative essay such as how to organise an argumentative essay and what it should contain. Moreover, a model of the argumentative essay was given. As I recorded in my reflective journal, the questions students asked during the discussion showed that some important points of the argumentative essay were still unclear to them, such as how to support their arguments. All the session in this first meeting of the third cycle was devoted to discussing the concept of argumentative essay, and deeper discussion of the organisation of argumentative essays was still ongoing when this meeting was over.

As the discussion of the rules of argumentative essay took longer than my initial plan, part of the next meeting (second meeting of the third cycle), which was allocated to discussing the rules of citation, was then used to analyse more examples of argumentative essays. It was expected that students had a clearer picture of argumentative essay before practising writing it through the third online portfolio

assignment. Before students worked on the third online portfolio assignment of argumentative essay in this third cycle, the next four meetings were allocated to cover some topics as planned in the syllabus (see appendix 10), which included direct quotation and paraphrasing, summarising, bibliography and reference, and plagiarism.

The third online portfolio assignment was done during the last two meetings. Students did not face any technical problems while working on the third online portfolio assignment, and I noted that they could work on their online portfolios smoothly. With regards to the changes I planned following the second cycle, I gave a lengthy discussion on how to write feedback on their peers' work. As I stated earlier, some of the students' comments in the second online portfolio assignment still did not highlight specific writing aspects that were helpful for their peers to improve their writing drafts. In this regard, I reviewed and emphasised the criteria used in the writing rubric. I gave students opportunities to ask about any writing aspect included in the writing rubric which was still unclear to them.

As I noted in my reflective journal, students looked more confident in writing comments on their peers' work. I could see students' cooperation in working on their online portfolios. They could work as a team, not only with the peers to whom they wrote their comments, but also to other peers. Students, particularly those who were very interested in the online portfolio and willing to support their friends, could create a cooperative atmosphere which which was very helpful for those who were less motivated. A student (Oci) who could not maintain his motivation and thus did not complete his first and second online portfolio assignments seemed to be influenced by his friends' encouragement and support. He could finish the third online portfolio

assignment on time. Moreover, he told me that, even though he had missed the online feedback activities in the first and second assignments, he managed to finish the original draft and his final draft with his self-revision. As for the other student (Abdi) who was not present after the half term and did not complete his online portfolios, I was informed by other students that for some personal reasons, he decided to quit his study in the Masters programme, and his reasons did not have anything to do with online portfolio implementation in the academic writing class.

The time for the online feedback activities in the third online portfolio assignment was spent effectively without any technical problem and without any students looking confused about what to write in their comments in the feedback activities as well as what to write in their reflections. After finishing the third online portfolio assignment, the five selected students had the third interviews to share their perceptions on the process of the three online portfolio assignments. During the third interview, the students highlighted that there was no more technical problem in the third online portfolio assignment, and their technology skills had improved throughout the online portfolio implementation. It is demonstrated in the following extract of a student's interview.

After all the tasks that I did...that three tasks...I think I don't have any more problems. At the beginning I had technical problems... that part was because it was my first time using the blog, later on after some times I used it, I knew very well how to use a blog...Now I don't have any problems (Interview#3 Arin).

However, some students stated that the commenting activities could have been done better. A student (Vina) expected to have more comments to help her to improve specific parts of her writing draft. Another student (Gita) suggested that the commenting activities should involve more students from other writing classes to comment on their

writing drafts. Even though in fact, as Vina stated in the third interview, not every comment in the third writing assignment suggested clear guidance to follow in order to improve the writing draft, most of the comments could spot specific writing issues. I will discuss the comments that the five selected students received in the third online portfolio assignment along with other two previous assignments in chapter 5 section 5.2.2. The next section will discuss the emerging problems throughout the online portfolio implementation including those having to do with online feedback activities.

4.2 The emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation

This section is concerned with the emerging problems students faced in different stages and aspects of the online portfolio implementation. Data in this discussion were drawn from the five selected students' interviews, reflections, online portfolio entries (writing assignments) and my reflective journal. The interview questions from which I drew the data in this discussion include interview 1 questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10, interview 2 questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and interview 3 questions 3, 4 (see appendix 7). These interview questions were particularly relevant to students' perceptions of the problems they experienced in different stages of the online portfolio implementation, which involved different elements such as working with the blog as the portfolio platform, peer feedback activities and reflection.

4.2.1 The emerging problems with the use of blog as the online portfolio platform

The participants were interviewed twice during the implementation of the online portfolio and once after its implementation. Some questions in the interviews (interview 1 questions 1, 3, interview 2 questions 1, 2, and interview 3 question 3) addressed students' perceptions toward the use of a blog as the online portfolio platform. The

interviews then were transcribed and analysed. Students' unfamiliarity with blogs and the quality of internet connectivity emerged as two important problem areas students faced in working with the blog.

4.2.1.1 Unfamiliarity with the blog

Most students especially those who were experienced with blogging activities, perceived the blog as a practical technology tool and they did not find any difficulties in creating it. However, a few students faced difficulties in creating and managing the blog even though guidance was given. They stated that the features of the blog and how to operate them were not familiar to them. As a result, it took them some time to learn how to create the menu, how to create categories and how to manage them (interview#1 Arin). The following extracts of students' interviews also show that a few students faced difficulties in creating and operating the blog.

I have some technical problems ...how to upload, how to put this into the file, how to make menu. I think that is the difficulty I found during the time (interview#1 Arin).

However, there was a problem when I was about to post the writing because my writing was not posted successfully (interview#1 Wawan).

Some students became aware of problems which happened to their friends dealing with the blogging activities. They noticed that some of their friends faced difficulties in the process of creating their blog and online portfolio. This was clear to them as those with problems did not hesitate to share the problems they faced with each other during the blogging activities. Moreover, there were some students who were more competent in working with information technology compared to other students and they seemed to be willing to help other friends. With such situation, the class developed activities of "peer teaching". Further discussion on peer teaching was presented in the previous section

(section 4.1) concerning teacher's experiences in the online portfolio implementation.

The following statements of students with a higher level of capability in technology show their concern for their less capable friends.

It seems to me that there were a few students having difficulties in creating online portfolio. I think those students who are not familiar to the blog need more attention (interview#1 Gita).

They could not post their writing draft at the beginning, could they? They did not know how to create online portfolio (interview#1 Tia).

Even though students were not familiar with the blog tools, most of the technical problems dealing with students' unfamiliarity with the blog occurred only in the early stages of the blogging activities, as can be seen in the following statement:

At the beginning to be honest the blog was still something new for me. But I found out that creating blog is just like creating account on facebook or twitter; at the beginning it was difficult, but it finally became easier (interview#1 Vina).

The thing that didn't run well was the first time when I got confused how to make menu and how to make the parent or things that I think most of it is...that part of because it was my first time using the blog, that later on after how many times I use it I know very well how to use a blog (interview#3 Arin).

Another problem, which arose while working with the blog, was the different appearances of students' blog pages as Wordpress has various themes and features. When different students selected different themes or clicked different features, the students' screen showed different versions of the blog page. As a result, each student needed different procedures to work with their blog which basically could be learned by familiarisation with the blog features. Other problems students encountered when dealing with operating the blog in the early stages are illustrated in the following extract of the student's interview:

There was a little difficulty at that time. May be it was not a difficulty, but it might be technical problem when creating blog. There was parent page in which I wrote the title of the online portfolio, and then the sub-parent is writing task 1,

but when I uploaded for the second time, I uploaded it on the wrong page. So, there was a little technical problem (interview#1 Vina).

The fact that some students were unfamiliar with the blog was confirmed by the survey conducted at the beginning of the course. It shows that only two out of 16 students had used blogs before the blogging activities in the academic writing class commenced. However, the survey shows that most of the students were experienced in using the internet for email, Facebook, shopping online or browsing teaching resources. The availability of information technology facilities in the institution and the potential uses of technology in supporting teaching and learning activities, which challenged me to implement the online portfolio in the academic writing class, were supported by students' experiences in using the internet. Even though most of the students had not used blogs before the online portfolio was implemented, their experiences with the internet became an important factor that made familiarisation with the blog easier for them.

The discussion in the next section will be concerned with internet connectivity as another important factor raised by the students to be taken into account when utilising the internet in the teaching and learning activities.

4.2.1.2 Internet connectivity

In terms of the ICT facilities, internet connectivity became a problem hindering the use of the blog in the writing class. Students faced difficulties in updating their online portfolio on their blog when the internet connection was bad (interview #2 Wawan). One student said in his interview that he could manage his blog well except when he

had a problem with the internet connection. Some other students highlighted the same problems as demonstrated in the following extracts of students' interview.

Yes, sometimes there is an error in the blog. For example, when I tried to post yesterday, I did not know why there is a notification from Wordpress, may be the connection was bad or may be another problem, but it is still like that now (interview #1 Tia).

On the other hand, I faced difficulty when the internet connection is bad so that I can not update my online portfolio in my blog (interview #2 Wawan).

The problems caused by bad internet connection seemed to affect the appearance of the blog page, which caused confusion to students. It was pointed out by one student in her interviews:

I do not know whether it was an error from Wordpress or the programme is actually like that. Sometimes when I used a computer, then I used another one, the two computers showed me different responses. That is the problem that still makes me confused until now (interview#1 Tia).

So, there might be some mistakes in the internet connection. That is the difficulty in posting my works. Sometimes it appears, but sometimes it doesn't (interview#3 Tia).

The problems of using the blog, either those which were caused by students' inability to adjust to the technology tools quickly or the technical aspects such as computer and internet connection influenced the online peer feedback activities. In order for students to get involved in the online feedback activities, they should have been able to post their work on their blog in the agreed time. In the first assignment, not all students could manage to post their works before the online feedback activities were started. As a result, they could not receive any feedback from their peers or teacher. This issue will also be discussed in the following section.

4.2.2 The emerging problems during the online feedback activities

Before discussing the data on emerging problems during the online portfolio implementation drawn from the students' interviews and reflection, the quantitative data of students' comments on their peers' writing drafts will be presented in this section to give an overview of students' participation throughout the online feedback activities. Moreover, presenting the quantitative data of students' comments on their peers' writing drafts in addition to the students' perceptions guided me to identify possible causes of such students' participation.

In the online portfolio assignments, students were asked to comment on their peers' writing drafts using commenting tools on the students' blogs. Blogs as the online platform for peer feedback activities were discussed earlier in the first section of this chapter. Throughout the online portfolio implementation, students were assigned to work on three writing assignments, and each assignment involved online peer feedback activities. The number of comments in the three writing assignments shown on students' online portfolio can be seen in the charts (see figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) presented in the later part in this section. It was problematic to determine the number of comments since students could write some sentences in one comment which contained more than one points or aspects. However, in order to show students' participation in commenting activities during the peer feedback activities, the number of comments was presented regardless of the quality of the comments on students' final writing draft. It was determined based on the number of comment postings; one comment posting was considered as one comment although it could consist of more than one sentence or point of comment.

The received comments shown in the charts in figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 involve all the peers' comments and one teacher's comment that students received on their writing draft. However, there are some comments that do not belong to either received or given comments. Those are the comments that students wrote on their own blogs as responses to their peers' comments. The number of students' responses to their peers and teacher's comments in each assignment is also presented in the charts in figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 to show how two-way interaction had taken place during the online feedback activities.

The number of comments in assignment 1

The chart of the first assignment in figure 4.1 shows that the number of received and given comments, including students' own comments on their own blog as responses to their peers' comments varied between students. One student, Sarah, received seven comments (six from peers and one from teacher), and she gave six responses to the comments she received. The responses written to every received comment showed that she really expressed her appreciation on the comment she received and tried to maintain communication, as can be seen in the following responses she wrote:

heheheehe thank you miss Novi. Iforget to give example and conclusion in my writing (Sarah)

thank you miss ade. hehehe ok, I will study more for writing to be better than before.. (Sarah)

On the other hand, four students did not receive any peer comments at all in the first assignment; each of them only received one teacher's comment. Since there were no friendship issues with those four students, students' random choice of peers' work to comment on and the freedom given to decide the number of comments to write, could be the reason for the difference in the number of received comments among students. A

student could have written to any peers randomly, to one or more close friends, or to only one of his/her close friends. That is why even though it seemed that those four students were friendly with everyone in the class, they still did not receive any peer comments. The issue of the peer commenting procedures and the changes I made have been discussed in the previous section (section 4.1.2).

An absence of received peer and teacher's comments occurred with 6 students. They did not get any comments either from peers or teacher due to the late posting of their writing draft. Late posting of the drafts to be commented on by peers became a factor which hindered students from getting the benefits of peer feedback activities, as happened in the first assignment. Students were not able to spend much time focusing on writing feedback as they had to move on to the next step which was writing their final draft.

In terms of given comments, the chart in figure 4.1 of the first assignment shows that two students did not leave any comments on their friends' works. It happened because they were unable to post comments for their friends; one student was still working on her own writing draft, and the other was still having problems with operating the blog. However, all students had been reminded to move on to the peer feedback activities as no more time in the class could be allocated for writing and posting the draft, and extra assistance outside the class schedule was offered to those who had problems with operating the blog.

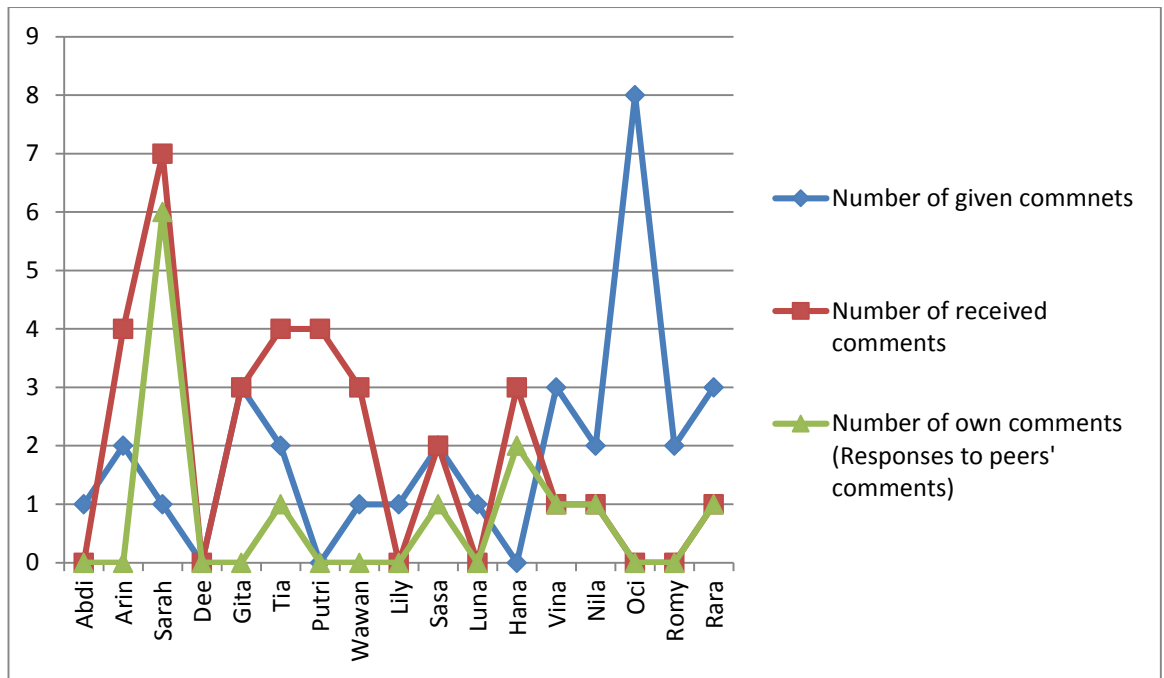


Figure 4.1 Number of comments in assignment 1

Even though some students were late in posting their work for whatever reasons - they did not finish their work on time, or they had technological problems in posting their drafts, or both, as discussed earlier – some of them still managed to write comments for their friends. Nevertheless, this situation was not ideal if the peer feedback activities were to be successful in giving benefits for every student.

With regards to the emerging problems which occurred in the peer feedback activities in assignment 1, some changes were made in the procedures for peer feedback activities, and more encouragement for students to participate was given. The procedures for peer feedback activities have been discussed in more details in the section on action research cycles (see section 4.1). After the peer feedback activities procedures had been changed, the number of overall comments posted and received by students in the second assignment improved. In the second assignment, every student was assigned to write and leave at least 2 comments for two different peers whose names and blog sites were

all listed on the teacher’s blog page; each student was to comment on the two peers whose names were above and under his/her name on the list. With these feedback procedures, every student was supposed to receive at least two comments from peers and one from the teacher. In addition, a student could receive more than three comments as every student was allowed to write more than 2 comments for more than two peers, or they could leave more than one comment for one peer’s work. As a result there could be a discrepancy in the total number of given and received comments.

The number of comments in assignment 2

The number of comments received and given by students, and the number of their comments in their own blog as responses to their peers’ comments in the second assignment can be seen below:

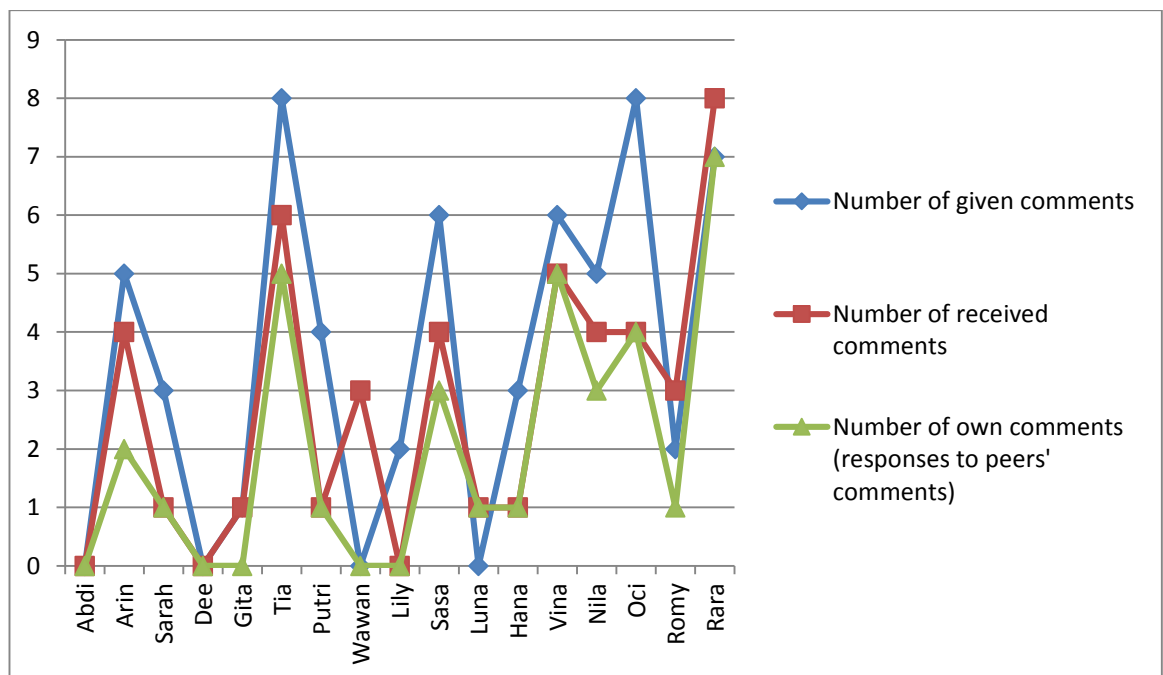


Figure 4.2 Number of comments in assignment 2

Even though there was an improvement in the total number of comments compared to the previous assignment, there were still 3 students who did not post any comments on their peers' blogs, and 3 late postings still occurred from 3 students which resulted in the absence of peer feedback on those 3 pieces of work. A technical problem was not the main reason for these late postings in this second assignment. Two students were absent in the previous meetings, and they could not manage to catch up with the tasks they were supposed to finish that day, while another student said that he had technical problem when he wanted to post his writing draft. As every student had agreed to the schedule of the peer feedback activities and extra assistance had been offered, the occurrence of the late postings were caused more by students' attitude; their lack of commitment to finish the task on time and their unwillingness to tackle the technical problems with the available resources.

The figure indicates a trend that increasing numbers of feedback comments that students received affected the number of comments they themselves posted as responses to the received feedback. Overall, the numbers increased, and it shows that the commenting tools became more interactive between the students. Two-way communication occurred during the peer feedback activities. The data showed that in the second assignment, receiving more comments on their work encouraged students to respond to those comments.

The number of comments in assignment 3

The total number of comments in the third online portfolio assignment was quite consistent with the total number in the second assignment, as can be seen in figure 4.3. However, unlike what occurred in the second assignment, the number of students' own

comments as responses to peers' comments decreased in the third assignment. This could have been due to the students having less time to work with their online portfolios outside the class. The third online portfolio assignment was undertaken as the end of the semester was approaching, and students had to deal with a lot of assignments from all other courses they were studying in that semester.

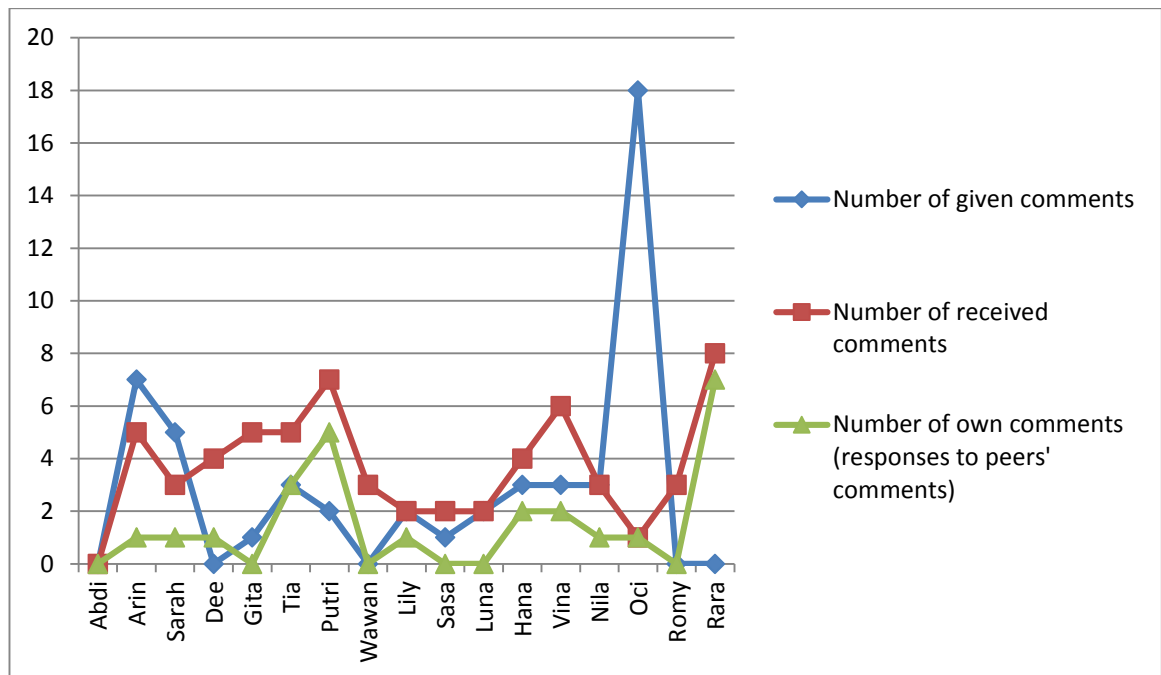


Figure 4.3 Number of comments in assignment 3

The three figures show that the total number of comments increased throughout the peer feedback activities. As stated previously, the rise in number of comments was partly due to the changes made in the commenting procedures; students were asked to write at least two comments in each assignment. Nevertheless, the increased number of comments was not necessarily followed by improvement in the quality of the comments. I will discuss how students' comments contributed to the students' writing development in chapter 5 section 5.2.2.

Having presented the students' participation in the online feedback activities with the data drawn from the students' online portfolios, the next sections will discuss the emerging problems during the online feedback activities with the data drawn from students' interviews and reflections from the five selected students focusing on two categories; difficulties in writing comments and the commenting procedures.

4.2.2.1 Difficulties in writing comments

Before writing a comment on their peers' writing for the first assignment, students were given guidance on writing feedback, which was drawn from the writing guidelines suggested in the academic writing handbook (see appendix 13). Instead of grading a peer's writing draft, the feedback was given in a written comment form. The feedback was given as part of the assessment for learning that was intended to help learners improving their writing (see section 2.2.1.3).

Most students were not experienced in writing comments on others' writing, and it made students feel lacking in confidence to write feedback for their peers. For instance, a student in her interview stated:

To be honest this is my first time to give comments on others' works...Sometimes I found difficulties. For example, when it deals with my confidence. When we read our friend's writing draft, then we feel that we are not so sure whether our comment is right or wrong (interview#1 Tia).

The student's statement above also showed that not feeling confident to write comments was partly because they felt that they lacked knowledge about the aspects of writing they wanted to comment on. This issue was also demonstrated in the following students' statements.

... May be some of the difficulties is when I do not understand what they are writing about, and may be because of my grammar, sometimes I forgot, is this correct? I have a little difficulty in making topic sentence, so usually I will have to concentrate..is this really the topic sentence? That's my own difficulty. So, I have to concentrate on that one. So, sometimes my own knowledge about topic sentence, concluding sentence. that was the difficulty of me giving comments to my friends' work (interview#1 Arin).

Probably difficulty in correcting the writing draft from very deep specific aspects. That could be because I am not a writing expert that I have not understood very well the deep aspects of writing (interview#1 Gita).

In giving comments, I felt afraid at the beginning because...Ohh, I have to correct others' work. I was afraid to correct others' work because I was not sure if my comments were right or wrong..how was the correct one?..It was fine actually ..To be honest, at the beginning I had to open the book, eventhough it was not a requirement..Oh ya..you should bla bla bla... (interview#3 Tia).

As online feedback activities were part of an action research project in which students were expected to contribute their ideas or input to improve the learning process, students were encouraged to share any issues they faced during the activities. Some students highlighted that there was still a problem with the content of the feedback that other students wrote on their writing assignments, as demonstrated in the following statements:

But I think the part that needs to be improved is giving comments because some friends just gave comments "yes or no"; they did not base the comments on the guidance book (interview#2 Vina).

What did not go well is in giving comments..It needs to be improved because I still received comments that were not like what I expected. The real comments should be comments that can help improving my skills. I think it is about comments (interview#3 Tia).

The issue of improving students' ability to write comments also became part of my own concern which I have discussed in the previous section covering my experiences in facilitating the online portfolio implementation and the action research cycles. The next section will discuss another emerging problem in the online feedback activities relating to commenting procedures.

4.2.2.2 Commenting procedures

This section is focused on the problems that students faced with regards to the commenting procedures applied during the peer feedback activities, which have been partially discussed in section 4.1. In writing assignment 1, students were asked to voluntarily comment on their peers' writing drafts. Every student was given the freedom to choose whose works to comment on and to decide how many comments they wanted to write. The procedure to write feedback voluntarily was chosen so that the students would not feel that peer feedback activities would be a burden for them. However, it was expected that every student would write at least 1 comment for a peer and that they would have at least one peer comment posted on their own blog. In practice, the procedure did not run as expected. Students highlighted these potential problems of the commenting procedures, as can be seen in the following extract of a student's interview:

But the negative side is that some students might not get any comments, and it is impossible for every student to check all their friends' blogs to know whether they have got comments or not because we do not have that much time to work on the online portfolio. So we can not make sure that every student get the same number of comments from their friends (interview#1 Arin).

The above student's perception is in line with what happened in practice, as has been discussed previously in this chapter (see section 4.1); while a few students received some comments from some peers, some students did not receive any comment at all from their peers.

4.2.3 The emerging problems in reflection activities

The problems that emerged during the reflection activities mostly dealt with the difficulties in writing the reflection itself. Guiding questions to write reflectively were given prior to the reflection activity (see appendix 14). However, not all students were able to follow the guidance adequately, since writing reflection was a new experience for them. Some students were still not sure about what they should write and the language style they needed to use in writing reflection. The majority of students' first reflections were dominated by a summary of the subject matters they learned and the activities they did rather than their reflection.

In the interview, one student stated that writing the reflection was a bit difficult to do. Because he did not have many personal ideas or had forgotten what he had done or learned during the learning activities, writing reflection became a difficult task. At the beginning, he was a bit shocked with the task of writing reflection on his final draft. He should have remembered more of what he had learned to make writing reflection easier for him. Moreover, he still had difficulty in terms of the writing style that he should use in writing his reflection (interview#1 Wawan). Another student shared a similar experience. She said that writing reflection was very confusing at the beginning. She did not know exactly what kind of reflection she had to write, so she wrote the reflection without any clear understanding of what and how to write it (interview#2 Vina).

The problems mentioned above partly relate to the degree of depth of reflection. The issue regarding the depth of reflection while implementing it as a new practice was not surprising. The phenomenon of the use of reflective activities with students, concerning the depth of reflection was previously observed by Moon (2001). She revealed that

reflection could be “superficial and little more than descriptive or can be deep and transformative (and involved in the transformative stage of learning)” (p.10). In a previous study, Hatton and Smith (1995 as cited by Moon, 2001, p.10) also mentioned that it could be “difficult to get many students to reflect at greater depth”. Regardless of the difficulties and challenges of implementing reflection, deep reflection is necessary when it is intended to support learning which is to result in behaviour change (Moon, 2001).

In order for students to be able to have deep reflection, support from a teacher/facilitator was required. As the content of reflection could be very personal, an environment with a relationship of trust was created to make students feel comfortable to share any feelings related to the learning they experienced. Moon (2001) suggested that reflective writing is a skill that can be developed through training and guidance. My role as a facilitator was to make sure that sufficient support was in place whenever students faced any difficulties in writing deep reflection. Since students were inexperienced in working with reflection and time allocated for training them to write reflectively was very limited, I kept reminding them that in writing a reflection, the reflective aspects were more essential than the summary of the subject matters they learned, or the description of the activities they experienced. Since every student might encounter different problematical aspects in writing a reflection, I encouraged them to ask for the teacher’s support and more personal guidance if required.

After practicing, experiencing and discussing any unclear aspects of reflection, students felt more comfortable when writing their second reflection (interview#2 Tia). However, a problem with the content of reflection still became an issue that the teacher and

students needed to deal with, as can be seen in the following student's statement during the interview:

So far, I could manage to write reflection, but sometimes it is a bit hard to talk about my own strengths and weaknesses (interview#2 Gita).

The emotional difficulty of sharing one's own strengths could be due to a cultural issue that someone is considered arrogant when expressing his/her own strengths to others.

4.3 Summary and reflection

The discussion in this chapter provides information of potential results and drawbacks of teaching EFL writing in the particular context of this study. Reflecting on my teaching throughout the online portfolio implementation has been beneficial for both my professional development and the improvement in teaching and learning activities. I observed and evaluated every phase of the online portfolio implementation in the academic writing class to identify emerging problems and how to deal with them. I thought the tasks involved in the online portfolio implementation comprising using the blog, self-revising, peers and teacher's feedback (commenting) activities, and reflection generally worked out well; however, there were some minor obstacles caused by internet connection, students' technology skills, online feedback activity procedures, and students' unfamiliarity with reflection. As part of my action research agenda, I observed those problems, searched relevant references, made some changes, observed and reflected on the consequences of my decisions, and made other necessary changes following my action research cycles. At the end, I could feel satisfied that the online portfolio became a meaningful tool for students to support their learning, particularly in developing their EFL writing performance in their academic writing class.

