

The Application of Authentic Assessment for Students Writing Skill

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Abstract

The research aims to describe the application of authentic assessment for writing skill in English learning process. Authentic assessment is a form of assessment that requires students to demonstrate the competence of attitude, knowledge and skill gained from the learning process that linked to the real-world context. The research was conducted at senior high school in Indonesia. It is a qualitative research in the form of qualitative descriptive approach. The subjects of the study were the English teacher and the students of grade eleventh. The data were taken from observation, interview, and documentation. The findings show that the teacher has been implemented authentic assessment for writing skill. The teacher used several techniques and instruments in applying authentic assessment for students writing skill: (a) attitude assessment (observation and journal), (b) knowledge assessment (written test and assignment), (c) skills assessment (project and product assessment). But in its application, teacher still found some various problems. They were time limitation of learning and complexity of assessment procedures. Nevertheless, teacher made several efforts to overcome the problems.

Keywords: assessment, authentic assessment, writing skill, English learning

1. Introduction

Curriculum is a systematic choice of knowledge, skills and assessment which shapes the process of teaching, learning and assessment. Based on *Permendikbud No. 23 of 2016*, assessment is the process of gathering information or evidence about the students' achievement in the competence of attitudes, knowledge, and skills which are done systematically in the learning process. Assessment is an activity that cannot be separated from the learning process. Assessment is carried out during or after the teaching and learning activities takes place. Teachers are one of the parties who act as assessors of student performance. Therefore, the assessment is carried out accurately and accordance with curriculum standards. The assessment models are always refined and developed based on the applicable curriculum.

Assessment is a planned and sustained effort by the teacher to obtain information how far the success of learners in understanding and applying learning that learned both in terms of process and results. These last few years, Indonesia government has implemented curriculum 2013, it emphasizes the application of authentic assessment for the learning process. Based on Majid (2014) defines "authentic assessment is the process of a collecting data include performance, achievement, motivation and student attitude" (p. 56). This is in line with *Permendikbud No. 104 of 2014*, authentic assessment is a form of assessment that requires students to show the attitude, knowledge and skill gained from learning in performing tasks in real situations. In addition, O'Malley and Pierce (1996) state that "authentic assessment is an evaluation process that consists of various forms of performance measurement that illustrates student's achievement, motivation and attitudes toward instructional activities according to instruction" (p. 4).

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Through an authentic assessment, teachers can know about progress and achievement of students' learning that are able to express, prove and demonstrate precisely that the learning objectives have been completely mastered and achieved with motivation and attitude toward learning.

The application of authentic assessment becomes an obligation for teachers. They must master it as a reference in assessing various language skills. English learning in the curriculum 2013 is based on text-based competencies, so that the application of language learning and language skills are adjusted to the type of text which is taught. In this regard, writing skills become an important skill in learning English. According to Hamp-Lyons (1990) in O'Malley (1996: 136) "writing is a personal act in which writers take ideas or prompts and transform them into self-initiated topics". Through writing activities, students can deliver their imagination and ideas in writing. Teacher needs to develop assessment tasks that allow learners to demonstrate real-world writing skills – skills that will be useful in their interactions outside of the classroom. So, authentic assessment is very suitable to be applied in learning English, especially to assess students' writing skill.

Majid (2014) states that "there are some techniques and instruments of authentic assessment: the instruments of attitude assessment are observation, self-assessment, peer assessment and journal, the instruments of knowledge assessment are written test, oral test and assignment, the instruments of skill assessment are performance assessment, product assessment, project, and portfolio" (p. 163-216). In the application of techniques and instruments, teacher needs rubrics as a reference in assessing students' writing skills. O'Malley (1996) states that "the scoring of authentic assessments should always be defined before the exercises and assessment procedures are developed" (p. 142). Teacher can use two types of rubrics as a scoring guide of students' writing skills, namely holistic and analytic rubrics. Holistic rubric uses various criteria to produce single score. The basis for using holistic rubric is that the total quality of written text is more than the sum of its components. Besides, analytic rubric separates the composition features into components that each require repeated examination.

Some previous researches about the implementation of authentic assessment has been conducted by other researchers. Fook and Sindhu (2010) was conducted research to examine the implementation of authentic assessment in higher education in Malaysia. The findings of this study indicated that alternative and authentic assessment have more acceptance from students. It is supported by Tangdhanakanond and Wongwanich (2012) that examine teachers' attitude towards the use of student portfolio assessment and to examine teachers' needs concerning the use of student portfolio assessment in Thailand's educational reform process.

