

Digital Authentic Assessment in Sentence Based Writing Course

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Abstract: The use of technology and digital literacy is increasing today, and implemented in the classroom. Authentic assessment provides students' practices in real life activities. Higher education is more aligned with the practices of students' future professions, which are becoming increasingly mediated by technology, when authentic assessment is used. This study aims to describe the use of authentic digital assessment in sentence-based writing course at English Education Study Program of UIN Saizu Purwokerto. A qualitative descriptive method was conducted through observation and documentation for collecting the data. The field notes and checklist were used as the instruments of the research. Instructional teaching materials and syllabus also used as the documents that were analyzed to support the data of observation. A lecturer was involved in this study as the subject of the study. The results show that the lecturer uses performance-based assessment using various mobile application; telegram, email, WhatsApp, Instagram and Canva. All the assessment activities fulfill the characteristics of authentic assessment. However, the lecturer did not implement all of the steps in assessing writing skill using authentic assessment that purposed by Brown. A holistic rubric is used to assess the students' writing. This study is expected to provide pedagogical experiences in designing the authentic assessment using technology, especially in writing class.

Keywords: Authentic assessment; digital learning; writing skill; writing assessment.

Introduction

Assessment is one of the crucial elements in teaching and learning process, especially in order to determine how far the process has progressed toward its objectives (Sarwanti, 2015). Assessment is essential in both teaching and learning (Bordoh et al., 2015). It is a method of gathering data regarding students' learning processes. The data is required to make judgments about students' learning capacities, placement in suitable levels or groups, and accomplishment (Kankam, 2015). Thus, assessment should be designed and constructed appropriately for students.

Nowadays, the use of authentic assessment in teaching and learning process becomes popular (Aitken and Pungur, 2005). Authentic assessment takes place in the context of real-life activity with complicated problems, focuses on an active learner

who creates refined outcomes or products, and is related with various learning indicators (Herrington & Herrington, 2006). In other words, this kind of evaluation evaluates students' performance in their real world. Keyser and Howell (2008) confirm that this actual evaluation more closely resembled real-world challenges than the worksheet or exam given in the classroom. Authentic assessment, in its most practical conceptualization, requires students to 'use the same competencies, or combinations of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, that they need to apply in the criterion situation in professional life' (Gulikert et al. 2004, 69).

In the 21st century era, higher education aims to provide meaningful, relevant courses that will prepare graduates to work and live in an increasingly digital world. Furthermore, digital devices such as smartphones have become

intertwined and constitutive of daily life, to the point that all kinds of work and existence may be said to take place inside a digital environment (Nieminen et al., 2022). Hence, digital technologies should be brought into the classroom to facilitate and improve students' learning (Flavin, 2012), not to mention to assess students' performance. If the digital is a part of the social world, then it must unavoidably be a component of authentic assessment, as implied by authenticity as a means of relating to the broader world (Nieminen et al., 2022).

Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) propose six types of authentic assessment that can be used in assessing language skills. They are performance-based assessment, portfolios, journal, conferences and interview, observation, self, and peer-assessment. There are some characteristics of authentic assessment. It (1) asks pupils to create, perform, or produce something, (2) uses situations from the real world or simulations, (3) is not intrusive because it made a daily classroom activity last longer, (4) permits pupils to be evaluated on their daily routine in class, (5) uses teaching activities that are meaningful, (6) focuses on both process and product, (7) demonstrates advanced degree of thought and problem solving, and (8) provides information about strengths and weakness of students (Brown, 2004). O'Malley and Pierce (1996:1) suggest the following stages for evaluating student writing using authentic assessment: selecting topic a relevant topic for the students, 2) deciding on rubrics that students may utilize, 3) distributing rubrics to students, 4) recognizing bench-mark papers, 5) examining how pupils write rather than just what they write, 6) holding a meeting with the students to discuss their writing outcomes.

Several related studies have been discussed about authentic assessment in writing (Lenggahing et al., 2017; Moria et al., 2017; Rourke & Coleman, 2011; Sarwanti, 2015). However, there is still limited discussion about digital authentic assessment in writing. This study is an attempt to fill the gap of the previous studies that aims to describe the implementation of a digital authentic assessment in sentence-based writing course at

English Education Study Program of UIN Saizu Purwokerto.

Materials and Methods

A descriptive qualitative study was employed to achieve the aim of the research. Especially, descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). It means that the data are reported in words and pictures, rather than numbers (Cresswell, 1994).

Site and Participant

This study was conducted at English Education Study Program of UIN Saizu Purwokerto (UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto). In this study program, there is a writing subject, and this study focus on the implementation of digital authentic assessment in sentence based writing course. A lecturer was a respondent of this study since a digital authentic assessment is implemented in her class.

Procedures

A participatory observation and documentation were applied to collect the data of the research. A field notes and checklist were used as the instruments of the study. The observations were conducted in six meeting of the writing course, especially to know how to assess writing skill using digital authentic assessment. Instructional teaching materials and syllabus were used as the documents of analysis that support the observation data.

Data analysis

The data of observation and documentation were then analyzed qualitatively using Miles & Huberman (1994). Firstly, the data that were not related to the study were reduced which categorized according to the theories of authentic assessment. Then, the data were displayed. Lastly, data verification was employed.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study shows that the lecturer assesses the students writing skill using various digital assessment. Especially, the students use Mobile App (application) and do several real-life activities in doing writing assessment.