CHAPTER 5

ONLINE PORTFOLIOS AND STUDENTS' WRITING DEVELOPMENT

The discussion in this chapter examines how the online portfolio implementation in the writing class that incorporated self-revision, peer and teacher feedback, and reflection helped students to revise their writing. It is intended to provide the responses to the second research question concerning students' writing development throughout the online portfolio implementation, which consists of the following sub-questions:

- a. How do students' perceive their writing development throughout the online portfolio implementation?
- b. How do students revise their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation?

With regards to the above research questions, the discussion is divided into two sections. The first section will discuss how students perceived the impacts of the online portfolio on their writing development. Data on this discussion will be drawn from the five selected students' interviews and reflection. The second part of this chapter will discuss the contribution of self-revision, peer and teacher's feedback, and reflection towards students' writing development, with the data drawn from the five selected students' interviews, reflections, writing assignments and comments they received from both teacher and peers.

5.1 Students' perceptions of the development of their writing ability throughout the online portfolio implementation

The students' interviews and reflection in their writing were analysed to reveal their perceptions on their writing development throughout the online portfolio

implementation. Generally, all five participants perceived that, by implementing the online portfolio, they developed their skills in different writing areas including organisation, grammar and sentence structure, and content. However, some students' statements did not indicate any specific writing aspects when describing the writing skills they developed, and I categorise this under a category of overall writing aspects.

5.1.1 Improving organisation of the writing

All the participants in the in-depth study perceived that the online portfolio, with all the components, helped them to improve the organisation of their writing. One student stated that the online portfolio with all the tasks was very helpful for students because writing skills could not be learnt instantly (Interview#2 Wawan). The student highlighted that he had improved the coherence of his writing through the online portfolio tasks. It implies that the student developed coherence in his writing through the online portfolio tasks which involved practising writing coherently with students being given opportunities to review the concept of coherence and evaluate the coherence aspect of their own and their peers' writing drafts. The following students' statements also show how some students perceived that the tasks involved in online portfolio helped them to improve the organisation of their writing.

My strength is that I can organise my essay and make the thesis statement well (Reflection #2 Tia).

It increased my expectation because when I write, I expect to be able to make my writing good with all its aspects, and when we made it in the online portfolio, it was done coherently and step by step so that we could make a good and structured writing (interview #3 Wawan).

One student specifically emphasised her improved ability in the organisation of an argumentative essay after having practised writing it through the third online portfolio assignment (Reflection#3/Arin).

5.1.2 Improving grammar and sentence structure

Three of the five participants highlighted the areas of grammar and sentence structure when they shared their perceptions on the writing developments they had made. One student stated that she had made some grammatical mistakes and incorrect sentence order in the first assignment. Becoming aware of that, she improved it in her second writing assignment (Reflection #1 Arin). Another student pointed out that, along with other areas of writing, she also made improvements in grammar and sentence structure (Reflection#1 Vina). Similarly, Wawan, who also identified sentence structure as an area he improved, wrote in his second reflection that, after practising writing during all the tasks in the online portfolio, he could produce better sentences, not only simple sentences, but also compound and complex sentences to express his ideas (Reflection #2 Wawan).

5.1.3 Improving the content of their essay

Not many students, while sharing their perceptions on the development of their writing ability, mentioned this area of writing. One student mentioned that throughout the online portfolio implementation, she had improved in terms of content (Reflection #2 Vina). The finding that not many students' perceptions on their writing development included the area of content, is not because they did not pay attention to this area while revising their writing drafts (see section 5.2.1 showing the number of revisions in the area of content). Instead, most students described their writing development in general, and did not mention the area of content in particular, as will be discussed in the next section.

5.1.4 Improving overall writing aspects

As previously mentioned, some students did not mention specific aspects of writing that they had improved as a result of implementing the online portfolio. Instead, they mentioned development in terms of overall writing aspects, as illustrated in the following students' statement:

The online portfolio makes me practise my writing more regularly and improve my writing ability more continuously (interview#1 Gita).

The steps involved in the online portfolio; self-editing, and then comments from friends, are very helpful to improve my writing (interview#3 Vina).

Furthermore, one student stated in her reflection that every step of the academic writing task incorporating online portfolio was beneficial for students to increase their writing skills. Since all the writing tasks were uploaded in her blog, her development in writing appeared obvious (Reflection#2 Vina). In the same vein, Arin, in her reflection, stated that, having their work with all the changes documented in their online portfolio, she could see that her writing was getting better over time throughout the online portfolio implementation (Reflection #2 Arin).

Online portfolio helped students learn writing in a more organised way. One student mentioned that, with the online portfolio, her practice of learning writing changed. She had an improved learning plan; at the beginning she had to learn certain concepts in certain ways, starting from the simple to the more complex aspects. At the end, she could show improved writing (interview#3 Tia). Another student highlighted the procedure of systematic steps of online portfolio implementation and its contribution to her writing development, as can be seen below:

Online portfolios helped me to guide how to learn writing well because the online portfolios is very systematic, from the early step which is writing the draft, and after making our draft, we have to understand our strengths and

weaknesses, and then we correct and improve our weaknesses, and then it is also improved by our friends; it is given comments. Those steps implicitly and explicitly will help us to understand our weaknesses and strengths (interview#3 Vina).

When stating the impact of the online portfolio towards the overall aspects of their writing improvement, students also pointed out how specific elements of the online portfolio contributed to their writing improvement in general, as will be discussed in the subsequent sections under three categories of online portfolio components; self-revising, teacher and peer feedback, and reflection.

5.1.4.1 Contributions of self-revising

Most participants stated during the interviews that self-revising helped them to improve their writing ability. The guidance to carry out self-revising given to students helped them identify the weaknesses of their writing which needed to be improved (interview#2 Vina). During the self-revising activities, students identified some corrections they had to remember in order not to make the same mistakes again in the future. The steps in the online portfolio, particularly self-revision with the given guidance, enabled one student to know how certain aspects of writing should be, which she did not previously know. She stated that she had improved in her writing drafts through self-revision, by referring to the guidelines (interview#2 Tia). Moreover, self-revising became part of online portfolio tasks to which students paid particular attention.

...but through the self-editing and with the help of the steps that I have to do in self-editing, I improve a little...sometimes I change a lot especially the topics and the way I write, and of course I organise it better... Most of the revisions that help me improve a lot is the part of self-editing when I see the guidelines (interview#2 Arin).

As students came to understand the criteria of effective writing that they were expected to produce, and self-revising with its guidance gave students the opportunity to check

their own writing draft, students perceived that the self-revising activity had improved their writing.

5.1.4.2 Contributions of teacher's and peers' feedback

All participants acknowledged that their writing skills improved due to the incorporation of teacher and peers' feedback in the online portfolio implementation. One student mentioned that the writing assignments incorporated comments from both peers and lecturer helped her improve her writing. The comments helped her find the mistakes in her writing draft that she was unable to see herself. It also helped her to see if the unity and coherence of the essay was well written and understood by the readers (Reflection#2 Arin). In addition, another student highlighted that self-revising was not enough if she wanted to produce a good piece of writing, as can be seen in the following extract of the student's reflection concerning the teacher and peers' comments:

Based on some comments given by my friends and my lecturer after the self-editing; for instance; the incoherent sentences had not been revised yet and a little bit grammatical error that should be revised, finally in my final draft, there are some significant development in each process. It can be proved by some aspects such as; good development in the format, mechanic, content and organisation, grammar and sentence structure (Reflection #1 Vina).

Comments and suggestions from peers and teacher had also enabled students to determine what they should do properly in their writing subsequently. One student stated that peers' and teacher's feedback had guided her to be more careful when writing, to read and practise writing a lot, which in turn enabled her to produce better writing (Reflection #1 Gita). Moreover, another student added that, regardless of the uncertainty of the peer feedback quality, it helped her improve different aspects of her writing (interview#2, reflection#1 Tia).

5.1.4.3 Contributions of reflection

Writing development had also been perceived as an impact of reflection. Through reflection, as will also be discussed in the section concerning the contribution of the online portfolio on students' self-evaluation (section 6.1.2.3), students raised their awareness of their strengths and weaknesses of their writing skills. This awareness enabled students to improve the areas of their weaknesses, and helped them improve their overall writing skills. One student emphasised that reflection contributed substantially to his writing development. By writing a reflection, he could review what he had written previously and identify the strengths and weaknesses of his writing (interview#2 Wawan). Similarly, the following extracts of students' statements show the roles of reflection in helping students improve their writing:

I think the role of reflection on my writing development is very significant. Reflection or self-evaluation became a way for us to realise the areas of our weakness and strength. Moreover, it is a kind of self-evaluation on how to solve/improve our weaknesses so that the result will be better, and how we can maintain and keep improving our strengths to make a better result as well (interview#2 Vina).

In my opinion the weakness of my essay is sometimes I am careless in checking my work and make minor mistakes in grammar. One other weakness is that I sometimes find it difficult to find the right conclusion sentence that flows with the paragraph. It takes me sometimes to think about it. My strength is that I can organise my essay well and I try to be as coherence as possible. Even though once in a while my vocabularies need to be improved to create a more variety (Reflection#2/Arin).

Even though writing reflection was not an easy task for students, as I have discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.2.3) concerning the emerging problems in implementing reflection, students perceived that reflection had been beneficial in their effort to improve their writing skills. It can be seen in the following student's statement during an interview:

It is difficult because we have to have a flashback; what I have done in the earlier meetings until the last meeting. It is more about understanding how the good writing structure from the beginning till the end is. Maybe the difficult part is, when we want to make the topics coherent from one to another. But I think so far, reflection on class activities or learning activities is very useful for me; I become more systematic/organised, systematically planned from 0 until now, maybe not reaching 100 yet, but at least there is a development in every step, and reflection is really helpful in that it helped me keep on the learning track (interview#1 Vina).

To summarise this section, the incorporation of comments from others, in addition to self-revision in the process-genre approach of writing in the online portfolio implementation have been perceived as beneficial processes in students' effort to improve their writing ability. Moreover, documenting and reflecting on the learning process gave students opportunities to review the revisions they had made in writing drafts and learn from the mistakes in their previous work.

5.2 The impacts of the online portfolio on students' writing draft revisions

As discussed previously, the writing class which implemented the online portfolio in this study drew on the process-genre approach of writing incorporating self-revision, peers' and teacher's feedback. In this section, I look at the impacts which the online portfolio had on students' writing; how the students' writing draft revisions were influenced by the online portfolio process involving the aspects mentioned above (self-revising, peers' and teacher's feedback). The discussion is divided into two parts; students' revisions on their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation and contributions of self-revising and different feedback types on students' writing.

5.2.1 Students' revisions on their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation

In this section, analysis of revisions made by 5 selected students on their writing drafts as part of the process to produce their final draft will be discussed with regards to their writing. The writing drafts consist of three writing assignments (15 original and 30 revised drafts). The essay scoring rubric from the "Writing Academic English" that was adapted as the guidance for writing feedback was also used as the basis for analysing students' writing revisions. The criteria included in the essay scoring rubric were used as the pre-determined categories for analysing students' original draft, draft after self-revising and final draft. The areas of students' writing revisions involved mechanics, content, organisation, and grammar and sentence structure. The scoring rubric for the writing draft (paragraph and essay) can be seen in appendix 11. In terms of linguistic unit, the revisions were made in punctuation, word, phrase, clause, sentence and paragraph levels. The number of revisions was counted with regards to the areas and linguistic unit level. As a result, a revision made in a paragraph level that affects only one area such as content or organisation, was considered as one revision, while several revisions could occur in a sentence level when the revisions made in that sentence affect more than one area (e.g. grammar and mechanics). There was a complexity in analysing the revisions since some revisions in an area could overlap with another area. For example, when a revision was made by adding a paragraph to improve coherence (which is part of organisation), it could affect the content at the same time. When such a case occurred, it was considered that revision was made in both areas.

The results of the revisions analysis show that the most common revisions students made in overall writing assignments throughout the online portfolio implementation

were in the area of organisation (52%). Revisions in other areas were content (24%), grammar and sentence structure (19,3%), and mechanics (4.3%).

Categories of revision	Mechanics	Organisation	Content	Grammar and sentence structure	Total number of revision changes
Student					
Arin	1	26	22	3	52
Vina	2	24	7	10	43
Tia	2	16	4	3	25
Wawan	1	15	4	11	31
Gita	1	4	1	4	10
Total number	7	85	38	31	161
Percent	4.3	52	24	19.3	

Table 5.1 Categories, number and percentage of revisions

In making revisions, organisation of the essay became the area in which students paid more attention than in other language areas. This phenomenon could be due to the explicit instructions to the students to be concerned with organisation while writing an essay throughout the writing classes, and the area of organisation which made the highest percentage of score in the writing rubric. Moreover, students realised their weaknesses in this area and felt the need to work harder in it. As I recorded in my journal, some discussion during the writing practice in the class was focused on the area of organisation as different students raised questions dealing with aspects relating the essay organisation. Coherence was among the aspects that took the longest discussion

time and more practice. It was not a new concept for students, but they said that they did not really understand how to make an essay coherent.

The fact that other language areas such as grammar and mechanics did not raise as much concern as the areas of organisation or content, does not necessarily mean that they did not make mistakes in those areas. It could be due to the lack of emphasis given to these areas during the class discussion prior to the writing essay practice. Because of the limited time, students were expected to learn and review these language areas themselves, and the students were informed of this at the beginning of the course. Even though some students received feedback from either peers or teacher highlighting these areas, some grammatical mistakes still occurred in their final draft.

The findings from the analysis of students' writing revisions which show that students focused mostly on the organisation of their writing in making revisions, and did not pay much attention on grammar and sentence structure, are in line with the students' perceptions towards the development of their writing ability. Only two of the five participants touched upon the areas of grammar and sentence structure when describing their writing development. As for the area of content, even though not many students mentioned this area when perceiving their writing development, the number of revisions in this area shown in students' writing draft is quite many. In the area of mechanics (punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling), students did not make many revisions; only 4.3 percent of the total revisions. This is in line with the students' perceptions on their writing development which did not particularly highlight this area (see section 5.1).

5.2.2 Contribution of self-revising and different feedback types on students' writing

The incorporation of self-revising and peer and teacher's comments (feedback) in the online portfolio implementation was analysed to illuminate how different kinds of online portfolio elements mentioned above had contributed to students' final writing drafts. The analysis of students' writing draft revisions throughout the online portfolio implementation incorporating self-revising, teacher and peers' feedback shows that the online portfolio process had a substantial effect on students' writing revisions, as can be seen in table 5.2. However, there are limitations in the quantitative data analysis of students' revisions as they are descriptive only, and thus only show a rough idea of the amendments. The analysis was influenced much more by the in-depth qualitative analysis that followed. The in-depth qualitative analysis is intended to give deeper information in addition to the descriptive analysis of students' revisions concerning necessary questions raised from the raw quantitative data. For example, a question could raise from the quantitative data showing that some students incorporated only one peer feedback in the process of writing the final draft. The in-depth qualitative analysis explored possible causes of such a case; whether some students ignored their peers' feedback, they did not receive any feedback, or they rushed and therefore needed a lot of self-revision changes in the first instance.

Number of revisions made as a result of	Self-revising (before feedback activities)	Teacher's feedback	Peers' feedback	Self-revision (After teacher and peers' feedback activities)	Total number of revisions
Students					
Arin	41	4	1	6	52
Vina	13	8	14	8	43
Tia	2	6	1	16	25
Wawan	5	9	4	13	31
Gita	1	1	2	6	10
Total number	62	28	22	49	161
Percent	38.5	17.4	13.7	30.4	

Table 5.2 Revisions made by self, peer and teacher feedback

The analysis of teacher and peers' comments, original draft, draft after self-revising and final draft of students' writing revealed that 38,5 % of revisions made was a result of self-revising, 17,4 % was based on teacher's feedback, and 13, 7 % was based on peers' feedback. In addition, students made many further and self-revisions after feedback activities which reached 30,4 % of the overall revisions. The writing process approach incorporated teacher and peers' feedback activities not only gave students opportunity to revise their writing drafts based on the feedback they received; the process of incorporating feedback itself had guided students to identify themselves other weaknesses of their draft that they needed to improve. Regarding the percentage of the feedback students incorporated on their writing drafts, the data showed that more revisions were made based on the teacher's feedback. This phenomenon could arise because of students' uncertainty of the accuracy of the feedback they received from

their peers. In the previous study, Liu and Carless (2006) as cited by Lam (2013) had illustrated students' scepticism about the reliability of peer feedback to be used as a legitimate form of feedback. The finding was echoed by a research on students' preference for incorporation of self, peer, or teacher feedback into revision conducted by (Zhang, 1995) revealing that students tended to select teacher feedback when they were asked to choose among three options.

Even though the percentage of peer feedback students incorporated on their writing draft in this study is not as high as the teacher's feedback, the number is quite significant and had contributed to the students' text revisions. It can be seen from the data that, in fact, there is not much difference between the contribution of peer and teacher's feedback, and their difference is less clear cut. For some students the peer feedback had greater impact. More details and example to illustrate these findings will be presented in the next parts of this section. The findings are in line with the studies conducted by Lundstrom and Baker (2009) showing that the use of peer feedback in revision tended to be positive. Moreover, in this study, besides the teacher's feedback, self-revising and peer feedback activities had succeeded to enhance students' awareness of their areas of weaknesses in writing and promote active participation in the process of revising.

Referring back to the previous studies, Sengupta (2000) argued that the relation between revision and text development is problematic. Moreover, it still remains debatable whether the feedback students receive necessarily have a positive impact on their writing draft revisions and writing ability due to some influencing factors, such as student factors, teacher factors, and specific contextual factors which could constrain

the conditions of giving and responding to feedback in the implementation of portfolio (Hamp-Lyons, 2006, 2007 as cited in Lam, 2013). For that reason, it became more important to discuss the complexity of the impact of feedback with regards to those possible influencing factors, including the specific context in which the current study was conducted.

The data analysis in the current study revealed that the revisions students made throughout the online portfolio implementation may not necessarily guarantee writing development. More details of this finding will be discussed in the next parts in this section with examples of students' revisions that did not bring about development in students' writing drafts. Some students' revisions that did not make development in the revised writing drafts could be due to some different factors in the particular context of this study. For example, one of the students (Wawan) received some useful feedback from both teacher and peers highlighting the sentence structure area, but he failed to incorporate the feedback to improve that area of writing in his final draft. Instead, he made some revisions on paragraph level that in fact did not improve the areas of weakness in his previous draft as indicated by the feedback. In this case, students' interpretation of the written feedback they received and their understanding of how to address the feedback became very important. In relation to this issue, Conrad and Goldstein (1999) pointed out that the revisions students made on their writing could fail to improve the quality because students misinterpret written commentary when revising drafts. Moreover, Ferris (1997) in his study revealed that students appeared to understand from the comment that something was required of them, but they were less clear about how to incorporate the requested changes successfully.

Despite some parts of the findings that showed the negative correlation between the revisions and the writing development, the majority of the findings in the current study suggest that elements of online portfolio implemented in the study to support the process approach of writing had helped students to make necessary revisions. These findings are echoed by Lam (2013) who conducted a study with two groups of Hong Kong EFL pre-university students. He implemented two portfolio systems namely working portfolio and showcase portfolio with those two different groups of students. The study revealed that the working portfolio system involving peer and teacher's feedback had facilitated students' writing development.

As stated earlier, the discussion in this chapter is intended to address the research questions dealing with the impacts of the online portfolio implementation on students' writing. The analysis of students' writing assignments and the process involved in the online portfolio implementation (self-revising, teacher and peers' feedback) will be further discussed and presented in the form of case studies of 5 students involved in the in-depth study. The selection of 5 students to take part in the in-depth study was discussed in chapter 3. The discussion involves more details and examples of students' writing developments as a result of self-revising, teacher and peers' feedback. The comments received by the five selected students as well as the incorporation of the comments will be discussed with regards to the aspects of writing within the agreed criteria suggested in the academic writing rubric from the academic writing handbook. Extracts of the five students' final writing drafts which included the revisions they made after the feedback activities will be presented to show how the peer feedback, teacher feedback and self-revising after the feedback activities contributed to their writing draft revisions. Students' comments that were not incorporated in the revisions but showed

important phenomena during the peer feedback activities will also be discussed. Preceding the discussion of the case study, some relevant background information of each student resulted from the survey at the beginning of the study through questionnaires will be presented.

Arin

Arin got her Bachelors degree from a non-English department. However, she had had a lot of exposure to English since she had studied in international primary and secondary schools. She learned and used English both spoken and written because she had to do all her school tasks in English. English skills were indeed considered as common skills that every student in the international school needed to master. However, Ade perceived that her grammar was not as good as those who learned English in an English department which focused particularly on language skills. She learned writing by reading and then practising to write. Regarding the importance of academic writing skills, she thought that academic writing skills were important to write scientific papers and essays related to the academic world. In her opinion, the use of technology is very important because it can make language learning easier.

Arin was a student who made the biggest number of revisions by self-revising throughout the online portfolio implementation. As presented in the previous section, she made 41 changes on her draft after self-revising. The revisions comprise various areas of writing; mechanics, organisation, content, grammar and sentence structure. The analysis of her draft after self-revising with the changes she made compared to the original draft showed that the revisions she made had improved her writing draft. For

instance, the deletion of unnecessary phrase in the first assignment and the addition of transition signal to improve the coherence in the second assignment.

Throughout the online portfolio implementation with three writing assignments, online feedback was provided after Arin posted her draft after self-revising. The comments she received from both peers and teacher and how she incorporated the feedback in the three writing assignments are discussed below.

Assignment #1

In the first assignment, Arin received comments highlighting the topic sentence, supporting sentence and concluding sentence. She received comments from a peer (Tia), mentioning that as a reader, she could not catch the fifth sentence because may be there were some words she forgot to add. Her topic sentence was good, not too specific and not too general. The supporting point and supporting details were clear, and she could separate them well. Arin was suggested to add supporting sentences by giving an example so that the topic could be understood by the readers more easily. Regarding the concluding sentence, a comment (Tia) said that it really persuaded the readers to go to Malioboro, a place becoming the topic of the paragraph. A comment gave another suggestion to add more information about accommodation around Malioboro because it could help the readers to find out the nice place there.

Even though Arin mentioned in her reflection that she tried to revise her draft based on the comments she received, her final draft showed that she did not address any peer comment she received. One of the peer comments suggested her to add examples in her supporting sentence as stated earlier. She decided not to add more examples in her final

draft, and her decision was reasonable as she had included some examples in her writing draft. However, she made some changes in her final draft based on the teacher feedback. The revisions included addition of controlling idea in the topic sentence and end-of-paragraph signal in the concluding sentence, both were based on the instructor's comments. The extracts from the paragraph below showed the revisions Arin made in her first writing assignment after the feedback activities. The underlined parts indicated the additions and changes that students made after feedback activities.

Don't forget to visit Malioboro when you are in Jogjakarta. There are a lot of things you can do in Malioboro. ~~Malioboro~~ It is located in the heart of Jogjakarta. It is on the sidewalk of the busy Malioboro Street. The street is near the Keraton of Jogjakarta, and it is always full of motorcycles that roam the street. Furthermore, there are a lot of street vendors that occupies along the side of the street. They are on the right and left of the side walk, so we have to walk in the middle. It is difficult to pass by when you want to see what they sell because it is very crowded; we have to walk slowly in the middle of the crowd. We can buy different kinds of things from the vendors. Most of them sell clothes, wood statues, food and other souvenirs. The prices are quite cheap; however, we have to bargain for the things we buy. For instance, the seller will tell you that the price is 10000 rupiahs; actually you can have it for 5000 rupiahs with a good negotiation skill. If you are not good at bargaining, it will be quite difficult to get the right price. It is not like shopping in the mall, you have to stand the hot weather and walk slowly among the crowd. Moreover you have to keep your valuable things you carry safe from pickpocket. Nevertheless even though it is not a comfortable place to shop, it is fun to see the things there. Overall, Malioboro is an interesting place to go, so don't miss the opportunity to spend the time there.

Underline: Revisions made by Arin; Shade: Revisions based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.1 Arin's revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment

It could be seen in the writing draft after the revisions that a revision was made in the first sentence. However, changing the topic sentence in fact did not make the paragraph better as the topic sentence in the original draft was more attractive (stronger) in inviting the reader's attention. In the topic sentence of the first draft, implicitly, the writer intended to use the attractions of Malioboro as the controlling idea by inviting the

reader to visit the place, but the teacher feedback suggested the writer to make explicit in the topic sentence what the writer wanted to write in the paragraph (general information of what visitor can do in Malioboro to complete the imperative sentence inviting people to visit Malioboro). This phenomenon showed that whether the feedback and the revision would make development on the writing draft depended on the students' interpretation of the written feedback and the written feedback itself (whether it was clear and not caused misinterpretation).

Other comments Arin received, contained an appreciation and interest of what Arin wrote, as demonstrated in the student's comment below:

your writing is awesome. when i read it, it can open my memory when i visited jogja last holiday. the topic is good....and i find best skill in your writing...yes, your paragraph is interesting for me because I like this topic. I haven't visited Jogjakarta, especially Malioboro (Choirunisa).

It was not surprising that Arin received a lot of compliments on her writing drafts as she was considered as having higher skills in English academic writing compared to all her classmates. Her spoken English skills also showed her high level of English. She had got used to writing English since she was a student of international primary and secondary schools. The writing draft she posted obviously showed her writing quality. However, she behaved very cooperatively and was very helpful during the collaborative learning in the peer feedback activities. She gave a lot of feedback on her friends' writing in a supportive way. This is what made her friends feel the spirit of cooperation and tried hard to give her comments even though they admitted that Arin's writing had a high quality (comment#1 Sarah, comment#2 Tia). Arin also showed her appreciation to her peers' comments that made them not feel hesitate to comment on Arin's works. As a result, Arin received some comments as discussed previously even though she did not

incorporate every peer comment in her final draft. In this situation, when there were students considered as having higher skills than others, the incorporation of teacher's feedback became more important. Every student expected to get feedback that could highlight the weaknesses of their works and guide them to improve, no matter how good their skills were.

Assignment #2

On the second writing assignment, Arin received comments concerning essay format, sentence structure, vocabulary, grammar, introduction, organisation and supporting details. In terms of grammar, Arin got a suggestion for correcting a comparative adjective (easy became easier) and subject verb agreement. However, the final draft shows that Arin decided not to make any revision in these areas as she did not make any mistakes in subject verb agreement or adjective form in her draft. This finding shows that the reliability/accuracy of the feedback had to be examined before being incorporated, and Arin had done it.

In other aspects, Arin received positive feedback in the areas of vocabulary and sentence structure, as can be seen in the following extracts of the student's comments:

You used high level of sentence structures and vocabularies, it makes your essay looks very good as I read a page of a published book...(comment#2 Sasa).

Another comment stated that her essay was smooth from the beginning, very well organised, and completed with examples and real facts. She also received a compliment from her friend stated that her topic was interesting.

Arin perceived her peers' feedback in a positive way. For example, her peer's feedback concerning her grammar was in line with what she wrote in her reflection:

In my opinion the weakness of my essay is sometimes I am careless in checking my work and make minor mistakes in grammar. One other weakness is that I sometimes find it difficult to find the right conclusion sentence that flows with the paragraph. It takes me sometimes to think about it. My strength is that I can organise my essay well and I try to be as coherent as possible. Even though once in a while my vocabularies need to be improved to create a more variety (reflection#2 Arin).

Based on the feedback from the instructor, she made a revision in the introductory paragraph in her final draft; adding a general statement. Another revision was made based on the teacher feedback to make sure if she used transitions signal between the body paragraphs properly. It can be seen in the following extracts from her introductory paragraph after the peer feedback activities:

We cannot live without a computer now days, all our activities are well stored in the digital world. There are a lot of brands of computers in the world, but two are well known, a Mac and a PC. A Mac is a line of computers that is produced by Apple, while a PC refers to computers that runs with the Windows operating system. People tend to compare both of them before they choose one of them. They each have dedicated followers, and each type of computer has some similarities and differences.

...

Finally, Another difference between Mac and PC is the security. We have known that there are a lot of viruses, worms, malware and other kinds of destructive programs out there. The popularity of PC has made people more interested to create a destructive program to hack this operating system. For instance, most people choose to create this kind of program for PC due to its large number of user. The impact will be much bigger. Spam or advertise fraud is a big threat for PC, while it will do a little harm to a Mac. In spite of the increase of user of Mac may raise the number of threat, the threat for PC is always be higher.

Underline: revisions made by Arin; Shade: Revisions based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.2 Arin's revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment

Assignment#3

As students had been practising to write feedback for their peers, their ability to highlight specific aspects of writing was improving as well. Even though not all comments suggested changes in the writing draft as they only expressed some compliments, comments Arin received in the third assignment focused more on specific writing aspects.

The comments received by Arin on her third assignment covered the areas of content and organisation of the body paragraphs and conclusion.

I really understand about the real event after i read your essay. you give rebuttal in every your point. and in the conclusion, you have made minimise for every your point above complete with the rebuttal too (Sarah).

It is well-organised Mba Arin (Nila).

As in her previous assignment, on the third assignment Arin received compliments from her peers expressing their interest on the topic Arin wrote.

Arin did not incorporate any peer comment into her third writing assignment. However, she made some revisions after receiving teacher feedback to state her position more clearly in her thesis statement in the introductory paragraph and to pay more attention to the transition signals between paragraphs to make her essay more coherent. It can be seen in the following extracts from her revisions after receiving feedback.

Space travel has become an issue from the first time it is possible for man. The first men landed on the moon in 1969 had made an astonishing achievement for humanity. Lately, new ideas to send manned flight to Mars are introduced. Some people think that it is worth the expense and risk, however, ~~some people feel in my opinion~~ it is unnecessary.

...

~~Furthermore, the opponent says~~ economic growth will elevate the well being of people. One of the keys to economic growth is science and technology. It is claimed that a manned flight to Mars is the key. However, raising the well being through science and technology is not limited to one discovery only. There are other inventions, such as a Hoover Dam, that is more useful for human kind. The dam will help man to control the availability of water in the reservoir, and as we know water is crucial to all human activities and its well being. There are a lot of discoveries that within our reach should be prioritized. The prosperity of the people through economic growth can be reached by other discovery, so it is not necessary to only have a manned flight to Mars as the key.

~~It is believed~~ ~~The final argument believed by the opponent is~~ that the result of the experiments and studies will be quicker, if we send human being to Mars. However, it is a fact that a lot of achievements in the space exploration are achieved without sending human to Mars. For instance, we can have the evidence of water existence with only automated probes and automated space telescope. Moreover, analysing rocks and minerals can be done in the laboratory on earth after sending an unmanned craft to Mars for samples. So the importance of sending human in the exploration can be replaced by other ways, it is not necessary to send them directly to Mars.

Underline: revisions made by Arin; Shade: Revisions based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.3 Arin's revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment

Vina

Vina had graduated from an English department. She had learned in her previous study how to write essays. She learned to write by reading the rules to write essays from the text book, and then she practised applying the rules in her writing. She perceived academic writing skills as very important skills to support her study in the Masters programme. She had used internet for email, Facebook, and browsing various

information. She had also used the internet to help her in her English learning. She stated that the internet is very beneficial, and English learners should be able to benefit from the availability of the internet.

The data of the revisions show that Vina made the second-most revisions throughout the online portfolio implementation compared to other participants, and peer feedback was the most influential aspect of the online portfolio activities that contributed the biggest number of revisions. In terms of writing aspects, she made the biggest number of revisions in the area of organisation. The comments she received from both peers and teacher and how she incorporated the feedback in the three writing assignments are discussed below.