Authentic assessment is already known and applied in some countries, but it is relatively new in Indonesia. It becomes the teachers' challenge to apply authentic assessment for the students. The application of authentic assessment requires well preparation, so that it can measure students' ability in detail and effectively. The results of the assessment can be used to determine the next learning plan that adjusted to the students' needs. Therefore, the writer is interested to do the research to know the extent of authentic assessment for students writing skill. This research investigates some of the following research questions: (1) what are techniques and instruments that teacher used to assess students' writing skill. (2) what are the problems faced by teacher in implementing authentic assessments for students' writing skill

2. Research Methodology

In this research, the writer conducted a descriptive qualitative research. Moleong (2014) states that "in descriptive research, the data gathered are words, pictures and no calculation" (p. 11). It involves describing and interpreting events, condition, or situation of the present. This research aims to describe the application of authentic assessment for writing skill in English learning. It focuses on the application of techniques and instruments and problems faced by teacher. The subjects of this research were an English teacher and 36 students of grade eleventh in one of senior high schools in Boyolali, Indonesia. This research conducted in the academic year of 2016/2017. The writer used observation, interview and document analysis to collect the data. The writer observed about some aspects. First, understanding techniques and instruments of authentic assessment used by teacher in the process of assessing students' writing skill. Second, noting down problems faced by the teacher in implementing authentic assessments for students writing skill. Interviews were conducted to explore general information regarding the application of authentic assessment for writing skill. Furthermore, the observations made on the process of learning English in the classroom that conducted by teacher. The purpose of this activity is to collect the facts in the application of authentic assessment as well as documenting the implementation of the assessment.

Document analysis is qualitative documents that collected in the form of syllabus, lesson plan, scoring rubric, English book and all document related to the issues in the research questions. In this research, analyzing the data is done with the data collection process simultaneously. “The data analysis in qualitative research involves three stages namely the data reduction, the data presentation/display and the drawing conclusion / verification (Sutopo, 2002, p. 90). The data reduction was part of data analysis which made the data shorter, made the theme focused and arranged the data in appropriate order. While in the second stage, the writer arranged a relevant data in order to get information to make conclusion. The writer took conclusion after interpreting the data taken. Qualitative data analysis is conducted to find out the facts about the techniques, instruments, and teacher’s problems in assessment process.

3. Results

The results of the application of authentic assessment for writing in English learning obtained through interviews, observation and document analysis. The findings that are presented in sequence are the techniques and instruments of the authentic assessment used by teacher to assess students’ writing skills and problems faced by teacher in applying authentic assessment for writing. Based on data, teacher has performed an authentic assessment for writing. However, the implementation was not maximal because there were still problems faced by teacher.

3.1 The Techniques and Instruments of Authentic Assessment Used by the Teacher to Assess Students’ Writing Skills

Based on observations and interviews with English teacher, the writer got the description of implementation of authentic assessment. To apply authentic assessment, the teacher assessed three aspects used several techniques and instruments.

Table (1): assessed aspects, techniques and instruments of authentic assessment

Aspect	Assessment Technique	Instrument forms
Attitude Assessment	Teacher observation Journal	Checklist completed with rating scale Field note
Knowledge Assessment	Written test Assignment	Essay test Homework or tasks that are done individually and groups
Skill Assessment	Project Work Product assessment	Scoring rubric Scoring rubric

From table (1), it shows that the teacher applied authentic assessment that covers three aspects: attitude assessment, knowledge assessment and skill assessment. The first is attitude assessment. Based on the data, the assessment techniques used in attitude assessment were observation and journal. The instruments used in attitude assessment techniques were checklist with rating scale and field a note. In attitude assessment rubric it covers students’ behavior including of cooperation, curiosity, discipline and honestly. Teacher used a checklist that includes a list of skills or sequential behaviors organized into categories and used to determine whether a student shows the listed behaviors or skills. In addition, field note was to record students’ behavior during the learning process.

Second, the techniques of knowledge assessment were written test and assignment. Its instruments were essay test and homework or tasks that were done individually and groups. In written test, students were given the text, they were ordered to identify the structure of the text, the language feature and the function itself. In addition, the instrument used in the knowledge assessment is assignment. Students are asked to produce some texts simply in accordance with the materials in the syllabus; those materials are formal invitation, personal letter and exposition text. The third is writing skill assessment. The techniques used in skill assessment are the project work and product assessment. Scoring rubric was used as the instrument. The teacher gave the duration of time for the students to complete the project tasks and the products. In this process, students were assigned to produce text in detail. This task was done in group work. The assessment covered the idea of the text, the language feature such as the structure, the use of appropriate vocabulary, and the proper content that support the ideas. The teacher measured the students’ work using a scoring rubric. It is used by the teacher as a feedback on the quality of students’ work. Teacher used scoring rubric as a scale tool to measure the students’ scores of each predetermined criterion. The rubric listed in the teacher’s lesson plan that was in table form. The rubric was based on assessment aspect of each competency along with the criteria and level of performance.