Assignment #1

Vina is one of the students who did not receive any comments from her classmates on her first assignment. It could be due to the procedures of peer feedback activities in the first assignment; students were given freedom to choose any of their peers' works to comment on. The record of students' commenting activities; who commented on whose writings, showed that students chose their peers' works to comment on randomly. There was no friendship issue for any students who did not receive any comment, as what happened to Vina. As I noticed and recorded in my journal, Vina was an easy going person who got along well with all her classmates. In the class discussion, she also got involved actively and could work with her friends cooperatively. Vina produced her final draft after the online feedback activities without any feedback from her peers. Instead, she made revisions based on teacher feedback highlighting the organisation

(unity and coherence) and grammar (“part of speech”). In addition, some revisions were made based on self-evaluation.

A serious problem faced in my hometown is a bad sanitation. ~~According to World Health Organisation (WHO), sanitation as group of methods to collect human excreta and urine as well as community waste waters in a hygiene way, where human and community health is not altered. From that statement it can be inferred that a good sanitation will create a hygienist environment. The problem~~ It of a bad sanitation in my home town occurs because the public ~~does~~ are not aware the ~~important~~ importance of sanitation. It can be seen from the bad of urban planning and social awareness. For instance; the location of housing is ~~disordered~~ not well organised, the distance of the disposal tank is too ~~near~~ close from the well and the ditch is not arranged ~~well~~ properly. Therefore, ~~for the bad of that sanitation, it~~ those kinds of condition brings some negatives impacts in the society, such as the lack of clean water, some diseases appears and the environment is very slum. These happen because of the pollution from the disposal tank and the ditch around the environment. ~~Thus, it can be concluded~~ In summary, ~~because of the low awareness of the important of sanitation in public, a serious problem of the bad impact of sanitation appears in my home town. the serious problem of the bad sanitation happens because of the low awareness of the importance of sanitation in public.~~

Underline: Revisions made by Vina; Shade: Revisions based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.4 Vina’s revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment

Concerning the online feedback activities procedures, it had been agreed by all students that they would not make it a problem if some students did not receive any feedback as the consequence of the peer feedback activities procedures. Rather, the class agreed to improve the procedures if the first procedure did not work well, as happened in their first assignment. More details about peer feedback activities procedures can be seen in section 3.8.3.2, and how they were changed was discussed in chapter 4; “Teacher’s experiences in facilitating the online portfolio implementation and the action research cycles”.

Assignment #2

Unlike her first assignment that did not get any peer comment, in her second assignment, Vina received some comments from her peers. Some of them were concerned with diction, unity and coherence, as can be seen in the following comments:

Your essay organisation is well develop. There are some inconsistency of tenses usage in paragraph 2. If you want to improve the unity and coherence of your essay, it will be better to use pronoun. You don't have to mention some things again and again. It is advisable not to use 'and' to begin a paragraph. Be careful with your word choices, some words are not commonly use in English (comment#2 Arin).

Another comment highlighted the first sentence Vina used in the introduction of her essay. It criticised part of the introductory paragraph, especially the choice of the first sentence, as shown in the following extracts:

According to my opinion, the introduction from your essay in selecting the first sentence goes to the main point directly. You can brainstorm firstly about culture in Indonesia after that the province especially in Lampung and the main point specifically about Pepadun and Saibatin. But as the whole your writing is great (comment#2 Nila).

The peer feedback had been useful for Vina to revise her draft particularly in improving the coherence and the introductory paragraph. Diction and the use of pronoun are parts of revisions she made. Moreover, she added a general statement to start the introductory paragraph of her essay after receiving peers' feedback, as can be seen in the following extracts of her writing draft after the feedback activities.

~~Pepadun and Saibatin are two traditions as the pillar of Lampung culture.~~ **Lampung is a province in Indonesia which is built by two pillars of culture, they are Pepadun and Saibatin.** Both of them are inherited of ancient Lampung civilization which colorize and enrich Lampung culture with their characteristics...

First similarity of Pepadun and Saibatin is the descendant. ~~Both of Pepadun and Saibatin~~ **They** are Lampung people who come from the same place of origin that is STiala Brak. It is a kingdom located in the flatland of Belalau in the south of Ranau Lake which located in Lampung Province administratively. Nowadays, this place is well-known as West Lampung. Then, from the flatland of STiala Brak Lampung people spread in whole the direction follow the river flow. ~~So~~ **Thus**, because of the same of place origin, it makes both of Pepadun and Saibatin are similar.

Underline: Revisions made by Vina; Bold: Revisions based on peer feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.5 Vina's revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment

Vina did not address the peer feedback concerning grammar and the teacher feedback highlighting accuracy of sentence structure. As the feedback was written to guide the writer to find the mistakes herself without telling explicitly which specific parts of the draft contained the mistakes, it was possible that Vina could not find all parts of her draft that needed revisions suggested by the feedback. However, her effort to address the feedback was seen from the revisions she made as mentioned previously.

Other feedback commented that Vina gave a clear thesis statement and wrote so many examples of dialect that was "awesome" (Nila). Lastly, the title of her essay got a comment stating that it did show an argumentative essay (Oci). The rest of the comments mostly praised her essay; "good essay" (Sasa), "your topic is very interesting, and the essay gave me new information of culture in your hometown" (Hana), "you have done a good job"(Hana), and "Overall, it is interesting to read your paragraph."

Assignment #3

In assignment 3, Vina received more comments from peers compared to the previous assignments. The first comment mentioned that her argument was well written; she gave rebuttal and argued the rebuttal well. She had included references and citation. However, she was suggested to vary the vocabularies that she used in the essay, especially when she introduced a paragraph. In terms of sentence structure, she was advised to be careful of “run on sentences” (Arin) and accuracy of complex sentences. The teacher and peers’ feedback Vina received contributed positively in improving her writing draft. Extracts of Vina’s draft after feedback activities and the revisions she made can be seen in the following figure.

~~In social life, people need language for communicating and doing~~ Language is the means of communication; people spoke it for having the interaction in all of the aspects, such as economy, politic, culture, education etc. ~~those interaction conducted in all levels, start from regional, national and international.~~ Based on its function, language is divided into four, namely; mother tongue or first language, second language, foreign language and global language. Nowadays, the status of English as the global language in the world cannot be ~~denied~~ **disputed**. It has been spoken and written by 380 native speaker, ~~and Over 700 million people, speak English,~~ In addition, Over 700 million people speak English as a foreign language. But, will it still be the global language in the future, is still a question. ~~Whereas~~ Meanwhile, many people think that probably the global language in the future is Mandarin instead of English, since the development of economy in china increases rapidly and leads the central industry in ASEAN. Although many people think that probably the global language in the future is mandarin, but I believe that the future status of English as the global language is assured.

Underline: Revisions made by Vina; Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback
Bold: Revisions based on peer feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.6 Vina’s revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment

There were other interesting comments written by students who paid attention to what others had commented on and added another point, as demonstrated in the following comment extracts:

.. the previous comments n suggestion has represented what I thought ^_^ .. almost the same.. I just wanna tell a little bit, perhaps it is better for you to justify it in Ms.Word before uploading it. (Sasa)

I agree with mba Arin u often mention something again and again. (Hana)

So did I with Mba Arin. in addition, according to me, I still confused in conclusion. Could you give us the clear conclusion; for instance giving the main points and leaving out most detail. (Nila)

However, there were some repeated comments highlighting the same aspects of writing as discussed in other parts of this section.

Vina received positive comments mentioning that she had done a good job and written a good topic. In addition, responding what Vina wrote about the status of English as the global language, a student commented:

...I think English will be global language assured because from old day until now it is still as an international language. Most countries in the world use English to communicate each other...

Wawan

Wawan got his bachelor degree from an English Department. He had learned to write short essays in English prior to the academic writing course in his master programme. He learned EFL writing skills by understanding the rules and practising them. He learned the writing skills both individually and by sharing his writings with his colleagues (teacher fellows) as he was an English teacher in a secondary school. He was positive about his previous experiences of learning writing, stating that he liked the way he had previously learned writing. He perceived that learning academic writing skills was very important because academic writing skills could enable him to write a scientific writing that would be very useful in the science world. Regarding his

experience in using the internet, he had used the internet for email and social media. Moreover, he had used the internet to find sources or materials for his teaching.

Wawan made a total number of 31 revisions in all areas of writing with the largest number of revisions in the area of organisation. His revisions were influenced by both teacher and peer feedback, but the self-revising contributed the most to his revisions. More details on the comments he received and how he responded to the feedback in every writing assignment throughout the online portfolio implementation are discussed below.

Assignment #1

In the first assignment, Wawan received three peer comments containing some positive feedback. As mentioned by his peer, his writing was easy to understand, and he had made a good concluding sentence (Gita). He had written a very well organised paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting points, and concluding paragraph that restated his topic sentence in a different way. Another comment stated that he had very strong skills in developing his ideas and supporting them with examples (Luna). Since those comments were affirmation of good aspects of his writing and were not written to suggest any changes, they were not incorporated in the revision of his writing draft. However, he got a suggestion to pay more attention to the sentence structure including the necessary punctuation. He received another suggestion to be more concerned with subject verb agreement to make his writing more grammatically accurate.

As mentioned earlier, beside some positive feedback, Wawan received comments guiding him to improve his writing on some specific areas. It was revealed that some

comments from different friends addressed the same areas of development in a different way; one mentioned the subject verb agreement without telling which specific part in the writing draft it is, while the other comment mentioned it specifically by writing the following comment:

..... the mistake only, >>>>> it have a lot of speakers in the building<<<<< it should be It has, :) (Nila)

Regardless of the point that the above comment was intended to highlight, which is grammar aspect, the comment shows another interesting finding; not all peers' comments were accurate and thus needed to be examined further. The comment above mentioned that the mistake highlighted in the comment was the only mistake in the writing draft, whereas in fact, it was not the only mistake in Wawan's writing draft. This phenomenon indicates that there is a space for a critique of the peers' comments. This space of critique required students to think more critically in order to be able to select the comments that could contribute well on their writing draft development.

Of all the comments mentioned above, Wawan made corrections on his writing draft based on the feedback with clear directions of development. The extracts from the paragraph in figure 5.7 illustrate the revisions Wawan made in his paragraph after the feedback activities.

Although some people think that watching movies in the theatre is too expensive rather than home but for several people, it can release stress after working for a week. A lot of us even prefer to spend their holidays ~~with just~~ by watching a movie. For example lots of teenagers ~~used~~ spend their leisure times by watching movies in theaters and it also ~~becoming~~ **become** hobby for several people. Watching movies in the big screen is more fun because we can feel the situation experienced by the characters in the film and we can enjoy the technology like 3D and IMAX which we can't get from the TV. The technology of Dolby sound makes the situation in the theatre ~~becoming~~ **become** more life exciting because it ~~have~~ **has** a lot of speakers in the building. We also can ~~finds~~ find several of snacks which available in the theatre from the expensive until the cheapest snack like popcorn, nachos, fries, and hot dogs. Before ~~we watch~~ watching movie we can also see the movie trailer which is going to play on the big screen. Sometimes when we watch the prime movies we can meet with the ~~performer~~ actors and we can get their signature. In conclusion we can say that watching movies in the theatre is more fun rather than at home because of the visual, audio and also snacks.

Underline: Revisions made by Wawan; Bold: Revisions based on peer feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.7 Wawan's revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment

Even though Wawan succeeded in revising some parts of his paragraph based on peer feedback concerning the areas of grammar, he could not incorporate the feedback highlighting the sentence structure properly. He did not make any correction to improve the sentence structure including adding the necessary punctuation despite the peer feedback he received from the teacher highlighting that area, as can be seen in the following extracts of his draft. The sentence structure remained the same, before and after the feedback activities.

Although some people think that watching movies in the theatre is too expensive rather than home but for several person it can release stress after working for a week. A lot of us even prefer to spend their holidays with just watching a movie. For example lot of teenagers used their leisure times to watch movies in theaters and it also becoming a hobby for several people.

Students' knowledge and understanding of the sentence structure became a determining factor in this case. Even though this area had been reviewed prior to the essay writing activities, students were supposed to check the reference book when it came to examining the accuracy of his sentence structure in his writing. The comments he received during the online feedback activities had actually informed him to be concerned with this area, and resources to help him with the necessary rules in making accurate sentence structure were available.

Assignment #2

In the second assignment, the introduction became the first part of his essay commented on by his peers. One of the comments wrote that his introductory paragraph was too long, and it affected the coherence of the paragraph. The paragraph should have had only one topic. Another comment highlighted the conclusion; the conclusion should have reflected the thesis statement and all the body paragraphs (Arin). He was also suggested to be careful with sentence structure, particularly the use of conjunction in his complex sentences, and the use of preposition (Putri).

From the teacher, he received comments highlighting areas of sentence structure, coherence and concluding paragraph. In order to write more structurally accurate sentences, he was suggested to review the sentence problems including run-on sentence. Writing accurate compound sentence with coordinators and necessary punctuation was another area of sentence structure he needed to focus on. He was suggested to have more various transition signals which can be single word as he had used in his draft, phrase, or dependent clause that repeats or summarises the main idea in the preceding paragraph.

The most important revision he made in his essay was addition of the concluding paragraph that he did not include in his previous draft. The revision was made based on the teacher feedback. However, Wawan could not address other important feedback from teacher and peers such as those highlighting the sentence structure which were necessary for his writing improvement. The revisions which Wawan made and some errors (inaccurate complex sentence) which had been highlighted both in the teacher and peer feedback but were not revised, can be seen in the following extracts of his writing draft after the feedback activities:

...

We can purchased in the \$10,000 to \$15,000 price range for very basic entry models, and go all the way up to over \$110,000 for some of the most advanced models on the other contrary it is the same with vehicles that use gasoline engines as well and people which can buy an electrical car which can reduce the effect of global warming and to make people interested to use electrical car. So, people shouldn't doubt to buy electric because the price is already the same with the gasoline car.

In conclusion, cars in developing countries is needed even at the present time the cars technology has changed from gasoline-powered to electric it happened because of the cost is cheaper, the maintenance and the environmental impact caused by gasoline cars but electric cars has also developing their technology and becoming luxury.

Underline: Revisions made by Wawan; Shade: Revisions based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.8 Wawan's revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment

Assignment #3

In assignment 3, Wawan received a comment which emphasised that in the thesis statement, he had to make it clear where he stood. Another comment from the same person suggested for him to try to connect the sentences and paragraphs with coherence devices. It would help with the unity of the essay (Arin). However, another friend

commented that the organisation of his essay was good. He just needed to check some grammatical errors (Vina). This kind of contradictive comments from two different people gave Wawan a space to think more critically as he had to decide which comment was right and whether he had to consider it to revise his draft. More discussion on the feedback and students' critical thinking will be presented in section 6.1.4.

Another comment appeared in his last assignment praised the good ideas he gave on the English language status (Arin). In his final draft of writing assignment 3, Wawan could address the teacher and peers' feedback dealing with sentence structure by adding necessary punctuation. However, this area seemed to be an area that Wawan needed to work on. Errors in this area still appeared in his final draft of the third assignment even though it had been emphasised since the first assignment. In term of content, based on feedback, Wawan added some reasons to strengthen his arguments of his disagreement with the issue discussed in his essay. He also included opposing views of his arguments to show that he had considered both sides before coming to his view even though they still needed to be written more coherently in the essay. Moreover, he made clear his position on the future status of English as the global language as suggested in both teacher and peer feedback. The revisions that Wawan made in his third writing assignment after receiving the feedback can be seen in the following figure:

...

Today is globalization era. In this era, English is important for people in the world because English is an international language. Many people want to master English in order to communicate with others and to get information. Many countries use English as national language. They express their idea, opinion, and feeling and it also learned by students in Indonesia. Learning English as the second language is one way to face globalization era; it is because English spread all over the world, the most commonly used language, make people bilingual and more employable.

...

The position of English can only be altered by major world scale political and economic changes, such as increasing of the European Union or coalition between Japan and China. Such power might wish and be able to promote a language other than English. Many developing countries are affected by the technologies from Japan, China and Korea. Many companies belong to Japan, China and Korea in the whole world. They are already spread and affected in whole aspect and they often sent their employee to train training towards to Japan, China, and Korea. It is why the employees from Japan, China and Korea factory needs to learn the language. It is evident from the many productions by the State.

The birth of the computer and its American operating system gave English a nudge ahead; that of the internet has given it a huge push and the extraordinary growth in speed online communication brings, combined with the emergence of global English varieties, creating a new dialect of English for the web. Because of the speed operating system and online communication it can immediately heard, seen, read and understood by far greater number than ever before.

English is the language of the world, I **do not** agree on this. At the conclusion English language as the primary language in the future and it is widely used even in Indonesia. Then although many countries are more affected by languages other than English in Asia, discussed English still used as a benchmark capability. Furthermore English is important in knowledge, especially in the office, especially computers when we want to operate computer for looking some illiterate and also for speed online communication.

Underline: Revisions made by Wawan; Shade: Revisions based on teacher feedback
 Bold: revisions based on peer feedback
 Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.9 Wawan's revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment

Gita

Gita had graduated from an English department. Prior to the academic writing course, Gita had learned to write different types of text such as essays and journals. She learned these types of writing to fulfil her course assignments. She learned writing by reading the theories of sentence structure, paragraph, etc. Sometimes she took the initiative to write different texts. She often compared her writings with the writings of her more proficient friends so that she could evaluate her own writing. She preferred to write what she really wanted to write at the time she wrote. She stated that the ways she learned writing before had been useful enough and interesting. Academic writing skills were very important for her because she thought that the goal of writing was to produce texts which could give benefits to the readers. In order for her writing to be useful, she had to know well the ways to deliver her message to the readers; one of the ways is by having academic writing skills. She had used the internet for browsing information, social media, chatting, blog, etc. Sometimes she used the internet to learn English, for example, by reading journals and articles. She accessed new knowledge from that, such as how to write English properly. Moreover, Gita stated that the use of technology was very helpful in language learning, particularly due to the availability of more technologies which were created specifically to support language learning.

Gita made the smallest number of revisions in every aspect of writing compared to all other participants, and the revisions she made were mostly based on the self-revising. The next parts will discuss how Gita incorporated the feedback she received in the three writing assignments, and particularly in writing assignment 2, why feedback contributed the least on her writing revisions.

Assignment #1

Gita received some feedback concerning the content of her paragraph. She was suggested by her peer to add more information of what she had written. Having concluding sentence with end-off paragraph signal was another suggestion she received from the teacher. Some revisions she made on her draft to be posted as her final draft showed that she incorporated the feedback she received effectively. Moreover, she was able to make some self-revision to improve her paragraph.

Many Indonesian movies have ~~gone~~ been going worldwide. They were getting ~~more~~ popular in many countries, such as *The Raid*, *Laskar Pelangi*, *Pasir Berbisik*, and so on. **Because of the national great achievement, those movies attracted the attention from several countries in the world.** Some of the movies even got some international awards; one of them was *The Raid* which got Cadillac's People Choice Award, in Toronto International Film Festival 2011. ~~Beside of that~~ Moreover, *Laskar Pelangi* also got award from Asia Pacific Film Festival 2009 in the United States of America. It brought the positive responses from many foreigners. Many movie directors gave the compliments to ~~our~~ those movies and the actors as well. All of them really appreciated our movies. It was really a pride for our country Indonesia. Hence, Indonesia should keep improving the quality of local movies in order to get the greater achievements in the world.

Underline: Revisions made by Gita; Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback

Bold: Revisions based on peer feedback

Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.10 Gita's revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment

Assignment #2

As I discussed in the changes I made in the commenting activities procedures (see section 4.1.2 of my action research cycles), it had been agreed that starting from the second assignment, every student had to write at least two comments on two writing drafts of their appointed peers, which meant that everyone was supposed to receive two comments. However, this procedure did not work as expected. Gita just received one peer comment on her second assignment. One of her peers who was supposed to write

her a comment did not leave any comment for her. It happened because he had technical problem with his own blog tools, and it hindered him from commenting on Gita's draft. More details about this finding of the problems students faced during the online portfolio implementation, particularly the peer feedback activities were discussed in chapter 4.

Gita did not make many revisions in her writing draft after the teacher's and peer's feedback activities. She did not incorporate her peer feedback, which had suggested that she checks if there were unnecessary sentences in the concluding paragraph. Based on the teacher's feedback, she made revisions in the area of sentence structure by correcting some sentence problems (comma splice). The revisions which Gita made after peer and teacher feedback activities can be seen in the following extracts of her essay.

Discussing about the education world we know that every level of formal education is obviously different. Primary School, Junior High School, Senior High School, and University; all of them are different. University is an education phase which has a contrast leap condition with the previous education phase which is Senior High School. ~~It~~ It is not like the move of education phase from Junior High School to Senior High School or the others that have a bit difference. Hence, there will be many differences between school and university that sometimes make the new students surprise such as; learning system, assignment system, and evaluation system. However, some similarities between High School and University still exist.

There are some differences between High School and University viewed from the learning system. First, the difference is from the learning time. ~~the~~ The school averagely spends 6 days in a week with a settled time; for instance, from 7.00 AM until 14.00 PM. Meanwhile, the university averagely spends 5 days in a week with an unsettled time as well as the time accumulation which is less than the High School. Second, viewed from the lesson or the course at High School, the lesson which is taught in every semester will be the same during 3 years. The difference is merely in its substitution. On the contrary, the course of university in every semester will be different. Third, in the university, the student will be a critical and independent learner since the learning method mostly conducts a discussion, not a speech method like mostly applied in the High School. Thus, three of them distinguish the learning system at High School and University.

Underline: Revisions made by Gita; Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.11 Gita's revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment

Assignment #3

Gita had more comments on assignment 3 left by her peers on her blog. One of them said that she liked her well organised essay. However, she was confused about what style Gita used in her argumentative essay. Another comment suggested her to look at her thesis statement to make it more specific and easily understood (Arin). She also received a suggestion related to the thesis statement; to put thesis statement at the end of the paragraph. Rebuttal part was another concern of another comment. One of Gita's peers wrote in her comment that she could not find the rebuttals of Gita's argument while an argumentative essay should include rebuttals of the argument to show that the writer had considered other views in comparison to her arguments.

Some other comments praised Gita's interesting topic and essay. Among the comments that Gita received, there was an interesting comment written by one particular student. The comment was an encouraging expression written in Indonesian, "cemunguudddddddddd" (Tia). This word, which means "Keep up the spirit" is a very popular slang word among Indonesian young people and used to motivate others. This expression in fact was used by this particular student not only to motivate Gita, but also to all her friends whose writings she commented on.

Gita took the suggestions she received from peers into account. For example, in the part of topic sentence in the introductory paragraph, she made clear which side she was for, as can be seen in her introductory paragraphs of the assignment 3 before and after the peer feedback activities.

Regarding the teacher feedback, Gita incorporated the suggestion to add supporting details to support her argument. Her revisions after the feedback activities can be seen in the following extracts of her essay draft:

We all know that English has been the world's dominating language for a very long time. English is used to communicate among people all over the world. One of the reason why English becomes international language is because the vast of Britain as a former colonial power. In recent years, the influence of English Language has increased such as, on internet, TV shows, business, where many of them use English. Some statements also appear that English will be no longer as the global language. Then, is the future of English as the global language assured? **Nevertheless, I believe that the future status of English is assured because English itself is currently getting more extensive.**

Nowadays we can see that English is mostly learned by people all over the world. According to the article entitled *The World Language; The Economist. Millennium Issue* (1999: 85); 350 million people speak English as their first language. Many people from various countries want to be able to speak English. They learn it from anywhere: school, course, book, internet, etc. There are even many English young learners today. It shows that English becomes more important to master. Seeing this kind of condition, there will be more people who will learn English in every single year. However, some people state that some countries do not even consider English as an important language in their countries, such as, Brazil, Spain, Korea, etc. Those countries are really proud of their national language. They do not want to lose their cultural identity. Furthermore, according to the article entitled *Brazil Considers Linguistic Barricade* which stated that people feel humiliated and offended by having to pronounce a word in a language that is not theirs. Thus, many citizens of those countries cannot speak English.

Underline: Revisions made by Gita; Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback

Bold: Revisions based on peer feedback

Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.12 Gita's revisions after receiving feedback in third assignment

Tia

Tia had graduated from an English department. She had learned various types of text and tried to improve her writing skills as well as she could. She learned EFL writing by trying to practise the rules she had learned and asking her lecturer in her undergraduate study to comment on her writing ability. She had not liked writing English until there had been a lecturer in her undergraduate study who motivated her to always write. She stated that learning academic writing skills were very important because she believed that by learning the skills, she could at the same time improve her sentence structure and develop her reading habits. She often used internet in her daily life. She used it for

browsing information, Facebook, chatting, blogging, etc. She thought that the internet was important in this modern era. She stated that all technologies were created also to help learning; for example, students could use a blog to upload various interesting information that they could share with readers. She used the internet in learning language because there were many sites that she could explore to develop her English skills. Moreover, she stated that technology in language learning was very exciting. For example, when she had started to learn listening skills, she felt that it was very difficult. She then found a site which was very useful for her. She liked listening to the conversation available on that site, and she could improve her listening skills.

As presented in the table earlier in this section, of the 25 revisions in Tia's writing drafts, 16 were made through her self-revision and only 1 was based on her peer feedback. It indicates an interesting issue to discuss, which is, what kinds of feedback Tia received from her peers so she only incorporated one feedback in her revisions.

Assignment #1

Some positive feedback was written on Tia's first assignment; "The topic sentence was clear and straight forward", "nice paragraph, good grammar and diction". Moreover, one of Tia's classmates addressed very specific aspects with clear suggestion, as can be seen in the following excerpt of the peer comment:

It could be useful if you differentiate between explanation and example, so it will be easier for me to see the flow of the paragraph. The concluding sentence is well said, and conclude the paragraph. Some grammar can be seen in parallel sentences. It is better to avoid repetition of words, you should try to find synonyms and make your vocabularies varied. Your paragraph is well organised, and your ideas are original. Cemungudh eaaaaa :):) (comment#1 Arin)

Another feedback contained compliments on the good aspects of her writing; “The paragraph is interesting, it gives some insight in how movies can help the skills of students.” (comment#1 Arin)

As for the teacher feedback, it highlighted the area of sentence structure. Tia was advised to check if there were any unnecessary words in the last sentence of her concluding paragraph.

In her first assignment, Tia only made one revision after feedback activities and this was in the area of sentence structure. It could have been a result of the teacher feedback which advised her to check if there were any unnecessary words in her draft that made the sentence structurally inaccurate. However, instead of checking and eliminating the unnecessary words that made the sentence structurally inaccurate, she decided to paraphrase the sentence, as can be seen in figure 5.13.

There are many advantages using western movie in improving students' ability. First it can improve student's listening skill. Improving listening skill through western movie can train students to listen and to understand, so it is better if they watch a western movie without a subtitle even the students feel difficult to understand the storyline of the film. Therefore, they try to hear the conversation in the dialogue movie, and then to observe grammar spoken by the actor and also will understand the storyline by attempting to translate the dialogue. It is done to increase their vocabulary and learn to pronounce words with the correct pronunciation. Second it can improve student's writing skill. Writing skill done after western movie finished be screened. The students try to write the story by their own words, so it means they can understand with the grammar which should be used. In this case, we can see the students understand or not with the story which have been played. Third it can improve student's speaking skill. In improving student's speaking skill, the students trained to speak English through story telling with the western movie which has been screened. In this part, the students not only trained to speak English, but also they are trained to familiarise them to use English in daily life and try to pronounce the correct pronunciation. In conclusion, western movie can be used as a media to improve an interesting the student's English skills. In short, using western movie is needed to improve student's ability in listening, writing, and speaking skills.

Underline: Revisions made by Gita; Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.13 Tia's revisions after receiving feedback in the first assignment

Assignment #2

The comments written on students' assignments were getting more specific in areas of writing to improve from time to time, including on Tia's second assignment. On her second assignment, her peer commented that the essay was correctly organised. Some minor grammar mistakes were still present, but they did not affect the unity and coherence. It was suggested that she should pay more attention to her sentence structure and to the use of pronoun to improve her unity and coherence. It might be better if she tried to use different kinds of vocabularies to explain some things. Moreover, she could add some of her thought in the conclusion (Arin). All students who wrote comments for Tia agreed that her essay had a good coherence but contained some grammatical errors.

It can be seen in one of the comments below, in addition to the comments discussed earlier:

The paragraph is coherent and flow smoothly from the beginning to end. I just found the grammatical error in using gerund in some words but overall this essay is good especially on its coherence (Putri).

Other comments contained compliment on Tia's writing. The information in Tia's essay also became interesting area for her classmates to comment on, as can be seen below:

I think your essay is interesting, especially for the students who just graduated from Junior High School. They can get many significant information through your essay, so it can be their consideration to choose their next education ahead. Your essay is quite easy to understand, so the readers will easily catch the point of your essay (comment#2 Gita).

The teacher feedback which Tia received also highlighted the area of sentence structure. Moreover, it suggested the use of transition signals to make the essay more coherent. The revisions which Tia made to her essay showed that the peer and teacher feedback had helped her in improving her draft, particularly in relation to organisation and sentence structure. The following extract of Tia's writing draft illustrated how she incorporated feedback as well as self-revision in her essay.

...

Moreover, ~~The~~ the curriculum in vocational high school and senior high school are different. The curriculum in senior high school learns more theories than practices whereas the curriculum in vocational high school has more practices than theories. Also, the students in vocational have to follow study field program to train their abilities, stated by Ministry of Education. For example, if they want to graduate from the study, they have to get scores with the comparison 70% for the practice and 30% for the theory are stated in vocational curriculum. Also, students in vocational high school are provided by study field program not only students learn in the school, but also they are able to learn in the real work place, in Indonesia known as *Program Satuan Ganda*. ~~Whereas, the students in senior high school are prepared to continue in the university, so they get their study just from their school because they do not need to follow study field program like vocational.~~ **On the contrary, the students in senior high school do not need to follow study field program like vocational, so they get their study just from their school.** Also, in the curriculum of senior high school, the students are prepared to continue in the university rather than prepare them to work.

Underline: Revisions made by Tia;

Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback

Bold: Revisions based on peer feedback

Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.14 Tia's revisions after receiving feedback in the second assignment

Assignment #3

The last assignment, which was an argumentative essay, was considered as the hardest assignment for the students. As I noted in my journal, the number of students' questions during the discussion of the argumentative essay before they were assigned to write one, showed that most of the students had not experienced writing an argumentative essay with the guidance and criteria as written in the handbook. However, some examples of the essay and the discussion of argumentative essay aspects/parts were quite helpful for students to write an argumentative essay as well as to comment on their friends' works.

On her third assignment, Tia received a comment mentioning that she wrote only one argument with three rebuttals, and it made the reader confused (comment#3 Arin).

Another feedback covered some important writing aspects for the development of Tia's essay:

You gave many references to support your writing. Well done so far! ^^ But, I have some suggestions for your writing. It's better for you to generalize your first paragraph because on your first paragraph you wrote mostly about English in business field, but in your following paragraphs you gave various examples, not only about business. In addition, if you write the abbreviation you had better write the information about it as well. At last, maybe you should be more careful in the use of conjunction, I think you should add a conjunction at one of the sentence on your last paragraph to make it perfect (comment#3 Gita).

Other peer comments stated that her argumentative writing was interesting, and she had written it well (comment#3 Gita).

In terms of content and organisation of the essay, Tia was suggested to check the relevance of her body paragraphs with her position in the issue she wrote and add necessary supporting details to support her argument. At the end, her final draft indicated the contribution of the feedback and her self-revision on improving her writing, particularly in the areas of organisation and content

In the globalization era, all the countries are freely to make their own business in many sectors. Most of foreigners come to Indonesia with their own business, and their activities use global language because the foreigners come from different countries. Therefore, they need a language to communicate each others to make easier in their interactions. Because language is the way to communicate in the globalization era, people have to learn a global language. Some people in Indonesia disagree English is not the future status as their global language; however, others agree English is the future global language.

~~There are many languages in Indonesia, but English in Indonesia is not the mother tongue or the first language. The first argument is English in Indonesia is difficult to learn because English is not the mother tongue or the first language.~~ Djonhar (2012, 1) explained that first language was the language primarily learnt and used by children or native speakers in a community where the language spoken like in United States, England, etc. Children in the first language are easy to acquire the language, but Indonesian children are difficult to acquire it. ~~Because English is not their mother tongue, they are lack of exposure. Also, they do not have the opportunities to use English to communicate with each others for global language, so they think they are not necessary to master English to use as a global language.~~ However, English becomes the target language in the school curriculum because the Indonesian government agrees English is one of the targets of global language used by most of the schools there. Harmer (1998) says, “Probably the greatest number of Language learners in the world do English because English is on the student curriculum whether they like it or not!” According to Harmer’s statement, students learn English because it has been stated in the curriculum, and Indonesian government realizes how important English as their global language. Although English is difficult to learn, it must be mastered by the students to fulfil school curriculum.

Underline: Revisions made by Tia; Shade: Revision based on teacher feedback
Delete: Substituted or eliminated parts

Figure 5.15 Tia’s revisions after receiving feedback in the third assignment

5.2.3 Highlighting interesting issues in the contribution of feedback

As has been discussed in the previous section, the extent to which students incorporated peer and teacher comments varied between students. The analysis of the feedback received by the five selected students in the in-depth study showed that several factors could come into play.

First, when the feedback contained compliments and highlighted only the strengths of students' writing draft, students tended not to follow up the comments by rechecking the parts of their writing drafts being commented on. In fact, not all of the areas of weakness in students' writing could be commented on by peers. In this case, the teacher's comments could play an important role. As in the case of Tia, she made a significant number of revisions as a result of the teacher feedback. On the other hand, even though she received a significant number of peer comments for the three writing assignments (see the quantitative data of the number of peer comments students received in section 4.2.2), she only made one revision as a result of the peer feedback (see the quantitative data of the contribution of peer feedback in section 5.2.2).

Another factor could be due to how students understood the comments and how willing they were to follow up the comments. As in the case of Wawan in his second writing assignment, both teacher and peer advised him to check the area of sentence structure in his draft, but he did not revise the sentences in his writing draft with inaccurate sentence structures. He could have tried to address the comments but was not able to find the incorrect sentences which were not explicitly shown in the comments. In this case, his knowledge of the subject matter, more particularly the sentence structure, was crucial. In order to be beneficial, the peer and teacher comments which had informed students of what areas of their writing they needed to improve, should have been followed with students' willingness to take any necessary actions such as to set their learning target and to plan their learning in order to achieve their target. In this situation, students' engagement in every learning task to achieve their learning goals using the online portfolio was required. This issue had been one of my reasons to think about learner autonomy and motivation in the online portfolio implementation.

5.3 Summary and reflection

This chapter discusses the impacts of the online portfolio on students' writing development. Students' perceptions toward their writing development throughout the online portfolio implementation were discussed in the first section. The analysis of students' interviews and reflection showed that students perceived the online portfolio with its elements as useful tools beneficial for their writing development. In the second section, students' writing drafts as parts of the online portfolio entries were analysed with regards to the writing aspects included in the agreed criteria. The results show that the online portfolio tasks had helped students develop their writing performance in the areas of organisation, content, grammar and sentence structure, and mechanics. This chapter does not only present descriptive quantitative data showing the number of students' writing draft revisions in different areas of writing and the contribution of different online portfolio tasks towards students' writing revisions, but the in-depth qualitative analysis is also discussed to give deeper information to the readers regarding the possible causes of such a situation. Moreover, each student has his/her own unique circumstances in working with the online portfolio to learn writing, such as the number and quality of feedback they received, and their ability to incorporate the feedback for their writing draft revision. The process of analysing and discussing the data on students' writing development itself, as part of my action research agenda, has raised my understanding of how learner autonomy and motivation, which are other elements of this study, play important roles in students' learning using the online portfolio in an EFL writing class context . The next chapter will discuss the learner autonomy and motivation in the online portfolio implementation.

End of volume I



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**Implementation of Online portfolios
in an Indonesian EFL Writing Class**

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Silih Warni

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CHAPTER 6

LEARNER AUTONOMY AND MOTIVATION IN THE ONLINE PORTFOLIO IMPLEMENTATION

In this chapter, the students' experiences in the implementation of the online portfolio with all its elements (self-revising, peers and teacher feedback activities, reflection), particularly which are concerned with learner autonomy and motivation, will be discussed in relation to the theories which were reviewed in chapter 2. The discussion in this chapter is intended to provide responses to the third research question dealing with learner autonomy and motivation, which includes the following sub-questions:

- a. What aspects of learner autonomy do students exercise throughout the online portfolio implementation (if any)?
- b. What motivates students in using online portfolios in learning writing?
- c. What is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation?

The discussion will be presented under three sections; learner autonomy in the online portfolio implementation, students' motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation, and the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation.

6.1 Learner autonomy in the online portfolio implementation

This section discusses the aspects of learner autonomy which students exercised during the online portfolio implementation. The discussion includes cultural perspectives of learner autonomy in the context of the current study. As stated earlier in this chapter and also shown in the matrix of research questions and methods in section 3.5, the aspects of

learner autonomy which students exercised during the online portfolio implementation were explored through the students' perceptions about learning academic writing using the online portfolios, with the data being drawn from interviews and reflections of the five selected students. The analysis of the data which is based on the concept of learner autonomy as a multidimensional capacity involving various components as suggested by different authors (see chapter 2 section 2.3.1) revealed three components of metacognitive knowledge (person knowledge, task knowledge, and strategy knowledge), three aspects of metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring, and evaluation), social strategy and critical thinking.

6.1.1 Metacognitive knowledge

Metacognitive knowledge consists primarily of “knowledge or beliefs about what factors or variables act and interact in what ways to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises” (Flavell, 1979, p. 907). With regards to the link between metacognitive knowledge and learner autonomy, a number of authors have confirmed the importance of the knowledge in facilitating students' autonomous learning. For example, Lamb (2005) asserted that the development of metacognitive knowledge is required for students to be able to self-manage and self-regulate their learning. In other words, students need to develop metacognitive knowledge in order to be autonomous. In the same vein, Cottrel and Murray (2009, p. 34) emphasised that metacognitive knowledge is important for learners to be self-directed “because it represents the knowledge base that students draw on as they make decisions about their learning”. Jiménez Raya et al. (2007) view the metacognitive knowledge as part of learning competence necessary to be an autonomous learner for it is focused on general knowledge about cognitive activities and capabilities, and a learner can use it to control

cognitive processes more effectively. Benson (2001) also emphasised the control over cognitive processes as an important dimension of control in his concept of learner autonomy. Three different types of metacognitive knowledge were identified by Flavell (1979). This knowledge comprises person knowledge, task knowledge and strategy knowledge. Person knowledge refers to an individual's knowledge about him or herself and others as cognitive processors, task knowledge is a person's knowledge about the resources and information required to complete a task, and strategy knowledge is defined as knowledge about the strategies that are likely to be most effective to achieve goals and undertake the tasks (Flavell, 1979).

Working on their online portfolios throughout their academic writing course, students became aware of and able to state their knowledge of themselves as a learner, the tasks they were doing, and the strategies appropriate to achieve their learning goals. The learning process incorporating the online portfolio shaped a particular learning context supportive for the development of metacognitive knowledge. Brown and DeLoache (1983) stated that students' metacognitive knowledge can emerge during their learning process. However, "metacognitive knowledge is activated deliberately under three conditions; firstly, when the nature of the learning task requires conscious thinking and accuracy; secondly, when the task is new; or thirdly, when learning has not been correct or complete" (Flavell, 1979 as cited in Cottrel, 2009, p.90). The current study indicated that the learning process incorporating portfolio tasks had been beneficial in activating different components of students' metacognitive knowledge. The subsequent sections will discuss the three categories of metacognitive knowledge revealed in the current study.

6.1.1.1 Person knowledge

I will start the discussion with the definition of person knowledge suggested by Flavell (1979, 1987) that became the basis of my data analysis. As mentioned earlier in the previous section, person knowledge is defined by Flavell (1979, 1987) as an individual's knowledge about how he/she learns and processes information. Moreover, in the context of language learning, this knowledge involves the individual's knowledge of his/her own intellectual strengths and weaknesses in language learning (Flavell, 1979). Students demonstrated that the online portfolio incorporating different tasks had enhanced their understanding of themselves. Students had different emphasis on what aspects of their person knowledge were enhanced by the online portfolio implementation.

By experiencing the online portfolio tasks, Students became aware of what determined their success in learning. Particularly in the learning of EFL writing using the online portfolio, one student stated that eagerness to try the ICT tools and willingness to devote time to practice was important to cope with the challenges of the technology skills and make it easier for her to manage her online portfolio, and therefore to succeed in her learning (interview#1 Vina). Most students emphasised the importance of others in achieving their learning goals, as articulated clearly after they experienced the peer and teacher feedback activities. They stated that they recognised their strengths and weaknesses through the comments they received.

From the comments I know my weaknesses and strengths in my writing (interview#2 Gita).

My friends' comments also made me understand my strengths and weaknesses so that I can improve my writing (interview#2 Vina).

One student realised the importance of others even before she experienced the peer-feedback activities in the online portfolio implementation. The student pointed out that, having self-revised her writing, she acknowledged that she could not identify all the weaknesses in her own writing and therefore she emphasised that the roles of others were important in helping her to identify her weaknesses (interview#2 Vina).

Another aspect of person knowledge that this study reveals is students' awareness of their preference in learning, which has been enhanced through reflection as part of the online portfolio tasks. One student stated during the interview that she remembered faster when she wrote what she experienced or when she shared her thoughts on a piece of paper. For example, she remembered more clearly the mistakes she made when she wrote them on a piece of paper (interview#2 Tia). Reflection gave her the opportunity to internalise her experiences through sharing them; recognising her weaknesses and raising her awareness that recording her previous mistakes on paper helped her to remember and learn from them more clearly.

6.1.1.2 Task knowledge

In identifying the types of students' task knowledge which emerged through the online portfolio implementation, students' perceptions towards the use of the online portfolio which they articulated through their reflection and responses during the interviews were analysed with regards to the aspects of the task knowledge. Task knowledge refers to learners' knowledge about the nature and requirements of language learning tasks they are required to perform (Flavell, 1979, 1987). In the same vein, Wenden (1998) mentioned that task knowledge refers to what learners know about the purposes, nature and demands of the language learning tasks. Both definitions take the view that task

knowledge includes students' understanding of the complexity of the tasks which inform them how to manage their learning in order to achieve their learning goals. The results of the data analysis show that working on the online portfolio facilitated students to have better understanding of the tasks they undertook. This understanding of the task included the significance, requirements, and difficulty of the task.

Having experienced the online portfolio tasks, students became aware of the significance of the tasks in their learning. All the participants perceived the online portfolios as useful tools to facilitate their learning of writing skills. One student mentioned that the online portfolio made her practise her writing more regularly and continuously improve her writing ability (interview#1 Gita). The online portfolio helped students better understand the learning activities in relation to their contribution to the mastery of the subject matter, as they experienced the activities and reflected on their learning results (writing final draft). These can be seen in the following students' statements:

From one step to another step of the academic writing task, it was very useful for me to increase my writing skill. Since all of the tasks should be uploaded in my blog, my improvement in writing looks clear due to I got many comments, advice and evaluation from my friends and my lecturer (Reflection#2 Vina).

Again and again, this assignment can help me to show the result learning process. In the first draft, I made some mistakes. I tried to make it correct in my draft after self-editing and of course I made it better for my final draft because I received some suggestions from comments (Reflection#2 Tia).

Students' awareness of the importance of tasks was particularly raised throughout the reflection as one of the online portfolio tasks. One student pointed out during the interview that writing reflection was very useful especially for him, as he sometimes easily forgot things (interview#1 Wawan). He liked writing reflection because he could

review what he had learned in the previous lessons (interview#1 Wawan). Similarly, another student mentioned the importance of writing reflection in the following statements:

To be honest I am a kind of person who remembers better when I share anything in my mind in written language. So, the reflection I wrote that I can always read in my wordpress really reminds me what I have done (interview#1 Tia).

As part of the online portfolio activities, which was the last activity after students posted their final draft in the writing assignment, reflection was perceived as a means to understand the whole writing process, as demonstrated in the following students' statements in the interview:

...and the last one is reflection...how well...how does the process itself help me...(interview#2 Arin)

What I understand about reflection is that we review the process of writing we have done; starting from making original draft, self-editing, posting, giving and receiving feedback.(interview#2 Wawan)

While other students emphasised the contents of reflection, one student pointed out the aspect of writing skill in the reflecting activity. She said that writing reflection was just the same as practising her writing skills; how to write properly and how to share her thoughts properly. Furthermore, she stated, "There are some rules in writing including writing reflection. So, it helped me to improve my writing skills" (interview#2 Tia).

Both online feedback and reflection were two beneficial elements of the online portfolio which raised students' awareness of the significance of the task. The benefits of online feedback activities were understood better by students following reflection. In other words, reflection became a medium for students to internalise or realise the importance of the tasks, including the online feedback activity, which they were doing throughout

the course. It was pointed out in a student's reflection which stated that she could see how her writing had improved from comments (Reflection#1 Arin). Moreover, she realised that she needed others to help her point out her mistakes if she wanted to be a better writer (Reflection#2/Arin).

Students' understandings of other learning tasks were also enhanced through reflection. One student indicated her awareness of the activities and highlighted the importance of all the tasks throughout the online portfolio implementation. She wrote in her reflection that uploading and documenting the writing tasks in her blog made her improvement in writing more obvious (Reflection#2 Vina). Every step she had done in the academic writing class gave her many opportunities to expand her writing skills and improve them (Reflection#2 Vina).

Students' understanding of peer feedback activities improved after they had done more than one writing assignment and reflected on their writing results with regard to their learning experiences. One student wrote in her reflection that her second essay writing was better, and she needed to have outside comments to make it even better (Reflection#1 Arin). The comments both from peers and instructor had helped her to identify the weaknesses in her writing. She emphasised that it was important because she sometimes did not realise the mistakes she made in her own work (Reflection#1 Arin). In addition, she said that the comments also helped her see whether her writing had unity and coherence so that they were understood by the readers (Reflection#1 Arin).

In relation to the significance of peer feedback in the process of improving students' writing, feedback activities had already raised students' awareness of the contribution of the feedback in their writing performance, as shown by the following extracts of a student's reflections:

I have mentioned before that this assignment has helped me especially through the comments that I get from either my peers or my lecturer...The comments helped me to see mistakes that I don't really see. It also helped me to see that my unity and coherence of the essay is well written and understood by the reader (Reflection#2 Arin).

The students' perceptions on the impact of online feedback activities toward their writing improvement have been also discussed in chapter 5 section 5.1.4.2.

As discussed previously, throughout the online portfolio implementation, students experienced different learning tasks. Analysis of the data concerning students' task knowledge showed that students enhanced their understanding of the requirements to complete a particular learning task through working on the online portfolio tasks. Working on the writing tasks during the online portfolio implementation, a student demonstrated that her understanding of the requirements of the tasks was getting better over time, which helped her to finish her writing. The following extract from the student's reflection pointed out her understandings of the task's requirements and how they had improved,

You need to have a good organisation of your thought and make it easy to read. Furthermore, the way you connect the ideas and sentences are skills you have to possess...I can do better if I know more cohesive devices, more conjunctive in sentence and paragraph level...Moreover, to finish my final draft I added some facts and evidences into the rebuttal part of my writing (Reflection#2 Arin).

With regards to the online peer feedback, the activities encouraged students to realise that writing comments was not as easy as saying “good” or “bad”. The peer feedback activities encouraged students to be aware of the requirements of becoming a feedback source in academic writing. One student stated in the interview that students had to know well the criteria of good writing in order to give constructive feedback to their peers’ work. When students were good at grammar, they tended to give more comments on that aspect, but if, for example, they did not know how to make a good topic sentence, it was quite difficult for them to comment on that aspect (interview#1 Arin). The peer feedback helped students to internalise how important it is to learn the aspects of a good writing and the importance of learning how to make good comments. Similar points about the importance of knowing how to write comments were mentioned by other students in the following extracts of students’ comments:

The most important thing is that we have to understand what makes a good piece of writing or how a good piece of writing looks, and we have to understand its aspects such as conjunction, comma, and colon. If we understand those points, there will not be any difficulty in giving comments. (interview#1 Wawan)

Giving comments is more difficult because in doing so, we are required to be able to assess our friends’ writings in terms of the format, organisation, and grammar. To give comments, we do not just give random/easy comment; “it is good”, or “it is bad”, but we have to make our friends realise their strengths and weaknesses. I think that is the thing needs to be learned in writing comments because writing involves a lot of skills in it that must be mastered. So, when giving comments to our friends’ works so far, I feel that it is more about looking at how our friend’s work is compared to our own work. (interview#1 Vina)

Writing comments during the peer feedback activities also made students have a better understanding of how to read and assess a text, and to pay attention to the structure and content as important aspects to produce good writing. Through commenting activities, students developed a greater awareness that the more they assess each other’s writing, the more accurate they will be in checking others’ writing as well as their own writing

(interview#2 Gita). In line with these findings, a previous study conducted by Sanprasert (2010) with students of a Thai university, which examined the extent to which learner autonomy could be fostered with an implementation of Course Management System (CMS) in a blended learning situation, revealed that the course management system enabled students to get quick feedback from both teacher and peers, and students increased their awareness of the importance of feedback after experiencing feedback over one term.

In the online feedback activities, both receiving and giving comments, helped students raise their awareness of important aspects of writing and necessary tasks to improve them,

At the beginning, our comments could only be “Good”, “interesting”, or “the topic is useful for many people”. But now, we can comment from many more specific aspects of writing. For example, when we learned to write essay, we have to know transition signals. So, our evaluation is getting more accurate and specific. (interview#2 Gita)

Another finding from the data analysis showed students’ awareness of the difficulty level of the task, and students in most of their statements, link the difficulties of the tasks with the task requirements. One student stated that it was easy to write an essay, but making comments on other people’s work needs more time and thorough reading (Reflection#1 Arin). Furthermore, regarding the argumentative essay task, she pointed out in her reflection that, writing an argumentative essay needed skills to convey ideas, references, evidences and facts to support the argument; without them her argument would be weak. The student’s statements implied an awareness of whether the task was easy or difficult (Jiménez Raya, 2007). The following extract of a student’s reflection

on the third writing assignment also indicated an understanding of the difficulty level of the task with some description of the task requirements:

It was more difficult essay than before because I had to argue my statement with the supporting details (facts, quotations, and statistic). Actually in this case, I had to learn more the organisation of argumentative essay (Reflection#3 Tia).

Even though she perceived that the third assignment was more difficult than the previous assignments, as she had to argue her every statement with the supporting details (facts, quotations, and statistic) (Reflection#3 Tia), she could figure out the areas that she needed to learn more, and she had a better understanding of the requirements needed to complete the tasks. The following extracts of students' reflection demonstrated the students' understanding of the difficulty level of the task:

At the first when I make original draft I felt confused to develop my handwriting because I'm not only have to find the arguments but I have to find the rebut argument (Reflection #3 Wawan).

Actually I got a bit difficulty in the beginning, what I should write first. However, writing an argumentative essay was not as easy as I thought (Reflection #3 Gita).

The difficulty level of the tasks could be perceived differently by different students. In order to understand whether a task is difficult or easy, students in the first place had to be aware of what made a good task and how they should perform in order to achieve the goals of the task. Reflection had given students opportunity to raise that awareness. Regarding reflection as part of the online portfolio tasks, students also perceived its level of difficulty differently. A student viewed the reflection as a difficult task, as can be seen in the following extract from the student's interview:

It is difficult because we have to have a flashback; what I have done in the earlier meetings until the last meeting. It is more about understanding how the good writing structure from the beginning till the end is. Maybe the difficult part is when we want to make the topics coherent from one to another. But I think so far, reflection on class activities or learning activities is very useful for me; I

become more systematic/organised, systematically planned from 0 until now, maybe not reaching 100 yet, but at least there is an improvement in every step, and reflection is really helpful in that case because I will not be out of the learning track (interview#1 Vina).

Unlike the previous student who perceived writing reflection as a difficult task, another student stated in the interview that writing reflection was easy.

I think writing reflection is quite easy to do because it is about our own experiences; it is easier for us to write it. So, I think it is not that difficult. It is quite easy I think..because it is our own experiences, so we could share it directly in the written language (interview#1 Gita).

Students' perceptions towards the online portfolio, including the feedback and reflection activities as I have discussed earlier, show that the online portfolio activities had raised students' awareness of the learning tasks they were required to do throughout the writing course. As part of metacognitive knowledge, task knowledge becomes crucial for learners to be autonomous, and the online portfolio activities proved to be supportive learning activities raising students' task knowledge in this study. In other words, the online portfolio activities were beneficial for students in that they created a learning environment that led them to enhance their task knowledge and thus exercise their autonomy in learning writing.

6.1.1.3 Strategy knowledge

As has been reviewed in section 2.3.1.1, strategy knowledge refers to knowledge about the most effective language learning strategies to achieve learning goals (Flavell, 1979, 1987). Jiménez Raya, et al (2007) added that this knowledge involves students' understanding of the best way to tackle language learning and the principles underlying the choice of the strategies. In the same vein, Wenden (1998, p.519) refers strategic knowledge to “general knowledge about what strategies are, why they are useful, and

specific knowledge about when and how to use them”. This section is intended to reveal the impacts of the online portfolio on students’ strategy knowledge, the knowledge that enables students to be more aware of what and why they used a particular strategy in learning academic writing. Data in this discussion were drawn from students’ interviews and reflection. Regarding the data collection methods for investigating strategic knowledge, Wenden (1998, p.519) stated that data collecting techniques leading students to recall on their learning and require them “to draw upon their *stored metacognitive knowledge* about learning strategies”, such as interviews, could result in “accounts of strategies learners may actually use or think they use or should use, and thus can be seen as evidence of the strategic knowledge”.

Analysis of the data concerning students’ strategy knowledge revealed that, working on the online portfolio tasks raised students’ understanding of effective strategies to learn writing. One student stated in the interview that the step by step procedures incorporated in the online portfolio tasks were very helpful in learning English academic writing which involved complex skills and could not be learned instantly (interview#2 Wawan). Students’ understandings of the effective strategies in writings can also be seen in the following extracts of the students’ interview and reflection:

Therefore, to improve and fix my writing I have to practice a lot with different topics as a result I can make a good text (Reflection#1/Wawan).

Therefore, I must overcome those problems by practicing a lot and reading a lot in order to improve my writing skill (Reflection#2/Vina).

Overall, writing is a practice. The more you practice you will master it better (Reflection#2/Arin).

I need more practice if I want to perfect what I have learned (Reflection#3/Arin).

The strategy knowledge demonstrated by the students in the above extracts highlights the importance of practice to improve their writing. Other students emphasised both reading and practising as essential strategies to improve their writing. A student stated in her reflection that she found some problems in making her writing draft, and to overcome those problems, she emphasised the need to practise writing and read a lot of concept and examples of essay organisation to help her improve her essay (Reflection#2 Reflection#3/Vina). The importance of reading references from different sources such as books and articles for informing both what to write and how to write, was also obviously shown by a student in his reflection.

When we wanted to develop an argumentative essay we need references, evidences, and facts to support the argument. Step by step, I got the ideas from books and internet and it makes me easy to finish my writing... At last I hope I could learn more about to develop my writing because if I wanted to be a good writer, I must read books to get a lot of knowledge so when I make my writing again it becomes easy (Reflection#3/Wawan).

Closely related to the students' awareness of the tasks, as discussed previously in the section of task knowledge, students' statements during the interviews show that they had understanding of peer feedback activities as an effective strategy to improve their writing. Students demonstrated that they learned from each other during peer comment activities. The activities had raised students' awareness of the learning process. They read and observed their friends' essays and comments in order to be able to take and give benefits to/from each other with useful feedback. By doing so, they became aware of their own needs and had a better understanding of the strategies to fulfil those needs, both in how to write constructive comments to help their friends and how to address their peers' comments to improve their writings. This kind of knowledge, which is strategy knowledge, is one of the important learning competences for a learner to be autonomous, as suggested by Jiménez Raya et al. (2007), as mentioned earlier. The

following extracts of a student's statement show a student's understanding of, why peer feedback activities can be a useful strategy to improve writing.

By giving comments, we could see how other people write. While giving comments, we can also learn by reviewing what we have learned before... Giving comments is a kind of learning process for me because by doing it we can also review the materials we have learned (interview#2 Wawan).

Another student stated that, if she forgot a certain aspect of writing, and she had to give comments on it, she felt that she had to reopen the book, which she actually did. She was quite honest that she had experienced that; many times she had to reopen the book before writing comments to her friends because she was not confident enough to give comments before confirming with the resources, which was mainly the text book (interview#2 Tia).

Similar to the learning process that occurred during the comments writing, peer feedback also made students think of how to respond their friends' comments and whether they needed to incorporate their comments to improve their writing. Peer feedback had enabled students to develop their knowledge of which ways were appropriate and what strategies could work for them to improve the skills necessary to be a good writer as well as a good commenter as demonstrated in the following excerpts of student's statements:

I tried my best to make the final draft by considering the comments I got. To be honest, there were some comments that I did not agree with after I checked it with the reference book. That is why I did not use them to revise my draft (interview#2 Tia).

So, it would be much better if for example, I have some problems in A, B, C..then it is discussed in the class, so that it is clear. I have better understanding that way. (interview#3 Vina).

Similarly, there was a student who stated that, in order to make his writing better, he checked the comments from his friends and teacher as they showed him what was wrong with his writing, and it led him to fix it. He realised that sometimes other people could see the mistakes he made more clearly than he did (Reflection#2/Wawan).

As the findings of the study show, students demonstrated their awareness of different types of strategies and why particular strategies were needed to employ in learning writing, which Sinclair (1999) argued as an indication of autonomous learners.

6.1.1.4 Summary

In this study, students demonstrated that the online portfolio incorporating different tasks had enhanced their understanding of themselves; what determined their success in learning and what their preferences in learning were. Working on the online portfolio had also enabled students to have better understanding of the tasks they undertook, which included their understanding of the significance, requirements, and difficulty of the task. Moreover, the findings concerning students' strategy knowledge revealed that the online portfolio tasks had raised students' understanding of the effective strategies for developing academic writing skills.

6.1.2 Metacognitive strategies

The online portfolio not only enhanced students' strategy knowledge as I have discussed in section 6.1.1. The results of the data analysis in this study reveal that students also exercised metacognitive strategies, one type of learning strategies which Benson (2011) suggested was one of the components of learner autonomy (dimension of control over learning management). Metacognitive strategies became the most

recurrent themes in the data analysis in this study. These strategies involve “thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring the learning tasks, and evaluating how well one has learned” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, p.137). The findings that indicated that students in this study exercised metacognitive strategies in their learning show that the concept of autonomy is relevant to the Indonesian context, and thus support the argument that negotiated versions of autonomy can be relevant in all contexts (Littlewood, 1999). Having exercised the metacognitive strategies throughout the online portfolio implementation, students showed that they were able and willing to play active roles in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning. The stereotype of passive and teacher dependent learners with no capacity for learner autonomy (Smith & Aoki, 1999) is not reflected in the case of the students in this study, who learned academic writing skills using the online portfolio.

6.1.2.1 Planning

Planning in the learning process includes “proposing strategies in handling an upcoming task, generating a plan for the parts, sequence, main ideas, or language functions to be used in handling a task” (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990, p.138). In order to enable students to plan their learning, activities in the class should, as much as possible, guide them to learn how to make decisions about what and how to learn. Even though the goals of the academic writing course had been formulated in the curriculum, students were able to make decisions on how to organise autonomously their resources (e.g. their time, the learning resources) in their attempt to achieve the goals. This version of autonomy was referred to as reactive autonomy by Littlewood (1999).

The analysis of students' interviews and reflection reveals that, through the online portfolio tasks, students exercised planning strategies. Two of the participants stated that they intended to write not only during the class, but they would also try to make writing their habit and practice it outside the class (interview#1 Gita, reflection#2 Eka). In addition, another student shared in her reflection her learning plan after completing two writing tasks; she shared her intention to read more to help her improve her writing (Reflection #2 Gita).

The online portfolio tasks gave students opportunities to learn how to make decisions on what and how to learn, which they believed would lead them to successfully learn academic writing, as shown in the following extracts,

The online portfolio helps me planning my learning because when we write in our online portfolio, we can think about what we should do now, after that, what we should do next, until we could make a good writing (interview#2 Wawan).

The online portfolio helped students plan their learning in a more organised way due to the structure of the online portfolio tasks. A student pointed out in her interview,

Before, when I learned I felt that I had to master all at the same time, but with the online portfolio it is not like that. So, my learning plan..at the beginning I was like this, then I have to study this way..my learning plan is made from the smallest thing first. And now I deepen the skills more and can show better things (interview#3 Eka).

The above statement could be due to the student's experiences in working with every step in the online portfolio implementation. As I have discussed in chapter 4 section 4.1.2, some changes were made in teaching learning activities in order to meet the learning goals without ignoring students' different circumstances. For example, some basic materials that students needed in order to write academic English, such as

sentence structure, were reviewed, and different elements of the online portfolio activities (self-revising, feedback, reflection) led the students to recall their knowledge of that basic subject matter in addition to other new knowledge of academic writing, and thus guide them to plan to review the subject matter.

Peer feedback activities as part of the online portfolio tasks, gave students an understanding of the learning direction, as demonstrated on the following extracts of student's interview:

However, there is an advantage; when I wanted to give comments on my friend's work, I really had to open the book..Ohh it should be like this. It means that there is a requirement to learn more. Something like that (interview#1 Tia).

Giving and receiving feedback made students realise that they needed to learn much more and have greater knowledge. Moreover, the comments had made students aware of their weaknesses and informed them what areas they needed to work on further (interview#2 Wawan). Since the comments given by peers could be accessed immediately, they could improve it right away. In other words, peer comments gave students inputs which made their writing better (interview#3 Vina). After receiving some feedback, students realised that they should be more careful when writing, and they had to read a lot and have more practice with their writing skills. Students realised that some aspects of writing skills could only be improved by practising, such as developing ideas and producing sentences with more complex sentence structure (Reflection #1 Gita). All the information students gained from the online feedback activities as mentioned above, enabled students to set their plan for their further learning; what areas to focus on and how to improve those areas.

One student highlighted in her reflection how she planned her learning more appropriately after doing peer feedback activities. She thought that she should be more careful when writing. She learned that she had to read and have a lot of writing practice to improve her writing skills (Reflection #1 Gita).

Having engaged in the reflective writing activities as another part of the online portfolio tasks, students maintained that such activity was useful for them to identify their weaknesses, and guide them to plan for their next learning development. One student stated that her topic sentence was too general; she needed to write something more specific for the topic sentence to make her paragraph better (Reflection #1 Arin). Moreover, she did not use sufficient references in writing her argumentative essay because she found it difficult to find references for the topic she wrote about (Reflection #3 Arin). Reflecting what she had done became a kind of reminder for her not to make the same mistakes in the future and pay more attention in the areas of her weakness in planning her learning (Reflection #2 Arin).