Table (2): the analysis of scoring rubric in writing

No	Assessment Technique	Description
1	Observation Journal	Scoring rubric is in table form (holistic rubric) Field note
2	Written test Assignment	Rubric using a rating scale Rubric of discussion assessment (holistic rubric)
3	Project Work Product	Scoring rubric is in table form (analytic rubric) Scoring rubric is in table form (holistic rubric)

From table (2), it can be concluded that the rubric is based on the type of assessment technique that is used. The rubric forms that are used by teacher were holistic rubric, analytic rubric and field note. The rubric contained a description of the criteria that must be learned by students. In the lesson plan, the scoring rubric is placed in the final section and it accompanied by the scoring guidelines.

3.2 The Problems Faced by the Teacher in Applying Authentic Assessment of Writing

Based on interviews and observations, there were two problems found by the teacher on the implementation of authentic assessment for writing. First, there was time limitation in doing learning process and assessment process at the same time. English subject only has 2 hours meeting in one week. Based on interviews with the teacher, he felt hard to implement authentic assessment for writing. Because the students' writing assessment took a long time and needed well preparation. Students' writing assessment is not just merely assessing the product but the students' writing process is also assessed. The second problem found by the teacher was complexity of assessment procedures. In the application of authentic assessment, assessment of each aspect used different techniques and instruments. It was based on the aspects that will be assessed. Based on teacher's interviews, the students' writing assessment was complicated. Teacher was not just assessed the products that students made, but teacher had to assess in terms of writing process, so that the teacher can really assess the students' writing skills appropriately. It can be used as a reference to design further learning activities adjusted to the students' needs.

4. Discussion

The results show that teacher has done an authentic assessment for writing. It is because in the process of writing assessment, teacher assessed students from three aspects, namely aspects of attitude, knowledge, and skill that refer to the real condition. It is supported with the statement contained in *Permendikbud No. 104 of 2014* stating that authentic assessment is a form of assessment that requires students to show the attitude, knowledge and skill gained from learning in performing tasks in real situations. In addition, this is evidenced by teacher's statement which was able to describe the authentic assessment procedures that he did while learning process. Teacher included a variety of authentic assessment techniques and instruments in the lesson plan.

Based on document analysis and interviews, it is known that the authentic assessment techniques and instruments for writing skills used vary and it was according to the curriculum 2013. It is in accordance with the theory stated by Majid (2014), "authentic assessment techniques include assessment of attitudes (observation, self-assessment, peer assessment, and journal), knowledge assessment (written test, oral test, and assignment), and skills assessment (performance assessment, product assessment, project and portfolio)" (p. 163-216). However, there are some techniques that were not implemented by the teacher, those are self-assessment, peer assessment, oral test, performance assessment, and portfolio (shown in table 2).

The application of authentic assessment for writing skills was well executed. But it was not optimally, because there were still some problems faced by the teacher. The problems were the time limitations of learning and the complexity of the procedures in applying authentic assessment. It is because teacher should make scoring rubrics on each assessment techniques. To solve the problems, the teacher made some discussions with other English teachers both at the same institution as well as other institutions. Teacher also consulted with the vice principal of curriculum.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussions, it can be concluded that the English teacher has conducted an authentic assessment for writing that is suggested in regulation of curriculum 2013. The techniques and instruments of authentic assessment for writing used by teacher are varied. It is adjusted for the aspects that will be assessed.

To assess aspects of attitude, teacher used observation and journal as the assessment techniques. While on the knowledge aspect, teacher used written test and assignment. On the skills aspect, teacher used the project work and product assessment as the technique to assess students' writing skills. Instruments of each techniques are different, namely holistic rubric, analytic rubric and field note. However, the application of assessment techniques has not been done optimally. There were several assessment techniques that did not apply by teacher, those are self-assessment, peer assessment, oral test, performance assessment, and portfolio.

On the other hand, there were still problems faced by the teacher. It means that the application of authentic assessment for writing has not gone well. The teacher's problems were time limitation of learning and the complexity of procedures in preparing authentic assessment techniques and instruments. Therefore, the teacher made several efforts to overcome the problems. He communicated with other English teachers and conducted consultation with the vice principal of curriculum. The research is expected to help teachers to apply the techniques and instruments of authentic assessment which appropriate to the students' competence that will be achieved, especially for writing. In addition, the findings are also expected to help students to understand the process of applying authentic assessment for students' writing skill.

6. References

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