The skills of planning are closely related to evaluation, which will be discussed in section 6.1.2.3, since the areas on which students needed to focus in planning their learning are determined by the evaluation of previous learning. Students pointed out the attainment they made through the reflection in the following extracts of their interviews:

The result of my reflection on my second writing assignment was that I could evaluate myself, describe the areas of my strengths and weaknesses, and then after I knew what my weaknesses and strengths are, my next step was self-evaluation; I made some specific strategies to make my writing better...and that is to arrange/set strategies for the next assignments. So, if there is another assignment, it will be better (interview#2 Vina).

I have to be able to learn more on how to evaluate my own writing (interview#2 Gita).

Other students, as shown in the following extracts from their reflections pointed out both implicitly and explicitly to the plans they made after doing the writing assignments and reflecting on them.

After writing argumentative essay, I hope I could learn more about writing because to be a good writer, we must keep learning, reading, and writing (Reflection #3 Gita).

Therefore, I have to arrange it in the different way. I tried to make the statement of the other side's first, second, third argument and rebuttal with my counterargument in each body paragraph (Reflection #3 Tia).

Conscious reflection, whether it is about positive or negative feelings, is a good start to students' autonomous learning due to its contribution to students' learning plans. In this regards, Benson (2001, p. 207) pointed out, "Reflections upon positive feelings can confirm the learner's sense of the rightness of a plan. Negative feelings about learning experiences can become occasions for deeper reflection leading to changes in plan".

6.1.2.2 Monitoring

As part of metacognitive strategies, monitoring involves "checking, verifying, or correcting one's comprehension or performance in the course of language tasks" (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p.138). The process of producing students' final draft of the academic writing tasks, as discussed in chapter 3 section 3.8.3.2, involved some stages integrated in the online portfolio activities (writing the original draft, self-revising and online feedback activities). Step by step procedures of writing essays incorporated in the online portfolio helped all participants monitor their learning along the process of completing the writing assignments.

Some students pointed out how the online portfolio helped them monitor their progress during the learning process, as can be seen in the following extracts:

It helps me some on how I write. The process itself with the guidelines...how I write from really awful until I get the guidelines and looking at the comments and everything (interview#3 Arin).

The final draft part is the final ending of the whole processes that have been passed, from writing draft, and then self-revising. It is a result that has been based on peers' comments. It means that in the final draft, even though it is not perfect, it is better than the previous drafts (interview#3 Vina).

They have improved my skills...before I made a draft like this...pure...not good enough I think. But after self-revising, and I got comments, I feel my ability improved (interview#3 Eka).

Having self-revised their own writing as part of the writing process in the online portfolio implementation, students became aware of the improvement they made in their writing draft, which covered some specific areas of writing.

...but through the self-revising and with the help of the steps that I have to do in self-revising, I improve a little...sometimes I change a lot especially the topics and the way I write, and of course I organise it better...(interview#2 Arin).

Self-revising had guided students to be aware of the level of their understanding of the knowledge necessary to improve their writing.

Then in self-revising, I started to learn because I checked and corrected my own writing. There were some corrections I have to remember so that I will not make it again such as punctuation and so on. The steps in the online portfolio made some difference that I could feel; I really did not know before how a certain aspect of writing should be, and now I know it. I made improvement. I self-revised my draft by referring to the book (interview#2 Tia).

The above evidence which demonstrated the student's self-monitoring is echoed by Jácome (2012) who conducted a project to promote learner autonomy through teacher-student partnership assessment with a group of students in an American High School who learned Spanish as a foreign language. The study revealed that self-revising

activity enabled students to understand the mistakes they made, which led them to correct them and prevent the making of those mistakes.

Through peer feedback, students found that there were still some mistakes such as grammar and vocabulary, which they needed to correct through the process of revising and writing their final draft (interview#2 Tia). The fact that peers did not necessarily give correct advice during peer feedback activities, gave students more opportunity to verify the correctness of their work and the feedback. The peer comments gave students further considerations to take into account in revising their drafts for improvement, although they were not always incorporated in the revised draft. Students' awareness that their peer comments were not necessarily correct was shown by their decision not to incorporate the feedback they received in writing their draft revision, as stated in the following extract of a student's interview:

I tried my best to make the final draft by considering the comments I received. To be honest, there were some comments that I did not agree with after I checked it with the reference book. That is why I did not use them to revise my draft (interview#2 Tia).

The above student's statement shows that students were thinking critically, not just automatically following the advice they received.

Although a student felt unhappy after receiving a comment which showed him that his writing was not as good as he thought, he realised that there were some parts to improve in his writing, and he could learn from that comment. Peer feedback helped him identify the areas to improve (interview#2 Wawan). Moreover, peer comments challenged the students to monitor their own writings, especially when the comments stated that their writings needed further improvement (interview#2 Vina). Comments which addressed

specific areas of writing to improve were more helpful to students for checking and revising their own writing draft.

Based on some comments given by my friends and my lecturer on the self-revising from my blog; for instance; the incoherence sentences had not been revised yet and a little bit grammatical error that should be revised, finally in my final draft, there are some significant improvement in each process. It can be proved by some aspects such as; good improvement in the format, mechanic, content and organisation, grammar and sentence structure (Reflection #1 Vina).

I think the online portfolio implementation has been very useful. With the online portfolio we could post our writings, and then we could get evaluation from our friends and our teacher. We got a lot of input from there (interview#2 Gita).

The findings echo a previous study conducted by Burkšaitienė (2013) among undergraduate students in the first year of their Bachelor of Laws study programme in the Faculty of Law at Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius. The study demonstrated that, based on project presentations criteria in the course of English for Law, peer feedback provided helped students identify the strengths and weaknesses of their performance compared to the performance criteria. Furthermore, the study revealed that peer feedback enabled the students to focus on the areas of their performance which needed further work and gave them direction for further action to improve their performance in the future (Burkšaitienė, 2013).

As for the activity of writing comments on peers' work, students perceived that this was the same as learning. One student stated that, when she found something wrong on her peers' work and commented on that, she learned from her peers' mistakes (interview#1 Gita). Moreover, Arin stated that writing comments helped her check her own writing again to see if she made the same mistakes (interview#1 Arin). Another student, Tia, added:

I could learn from writing comments to others' works, then I could correct myself. I became more sensitive with some errors of some writing aspects after writing comments (interview#2 Tia).

The process of monitoring occurred not only on the progress of student's academic writing skills as I discussed previously, but also on the improvements of students' ability to write feedback. Students were aware that they had improved their ability to give comments. They could give better comments on the second online portfolio assignment. They could give comments more deeply instead of just saying that their friend's writing was good or bad. Through the comments, they could show the weaknesses in their friends' writings and give some suggestions on how to improve them. The following student's comments demonstrated student's awareness of the improvement on their skills to write comments:

So, yes, my comments are now more focused on those things rather than just giving comments in "it's good, nice" or "well done" (interview#2 Arin).

What she stated about the peer feedback improvement she made was evidenced, as can be seen in the comments she posted on her peer's writing draft (see chapter 5 section 5.2.2).

The present study showed that in producing feedback on their peers' work, students engaged in thinking about and analysing the performance criteria. Peer feedback helped students understand the criteria of performance and to compare their current work with the criteria; moreover, peer feedback guided students to plan their next action in order to achieve better performance. This kind of direction was not only given to those who received feedback, but also those who wrote feedback for their friends' work. The following extracts from a student's interview clearly showed that:

Because when I write comments, I will remember it, and I won't make the same mistakes. So, for me, to review others means that I review myself as well (interview#2 Arin).

Reflection, as another online portfolio task, helped students monitor their learning. A student mentioned on her reflection what improvement she had made in different stages of the writing assignments. She said that she made some grammatical errors and incorrect ordering of sentences, and improved those areas in her second writing draft (Reflection #1 Arin). Moreover, her ability to organise an argumentative essay was getting better, and she recognised it as she reflected on her final writing draft in the third writing assignment (Reflection #3 Arin). The following statements written by other students in their reflection also pointed out students' awareness of the progress they made after working on different tasks in the online portfolio implementation.

I could write paragraphs with quite good grammar, sentence structure and mechanics (spelling, capitalization and punctuation) (Reflection #1 Gita).

I tried to make it correct in my draft after self-revising and of course I made it better for my final draft because I received some suggestions from comments. Firstly, I felt so sad because after I got some comments from my friends, I look so many mistakes especially in organised my essay (Reflection #3 Tia).

As the writing class incorporated technology to support learning, the technology also became an aspect that students paid attention to. A student highlighted her learning experiences and the process of familiarisation with the technology tools. She wrote in her reflection, "For the first experience of using blog, I still did many technical mistakes, and this last task makes me very familiar in using my blog" (Reflection #3 Vina).

The findings regarding the roles of reflection towards students' monitoring skills were echoed by a previous study conducted by Usuki (2001). She revealed that the reflective journal intended to support learning provided an opportunity for self-analysis; it gave students a chance to reflect on their obstacles and achievements.

6.1.2.3 Evaluation

According to O'Malley et al. (1985, p.33), evaluating as part of metacognitive strategies includes "checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy". In contrast with monitoring, Wenden (1991) emphasised that a task of evaluating involves considering "the outcome of particular attempt to learn or use a strategy; the focus is on the result and the means by which it was achieved" (p.28). Analysis of the data on students' perceptions towards the online portfolio shows that, having their writing with all the processes documented on the online portfolio enabled students to self-evaluate the results of their learning. The following extract shows how one student perceived the online portfolio as a supportive tool to evaluate the results of all her writing assignments during the course:

The process itself...How I write from the first task, the second task, and the third task shows that over time, my writing was getting better (interview#3 Arin).

The findings of the current study indicate that different elements of the online portfolio are linked and complementary to each other in supporting students to self-evaluate their learning. As part of the online portfolio elements, online peer feedback was perceived as a beneficial task which helped students self-evaluate their learning by giving students input on writing areas they needed to improve as well as the areas they were good at. The findings concerning the contribution of the online peer feedback towards students' self-evaluation in this study is echoed by Murphy (2014, p.121) who argued that, the

online feedback had supported the process of developing students' competence by "working toward challenging but achievable goals which gradually extend one's capabilities". The online feedback had led students to evaluate their performance positively. As reflection gave students opportunities to reflect on all learning activities they had done, including the peer feedback activities, students perceived that reflection and peer comments, had been very helpful for them to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their writing.

Students, in a lot of their statements concerning the self-evaluation, mentioned "reflection" and associated it with evaluation, and thus evaluation became a theme that frequently appeared during the coding of students' reflections. Through the reflection, students evaluated the results of their writing with regards to the overall learning processes in their academic writing class incorporating the online portfolio. In this section, I do not intend to repeat the presentation of students' perceptions on their writing improvements, as I discussed this in chapter 5 section 5.1 concerning students' perceptions on the development of their writing ability. However, some other extracts of students' statements indicating their strengths and weaknesses on their writing skills will be included to illustrate the self-evaluation occurred throughout the online portfolio implementation.

One student stated that, after finishing the writing assignments and writing her reflection on the final draft, she realised that she had made some progress over time. In other words, reflection helped students raise their awareness of the progress they had made (Reflection#3/Arin). Another student stated in her reflection that she had made significant improvement to her writing skills after finishing her paragraph writing. She

knew more on how to make a good topic sentence, sentence structure, paragraph, and so on. There were different areas of her writing which showed the results of her learning process; controlling idea, supporting sentences, and the unity of the sentences (Reflection #1 Gita).

With the online portfolio, students could see their improvement clearly by looking back at the steps they had taken until they produced their final writing draft. Reflection stimulated students to review the learning process they had experienced. One student wrote in her reflection that, looking at her documented writing assignments on her portfolio, she could see that her essays were getting better over time. She wrote her essays more systematically, and she could use appropriate diction in her current writing (Reflection #2 Gita). Even though she thought that she had no problem with grammar, sentence, or mechanic, she still received some comments suggesting that she review comma splice to improve her sentence structure (Reflection #2 Gita). The reflection on her final writing draft helped her recognise some improvements in her writing, such as, more systematic writing and more appropriate diction. Although she received positive comments from her peers and lecturer, she was still not satisfied. She realised that her writing still needed more improvement (Reflection #2 Gita). The following extracts of students' statements also indicate that students became more aware of their strengths and weaknesses through reflection.

One thing that made me proud of my essay was the topic, organisation and clear thesis statement and concluding...In spite of strength, I also had a lot of weakness. They were in term of punctuation, sub ordinate, coherence, repetition, and grammatical error...My improvements were in the term of content, organisation and structure (Reflection #2 Vina).

After I finished writing my essay, I felt that I had some progress from my previous writing. I became know how to write naturally and smoothly...When I saw my essay on my blog, I could see that my essay was much better than my

previous writing. I wrote it more systematically and smoothly. I could use the proper diction in my writing (Reflection #2 Gita).

When I was done with my essay, I obviously knew that my writing still had weaknesses. I tried to recheck and correct it... (Reflection #3 Gita).

The weaknesses of my essay are sentence structure and concluding paragraph. It could affect the unity and coherence of my essay (Reflection #2 Tia).

One of the students said in her first reflection that her topic sentence which was supposed to briefly indicate the paragraph content was too general; she needed to write something more specific for the topic sentence, so her paragraph would be more effective. She changed it afterwards. Moreover, she did not include a good concluding sentence, and it made her paragraph seem not to have an end (Reflection#1/Arin). What Arin wrote in her reflection obviously showed how she had reviewed her learning process through her reflection which helped her to identify any gaps in her writing skills that she needed to improve. The following extracts from a student's reflection also demonstrated how reflection had enabled her to evaluate her learning,

I like what I wrote because I could describe Malioboro quite well. Even though in some parts of the supporting sentences I am not thorough enough, I think I can convey some of the ideas...In my opinion it turned out to be quite all right. I am able to create sentences that describe the place well. Despite the good sentences that I made, I didn't have a good topic sentence (Reflection#1/Arin).

When discussing students' self-evaluation as part of metacognitive strategies which was enhanced through the online portfolio implementation, particularly reflection, there is a relation to students' task knowledge as an aspect of metacognitive knowledge. This is because the self-evaluation which occurred through the reflection could have enabled students to internalise the importance of the learning tasks they experienced, including the importance of reflection itself as part of the online portfolio tasks.

Reflection could remind the students of what subject matter they had learned so far. One student mentioned that without writing a reflective piece, they would not have the opportunity to recall and assess what they had experienced. They might not have experience of evaluating their own learning process (interview#1 Tia). The following students' statements also demonstrated the point:

It is very useful I think. Writing reflection in every meeting will evaluate ourselves; how our progress is so far...How our writing progress is from week to week will be seen from the reflection that we write (interview#1 Gita).

Reflection gave a lot of contribution to my writing improvement. By writing reflection, we can review what we have written before and see the strengths and weaknesses of our writing (interview#2 Wawan).

But when writing reflection on the second assignment, I understood better that reflection is a kind of self-evaluation toward the assignment given by the teacher (interview#2 Vina).

One student said that the role of reflection on her writing improvement was very significant as it was a kind of self-evaluation on how to solve/improve her weaknesses, so that the result would improve in the future, and how she could maintain and keep improving her strengths to make a better result (interview#2 Vina). In other words, reflection was a process to evaluate and recall what students had previously learned. They tried to recall what the teacher had taught them. They also tried to evaluate their own writing; its weaknesses and strengths. One student said in her interview, "reflection is recalling materials and evaluation of our learning" (interview#2 Gita). Other students identified the same perceptions toward reflection, as can be seen in the following statements:

What I understand about reflection is that it really reminds me and review what I have done and what mistakes I have made. It is a kind of self-evaluation (interview#2 Tia).

I feel that reflection task is very helpful for me to understand my weaknesses and strengths, and it is more about self-evaluation (interview#3 Vina).

The effects of reflection towards students' metacognitive strategies were in line with what Jiménez Raya et.al. (2007) suggested. They stated that reflection is linked to fundamental elements of meaningful learning that include the development of metacognition, the ability to self-evaluate, higher level thinking skills (e.g., problem-solving, decision making), and “the ability to ensure that learning needs are met within a context of negotiation and compromise” (p. 44). It implies that reflection gave students the opportunity to look over the learning processes they had developed, evaluate them and make necessary changes in the strategies they used which were all decided rationally by involving their critical thinking skills.

6.1.2.4 Summary

This section shows how the online portfolio helped students to exercise metacognitive strategies in their learning, an important component of learner autonomy. The online portfolio implementation, which involved different tasks, guided students to learn how to make decisions on what and how to learn in their attempts to improve their EFL academic writing skills. Step by step procedures of essay writing incorporated in the online portfolio helped all participants monitor their learning along the process of completing the writing assignments. Having their learning processes and their writing drafts documented on the online portfolio enabled students to self-evaluate the results as well as the process of their learning. Online peer feedback helped students self-evaluate their learning by giving them input on writing areas they needed to improve as well as the areas they were good at. As for the reflection, this task gave an opportunity and freedom for students to think about their learning. With support from the teacher, reflection had encouraged students to actively set their personal goals, plan their

learning, and evaluate their achievement. Moreover, it guided them to select appropriate strategies to achieve their learning objectives.

6.1.3 Social strategies

In relation to social dimensions of learner autonomy, it was argued that, as a capacity to take control of one's own learning, learner autonomy involves social strategies, which are actions taken by the learners to control aspects of the learning situation related to others (Benson, 2011). Social strategies which involve the ways learners interact with others (O'Mally & Chamnot, 1990) are the potential components of learner autonomy, because they are concerned with control over the learning process (Benson, 2011).

The social interaction facilitated by the online portfolio platform has contributed important roles in enabling students to exercise social strategies in learning academic writing. The roles of the blog in facilitating students' social strategies are closely related to the peer feedback activities that were undertaken using this online platform. The following extracts demonstrated this finding.

Other people might see our mistakes more clearly and give input or guidance so that we can make a better writing in the future. By using the online portfolio, that learning process can take place not only in the class. That is what I experienced (interview#1 Wawan).

What I like most about using online portfolio is when I upload my works to my blog. I could know immediately whether my works are good or not by looking at the comments given by my friends (interview#1 Vina).

The above extracts show that the online portfolio which involved peer feedback activities with the blog as the medium had promoted opportunities for interaction and co-operation with others as part of social strategies (Jiménez Raya et al., 2007). Students experienced the benefits of working collaboratively, interacting and

negotiating with others, which Batacharya and Chauhan (2010) argued as the prominent factors to promote learner autonomy in a language learning classroom. The social strategies enhanced through the online portfolio implementation are relevant to the Indonesian context with its culture that values group achievement and cooperation (see chapter 2 section 2.3.2).

The involvement of others in the writing process particularly in the online feedback activities was evidence of the benefits that students obtained from social interaction within their learning context. The peer comment tools and activities that enabled students to interact with their peers, and the process of writing had also given them the opportunity to learn from others' mistakes, reflect on others' comments, and also improve their own skills to correct and analyse others' mistakes (interview#1 Tia). This finding is relevant to what Murphy (2014) stated about the importance of feedback in developing critical reflection essential to autonomy.

Thus Learning and the development of cognitive processes, including the critical reflection and decision making so essential to autonomy, are seen to depend on participation in meaningful social interaction (Little 2001b), incorporating opportunities for exposure (input), production (output) and feedback, also referred to as the interaction approach (Thorne and Smith 2011, p.270).

Most students stated that during online feedback activities, they found that the comments were increasingly more helpful and specific as time progressed. So, it was easy for them to notice their mistakes in writing. One of the students pointed it out in the interview.

The comments are now really helpful because my friends now know much better what aspects need to be commented on and what should be checked. In the second writing assignment that is essay writing, my friends really gave me deeper comments (interview#2 Tia).

Some students said that the improvement in the comment quality could be due to the helpful guidance to write feedback from the academic writing handbook. Moreover, writing feedback on at least two of their friends' work was made part of the class tasks, so they had to do it, and subsequently they got used to it. In this regard, making a task compulsory could be a way of fostering the capacity for autonomy amongst learners in an institutionalised learning context. Fostering learner autonomy is a process and related to students' motivation (see section 2.4.2 concerning the process of internalisation of externally motivated activity). At the beginning, some students did not receive any comments from any of their friends due to the peer feedback activities procedures, but after the first assignment, everyone received comments from their friends except those who posted their draft late (see chapter 4 section 4.2.2). The feeling of being supported by others when receiving encouraging and helpful feedback, made students eager to write comments for their friends too. Students realised that writing feedback for their friends means supporting them to improve.

By giving comments to our friends, we give feedback to them on their writing. For me writing comments is more difficult than reading comments because we do not only comment whether our friend's writing is good or bad, but it is more about how we can help our friends to improve their writing skills (interview#2 Vina).

The comments also helped students to see their writing from other people's point of view; to ascertain whether their friends understood the information they wanted to convey (interview#2 Arin). The understanding of how important giving feedback is to their friends, how they should respond to their friends' comments, and the peer feedback activities as the activities which required them to support each other, was a form of empathising with others, more particularly becoming aware of others' thoughts

and feelings, which are all part of the social strategies important for autonomy (Oxford, 1990).

We always need input from others in writing, not only from ourselves. We might think that our writing is good or correct already, but for other people or readers it might not be good. So, we always need both positive and negative comments from others. It is useful to improve our writing so that it will be better and better (interview#2 Gita).

Well, I probably wanted more comments and more in-depth comments, but it is also already helpful for me (interview#3 Arin).

Another social strategy in language learning mentioned by Oxford (1990) involves cooperating with others who are considered as proficient users. Peer feedback activities have been supportive in developing this strategy. It is demonstrated in the following student's statement.

The comments are very helpful for me to improve my writing skills. As a human being, we have limited knowledge, and our friends maybe those who have more knowledge might be able to see our weaknesses. With our friends' comments, we can improve our weaknesses (interview#2 Wawan).

What is most interesting was that peer feedback did not only provide students with critical comments useful for them to improve their writing draft. The peer feedback activities which involved interaction among students through the commenting tool, kept students connected during the learning process. Some comments showed how students tried to develop and maintain their relationships. For example, Vina responded to every comment she received, and it made the commenting activities interactive. Tia kept motivating her friends by writing "cemunguuudd" in every comment she wrote. This Indonesian expression means "keep up your spirit", and it is quite a popular slang word among Indonesian students to encourage others. With regard to this finding, Little (2008), in her study which explored the experiences of pupils of a British secondary school who were teamed with 6 university students abroad in working collaboratively in

an online learning project, asserted that learning online collaboratively in friendship groups was “highly motivational, and seems to have paved the way for collaborative autonomy” (p.185). Moreover, supporting some previous researchers such as Benson (2007) and Ushioda (2011) who drew on Ryan and Deci’s (2000) self-determination theory (SDT), Murphy (2014) argued that, the exercise of autonomy is closely related to the concept of intrinsic motivation that can be fulfilled partly through relatedness to others.

Oci is another interesting student who was actively engaged in the commenting activities. He was willing to open most of his friends’ blogs and leave comments. His comments, that mostly contained expressions that expected a response, created two-way communication between him and the writer. Most of his comments did not have anything to do with the writing draft that was supposed to be commented on; “no... too lazy to do so... :D”, “wow, you have to attend my presentation tomorrow about human development ;)”, “Lin... try to do your own assignment...dont cheat Mr. Dee...”, “is that your own experience???” , “anyhow, leave a comment on my bloooog :D”. Even though he has shown quite a different approach in terms of the comments he wrote, he did not take part in the in-depth study so that the data could only be provided from his comments left on his friends’ blog. What could be seen from his comments is that, he could make the peer feedback activities on students’ blogs interactive. However, his comments at the same time showed that he did not seem to be aware that the comments and blog were intended to have learning purposes. It became an issue that both teacher and students needed to deal with; making students understand the learning purpose of peer feedback activities. They needed to be aware that communicating on the online media for learning purposes, as was supposed to occur in the online portfolio

implementation in the writing class, is different from communicating on other social media for non-learning purposes.

6.1.4 Students' critical thinking

Jiménez Raya et al (2007) highlighted critical thinking as one of the important sub-competences of learner autonomy. A critical thinker is someone who is able to “reflect on the relevance and adequacy of the principles of thinking they are using at any particular moment” (Jimenez Raya et.al, 2007, p. 33). Among attributes shown by a critical thinker are: asking pertinent questions and being interested in finding new solutions, being able to admit a lack of understanding of information, looking for “evidence to support assumptions and beliefs”, being “able to adjust opinions when new facts are found”, and examining learning problems closely (Jiménez Raya et al. , 2007, p.44). In the same vein, Pithers and Soden (2000 as cited by Thompson, 2011) stated that critical thinking involves the ability to respond to one’s questions through self-directed search and knowledge interrogation, and the ability to support one’s arguments with evidence. In relation to learner autonomy, Siegel (1988, p.54) stated,

If we accept critical thinking as a fundamental educational ideal, we explicitly acknowledge the desirability of the attainment by students of self-sufficiency and autonomy... The critical thinker must be autonomous—that is, free to act and judge independently of external constraint, on the basis of her own reasoned appraisal of the matter at hand.

The current study shows that the online portfolio, particularly with the online peer feedback activities has enabled students to exercise their critical thinking. The peer feedback activities gave students opportunities to comment on their peers’ work; they could give compliments for any good writing aspects or criticise any parts of writing

they found weak. The students could agree or disagree with the comments they received; therefore, it enabled a debate to take place in the commenting activities.

As peer feedback activities required students to comment on their friends' work based on the writing criteria, students worked hard to understand the criteria in the first place. They were aware of the importance of reviewing the writing rules they had learned in order to make sure that they gave correct and constructive comments.

Students perceived that writing feedback for their friends was not as easy as saying "good" or "bad" about their friends' work without reading them critically. Even though a few students felt disappointed by their friends' feedback as they did not provide critical comments, most of them stated that the comments they received from their peers were quite critical and helpful for them to improve their writing. The critical comments would not have been written by students without there being any critical thinking. As mentioned earlier, students learned how to compose good feedback from the process of peer feedback activities. They observed their friends' writings and applied the guidance of writing feedback as well as the criteria to achieve good writing.

At the beginning, our comments could only be "Good", "interesting", or "the topic is useful for many people". But now, we can comment from many more specific aspects of writing. For example, when we learned to write essay, we have to know transition signals. So, our evaluation is getting more accurate and specific (interview#2 Gita).

The process of critical thinking during commenting activities also occurred when students selected parts of their friends' work to be commented on and what information they needed to structure in their comments so that the comments would be constructive.

It helped me guide what aspects I should comment on, that I think I need to have my own knowledge of how to comment. Sometimes it could be the grammar

part, if I am good at grammar, I could give comment more rather than...when I do not know whether this grammar is correct or not, this structure is correct or not...But the difficulty is that, if I do not have my own knowledge about grammar...I could not comment on my friends' works, but if I do know, so I can comment...oh this one is wrong...this one...and then same thing as if I know how to make topic sentence. then I can comment on how to make a good topic sentence. but if I do not know how to make it, it is quite difficult for me to write comments (interview#1 Arin).

Peer feedback activities with the commenting tools, provided a record of all the comments which students received for each writing draft or online portfolio entry. All participants in the study analysed the feedback they received and determined which ones were useful to improve their writing draft and which ones were not. The cognitive process occurred when students chose critically which comments needed to be incorporated when revising their writing draft and which ones needed not. As discussed in the previous chapter (chapter 5 section 5.2.2) focusing on how students incorporated the peer feedback they received to produce the final draft, students revised their writing drafts with different levels of peer feedback incorporation. Some students decided to address all the input from their friends, some just selected specific points to be included in their revision, and others did not apply any of their friends' recommendation at all as they were quite sure that they had done it correctly.

I tried my best to make the final draft by considering the comments I got. To be honest, there were some comments that I did not agree with after I checked it with the reference book. That is why I did not use them to revise my draft (interview#2 Tia).

In other words, the interactive communication between the writer and the readers which occurred during the peer commenting activities became another aspect of the critical thinking process. Students were guided and helped by their interaction with the readers of their blog entry which was the writing draft. This finding is supported by a previous study conducted by Richardson, Ertmer, Lehman and Newby (2007). This study

revealed that peer feedback was perceived by students to be beneficial in improving their critical thinking skills. When the description of critical thinking by Siegel (1988) is considered, the connection between it and autonomy is obvious.

6.2 Online portfolios and students' motivation

The discussion in this section is intended to respond to the research question dealing with students' motivation; "What motivates students in learning writing skills, using the online portfolio?" As discussed in the theoretical review in chapter 2, Deci and Ryan's SDT of motivation was considered as the basis to analyse the data concerning students' motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation. In SDT, Deci and Ryan (2000) distinguished motivation as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation where "extrinsic motivation is hypothesized on the continuum depending on the extent to which the goal is self-determined by the individual or controlled by external contingencies, that is the degree of self-determination" (Yashima, 2014, p.62). In SDT of motivation, Deci and Ryan (2000) suggested that an externally regulated activity in a learning context may become more internally regulated or autonomous if three basic conditions are fulfilled; autonomy (students have freely chosen to participate in the learning process), competence (their skills and competence are improving), and relatedness (they are being supported by significant others).

According to Deci and Ryan (2002 as cited by Yashima, 2014), an activity that is initially externally regulated can be internalised and integrated within the sense of self by the learners. In order to make it happen, external encouragement plays a very vital role, and it requires the support from teachers as well as peers to facilitate learning. Yashima (2014) emphasised that it is particularly true in the context of foreign language

learning (for example, EFL in Japan), which involves activities that the learners do not necessarily enjoy (memorisation of words, grammar drills, etc.). This phenomenon also happened in the learning process of EFL writing that incorporated the online portfolio implementation. Even though it has been revealed that the online portfolios were beneficial for students to improve their writing, it was not necessarily followed by students' willingness to engage in the online portfolio activities. This became a challenge for the teacher to transform the activities as part of class assignments that were externally regulated for some students into more internally regulated or autonomous. As also discussed previously, Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory (SDT) emphasised that learning activities that can develop competence, a sense of relatedness, and autonomy, are supportive to gain intrinsic motivation, enjoyment or pleasure, and satisfaction (Murphy, 2014).

According to Lepper and Hodell (1989), the primary characteristics of tasks that promote intrinsic motivations for learning include challenge, curiosity, control, and fantasy. Moreover, as discussed in chapter 2 section 2.3.2.2, Dörnyei categorised the motivation components in the learning situation level under four areas; "*intrinsic interest*; the *relevance* of the instruction to the learner's personal needs, values, or goals; *expectancy* of success; and *satisfaction* in the outcome of an activity" (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 277).

The analysis of students' perceptions concerning their motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation resulted in eight motivation components encompassing interest, relevance, expectancy, challenge, satisfaction, confidence, convenience and

flexibility, and curiosity. Each category of the findings is discussed in the following sections.

6.2.1 Interest

As part of emotion, interest's function is "to motivate learning and exploration" and thus it drives people to "develop a broad set of knowledge, skills, and experience" (Silvia, 2008, p.57). Interest becomes a source of students' intrinsic motivation as it motivates people to learn for its own sake (Silvia, 2008). The experience of interest affects the persistence in learning and the development of skills (Silvia 2006).

For most students, the integration of technology in the academic writing class learning became an attractive aspect that promoted their motivation to learn. For example, a student stated that something which attracted her in the academic writing class was the integration of ICT in Academic Writing. In this case, ICT just acts as the media in teaching and learning process while the main focus is on the writing skills (Reflection#1 Novita). In the same vein, another student said during an interview that typing on the computer and using the internet were more interesting and less exhausting; his writing became more readable. He emphasised that he liked working with technology and said that there were a lot of blog features that he could use after he created his own blog (interview #1 Wawan). Another student was interested in the chosen blog site and its designing aspect, as shown in her statement below:

But for me, it is not too difficult because I have tried to create blog myself before. Here we applied Wordpress. Wordpress is really interesting ... In my online portfolio, my writing can be designed as I want, so the reader will not get bored when reading my online portfolio (interview#1 Tia).

Her interest in design is obvious as seen in the following screenshot of her blog appearance.

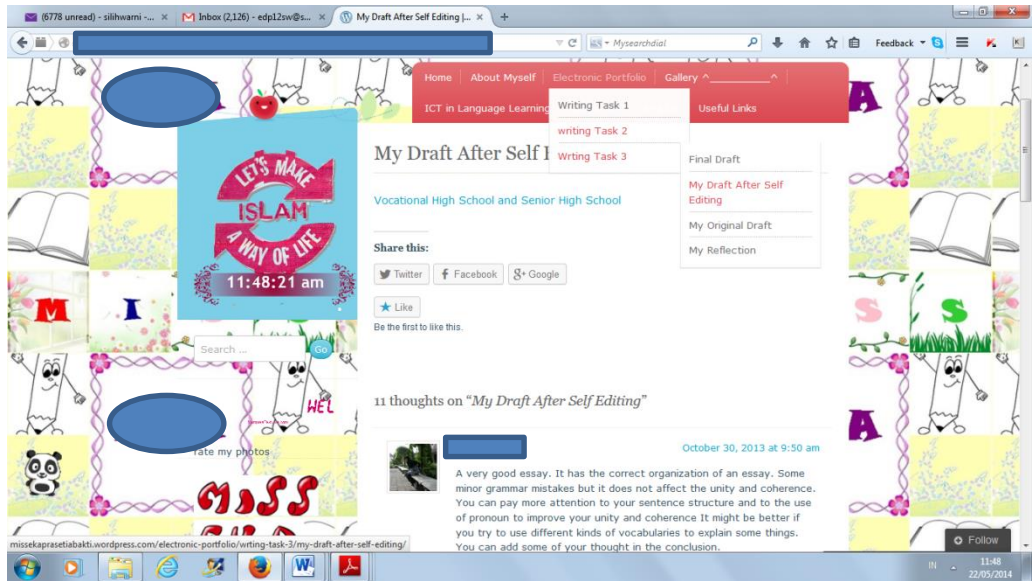


Figure 6.1 Screenshot of Tia's blog

Having an online medium to publish their works had made students enjoy writing more, as pointed out by a student in the following statement.

Now I like to write. I like writing more than I am supposed to write. So I push a lot of things in the blog (interview#3 Arin).

In fact, this particular student posted not only writing drafts assigned by the teacher, but also more pieces of writing she made of her own interest. The screenshot of her blog in figure 6.2 shows her interest in writing more articles and posting them on her blog.

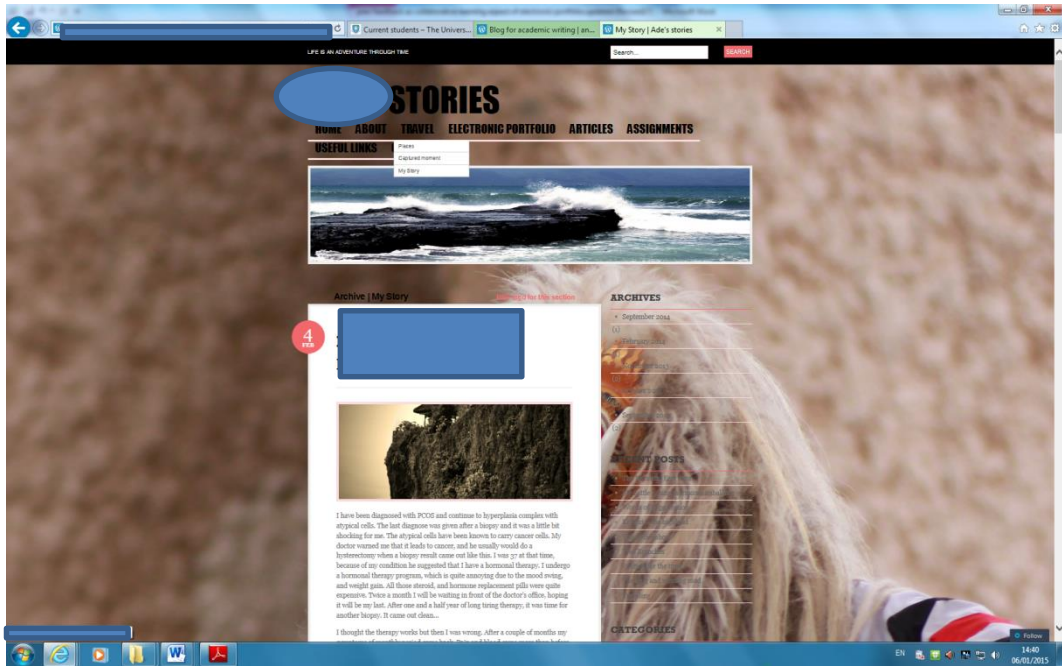


Figure 6.2 Screenshot of Arin’s blog

Another student stated that, even though posting her writing to her online portfolio was part of class assignments, doing so was exciting for her as it was similar to posting something on facebook or twitter (interview #1 Vina). Having their work seen by many people became an exciting element of students’ interest in using blog in their writing class, as demonstrated by a student in her interview.

I feel excited because posting our writing in our blog means showing it to many people; in Indonesia or maybe in other countries. So, I think it really motivated me to be better because I am sure we want to post a good writing, not the bad one. The more we post, the more we want our writing to be better (interview#2 Gita).

The findings suggest that students’ interest in working with the blog motivated them to put more effort into the task using the blog to improve their performance. This is in line with a study conducted by Song (2000) confirming that “the motivation to persist in learning is one of the major motivational categories of Web-based instruction” (Kim, 2005, p.23). During an interview, one student expressed her interest in doing online

feedback activities, particularly as it was supported by the blog as the online portfolio platform, which gave students a chance to write, publish their writing, and receive comments (Reflection#2 Arin).

The structure of the learning tasks using the online portfolio became another aspect which enhanced students' interest in learning academic writing. One student pointed out that the quality of the structure of the writing tasks using the online portfolio raised her willingness to learn writing (interview#3 Vina). In the same vein, other students stated that the implementation of online portfolios increased their interest because the online portfolio showed them how to learn academic writing systematically (interview #3 Wawan), and it involved step by step procedures in the process of writing supported by a technology tool, which students had not experienced before (interview#3 Tia).

Reflection, which gave students the opportunity to share their experiences in their learning with more personal writing style as well as to express their feelings, became another interesting aspect for students (Reflection#2 Arin). This finding was in line with a study conducted by Yang (2007) in the implementation of reflective journal writing in English learning. She revealed that “journal writing is a good stimulus to encourage students to stay actively involved in their English language learning” (p.4).

6.2.2 Convenience and flexibility

Since this study incorporated an online learning environment, it is worthwhile to review another theory of motivation particularly in the context of online learning. McCall (2002) suggested that convenience, flexibility, and control such as control over one's

own pace in learning, were the main factors that influenced students' motivation to participate and persist in online distance courses.

Most students in this study highlighted the benefits of using the blog as a convenient platform for their online portfolios, particularly for its accessibility. One student mentioned that it was good to use the blog because his writing would be easy to access and read. Besides, he could also save data and various writings that he had made without using a lot of paper, and he could open it on his blog anytime he wanted to see them (interview #1 Wawan). Since it can be accessed from anywhere, online portfolios also enable the students to give comments at any time. Moreover, he said that actually creating the blog was quite easy even in the early steps, because guidance on how to make and use the blog was given clearly (interview #1 Wawan). In the same vein, another student stated that the blog had made the writing activities easy and efficient for the students (interview #1 Vina).

6.2.3 Relevance

In the course specific motivational components suggested by Dörnyei (1994), relevance is referred to as the extent of the connectivity between the instruction and the student's personal needs, goals or values. The more students feel that the instructions in their classroom learning match their personal needs, the more they will feel motivated to learn. With regard to academic writing as the course chosen for the online portfolio implementation in this study, all students realised the importance of learning the skills for their study and future career, as can be seen in the following students' statements:

Academic writing skill is important for us especially those who are in academic world. It is considered to be a very...the most difficult assignment that I ever made...academic writing...Because in academic world, we write journal, we'll

write argumentative...we have to give our argument; we have to write about our opinion. I think academic writing will help us to do all of those (interview#3 Arin).

I think academic writing skill is very important because we are students, and all the assignments, such as thesis writing will involve academic writing skills. So, academic writing is a very useful course. Beside giving contribution on how we can produce a good writing, it can also increase our ability to express opinion or probably our experiences using writing (in written language) (interview#3 Vina).

I think Academic Writing is very important especially in learning process in this master programme. The implementation will later be used for scientific research (interview #3 Wawan).

Academic writing skills are very helpful. To be honest, when I took part in the working/job field, the skills are very helpful; the small example is when I wrote my CV. It plays important role in daily life. Our writing skills are shown in our CV. Something like that...For my study, academic writing is helpful in all skill aspects. As I said before, by learning writing, it indirectly improved my speaking, listening, etc because as far as I know writing in academic field is the most important thing that we have to learn (interview#3 Tia).

With regards to the tasks involved in the online portfolio implementation, most students perceived that the tasks were relevant to their goals in learning academic writing skills. The step by step procedure of learning writing using the online portfolio helped students achieve their learning goals. The following extracts of students' interview illustrate this.

Based on what I read, in academic writing we are required to be able to write paragraph, essay..argumentative essay etc. With the online portfolio, students achieved what they are supposed to achieve. So, I think the academic writing class goals that we want to achieve are achieved through the online portfolio...Online portfolio has improved my writing skills because in online portfolio, there are some steps, such as writing draft, self-editing, etc. (interview#3 Tia).

... it has relevance with the goals of academic writing course stated in the syllabus I got (interview#3 Vina).

Having done online feedback activities, one student realised that comments from others were what she needed most of the time in order to solve her problems in improving her academic writing (interview#1 Arin). This shows that the online feedback activities as part of the online portfolio tasks were relevant to her purpose in learning academic writing.

Understanding the importance and benefits of online feedback activities, students felt optimistic that their writing would be improved.

From the comments I know my weaknesses and strengths in my writing. Then my writing can be better than before (interview#1 Gita).

So, with the writing and the comments, we understand the weaknesses, and then it will become a lesson that will make our writing result better. Then, at the end, the result or learning writing will be better (interview#3 Vina).

Students believe that their peers' and teacher's comments could be a relevant lesson for them as they helped them identify their weaknesses, and in turn, they would guide them to improve their writing and have better results.

6.2.4 Expectancy

Expectancy, as another motivation component, is dealing with students' "perceived likelihood of success" (Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998, p.207). The data related to students' perceptions were analysed to reveal whether students felt that working on the online portfolio activities would raise their expectation to succeed in learning academic writing. Students perceived that the online portfolio implementation would help them improve their writing. The following students' statements illustrated that.

...at the end, the final result of my writing will be good because with the online portfolio, activities were began with easy task, meaning that we made easy draft, and then followed with reflecting on what became our weaknesses...at the end, learning using online portfolio will help me improve my writing skills (interview#3 Novita).

I expect to be able to make my writing good with all its aspects, and when we made it in the online portfolio, it was done coherently and step by step so that we could make a good and structured writing (interview #3 Wawan).

The blog as the online platform of students' online portfolios was perceived as a tool that could improve students' ability to write. It could train students to develop the habit of writing and make a very creative design (interview#1 Gita). This finding is echoed by Avci & Askar (2012), who conducted an investigation into the use of blogs by students in various teacher education programmes in Turkey. They revealed that blogs contributed to the students' work positively in the learning environment, and students who participated in the study perceived blogs as constructive tools that could increase their performance and productivity, and resulted in students' more positive views and greater intention to use blogs in the future (Avci & Askar, 2012).

Working on the online feedback activities also raised students' expectation to be successful in their learning academic writing. Some students stated that, having their writing commented on by others helped them better understand their weaknesses which would make their writing draft better, and at the end, would improve the result of learning writing (Interview#1 Gita, Interview#3 Vina).

6.2.5 Challenge

Having their works published online and seen by many people was perceived as an incentive by students in learning writing. Students who had already liked writing before they were introduced to the online portfolio also perceived that they were being more motivated to write better as they had a medium to show their writings to the world (interview#1 Arin). In other words, the online portfolio had challenged students to produce better writing. The following student's statement demonstrated the motivation students felt of having the online medium.

Besides, when I read my work, it feels like ...wow...my writing has been published, so I feel excited (interview#1 Vina).

Students' willingness to produce and post more pieces of writing besides the ones assigned by the teacher was also discussed in the previous part in relation to students' interests. Moreover, having their works published online gave students a challenge to create better pieces of writing.

But we have to try to make and show the online portfolio well because our online portfolio will have readers. There will be readers who read our writings. If we show our online portfolio not in a good/interesting way, people will be lazy to read it (interview #3 Tia).

Before I felt that in writing, if I want to write, I just write it, and that is all. I felt that my writing would not be read by many people. But with online portfolios, I feel very challenged because I feel that I have to show my better or even my best writing. I force myself to show my best writing because my writing will be read by many people (interview #3 Tia).

As students' work was published online on the blog which enabled students to see their peers' work which could be better than theirs, it became an input and could challenge them to improve their writing (interview#1 Vina). This is pointed out in the student's statement below.

So, if we make a piece of writing that is not good enough, all the world will see it if they know our blog. So, it really helped me to build my confidence because being monitored by others gives me a challenge to make a good writing (interview #3 Vina).

Having experienced the advantages of having online portfolios in their blog to learn writing, one student wanted to use her blog to post her work from other courses.

We should post all of the campus tasks, so that our Wordpress will be more lively. We really want to implement things like online portfolios in other subjects. It really becomes big motivation for me and my friends in the class (interview#1 Tia).

One student emphasised the challenge of the technology aspect. He stated that working with the blog in the writing class was more challenging because it integrated every concept in the syllabus using a media that made use of technology (interview #3 Vina). Another student added, “It gave me challenges a lot because the online portfolio gave a new innovation in writing learning process” (interview #3 Wawan).

Having their writing read and commented on by their friends, became another challenging part of the online portfolio. For some students peer feedback activities became challenging as they usually just wrote and did not know what to do with it at the end of the writing course. Peer feedback activities gave them a new experience in learning writing (interview#1 Arin). Furthermore, students felt more challenged to write much better after receiving comments from their friends.

I feel more challenged to make much better writing, especially in the final draft. To be honest it is really thought consuming..after receiving comments..ohh my mistake is this..It really improved my ability..explored my ability (interview #3 Tia).

The progress of students’ writing involving peer feedback that can be seen by other people on their blog, and positive comments students received from their friends, raised students’ feeling of satisfaction, essential for fostering motivation.

Students perceived that giving comments to their friends’ work gave them a challenge to improve their own writing. One student said that in giving comments, she was required to be able to assess her friends’ writings in terms of the format, organisation, and grammar, aspects of writing she needed to learn herself before writing comments. Moreover, looking at peer’s works was perceived as a challenge. The following statements from a student demonstrate this point:

So, when giving comments to our friends' works so far, I feel that it is more about looking at how our friend's work is, compared to our own work. Wow, I saw that some of my friends' works are much better, and it becomes an input for us to improve our own writings (interview#2 Vina).

6.2.6 Satisfaction and confidence

Students' motivation, as discussed previously, was associated with students' satisfaction and confidence. In this regards, Masgoret & Gardner (2003) stated that, among the factors influencing students' motivation in the classroom context, how students perceive their own achievement becomes the factor highly related to students' motivation compared to other factors. If students see themselves as doing well, they will be more motivated to do even better.

Working with their online portfolios, students experienced a feeling of satisfaction which energised them to put more effort in their learning, as demonstrated in the following student's statement:

I felt very satisfied because I could write my final draft well. So, in that part I really felt that my writing that was very bad at the beginning, and when I tried to rearrange/ revise my writing, and in my final draft I felt a special feeling of satisfaction, and in that part I felt very proud...time by time I felt more confident because of my progress, because of the learning process occurred there. People will see how my writing at the beginning was and how my final writing was. So I feel more proud (interview #3 Tia).

With regards to the use of the blog as the platform of the online portfolio, one student, who was a school teacher, shared in the interview that she felt proud after posting her writing on her own blog. Some of her facebook friends read her essay on her blog and asked her about the blog site which is WordPress. Some of her students had also read her essays on her online portfolio. Her students told her that they enjoyed looking at her

WordPress (interview #2 Tia). Another student highlighted her pride of having a chance to convey her ideas in pieces of writing and publish them online (Reflection#2 Arin). Since she had her own blog to keep her online portfolio, everyone who opened her blog site could access and read all the writings she had posted. In the same vein, another student stated that, having more people read her blog and leave some positive comments on her writings made her more confident in writing (interview #3 Tia).

The positive comments students received from their peers and teacher about the good aspects of their writing had also raised students' feeling of satisfaction (Reflection#2 Gita). Moreover they had made students feel more confident with their writing skills (interview #2 Vina). The positive feelings about their improved skills raised through positive comments indicated that the learning process students experienced fulfilled a need of competence which is important for enhancing students' motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2000). The following student's statement demonstrates the contribution of peer feedback activities, in which students worked cooperatively with their peers, in raising students' confidence:

The steps that I have passed gave positive contribution in increasing my confidence in writing because of the comments or suggestions given by our friends. Besides negative comments, there were also positive comments that showed my strengths. It has helped my confidence; Oh, my writing is good enough even though it is not perfect (interview #3 Vina).

This finding is supported by Crandall (1999) who revealed that cooperative learning can reduce anxiety and increase self-confidence and motivation. Moreover, Dörnyei (2001) emphasised the benefits of learning cooperatively in enhancing motivation compared to learning with individualistic or competitive structures. In this regard, the aspect of relatedness became crucial. Throughout the process of online portfolio implementation, particularly the peer feedback activities, students showed a willingness to "take and give"

in the learning process. Instead of merely taking advantage of the comments they received from their friends, students realised that their own comments were also needed by their friends to improve their writing. A sense of togetherness was also seen from the comments they wrote to their friends. As I mentioned previously (see chapter 5 section 5.2.2), one of the students (Tia), kept motivating her friends by writing an encouraging expression in every comment she wrote. The presence of supportive social interaction in peer feedback activities contributed to the rise of students' motivation. It is in line with what Dörnyei (2001) and Noels (2003) stated that individual motivation has been linked to the social context. This finding was also echoed by Smith (2001; 2003) and Noels (2003) who claimed that students learn better within a classroom setting in which they are connected with their fellow students and teacher.

Writing reflection was another activity which some students highlighted as giving them a sense of pride in their learning results, as demonstrated in the extracts of students' reflection below:

I was also quite happy with the positive comments given by my lecturer and my friends (Reflection#2 Gita).

Finally, I proud with my essay because I can change it with well organised (Reflection#3 Tia).

Little by little, I got the ideas and it eased me finish my writing (Reflection#3 Gita).

As discussed earlier, reflection had encouraged students to self-evaluate their writing performance which is important in maintaining students' motivation. Schunk (2003, p.162) stated that positive self-evaluations of students' capabilities and skills acquisition progress are "critically important for maintaining self-efficacy for learning and performing well". If students can make the improvement of their performance salient,

they will “feel efficacious and motivated to learn and thereby learn better” (Schunk, 2003, p.162). However, students do not spontaneously self-evaluate their capabilities positively, and therefore teachers’ support is necessary to give them stimuli for assessing performance and evaluating goal progress.

6.2.7 Curiosity

Another theme revealed in the analysis of students’ motivation is curiosity. One student stated that sometimes she received comments with some suggestions to improve her writing, but she was not sure about those comments. In that situation, she had to find and check more references to make sure what was the correct one; her opinion or her friends’ comments (interview #2 Tia). Peer feedback had stimulated students’ curiosity about certain debatable comments and triggered them to find more references to support or check their opinion.

6.2.8 Summary

This section has been devoted to discussing students’ motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation. The analysis of students’ perceptions concerning their motivation during the online portfolio implementation revealed that different aspects of motivation were enhanced, including their interest in learning academic writing, expectancy for their learning success, satisfaction from their learning outcomes, confidence in their skills development and curiosity for the subject matter. The tasks involved in the online portfolio were relevant to students’ learning goals. Moreover, the online portfolio created a challenging, convenient and flexible learning atmosphere. Having discussed the students’ motivation in this section and learner autonomy in the

previous section, the next section will discuss the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation.

6.3 The relationship between learner autonomy and motivation

Motivation is an important factor to investigate in the online portfolio implementation in this study, which is also concerned with learner autonomy. Jiménez Raya et al. (2007) stated that the effort to foster learner autonomy cannot be separated from enhancing students' motivation since motivation is the pre-condition for autonomy. However, whether it is motivation or autonomy that comes first still remains debatable. The discussion in this section is intended to answer the research question dealing with the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation; "what is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation?"

Analysis of the results from the students' interviews suggested that the relationship between motivation and autonomy is dynamic and not in a single direction. Some findings suggested that autonomy tended to lead to motivation. As discussed previously in section 5.1, the online portfolios with all the elements (blog, self-revising, feedback activities and reflection) had supported students in exercising learner autonomy. The online portfolio activities had provided students with opportunities to internalise their learning goals and their knowledge of the tasks they had undertaken. Moreover, it had raised their awareness of ways to achieve their learning goals. These conditions enabled students to have greater control over their learning, which in turn led them to engage in learning writing activities supported by the online portfolios. In other words, students had more willingness to engage in the writing activities after their capacity for

autonomy which involves different components (see section 5.1) was fostered. These findings are illustrated in the following extracts from one student's interviews:

Now I like to write. I like more than I am supposed to write. So I push a lot of things in the blog (interview#3 Arin).

As their task knowledge emerged during students' learning using the online portfolio, their interest to engage in the learning writing activities also increased. One student stated that the good structure of the tasks in the online portfolio activities had raised her willingness to learn writing (interview#3 Vina). The following excerpts of students' interviews also demonstrate this finding:

It really increased my interest because the online portfolio teaches me how to write systematically and coherent (interview #3 Wawan).

I feel motivated because it is very unique. To be honest this is my first time working with the online portfolio. I have not done the online portfolio before. There are some steps in the online portfolio that I have not met before. In that part I feel that there is something more unique in learning (interview#3 Tia).

The finding of the current study that learner autonomy precedes motivation is supported by Dickinson (1995). In the summary of a review article on autonomy and motivation, he stated that students can succeed and enhance motivation in their learning if they take responsibility of their own learning, are able to control their own learning, and perceive that the success or failures of their learning "are to be attributed to their own efforts and strategies rather than to factors outside their control" (Dickinson, 1995, p. 147). The three conditions required to enhance motivation are characteristics of learner autonomy described in applied linguistics (Dickinson, 1995).

In relation to the attribution theory of motivation suggested by Gardner (1985), Dickinson (1995, p.171) mentions that success in learning can lead to increasing

motivation only for students who take responsibility for the success of their own learning, that is, “who recognise that success arises from personal effort, rather than simply from ability or chance.” As personal effort is an attribute within the control of the student, only those who take the responsibility for learning outcomes by focusing on their personal effort can enhance their motivation in learning.

In addition to the importance of learner autonomy in enhancing students’ motivation, in one of the ‘ten commandments’ for motivating language learners, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) proposed that teachers need to foster learner autonomy in order to motivate students, which indicates that motivation is a result of learner autonomy.

Even though part of the findings indicated that learner autonomy tended to come first, the current study also revealed that the relationship between autonomy and motivation was not always in that direction. Some results of the study indicate that motivation was perceived as preceding autonomy. The components of the online portfolio implementation which initially attracted students to engage in the writing activities had led them to have better understanding of the learning activities they had been doing and of tools they had been utilising. The following extract of a student’s statement demonstrates this.

One thing that attracts me was the integration of ICT and Academic Writing. In this case, ICT just acts as the media in teaching and learning process while the main focus is on the writing skills (Reflection#1 Vina).

The above extract implies that the student’s task knowledge involving her understanding of the purposes of every task in the electronic portfolio implementation might not have occurred if students did not have the interest to engage in the online portfolio implementation in the first place. The findings that motivation could come

before autonomy, is in line with what Spratt, Humphreys and Chan (2002) proposed in their study. They did not assume that “the relationship between autonomy and motivation is always one in which autonomy leads to motivation” (Spratt et al., 2002, p.262). The results from their study indicated that “motivation may lead to autonomy or be a precondition for it” (Spratt et al., 2002, p.262). Some findings from the analysis of students’ interviews reveal that for the participants, the presence of motivation that was initially enhanced with the attractive technology tools support seemed to drive the development of learner autonomy. In addition to the technological aspect, other online portfolio aspects as discussed previously had successfully enhanced students’ motivation to learn writing and in turn facilitated students to exercise some components of learner autonomy.

Regardless of the debatable issue of whether motivation or autonomy comes first, their importance to help students to succeed in their learning had encouraged me to be concerned with both areas throughout the writing course with online portfolios. Spratt et al. (2002, p.263) stated that helping students to believe in “the effectiveness of their own efforts” seems to be an area that the teacher can develop. In order to do so, I devoted more time and effort to getting involved in activities and working to develop materials and syllabuses in which I expected learners to engage. In this situation, that which Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) suggested with regards to motivating students became very relevant. They asserted that teachers could motivate their students by being models of motivation themselves in the first place.

Two perspectives of the direction of learner autonomy and motivation revealed in the study showed that the relationship between motivation and autonomy could work in

both directions and change in direction along the stages, as has been previously proposed by Ushioda (1996) and Green (1999). As summarised by Spratt et al. (2002, p.262), they claimed that “motivation itself is dynamic and that it can alter in type and intensity over the course of a learner’s studies”.

6.4 Summary and reflection

This chapter has discussed learner autonomy and motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation. The first section discussed the components of learner autonomy exercised by students during the online portfolio implementation which include metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive strategies, social strategies and critical thinking. In the next section, students’ motivation in learning academic writing using the online portfolio was discussed. Students perceived that the online portfolio raised their motivation to learn writing with different components of motivation demonstrated; interest, relevance, expectancy, challenge, satisfaction and confidence, convenience and flexibility, and curiosity. Since the online portfolio incorporated different elements (self-revising, online feedback activities, reflection), and students put different emphasis on different online portfolio elements when stating their perceptions of the online portfolio implementation in learning academic writing, the discussion of learner autonomy and motivation during the online portfolio implementation in this chapter also emphasised some specific online portfolio components in addition to the overall online portfolio components. The last section elaborated the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation which shows that, the relationship between motivation and autonomy worked in both directions; learner autonomy preceded motivation and motivation could lead to autonomy. Moreover, the directions changed along the stages (dynamic).

The process of writing this chapter was very challenging due to the complexity of my data and the concept of learner autonomy and motivation. Along the process, I dealt with complex data which I had to make sense of and categorise with regards to the concept of learner autonomy and motivation. However, my interest in the learner autonomy and motivation concepts has been very helpful in the process in that it energised me to continuously read relevant literature and make better sense of students' perceptions on their learning process which includes the students themselves as learners, teacher, peers and the learning tasks. Having this understanding, I hope that, as a teacher, I could help students to maximise the results of their learning.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents important conclusions that I identified from the study, which address the research questions. Moreover, the contribution of the research findings to different stakeholders in the education field and the limitations of the study will be discussed.

7.1 Summary of the responses to the research questions

This section will summarise the results of my data analysis and the research findings to address the three main research questions concerning my experiences as a facilitator and the emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation, students' writing development, learner autonomy and motivation.

7.1.1 Regarding my teaching experiences and emerging problems in the online portfolio implementation

As this study is concerned with my own practice through my action research, and I intended to explore any emerging problems throughout the online portfolio implementation, these two areas became questions I raised in this study, and the key findings to address the questions are summarised in this section.

7.1.1.1 How do I experience teaching writing using the online portfolio?

Every step involved in the study was valuable for my professional development. Preparing the instructional materials was one of the important steps. I started the instructional materials preparation by exploring references on teaching academic

writing including teaching materials and approaches, as sufficient knowledge was required to underlie my teaching academic writing practice, particularly when it incorporated the use of technology tools. The knowledge became increasingly important particularly because implementing technology tools also has potential constraints that the teacher must be prepared for. Some students involved in the current study were not very experienced in the application of computers as a learning tool. As a consequence, I needed to allocate special sessions of the class to familiarise students with the technology tools used to assist learning. Another important step I needed to take was to make sure that every student could get access to the internet service provided by the university, and therefore I ensured that the university computer lab had a sufficient number of computers and internet access.

The role of the computer for supporting the learning activities was not intended to replace the teacher's roles. Instead, it must be viewed as a medium to interact, generate questions to be asked, and work collaboratively with peers and teachers (Kern, 1996). For this reason, it was necessary for the teacher to participate in students' communication and learning. As well as providing guidance and assistance in students' development of technical skills, a teacher can take part in providing teacher's feedback in a writing class utilising an online portfolio. In the blended learning environment, I had to understand my vital roles as a facilitator "to provide feedback on the quality of the online discussion in the face-to-face class and activities which prepared and skilled students for their online activities" (Stacey & Gerbic, 2008, p.967).

As I implemented the online portfolio through an action research project, which took into account my professional development, problems and their solutions naturally

became part of the process. What I needed to do was to give students the opportunities to experience the excitement of working with technology and the benefits of using technology in their learning. Students had to understand that any emerging problems throughout the learning process would be discussed and solved together and were part of the learning process that enabled students and me as a facilitator to make use of the ICT facilities and to improve both their technology and writing skills.

Every student had a different attitude, and their motivation in learning changed from time to time throughout the online portfolio implementation. This condition challenged me to continually improve my instructional plan. Increasing information from the students' perspectives was the basis for any necessary changes, and this aspect became very important. The changes made in the instructional plan in this study included; giving clearer guidance for students' reflection, better organisation of students' online portfolios on their blogs as some students did not follow the guidance of how to organise them, better procedure of peer commenting, and giving clearer guidance and emphasis of what to write in the comments.

Reflecting on my teaching practice throughout the online portfolio implementation has been beneficial for both my professional development and the improvement of teaching and learning activities. I observed and evaluated every phase of the online portfolio implementation in the academic writing class to identify any emerging problems and determined how to deal with them. I thought the tasks involved in the online portfolio implementation comprising blogging, self-revising, peers and teacher's feedback (commenting) activities, and reflection generally worked well, even though there were some minor obstacles caused by intermittent problems with internet connection,

students' technology skills, online feedback activity procedures, and students' unfamiliarity with the concept of reflection. As part of my action research agenda, I observed those problems, researched relevant references, made changes, observed and reflected on the consequences of my decision, reflected on the results of my decisions, and then made other changes accordingly following my action research cycles. At the end, I felt satisfied that the online portfolio had become a meaningful tool for students to support their learning, particularly to improve their EFL writing performance in their academic writing class.

7.1.1.2 What problems emerge during the online portfolio implementation?

This study revealed some problems, which emerged during the online portfolio implementation. They are categorised under three areas: problems dealing with the use of a blog as the online portfolio platform; problems dealing with online feedback activities; and problems dealing with students' reflection.

Students identified their unfamiliarity with a blog as one of the problems in working with the blog as the online portfolio platform. Even though most students, especially those who were experienced with blogging activities, perceived the blog as a practical technology tool and they did not find any difficulties in creating it, a few students faced difficulties in creating and managing the blog regardless of the guidance given. The problem in using the blog caused a slightly slower pace than expected for some students in the online portfolio activities.

In term of the ICT facilities, the internet connection was identified by students as another problem hindering the use of the blog in the writing class. The internet

connection in the computer lab was sometimes poor and made the loading process slow which caused a problem for students to work on some online portfolio tasks.

There were two problems, which emerged in the online feedback activities dealing with difficulties in writing comments and the commenting procedures. Most students were not experienced in writing comments on others' writing. Even though peer feedback guidance was given, some students were not confident in writing feedback for their peers. The decision to apply the procedure to voluntarily write feedback did not run as well as expected. Instead of having at least one comment from a peer, some students received a number of comments while others did not receive any comments at all.

Another issue related to the reflection as the last entry of each online portfolio assignment, which also became a matter for me to act on. At the beginning, students perceived reflective writing as a difficult task as it was a new experience for them. However, as they practised it, their ability in and perception of reflective writing improved.

7.1.2 Regarding students' writing development

My research questions regarding the students' writing development, as I have stated previously in chapter 1 and chapter 4, involve students' perceptions on their writing development and the changes to students' writing performance throughout the online portfolio implementation

7.1.2.1 How do students perceive their writing development throughout the online portfolio implementation?

The analysis of students' interviews and reflection showed that students perceived the online portfolio and its elements as useful tools beneficial to their writing development. Having understood the criteria of good writing they were expected to produce, self-revising gave students the opportunity to identify the weaknesses in the writing draft with regards to the agreed criteria. Students perceived that the self-revising activity helped them to improve their writing performance. Concerning the feedback activities, students emphasised that their writing skills improved due to the incorporation of feedback in the online portfolio implementation. The comments they received from both teacher and peers helped them find the mistakes on their writing draft which they were unable to identify themselves through self-revising. Writing improvement had also been perceived by the students as the impact of reflection that raised their awareness of their strengths and weaknesses on their writing skills. This awareness guided students to improve the areas of their identified weaknesses and helped students improve their overall writing skills. Overall, the online portfolio elements contributed positively toward students' writing development in a number of writing areas; organisation, grammar and sentence structure, content, and overall writing aspects.

7.1.2.2 How do students revise their writing drafts throughout the online portfolio implementation?

In line with the students' perceptions, analysis of students' writing drafts as part of the online portfolio entries shows that online portfolio tasks had helped students improve their writing performance in the areas of organisation, content, grammar and sentence structure, and mechanics. Different levels of revision made in each writing area were

demonstrated in the study and show that the most common revisions students made in overall writing assignments throughout the online portfolio implementation were in the area of organisation (52%). Revisions in other areas were content (24%), grammar and sentence structure (19.3%), and mechanics (4.3%). Moreover, online portfolio elements incorporated as part of the process-genre approach of writing (self-revising, peer feedback and teacher feedback) contributed different levels of revision throughout the online portfolio implementation. 38.5% of the total number of revisions were the result of self-revising before the feedback activities, 17.4% were the result of teacher feedback, 13.7% were the result of peer feedback, and 30.4% were the result of self-revising after the feedback activities.

7.1.3 Regarding learner autonomy and motivation

This section summarises the key findings to address the research questions dealing with the learner autonomy aspects which students exercised, students' motivation, and the relationship between learner autonomy and motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation.

7.1.3.1 What aspects of learner autonomy do students exercise throughout the online portfolio implementation?

Learner autonomy is a complex capacity which involves a number of components. In order to be called autonomous, a learner does not necessarily have to demonstrate all the capacity components. Rather, a learner can be called autonomous to some extent if he/she has some components of capacity to take control of their learning. This study revealed that the online portfolio with all the elements had been supportive in enabling students to develop the capacity of learner autonomy involving a number of key

components; metacognitive knowledge (person knowledge, task knowledge and strategy knowledge), metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluation), social strategies and critical thinking.

Concerning students' **metacognitive knowledge**, working on the online portfolio tasks in their academic writing course, students became aware of and able to state their understanding of themselves as a language learner (**person knowledge**), which involved their understanding of what determined their learning success and their preference in learning. Moreover, working on the online portfolios made students understand the significance, requirements, and difficulties of the tasks as elements of the task knowledge. As for the **strategy knowledge**, the online portfolio elements enabled students to monitor their learning experiences and helped raise their awareness of the learning process and understanding of the learning strategies needed to achieve their learning goals. Students demonstrated their knowledge of useful strategies in learning EFL writing which include practicing their skills from the simple to the complex, learning from each other, and reviewing the materials themselves by reopening the book.

In terms of **metacognitive strategies**, the online portfolio enabled students to exercise **planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning**. The online portfolio tasks gave students guidance to learn writing systematically and helped students to understand their learning direction which is necessary for them to plan their learning. The procedures of working on the online portfolio were beneficial for students in monitoring their learning along the process of completing their assignments. For example, the step of self-revising their writing draft and reflecting on their final draft made the students aware of

the improvement they had made, which covered some specific areas of writing (content, grammar and sentence structure, organisation). Through self-revising, students became aware of their level of understanding of the knowledge necessary to improve their writing. As for the peer feedback activities, the present study showed that in producing and receiving feedback, students engaged in thinking about and analysing the performance criteria. It helped them understand the criteria and compare their current work to the criteria. Different online portfolio tasks (self-revising, online feedback, and reflection) were revealed as complementary to each other in enabling students to self-evaluate their learning. The online feedback helped students self-evaluate their learning by giving them input on writing areas they needed to improve as well as areas they were good at. As reflection gave students opportunities to reflect on the results of their learning with regards to all learning activities they had done, it helped students to see their improvement clearly and evaluate their learning. Reflection enabled students to look back at the steps they had taken in the process of writing until they produced their final draft. Moreover, reflection stimulated students to evaluate the learning process they had experienced.

Another component of learner autonomy which was exercised by students during the online portfolio implementation is **social strategies**. This component is specifically enhanced through the online feedback activities which were carried out using the blog as the platform of the online portfolio. The online feedback activities had promoted opportunities for interaction and co-operation among students as part of social strategies (Jiménez Raya, et al., 2007). Moreover, through the online portfolio implementation, students experienced the benefits of working collaboratively, interacting and negotiating

with others, which are prominent factors to promote learner autonomy in a language learning classroom (Bhattacharya & Chauhan, 2010).

Throughout the online portfolio implementation, students demonstrated their **critical thinking**. Students highlighted that online feedback activities were part of the online portfolio tasks which required them to think critically, not only when they had to critically comment on their peers' work, but also when they had to choose which parts of their peers' comments to incorporate on their draft revisions and which parts were inappropriate or incorrect.

With regards to the cultural perspectives of the concept of learner autonomy in the Indonesian context, this study suggests that a particular version of autonomy is relevant to the Indonesian context. The concept of autonomy has been developing with regards to the context in which this study was carried out. Although it is limited in scope as the data analysed were drawn only from the five students involved in the in-depth study, this study suggests that, throughout the online portfolio implementation, students demonstrated a reactive version of autonomy, a version of autonomy suggested by Littlewood (1999). Through the online portfolio implementation, students organised autonomously the resources they had in their attempts to achieve the learning goals that had been formulated in the curriculum. Moreover, this study reveals that social dimensions of autonomy suggested by Dam (1995) and Littlewood (1999) were demonstrated by students in the Indonesian context with a culture that values group achievement and cooperation.

7.1.3.2 What motivates students in learning writing skills using the online portfolio?

In dealing with this research question, the study investigated the students' motivation throughout the online portfolio implementation. The study revealed that the online portfolio elements comprising the use of a blog as the online platform of students' portfolio, self-revising, feedback activities and reflection had enhanced students' motivation in learning writing skills.

The integration of technology in the academic writing class became an attractive aspect that raised students' **interest** to learn writing. Moreover, due to its accessibility, the blog as the online portfolio platform was perceived as a **convenient** platform which enables them to access it anytime from anywhere.

The **relevance** of tasks involved in the online portfolio implementation to the students' goals of learning academic writing skills is another motivating aspect. Students perceived that the step by step procedure of learning writing using the online portfolio helped them achieve their learning goals. For example, students realised that they needed comments from others in order to solve their problems in improving their academic writing skills.

The online portfolio had raised students' **expectancy** of success in their learning. Having their progress in writing documented from time to time on their blog which could be seen by other people had made students feel satisfied with the effort they made. The online medium had also challenged students to produce and publish better writing to their blog. As the online portfolio platform, the blog with all its features had

raised students' interest in learning writing. The online platform had been a motivating factor as it had made students feel comfortable with working on their writing tasks. Moreover, students perceived the blog as a useful tool to improve their ability to write since its features could energise and support them to develop the habit of writing and make creative designs. Having their work published online and seen by many people was perceived as an incentive by students in learning writing. Students who already enjoyed writing before they were introduced to the blog also perceived that they were being more motivated to write better since they had a medium to show their writing to the world. It gave students a **challenge** to show their good work.

Having their writing read and commented on by their peers became another challenging part of the online portfolio implementation. Some positive comments students received on their draft gave students a feeling of **satisfaction** and made them feel more **confident**. The process of online feedback activities helped students to improve their writing; identifying their weaknesses and strengths so that they became more confident in the next writing assignment. Moreover, peer feedback stimulated students' **curiosity** of certain debatable comments and triggered them to find more references to support or check their opinion.

7.1.3.3 What is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the online portfolio implementation?

This study revealed that the relationship of motivation and autonomy is dynamic and not in a single direction. Some findings suggested that autonomy tended to lead to motivation. Online portfolio activities had enabled students to internalise their learning goals and their knowledge of the tasks they had been undertaking. Students' awareness

of important strategies necessary to achieve their learning goals had also improved throughout the online portfolio implementation. As a result, students developed greater control over their own learning, and this condition led them to engage in the learning writing activities supported by online portfolios. In other words, having fostered some components of their autonomy, students had more willingness to engage in the writing activities. However, parts of the results of this study also show that motivation could be perceived as preceding autonomy. The components of the online portfolio which attracted students to engage in the writing activities in the first place had led them to have a better understanding of the learning activities they had been undertaking and the tools they had been utilising. In other words, the study reveals two perspectives of the direction of learner autonomy and motivation; learner autonomy precedes motivation and motivation can lead to autonomy, with changes in direction along the stages.

7.2 Contributions of the study to literature

In this study, the potential of online portfolios to develop Indonesian students' EFL writing skills was examined through an action research project with attention also paid to learner autonomy and motivation. A set of instructional plans for an academic writing class were made, applied, observed and reflected on through the action research cycles. In the area of EFL learning and teaching in Indonesia, this study contributed to the knowledge base of EFL writing instructional design principles with a technology based approach, particularly e-learning, that takes into account learner autonomy and motivation in the Indonesian context. Even though the learning direction in the context under investigation had been determined in the curriculum, an instructional design that was planned appropriately with regards to the students' capacity for autonomy could

support students to learn how to make decisions in their learning, such as the decision to apply a particular learning strategy in their attempts to achieve their learning goals.

In relation to the theory of learner autonomy, the current study contributed to our understanding of how the capacity for autonomy could be demonstrated by students in learning EFL writing skills in an Indonesian context, with the cultural perspectives discussed in section 2.3.2. Moreover, the study confirmed the feasibility of promoting learner autonomy in EFL learning in the Indonesian context with the cultural values embedded there. As demonstrated in this study, learner autonomy as a multidimensional capacity is a suitable concept which is worth fostering among students in the Indonesian context. The students in this study provided evidence of a range of learner autonomy dimensions (metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive strategies, social strategies and critical thinking).

7.3 Implications of the study findings

The implementation of the online portfolio has been beneficial in supporting learners of EFL writing to improve their writing skills. Students who participated in the study also perceived technologies as supportive tools in their learning. The following section will discuss the implications of the study for EFL writing teachers, the institution where the research took place, policy makers and further research.

7.3.1 Implications for EFL writing teachers

The findings of my study are expected to inspire EFL writing teachers as well as teachers of other subjects particularly in the institution in which the study was conducted, to reflect on their teaching and to be encouraged to implement an online

portfolio as part of the technology tools to support their students' learning. As the use of technology in language learning has been encouraged by the institution, sophisticated technology facilities have been provided, and the benefits of utilising the tools in learning have been evidenced, their utilisation must be maximised with appropriate planning. The EFL writing teachers need to enrich their knowledge about the potential of ICT, and in particular online portfolios, to support students' learning, give themselves an opportunity to experience the benefits of the online portfolio, and at the same time to understand the roles of the teacher in an online learning environment, including how to enhance students' motivation. With regards to the concept of autonomy, EFL writing teachers should also learn which components of this capacity they can work on when using online portfolios.

7.3.2 Implications for the institution

This study suggests that the institution needs to provide training for any teachers willing to incorporate ICT in their learning. The teachers' skills in facilitating students' learning can be developed through action research, as I did in this study. Moreover, when more than one teacher intends to implement ICT in their teaching in the same term, action research can be conducted collaboratively.

Some lecturers in the institution in which I conducted this study provided positive feedback towards the implementation of the online portfolio in the academic writing class. For example, a lecturer in the Indonesian Education graduate school and some lecturers in the undergraduate programme of the English department shared their interest in utilising the online portfolio in their teaching regardless of their lack of experience with the tool.

In order for the ICT implementation to be successful, the institution should improve and maintain the quality of the ICT facilities such as the quality of the internet. In term of electricity, an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) should be provided to make sure that the class activities using the technology are not interrupted by a power cut.

7.3.3 Implications for policy makers

The study has shown that online portfolios, which were planned and implemented with regards to the particular context, were beneficial for students in developing their EFL writing skills and had the potential to foster learner autonomy and motivation. The findings can be used by policy makers to identify the necessary investment needed in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning activities. A review of the curriculum is needed to ensure that students are supported in developing autonomy, because this capacity enhances students' learning and motivation. Moreover, this study suggested that online portfolios are worth considering to be implemented to facilitate assessment for learning, a form of assessment which is intended to provide information on students' performance that can be used to support learning and to improve teaching (Black and William, 1998, Parr and Timperley, 2010). It is recommended that utilisation of information and communication technology, particularly online portfolios, should be integrated into the language learning curricula. When the use of an online portfolio is integrated into the language learning curricula, investment should be allocated not only for providing technology facilities, but it should also be allocated for improving teachers' professional development and technical support for successful technology implementation in education, as suggested by the findings of the study.

7.3.4 Implications for me as a teacher

Throughout this study I learned a lot of valuable lessons as a teacher, particularly how to facilitate Indonesian students' learning of EFL writing using online portfolios. The action research was very beneficial for me as a teacher in that I became aware of the issues that emerged during the teaching and learning activities using the online portfolios and was able to tackle them through the action research cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

Throughout this study, I participated in two international conferences when I met other EFL teachers from different countries. I presented parts of my study findings in the International Conference on Computers in Education (ICCE) 2014 in Japan and in the World Congress of Modern Languages (WCML) 2015 in Canada. The conferences gave me valuable opportunities to share my research with practitioners, which enabled me to get further feedback on the ways in which my research related to practice and to understand better the real-world context of my work.

As for the context of my university in which this study was conducted, some lecturers shared their willingness to take on the challenge of utilising the ICT facilities to support students' learning. I am looking forward to going back to my university and working together with other lecturers to enhance our students' learning using the available ICT facilities. Having experienced some problems and tackled them through my action research, I plan to invite other lecturers in my university to a workshop to share my findings. With the involvement of more lecturers, it is expected that the implementation of online portfolios can be continued and developed. Moreover, it is expected that

similar problems in future ICT implementation, particularly of online portfolios to facilitate students' learning in my university, can be minimised.

7.3.5 Implications for developing practice

In December 2014, I participated in the International Conference on Computers in Education (ICCE) 2014 in Japan. It was an opportunity for me to share my current research and receive useful feedback from practitioners and researchers on the use of computers in Education from different contexts. During my presentation, I came across an English teacher of a school in Japan who shared an interest in implementing a blog-based online portfolio, and we came up with the idea of having long distance collaboration in online portfolios implementation. Making a collaboration of different groups of students in different countries to implement the online portfolio is worth considering. Interaction with students from different countries in online feedback activities could have the potential to raise students' interest in participating in commenting activities. The potential of the online learning tools enables students to engage in distance interaction with other students from different countries, supported by EFL teachers of both classes.

7.3.6 Implications for further research

Many universities worldwide including those in Indonesia already encourage and require their students and faculties to utilise computers in teaching and learning activities. This study has shown the benefits of implementing technology tools, particularly online portfolios, in developing students' EFL writing capabilities and enabling students to exercise autonomy in language learning. This study examined the participants' perceptions on the use of technology tools. As the use of technology in

Education has been encouraged and the online portfolio has been proven to be a beneficial tool, it is worthy of further study to explore how students and teachers in different contexts in Indonesia perceive online portfolio implementation if it is made a requirement, regardless of the level of teachers' initial interests to involve technology in their teaching.

In my study, the online portfolio was implemented for one semester with students interested in using technology for learning. It is recommended to conduct further study over a lengthier period of time to investigate if the learning benefits offered by such implementation are sustained over time. By conducting such a study, more factors constituting the success of implementing the tools such as quality of students' motivation could be identified, which would be useful for teachers who commence implementing online portfolios to support students' learning.

Considering the potential of the online portfolio and the range of online tools such as video material, images, sound files and so on that are available, it is worth researching how such tools might facilitate students' learning not only in EFL writing, but also in the development of EFL speaking skills. In this way the full affordances of the Internet could be drawn upon to enhance students' experiences and help develop autonomy.

7.4 Limitations of the study

In this study, my position was as a teacher researcher who was interested in utilising technology in teaching and examining my own practice. The applicability of the study to other contexts with different teachers is limited as the findings of the current study was influenced by my personal interest in utilising technology in language learning, my

teaching style and my experiences of using technology tools in learning. Limitations of the findings' generalisability exist as similar studies with other different contexts will result in different findings; however, it can be transferable to other contexts depending on the degree of similarity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study provided a comprehensive description of the participants, a discussion of my experiences, and a description of the unique context in Indonesia with its cultural circumstances, for the readers who intend to apply the findings to determine any similarities to their own context.

Students' reflection was part of the online portfolio entries in the study for exploring students' experiences in the online portfolio implementation. Students' lack of experiences in writing reflectively could have restricted the exploration of students' more reflective experience. Moreover, as demanded by the students themselves, the reflection was written in English, which is not the participants' first language. Even though students did not see the use of English in writing reflection as a problem, the fact that it is not their first language could, to some extent, become a barrier for them in expressing their thoughts and feelings.

If I could start all over again, I would involve the students from the early stages of online portfolio implementation. I would involve them in planning how to work on the online portfolio. As I revealed in this study, students enthusiastically contributed useful ideas, for example, in how to organise the peer feedback activities. I should have allocated more time and effort at the beginning to work on the students' ability to write constructive comments on their peers' work. As my students were mostly EFL teachers, I expected them to have such skills more than students from a different background. In

this regard, however, I needed to think more carefully about who my students were and what their experience was. As for students' reflective writing, it could have been richer if it had been done in the students' first language (Indonesian) and some special sessions focusing on this were allocated to give students more opportunities to practise writing reflectively.

7.5 Reflections on me as a researcher

The process of conducting my PhD research project and writing this thesis has given me valuable experiences and lessons as a researcher. At the early stage of my research journey, I joined various courses to develop my primary research skills such as qualitative and quantitative research methods. Taking part in these courses were inevitably helpful for me in that they gave me clearer picture of research procedures I was supposed to follow. However, different stages of my research involved various tough processes I had to deal with. The challenging process started from the early stage of my research, when I had to determine my research focus and had literature reading to broaden my horizon on my areas of interest. Focusing my research areas was not as simple as I thought. Moreover, the process of determining my research focus occurred throughout my research journey, including when I was in my writing up stage. Regardless of this process that sometimes was frustrating, I have been learning how to view a specific area from a broader angle/point of view.

The research process which required me to plan and prepare each stage myself carefully has shaped my time management skills. This aspect of my professional development was not without any challenge. There were some circumstances beyond my plan which required me to re-adjust my time-plan. With the guidance of my research supervisors as

well as the lessons I learned from working on learner autonomy as an area of my research, I feel that I too have been developing and practising how to work autonomously; I set my own research agenda, ensure my progress based on my timetable, and reflect on my experiences for both my personal and professional development.

Engaging in the data collection in my fieldwork and working on the data analysis which I have been doing since my fieldwork until the final stage of my PhD research, has made the biggest contribution to my development as a researcher. The support from my supervisors during these stages was specifically important as they provided critical and practical feedback to deal with various problems I faced. I acknowledge that throughout the supervision meetings, I have a better understanding of various methodology issues which is important for me as a researcher, not only for my PhD research, but also for other research projects I will carry out in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1
Ethical approval letter



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

**The
School
Of
Education.**

Silih Warni
PhD

Head of School
Professor Cathy Nutbrown

School of Education
388 Glossop Road
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S10 2JA

24 September 2013

Telephone: +44 (0)114 2228180
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Dear Silih,

ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER

Implementing electronic portfolio to foster learner autonomy in writing class

Thank you for submitting your ethics application. I am writing to confirm that your application has now been approved.

We recommend you refer to the reviewers' additional comments (please see attached). You should discuss how you are going to respond to these comments with your supervisor BEFORE you proceed with your research.

This letter is evidence that your application has been approved and should be included as an Appendix in your final submission.

Good luck with your research.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dan Goodley'.

Professor Dan Goodley
Chair of the School of Education Ethics Review Panel

cc Terry Lamb
Davy Heymann (RIS)

Enc Ethical Review Feedback Sheet(s)

Appendix 2

Letter of approval for data collection



UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH PROF. DR. HAMKA
SEKOLAH PASCASARJANA

Jl. Warung Buncit Raya No. 17, Pancoran Jakarta Selatan 12790
Telp. (021) 79184063, 79184065 Fax. (021) 79184068
Email : sekolahpascasarjana@uhamka.ac.id, www.uhamka.ac.id

Number : 4308/F.03.04/2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that the English Education Graduate School of The University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. HAMKA has no objection of Mr. Silih Warni, a PhD student at the School of Education, The University of Sheffield, collecting data for his study, "*Implementation of electronic portfolios in an EFL writing class*".

The English Education Graduate School of The University of Muhammadiyah Prof. Dr. Hamka agrees to be a study location, support the research and provide access to the university facilities necessary for the success of the research.

Jakarta, 30 August 2013

Head of English Education Graduate School



Dr. Gunawan Suryoputro, M.Hum.

Appendix 3
Participant Consent Form

Appendix 4
Participant Information Sheet

1. **Research Project Title:**

Implementing electronic portfolios to foster learner autonomy in a writing class

2. **Invitation paragraph**

You are being invited to take part in the research project “Implementing electronic portfolio to foster learner autonomy in writing class”. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

3. **What is the project’s purpose?**

One of the prominent issues in the theory and practice of language teaching recently is the importance of facilitating students to foster autonomy in their learning (Benson, 2011). Learner autonomy as a capacity necessary for learners to make their learning efficient and effective (Dafei, 2007) has become a part of higher education goals in Indonesia. However, learners sometimes find it difficult to accept the challenge of learner autonomy and will therefore need to be supported (Jiménez Raya et al., 2007). This study aims to explore how electronic portfolio as a potential e-learning tool can be used to facilitate learner autonomy development in EFL classes and to identify students’ perceptions on the use of electronic portfolios for their learning process. The field work will take 4 months from September until December 2013.

4. **Why have I been chosen?**

It has been decided that all first semester students enrolling in this academic writing class will be introduced to the use of electronic portfolios to support their learning. You will all be asked to fill in the students’ survey questionnaires at the beginning of the programme. For the in-depth study, data collection is mainly conducted through face-to-face interviews with students separately. Five participants will be selected for the in-depth interviews on the basis of their willingness to share their experiences on using the electronic portfolio and their ability to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

5. **Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in the research, though you will all be required to use the electronic portfolio as part of the curriculum. All students in this academic writing class will be asked to fill in the student survey questionnaires at the beginning of the programme. The consent to take part in the survey will be included in the questionnaire. You will be given this information sheet to keep as you decide to take part in the survey. If you take part in the following up interviews, another consent form will be given to sign, and you can still withdraw at any time without it affecting you in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

6. **What will happen to me if I take part?**

The research is planned to be conducted from September – December 2013. The information you contribute could be involved at any point during this period of time. The research methods include questionnaires that you need to fill in at the beginning of the project, electronic portfolio entries that need to be completed throughout the electronic portfolio implementation period, and

interviews with five selected participants that will be done twice during the intervention and once after the intervention. It is estimated that the interviews will take between 30-50 minutes. With your permission, the interview will be tape recorded. The tapes and information will only be used anonymously and for academic purposes. All the recorded interview files will be stored safely and destroyed after the research is finished. Participants will not be personally identified and information on individuals (such as name, gender, ethnicity and so on) will not be revealed under any circumstances.

7. What do I have to do?

If the information on this sheet is clear, you need to fill in the questionnaire with consent stated on the introductory section. If you take part in the in-depth interviews and allow the researcher to look at your electronic portfolio entries as part of data source, you need to sign another consent form, but you can withdraw at any time.

8. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable disadvantages or risks in taking part.

9. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your engagement will be beneficial for you as a learner as it will be part of efforts to foster learner autonomy. It is hoped that this work will give you opportunity to experience the electronic portfolio implementation and voice your perceptions on it.

10. What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?

If the research has to stop for some unexpected or accidental reason, all the information you contribute in this research will be destroyed, and you will not be affected.

11. What if something goes wrong?

Any enquiries or complaints about any aspect of this research may be made by contacting the research supervisor:

Dr Terry Lamb
University of Sheffield
School of Education
388 Glossop Road Sheffield S10 2JA
t.lamb@sheffield.ac.uk
Tel: (+44) (0)114 222 8118
Fax: (+44) (0)114 222 8105
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/education/staff/academic/lambt.html>

Should you feel your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction, you can contact the University's Registrar and Secretary:

Roscoe Hastings, Research Officer
Telephone: 0114 222 1108
Email: roscoe.hastings@sheffield.ac.uk

12. **Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

This research complies with the Data Protection Act 1998. All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications. Please see No.6 in this information sheet to see how information will be kept confidential.

13. **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The information you contribute will be transcribed and analysed. The analysed data will be organised as a part of the interviewer's thesis. The results might be presented as a published paper or report. Any personal information such as your name will not be identified in any report or publication.

14. **Who is organising and funding the research?**

This is PhD research that is being sponsored by Education Ministry of Indonesia.

15. **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This research project has been ethically approved by the School of Education Ethics Review Procedure. The University's Research Ethics Committee has monitored the application and delivery of the University's Ethics Review Procedure across the University.

16. **Contact for further information**

Researcher's Name: Silih Warni

Email: edp12sw@sheffield.ac.uk

Address: School of Education The University of Sheffield 388 Glossop Road, Sheffield S10 2JA

Supervisor Name: Dr Terry Lamb

Email: t.lamb@sheffield.ac.uk

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Tel: (+)44 (0)114 222 8118

Fax: (+)44 (0)114 222 8105

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/education/staff/academic/lambt.html>

During the interview, if you don't want to continue or need to break for any reason, please do feel free to say or stop the tape recorder by pressing the "pause" button. And at the end of the interview, if you want to withdraw from the interview, or if you do not want me use the tape or transcribe it, I will give the cassette tape to you, and if you like, you can wipe it. You will be given a copy of the information sheet and the signed consent form, if appropriate. Would you please sign the consent form? Thanks for your time and friendly help. If you have any problem about this interview or are interested in the research, please do feel free to contact me. My contact information is above. Again, many thanks. Your participant in this research is sincerely appreciated. If it is alright, we will start the interview now. Please relax and express your ideas with ease.

Question to insert into an information sheet if the research involves producing recorded media:

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

The audio recordings of your interviews and the transcribed data made during this research will be used for data analysis. In addition, the transcribed data will be used for illustration in conference presentations and lectures. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

Appendix 5
Questionnaire (English version)

Academic Writing Student Survey

Thank you for taking time for this academic writing student survey. Your information is important for the online portfolio implementation in this academic writing class. This survey should only take about 15 minutes. The information you give will be confidential and will not

affect your grade. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask the teacher. You voluntarily agree to participate in this survey by filling in the questionnaire. In the last part, please indicate if you would be willing to participate in the following up interviews. An information sheet and another consent form will be given if you are willing to take part.

Please mark the appropriate letter next to your answer choice with an "x" that best describes your response

Age range

- a. 19 – 25 b. 26 – 35 c. 36 – 45 d. 46 – 55 e. over 55

Previous education

- a. English department b. Non-English department

Gender

- a. Male b. Female

Please describe your English writing learning experience by answering the questions as fully as possible:

What kind of English writing did you do previously?

How did you learn to write in English? Did you just read and memorize theories of sentence and paragraph structure, coherence, etc, before starting to practice writing, or did you have more writing practice while learning the theories? Did you wait until your teacher asked you to do certain tasks or actively initiate any tasks you thought important? Did you study by yourself without your friends or work collaboratively with them? How did you monitor your progress? etc.

What was your opinion of the way in which you previously learned English writing? (What did you like/not like, find useful/not find useful, find enjoyable or not etc?)

What is your opinion about the importance of academic writing skills? Why are they important/not important?

Tell me about your previous experiences in using technology in a language classroom.

Have you ever used the Internet in your everyday life? What have you used them for (browsing information, facebook, chat room, blog, email, shopping online, etc.)?

Have you used internet for language learning? If so, how?

Have you used electronic portfolio for language learning? If so, what do you think of it?

How do you perceive the use of technology in language learning?

Would you mind if the teacher looks at your online work as part of the research data?
a. Yes b. No

Would you be willing to participate in the following up interview?
a. Yes b. No

Name: _____

Date : _____

Appendix 6
Questionnaire (Indonesian version)

Academic Writing Student Survey

Terima kasih atas kesediaan anda meluangkan waktu untuk mengisi kuesioner kelas academic writing ini. Informasi yang anda berikan akan sangat bermanfaat untuk penerapan portfolio elektronik di kelas academic writing. Pengisian kuesioner ini hanya memerlukan waktu sekitar 20 menit. Informasi yang anda berikan akan dirahasiakan dan tidak akan mempengaruhi nilai anda di kelas academic writing. Jika ada hal yang kurang jelas dalam pengisian kuesioner ini, silakan menanyakan kepada dosen pengajar/peneliti. Dengan mengisi kuesioner ini berarti anda secara sukarela bersedia untuk berpartisipasi dalam survey ini. Di bagian akhir kuesioner ini silakan menyatakan apakah anda bersedia untuk berpartisipasi dalam wawancara untuk menindak lanjuti kuesioner ini. Lembar informasi dan persetujuan akan diberikan bila anda menyatakan kesediaan untuk berpartisipasi dalam wawancara tersebut.

Pilihlah jawaban dengan memberi tanda “x” pada huruf jawaban yang anda kehendaki.

Usia

- b. 19 – 25 b. 26 – 35 c. 36 – 45 d. 46 – 55 e. over 55

Latar belakang pendidikan sebelumnya

- b. English department b. Non-English department

Jenis kelamin

- b. Laki-laki b. Perempuan

Deskripsikan pengalaman belajar menulis bahasa Inggris anda dengan menjawab pertanyaan-pertanyaan berikut selengkap-lengkapnya:

Jenis menulis bahasa Inggris apa yang pernah anda pelajari/lakukan?

Bagaimana anda belajar menulis dalam bahasa Inggris? Apakah anda hanya membaca dan menghafalkan teori struktur kalimat, paragraf, atau teori menulis essay sebelum memulai praktik menulis? Ataukah anda lebih banyak mempraktikkan ketrampilan menulis sambil mempelajari teori-teori yang disebutkan tadi? Apakah anda menunggu sampai guru anda menyuruh anda mengerjakan tugas tertentu ataukah anda dengan aktif berinisiatif mengerjakan latihan yang anda anggap penting? Apakah anda belajar sendiri tanpa teman-teman anda ataukah anda belajar secara kolaboratif dengan teman-teman anda? Bagaimana anda memonitor/memantau perkembangan kemampuan menulis anda?

Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang cara anda belajar menulis bahasa Inggris yang pernah anda lakukan sebelumnya? (Apa yang anda suka/tidak suka, yang anda anggap bermanfaat/ tidak, anda anggap menyenangkan/tidak, dan sebagainya?)

Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang pentingnya skill academic writing? Mengapa skill tersebut penting/tidak penting?

Ceritakan pengalaman anda menggunakan teknologi dalam kelas bahasa.

Apakah anda pernah memakai internet dalam kehidupan anda sehari-hari? Jika iya, untuk keperluan apa anda menggunakan internet (browsing informasi, facebook, chatting, blog, shopping online, dan sebagainya)?

Apakah anda pernah menggunakan internet untuk belajar bahasa? Bila iya, bagaimana?

Apakah anda pernah menggunakan portfolio elektronik untuk belajar bahasa? Bila iya, bagaimana pendapat anda?

Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang penggunaan teknologi dalam pembelajaran bahasa?

Apakah anda tidak berkeberatan bila pengajar/peneliti menggunakan pekerjaan/tugas online anda selama kelas academic writing sebagai bagian dari data penelitian?

- b. Iya b. Tidak

Apakah anda bersedia untuk berpartisipasi dalam interview/wawancara untuk menindak lanjuti survey ini.

- b. Iya b. Tidak

Nama : _____

Tanggal : _____

Appendix 7

Matrix of research questions, interview topics and interview questions

Research Questions	Interview topics	Interview questions
<p>What motivates students in using electronic portfolios in learning writing?</p>	<p>Components of electronic portfolio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blog as electronic portfolio platform • Collection of works • Selecting works • Publishing works • Comments • Reflection <p>Components of foreign language learning motivation (Dornyei, 1994a: 280)</p> <p>Learner level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for Achievement • Self-Confidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Language Use Anxiety * Perceived L2 Competence * Causal Attributions * Self-Efficacy <p>Learning situation level</p> <p>Course specific motivational components</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest • Relevance • Expectancy • Satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you perceive the importance of academic writing skills? • Did electronic portfolio challenge you to improve your writing achievement? If so, how? • Did electronic portfolio help you to build your confidence in writing? If so, how? • Are there any parts of electronic portfolio tasks that rise the feeling of satisfaction of the writing tasks you have done throughout the electronic portfolio implementation? • How do you perceive the influence of electronic portfolio with all its components towards your interest to learn writing? • Do you think the electronic portfolio tasks are relevant to your learning writing goals? • Did electronic portfolio help you to increase your expectancy of success of your writing tasks? If so, how?
<p>What aspects of learner autonomy are fostered through the electronic portfolio implementation?</p>	<p>Control over learning management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Organisation • Evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did electronic portfolio change the way you plan your learning writing? How? • Do you think electronic portfolio

	<p>Control over cognitive processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention • Reflection • Metacognitive knowledge (person knowledge, strategic knowledge, task knowledge) <p>Control over learning content: is a part of control over learning management focusing on what and why.</p>	<p>has helped you to monitor the learning tasks?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think electronic portfolio has been helpful in evaluating how well you have learned? How? • Did electronic portfolio guide you to understand how to learn writing better? How? • Did electronic portfolio help you to have better understanding of your strengths and weaknesses in writing? How? • Did electronic portfolio help you to have better understanding of the best strategies to improve your writing? How? • Did electronic portfolio help you to have better understanding of the learning writing tasks? How?
<p>What is the relationship between motivation and autonomy throughout the electronic portfolio implementation?</p>		<p>The data to answer this research question will be generated from the interview questions of motivation and learner autonomy.</p>
<p>What problems emerge during the electronic portfolio implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic portfolio tools? • Technology skills • Students' engagement • Technical problem, e.g internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you find any difficulties in developing your electronic portfolio (Creating blog, Posting students' works, writing reflection,

	connection	<p>giving comments)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you find any problems any technical problems with the ICT facilities that unable you to work on your electronic portfolio well (e.g. internet connection)? • Do you think the facilitator gave enough support for you in using electronic portfolio especially when dealing with technical problems? • Could you identify parts of the lessons using electronic portfolio that went well and that need to be improved?
How can a facilitator facilitate students' participation in the electronic portfolio?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing handout and sufficient guidance in every step • Evaluating his teaching practice • Giving constructive and clear feedback, giving reward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you think the teacher gave sufficient support during the electronic portfolio implementation? • What supports from the teacher do you find very helpful in the electronic portfolio implementation? • What do you think the teacher should do to improve his role as an electronic portfolio facilitator?
Is there any improvement in students' writing competence after the electronic portfolio implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization • Grammar and sentence structure • Content • Mechanics • Format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you perceive the impact of electronic portfolio for your writing improvement? <p>(Data for these writing components will mainly be generated from students writing assignments)</p>

Appendix 8

List of interview questions (English version)

Interview 1

Tell me about your experience in using blog based online portfolio in writing lessons so far.

1. How do you feel about creating your blog? Do you think the blog is user friendly?
2. What do you particularly like about using the blog?
3. Do you find any difficulties in managing your online portfolio on your blog? If so, what difficulties?
4. What do you think about the teacher's support in the online portfolio implementation so far? In which parts would you need more support from the teacher?
5. What do you think about giving comments on your friends' works? What do you learn from it? Do you find any difficulties?
6. Do you think the procedure to give feedback (students are required to give a written comment on the work of at least one of his/her classmates' randomly) is effective enough? How would you want it to be better?
7. What do you think of writing reflection on your assignments as the evidence of your learning process?
 - Do you think it is easy or hard to write your reflection? Why?
 - Do you think it is useful? Why or why not?
 - What do/don't you like about it?
8. How do you perceive the influence of online portfolios on your willingness to learn writing?
9. Could you identify parts of the lessons using online portfolio that went well and parts that need to be improved?
10. How would you want the writing lessons to use online portfolios better?

Interview 2

So far, we have done two assignments on the online portfolio with weblog commenting. Share your further experience in using the online portfolio to learn writing.

1. How do you feel about developing your online portfolio in your web blog? Do find it easier?
2. If managing your portfolio in your web blog is still hard for you, what do you suggest to make it easier for you?
3. Of the online peer review we have done, do you find the comments you receive are getting more helpful to improve your writing? Why or why not? And do you find it useful to provide comments on other learners' work?
4. The writing process has been done with the following steps: Step 1 – writing draft, Step 2 – self-editing, step 3 - posting paragraphs to your blog, Step 4 – peer and teacher review step 5 – revising and 6- reflecting. How do you perceive online portfolio with regards to the above process of writing to help you improve your writing?
5. We have had two types of academic writing assignments: paragraph writing and chronological order essay. You had to write and rewrite your drafts as well as read, and review other classmates' drafts. Do you think you have improved your ability to write comments? If so, how?
6. Do you think you have improved your writing form others' comments? If yes, How
7. What did you feel about posting your writing assignment as a part of your online portfolio entry? How do you feel when you receive comments?
8. What do you understand by reflection? Do you still have any problems in writing reflection on your works? If so, what problems?
9. How do you perceive the role of reflection in relation to your writing improvement?

Interview 3

1. What motivates students in using online portfolios in learning writing?

- How do you perceive the importance of academic writing skills?
- Did online portfolio challenge you to improve your writing achievement? If so, how?
- Did online portfolio help you to build your confidence in writing? If so, how?
- Are there any parts of the online portfolio tasks that increase the feeling of satisfaction with the writing tasks you have done throughout the online portfolio implementation? (This is a complicated sentence – can it be simplified?)
- How do you perceive the influence of online portfolio with all its components towards your interest to learn writing?
- Do you think the online portfolio tasks are relevant to your learning writing goals?
- Did online portfolio help you to increase your expectancy of success of your writing tasks? If so, how?

(Check this set of questions – there may be some which are very similar.)

2. What aspects of learner autonomy are fostered through the online portfolio implementation?

- Did online portfolio change the way you plan your learning with regard to writing? How?
- Do you think online portfolio has helped you to understand the importance of the learning tasks?
- Do you think online portfolio has been helpful in evaluating how well you have learned? How?
- Did online portfolio guide you to understand how to learn writing better? How?
- Did online portfolio help you to have better understanding of your strengths and weaknesses in writing? How?
- Did online portfolio help you to have better understanding of the best strategies to improve your writing? How?
- Did online portfolio help you to have better understanding of the learning writing tasks? How?

3. What problems emerged during the online portfolio implementation?

- Did you find any difficulties in developing your online portfolio (Creating blog, Posting students' works, writing reflection, giving comments)?
- Did you find any technical problems with the ICT facilities that unable you to work on your online portfolio well (e.g. internet connection)?

- Do you think the facilitator gave enough support for you in using online portfolio especially when dealing with technical problems?
 - Could you identify parts of the lessons using online portfolio that went well and that need to be improved?
4. How does a facilitator facilitate students' participation in the online portfolio?
- Do you think the teacher gave sufficient support during the online portfolio implementation?
 - What supports from the teacher do you find very helpful in the online portfolio implementation?
 - What do you think the teacher should do to improve his role as an online portfolio facilitator?
5. How do you perceive the impact of online portfolio on your writing?
- How do you perceive the impact of online portfolio on your writing?

Appendix 9

List of interview questions (Indonesian version)

Interview 1

Ceritakan pengalaman anda dalam menggunakan poertfolio elektronik berbasis blog dalam kuliah writing sejauh ini

1. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang membuat blog? Apakah menurut anda blog cukup mudah dibuat dan dikelola?
2. Apa yang anda sukai tentang pemakaian blog?
3. Apakah anda menemui kesulitan dalam mengelola portfolio elektronik pada blog anda? Jika iya, apa kesulitan tersebut?
4. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang dukungan dosen pengajar dalam penerapan portfolio elektronik sejauh ini? Di bagian mana anda membutuhkan dukungan/bantuan lebih dari pengajar?
5. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang memberikan komentar pada hasil tulisan teman anda? Apa yang anda pelajari dari aktivitas itu? Apakah anda menemui kesulitan dalam memberikan komentar tersebut?
6. Apakah menurut anda prosedur memberikan feedback dimana anda diminta untuk memberikan komentar pada hasil tulisan minimal dari satu teman anda, cukup efektif? Apakah menurut anda ada cara/prosedur yang lebih baik?
7. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang menulis refleksi pada hasil tugas menulis anda sebagai bukti proses belajar?
 - Apakah menurut anda menulis refleksi sulit atau mudah? Mengapa?
 - Apakah menurut anda menulis refleksi bermanfaat? Mengapa / mengapa tidak?
 - Apa yang anda sukai/tidak sukai tentang menulis refleksi?
8. Bagaimana persepsi anda tentang pengaruh portfolio elektronik terhadap motivasi/keinginan anda belajar writing?
9. Dapatkah anda menyebutkan bagian mana dari pembelajaran writing menggunakan portfolio elektronik yang berjalan baik dan yang perlu diperbaiki?
10. Menurut anda, bagaimana proses belajar writing menggunakan elektronik portfolio bisa menjadi lebih baik?

Interview 2

Sejauh ini, kita telah mengerjakan/menyelesaikan dua tugas writing pada portfolio elektronik dengan fasilitas komentar pada blog. Ceritakan pengalaman anda dalam menggunakan portfolio elektronik dalam pembelajaran writing!

1. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang mengembangkan portfolio elektronik pada blog anda? Sejauh ini, apakah menurut anda semakin mudah?
2. Jika mengelola portfolio dalam blog anda masih anda rasa sulit/berat, apa saran anda untuk membuatnya lebih mudah bagi anda?
3. Dari aktivitas peer review (memberi komentar pada hasil tulisan teman anda) yang sudah kita lakukan, apakah menurut anda komentar yang anda terima semakin membantu anda memperbaiki kemampuan menulis anda? Kenapa/kenapa tidak? Dan apakah menurut anda memberikan komentar pada pekerjaan/tulisan orang lain itu bermanfaat bagi anda?
4. Proses menulis telah dilakukan dengan langkah-langkah berikut: Langkah 1 – menulis draft, langkah 2 – self-editing, langkah 3 – posting tulisan ke blog anda, langkah 4 – memberikan dan menerima feedback dari teman dan pengajar – langkah 5 – revisi, langkah 6 menulis refleksi. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang penggunaan portfolio terkait dengan langkah-langkah menulis tersebut untuk membantu anda meningkatkan kemampuan menulis?
5. Kita telah membuat dua tugas academic writing: menulis paragraf dan menulis cause and effect essay. Anda harus menulis dan merevisi draft tulisan anda, dan juga membaca dan memberi komentar pada tulisan teman anda. Apakah menurut anda, kemampuan anda untuk memberi komentar pada tulisan teman anda meningkat? Bila iya, bagaimana hal tersebut terjadi?
6. Bagaimana perasaan anda tentang memposting hasil tulisan anda sebagai bagian dari portfolio elektronik? Bagaimana perasaan anda ketika mendapat komentar dari teman atau dosen pengajar anda?
7. Apa yang anda pahami tentang menulis refleksi pada hasil tulisan anda? Apakah anda masih memiliki kesulitan dalam menulis refleksi pada hasil tulisan anda? Jika iya, apa kesulitan tersebut?
8. Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang peran menulis refleksi pada hasil tulisan anda terhadap peningkatan kemampuan menulis anda?

Interview 3

1. Apa yang memotivasi siswa menggunakan portfolio elektronik dalam pembelajaran writing?

- Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang pentingnya skill academic writing?
- Apakah portfolio elektronik memberi tantangan pada anda untuk meningkatkan kemampuan writing anda? Bila iya, bagaimana portfolio elektronik memberi tantangan pada anda?
- Apakah PE membantu anda membangun kepercayaan diri dalam menulis? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah ada bagian dari PE yang menimbulkan kepuasan bagi anda terhadap tugas menulis yang sudah anda kerjakan selama penerapan PE?
- Bagaimana pendapat anda tentang pengaruh PE dengan segala komponennya terhadap ketertarikan anda belajar menulis?
- Apakah menurut anda penerapan PE relevan dengan tujuan anda belajar menulis? Bila iya, bagaiman relevansinya?
- Apakah PE membantu anda meningkatkan harapan anda untuk berhasil dalam belajar menulis? Bila iya, bagaimana hal tersebut terjadi?

2. Aspek learner autonomy apakah yang meningkat selama penerapan electronic portfolio?

- Apakah PE merubah cara anda merencanakan aktivitas belajar writing? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah PE telah membantu anda menilai/memahami manfaat aktivitas-aktivitas belajar dalam proses belajar writing? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah PE membantu anda mengevaluasi seberapa baik anda belajar? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah PE mengarahkan anda untuk mengerti bagaimana belajar writing dengan lebih baik? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah PE membantu anda memahami kelebihan dan kekurangan anda dalam menulis? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah PE membantu anda mengetahui strategi terbaik untuk belajar writing? Bila iya, bagaimana?
- Apakah PE membantu anda memahami aktivitas-aktivitas dalam belajar writing dan tujuannya? Bila iya, bagaimana?

3. Masalah-masalah apa yang muncul selama penerapan electronic portfolio?

- Apakah anda menghadapi masalah dalam mengembangkan PE anda (membuat blog, memposting tulisan anda, menulis refleksi, memberi komentar pada tulisan teman anda)?
- Apakah anda menemui masalah teknis dengan fasilitas teknologi yang menghambat anda dalam menerapkan PE (misalnya koneksi internet)?
- Apakah menurut anda fasilitator/dosen pengajar memberikan dukungan yang cukup kepada anda dalam menggunakan PE terutama yang berkaitan dengan hal-hal teknis (membuat blog, dsb)?
- Dapatkah anda mengidentifikasi/menyebutkan bagian dari aktivitas belajar menggunakan PE yang berjalan baik dan yang perlu diperbaiki?

4. Bagaimana seorang fasilitator dapat memfasilitasi partisipasi siswa dalam electronic portfolio?

- Apakah menurut anda dosen pengajar memberi support yang cukup selama penerapan PE?
- Dukungan apa yang diberikan oleh dosen pengajar yang anda rasakan membantu anda dalam menerapkan PE?
- Apa yang menurut anda harus dilakukan pengajar untuk memperbaiki perannya sebagai fasilitator dalam penerapan PE?

5. How do you perceive the impact of electronic portfolio for your writing improvement?

- Bagaimana persepsi/pendapat anda tentang pengaruh PE terhadap peningkatan skill menulis anda?

Appendix 10

Sample data analysis — Coding categories and samples of data extracts

Main coding categories	Sub-categories	Examples
Components of Learner autonomy	<p>Metacognitive knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person knowledge • Task knowledge • Strategy knowledge <p>Metacognitive strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Monitoring 	<p>“I remember faster when I write what I experience on a piece of paper”</p> <p>“It was more difficult essay than before because I had to argue my statement with the supporting details (facts, quotations, and statistic). Actually in this case, I had to learn more the organisation of argumentative essay”</p> <p>“Therefore, I must overcome those problems by practicing a lot and reading a lot in order to improve my writing skill”</p> <p>“The online portfolio helps me planning my learning because when we write in our online portfolio, we can think about what we should do now, after that, what we should do next, until we could make a good writing.”</p> <p>“It helps me some on how I write. The</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation <p>Social strategies</p> <p>Critical thinking</p>	<p>process itself with the guidelines...how I write from really awful until I get the guidelines and looking at the comments and everything.”</p> <p>“In my opinion it turned out to be quite all right. I am able to create sentences that describe the place well. Despite the good sentences that I made, I didn’t have a good topic sentence.”</p> <p>“By giving comments to our friends, we give feedback to them on their writing. For me writing comments is more difficult than reading comments because we do not only comment whether our friend’s writing is good or bad, but it is more about how we can help our friends to improve their writing skills.”</p> <p>“I tried my best to make the final draft by considering the comments I got. To be honest, there were some comments that I did not agree with after I checked it with the reference book. That is why I did not use them to revise my draft.”</p>
Motivation	Interest	“But for me, it is not too difficult because I

	<p>Satisfaction and Confidence</p> <p>Convenience and flexibility</p> <p>Curiosity</p>	<p>“I was also quite happy with the positive comments given by my lecturer and my friends.”</p> <p>“The blog had made the writing activities easy and efficient for students.”</p> <p>When I receive comments, I am not sure about those comments, I have to find and check more references to make sure what is the correct one.</p>
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Appendix 11

Academic writing class syllabus

Muhammadiyah University of Prof. Dr. HAMKA
Graduate School
English Education

Academic Writing Syllabus

Course	Academic Writing
Number of Credits	3
Number of Meetings	16
Duration	135 minutes
Instructors	Dr. Gunawan Suryoputro, M.Hum Silih Warni, M.Pd

General Instruction Objectives

This course aims at developing a competency of students' writing, particularly in academic genre. It discusses topics such as correct and effective sentences, paragraphs, and essays in academic writing. In addition, taking notes, making quotations, paraphrasing and summarising are taught and discussed. All these topics are required by students at a university level in order to be able to write argumentative essays and research writing.

Specific Instruction Objectives

At the end of the course, students are able to:

1. Understand and write various types of English sentences
2. Understand and write paragraph with appropriate structure
3. Understand and write various types of essays correctly
4. Take notes and quotations
5. Summarise information needed for writing argumentative essays and research papers such as articles and thesis

Assignments

The course will apply a *process-genre approach of writing* involving planning, drafting, revising and editing – and three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely, responding (sharing), evaluating and publishing the final draft. Online portfolios that use the blog as the platform will be implemented in order to support the writing process approach. The electronic portfolio entries will consist of students' writing assignments, reflection, and comments on their peers' essays .

Guidance to create electronic portfolio, write reflection and feedback on their peers' works will be given as students start the course.

Grading:

Online portfolio assignments (writing drafts, comments and revisions)

Assignment 1	: 30%
Assignment 2	: 30%
Assignment 3	: 30%
Attendance/participation	: 10%

Grading system:

- A 80 - 100
- B 68 – 79.99
- C 56 – 67.99
- D 45 – 55.99
- E 0 – 44.99

Text Book:

Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue. 2006. *Writing Academic English*, 4th ed.

Supplementary references:

Gunawan Suryoputro, Sugeng Riadi, Ali Sya'ban. 2012. *Menulis Artikel Ilmiah*. Uhamka Press.

Kate L. Turabian. 2007. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. The University of Chicago Press.

Course Schedule

Week	Topics
1	Introduction, Overview of Syllabus, Questionnaire, Pre-test
2	Sentence problems (Review) 5. Sentence Fragments 6. Choppy sentences 7. Run-on sentence and Comma splices 8. Stringy sentences
3	Paragraph structure Three parts of paragraphs: 4. Topic sentence 5. Supporting ideas 6. Concluding sentence
4	Paragraph structure Part 2, electronic portfolio (guidance to create blog and electronic portfolio entries)
5	Feedback and reflection Online portfolio tasks (commenting)
6	Organisation of Essay Three parts of essay: introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, concluding paragraph
7	Comparison/Contrast Essay
8	Comparison/Contrast Essay part 2 Online portfolio task
9	Introduction to argumentative essay
10	Citation
11	Direct quotation and Paraphrasing
12	Summarising
13	Bibliography & Reference
14	Plagiarism
15	Argumentative essay part 2 Online portfolio tasks
16	Argumentative essay part 3 Online portfolio tasks

Appendix 12

Scoring Rubric for paragraph and essays

Scoring Rubric: Paragraph		
	Maximum score	Actual score
Format — 5 points There is a title The title is centred The first line is indented There are margins on both sides The paragraph is double-spaced <div style="text-align: right;">Total</div>	1 1 1 1 1 5	
Mechanics — 5 points There is a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark after every sentence. Capital letters are used correctly The spelling is correct <div style="text-align: right;">Total</div>	1 2 2 5	
Content — 20 points The paragraph fits the assignment. The paragraph is interesting to read. The paragraph shows thought and care. <div style="text-align: right;">Total</div>	5 5 10 20	
Organisation — 35 points The paragraph begins with a topic sentence that has both a topic and a controlling idea. The paragraph contains several specific ad factual supporting sentences that explain or prove the topic sentence, including at least one example. The paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence. <div style="text-align: right;">Total</div>	10 20 5 35	
Grammar and Sentence Structure — 35 points Estimate a grammar and sentence structure	35	
Grand Total	100	

Scoring Rubric: Essays		
	Maximum score	Actual score
<p>Format — 5 points Title centred (2), first line of each paragraph intended (1), margins on both sides (1), text double-spaced (1)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total</p>	5	
<p>Mechanics — 5 points Punctuation: periods, commas, semicolons, quotation marks (3), Capitalisation (1), spelling (1)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total</p>	5	
<p>Content — 20 points The essay fulfils the requirements of the assignment. The essay is interesting to read. The essay shows that the writer used thought and care.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total</p>	5 5 10 20	
<p>Organisation — 45 points The essay follows the outline, and it has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.</p> <p>Introduction: The introduction ends with the thesis statement.</p> <p>Body Each paragraph of the body discussed a new point and begins with a clear topic sentence. Each paragraph has specific supporting material: facts, examples, quotations, paraphrased or summarised information, etc. Each paragraph has unity Each paragraph has coherence. Transitions are used to link paragraphs.</p> <p>Conclusion: the conclusion summarises the main points or paraphrases the thesis statement, begins with a conclusion signal, and leaves the reader with the writer’s final thoughts on the topic.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Total</p>	5 5 5 10 5 5 5 5 5	
<p>Grammar and Sentence Structure — 35 points Estimate a grammar and sentence structure</p>	25	
Grand Total	100	

Appendix 13
Guidance for self-revising

Self-Revising Guidance: Paragraph		
Format		
My paragraph has a title	Yes	No
The title is centred	Yes	No
The first line is indented	Yes	No
There are margins on both sides	Yes	No
The paragraph is double-spaced	Yes	No
Mechanics		
I put a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark after every sentence.	Yes	No
I used capital letters correctly	Yes	No
I checked my spelling.	Yes	No
Content and Organisation		
My paragraph fits the assignment.	Yes	No
My paragraph has a topic sentence.	Yes	No
The topic sentence has both a topic and a controlling idea.	Yes	No
My paragraph contains several specific and factual supporting sentences that explain or prove the topic sentence, including at least one example.	Yes	No
How many supporting sentences did I write?		
My paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence.	Yes	No
All of my sentences are directly related to the topic.	Yes	No
Grammar and Sentence Structure		
Every student has his or her own personal grammar trouble spots. Some students battle with verb tenses. For others, articles are the main enemy. Some find it hard to know where to put periods. Identify and try to correct any errors in the areas of grammar and sentence structure (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, pronoun agreement, sentence fragments, and run-on sentences/comma splices) you. Identify any areas you know are problems for you, and throughout the course, work on eliminating the problems.		

Self-Revising Guidance: Comparison/Contrast essays		
<p>Format My essay is correctly formatted (title centred, first line of every paragraph indented, margins on both sides, double-spaced).</p>	Yes	No
<p>Mechanics I checked punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling.</p>	Yes	No
<p>Content and Organisation My essay has all three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.</p> <p>Introduction: I checked the type of introduction I used (funnel, historical background, surprising statistics, dramatic story, etc). The introduction ends with my thesis statement.</p> <p>Body: The body has__ paragraphs.</p> <p>Unity: Each paragraph discusses only one main idea and there are no sentences that are “off the topic.”</p> <p>Coherence: each paragraph has coherence. My essay flows smoothly from beginning to end. I repeat key nouns. I use transition signals and comparison/contrast signals words to show relationships among ideas. I use transitions to link paragraphs.</p> <p>Conclusion; the conclusion (a) summarises the main points or (b) paraphrases the thesis statement. The writer adds a final comment or thought on the topic to leave final impression to the reader.</p>	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	No No No No No No No
<p>Grammar and Sentence Structure I checked my essay for grammar and sentence structure (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, pronoun agreement, sentence fragments, and run-on sentences/comma splices) errors.</p>		

Self-Revising Guidance: Argumentative essays		
<p>Format My essay is correctly formatted (title centred, first line of every paragraph indented, margins on both sides, double-spaced).</p>	Yes	No
<p>Mechanics I checked punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling.</p>	Yes	No
<p>Content and Organisation My essay has all three parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.</p> <p>Introduction: I checked the type of introduction I used (funnel, historical background, surprising statistics, dramatic story, etc). The introduction ends with my thesis statement.</p> <p>Body: The body has__ paragraphs. I give arguments for my point of view and arguments for the opposing point of view. I rebut each opposing argument. I support each point with a specific supporting detail such as an example, a statistic, a quotation, a paraphrase, or a summary. I cite the source of all borrowed information.</p> <p>Unity: Each paragraph discusses only one main idea and there are no sentences that are “off the topic.” Coherence: each paragraph has coherence. My essay flows smoothly from beginning to end.</p> <p>Conclusion; the conclusion (a) summarises the main points or (b) paraphrases the thesis statement. The writer adds a final comment or thought on the topic to leave final impression to the reader.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p>
<p>Grammar and Sentence Structure I checked my essay for grammar and sentence structure (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, pronoun agreement, sentence fragments, and run-on sentences/comma splices) errors.</p>		

Appendix 14

Guiding questions for peer commenting

Guidance for Peer Commenting: Paragraph

Use the following questions to guide you to write your comments on your peers' paragraph draft!

1. Is the paragraph interesting? Write a comment about a part that is especially interesting to you.
2. Do you understand everything? Highlight any part that you do not understand, and write a comment about it.
3. What do you think about the topic sentence and controlling idea?
4. What kind of supporting details does the writer use (facts, examples, quotations, statistics, etc)?
5. Would you like more information about anything? If the answer is yes, write in your comment what you would like to know more about.
6. Is there anything unnecessary or that seems "off the topic?" If your answer is yes, write a comment about it (them).
7. What do you think about the concluding sentence?
8. In your opinion, what is the best feature of this paragraph? In other words, what is this writer's best writing skills?

Guidance for Peer Commenting: Comparative/Contrast Essays

Use the following questions to guide you to write your comments on your peers' comparative/contrast essay draft!

1. Does the essay capture your interest? If so, what parts of the essay is interesting to you?
2. Give your comments on the introduction of the essay.
3. What do you think about the body paragraphs? Do they contain one main idea each? Are there supporting details in the body paragraphs?
4. Does the essay flow from the beginning to the end? Does it use appropriate transition signals?
5. Does the writer make a final comment and make an effective ending in the conclusion (one that you will remember)?
6. In your opinion, what are the best features of this essay? In other words, what is this writer's best writing skill?

Guidance for Peer Commenting: Comparative/Contrast Essays

Use the following questions to guide you to write your comments on your peers' comparative/contrast essay draft!

1. Does the essay capture your interest? If so, what parts of the essay is interesting to you?
2. Give your comments on the introduction of the essay. Does the writer state his or her position clearly with regards to the topic discussed in the essay?
3. Does the writer write weak or convincing arguments? Does the writer use statistics, examples, quotations, paraphrases, summaries, etc. to support his or her argument?
4. If the argument is weak, do you suggest possible ways to strengthen it?
5. Do you understand everything? Write your comments on the parts of the essay that you do not understand.

Appendix 15

Guidance for reflecting on the writing draft

Guidance for Students' Reflection

“Theoretical concepts will not become part of the individual’s frame of reference until they have been experienced meaningfully on a subjective emotional level. Reflection plays an important role in this process by providing a bridge, as it were, between experience and theoretical conceptualization” (Kohonen, 1992, p.17).

Reflection on the online portfolio artifact

Students will write a 1 page reflection after publishing a final draft of a writing assignment. The reflection can be written either in English or Indonesian. The artifact reflection must address the following aspects:

1. Some background of the assignment for the reader. Explanation of what the teacher is asking of you in the assignment.
2. Explanation of why you chose this particular piece of work and why you are proud of this work
3. Identifying which skill the artifact represents and how it represents the mastery of that skill.
4. Identifying the strengths of the work. Identifying any weaknesses; what could you have done better? What is something you can do to improve upon this piece?
5. Address the growth in learning that took place because of this assignment.
6. Identify parts of the assignment that show the result of your learning process. You can refer to the regular record of your learning process.

Indonesian version

Mahasiswa menuliskan satu halaman refleksi setelah memposting final draft dari tugas menulis. Refleksi tersebut memuat aspek-aspek berikut:

1. Penjelasan tentang apa yang diminta dari anda dengan tugas menulis tersebut.
2. Penjelasan mengapa anda memilih tulisan anda tersebut dan apa yang membanggakan dari hasil tulisan anda itu.
3. Menyebutkan/mengidentifikasi skill/ketrampilan menulis apa yang diperlihatkan oleh tulisan anda itu dan bagaimana hasil tulisan tersebut memperlihatkan penguasaan anda akan skill menulis tersebut.
4. Menyebutkan kelebihan dan kelemahan hasil tulisan anda. Kaitannya dengan kelemahan tulisan anda, Apa yang bisa anda lakukan untuk memperbaikinya.
5. Penjelasan tentang peningkatan dalam belajar writing yang terjadi karena tugas membuat tulisan itu.
6. Sebutkan bagian dari hasil tulisan anda yang memperlihatkan hasil dari proses belajar anda. Anda bisa melihat lagi refleksi/record yang anda tulis pada setiap pertemuan.

References:

Kohonen, V., Jaatinen, R., Kaikkonen, P., & Lehtovaara, J. (2001). *Experiential Learning in Foreign Language Education*. London: Longman
<http://electronicportfolios.org/reflection/mosepMod2-2adds.html#strategies>. Retrived on June 20th, 2013.