Types of Authentic Assessment

The lecturer used performance-based assessment for assessing writing skill for sentence-based writing course at English Education Study Program of UIN Saizu Purwokerto. In the sentence-based writing class of English Education Study Program, the lecturer asked the students to do writing performance according to the materials of each meeting. The students performed the writing and created a product based on their daily activities or related to their real life such as writing a caption on the Instagram App, writing a message on WhatsApp and Email App, creating a poster on Canva App, writing an email on the Email App, and posting announcement on the Telegram App. These kinds of assessment activities are related to authentic assessment principle that the students have to do the assessment in the context of real-life activity with complicated problems, focuses on an active learner who creates refined outcomes or products (Herrington & Herrington, 2006).

Various Types of Digital Authentic Assessment

The findings show that the lecturer provides various types of digital authentic assessment in the writing course. Firstly, in the punctuation and capitalization topic, the lecturer asks the students to write an introduction using appropriate punctuation and capitalization on the Instagram Application by posting a photo and write a caption about introducing yourself. The following figure shows this finding.



Figure 1. Writing an Introduction Using Appropriate Punctuation and Capitalization on the Instagram Application

After the students posted the introduction on the Instagram, the partner should review the sentences and do peer-review whether the sentences use appropriate punctuation and capitalization or not. Then, the lecturer would give feedback and assess the students' writing.

Secondly, Canva and Telegram App was used for students for assessing the students' performance in the topic of declarative and interrogative sentence. The students are required to design an infographic to write tips of doing something using declarative and interrogative sentences on Canva Application in group. The design then shared on the Telegram Group and assessed by the lecturer. The following figure displays this finding.



Figure 2. Writing Tips of Doing Something Using Declarative and Interrogative Sentences on Canva Application

Then, on the next topic, the students have to create a poster using imperative and exclamatory sentences on Canva App and to post on the Instagram App. The students do the assessment individually. This result is displayed in the following figure.



Figure 3. Writing a Poster Using Imperative Sentence on the Canva Application and posted on the Instagram Application



Figure 4. Writing a Poster Using Exclamatory Sentence on the Canva Application and posted on the Instagram Application

Next, the lecturer provides the assessment for students to write a formal message for the lecturer. The students are required to use WhatsApp and Telegram App to write a formal message using appropriate simple sentences. After the students send the message to the lecturer, they have to take a screenshot the message and share on the Telegram Group which then be assessed by the lecturer. The following figure shows the finding.

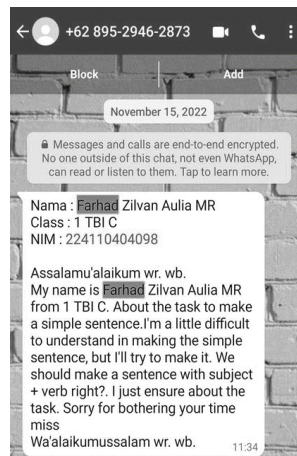


Figure 5. Writing a Formal Message Using Appropriate Simple Sentence on the WhatsApp and Telegram App

In another learning topic, the students are required to write a formal email using compound sentences using Email App. The students had to sent the email to their partner which then they had pair-reviewed. The students also had to take a screenshot of their email and sent on to Telegram group which are then assessed by the lecturer. This finding is displayed in the figure 6.

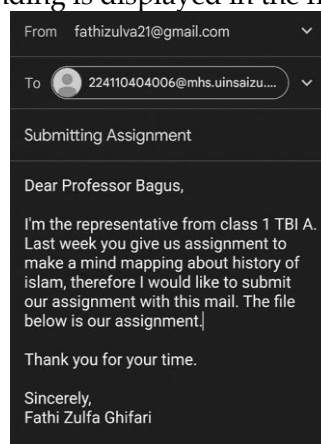


Figure 6. Writing a Formal Message Using Simple Sentences on the WhatsApp and Telegram App

The next writing assessment is the students are instructed to write a formal announcement using complex sentences on the Canva App and then posted on the Instagram App. As usual, the students share the link of the posting on the Telegram group, which then reviewed and assessed by the lecturer. Figure 7 shows this finding.



Figure 7. Writing a Formal Announcement Using Complex Sentences on the Canva App

Lastly, the last authentic assessment is that the students are required to write a formal invitation using compound complex sentence on the Email App. The students had to send the email to the partner, and also to share the screenshot on the Telegram group. Then, the lecturer assessed the students' writing performance and gave feedback. This finding is shown in the Figure 8.



Figure 8. Writing Invitation Using Compound Complex Sentences on the Email App

Steps in Assessing Writing Using Authentic Assessment

According to the result of the study, the lecturer implements several steps in assessing students' writing performance using authentic assessment. Firstly, the lecturer selected the topic that is appropriate for the students, especially the topic that is related to the students' real life. After selecting the topic, the lecturer selected the

rubrics for assessing students' writing performance. The lecturer decided to use a holistic rubric since this assessment belongs to formative assessment. The next step is that the lecturer reviewed the process of students' writing, especially the assessment is conducted at the class. Lastly, the writing results are displayed on the Telegram group, and the feedbacks are given directly at the class.

Discussion

In implementing the digital authentic assessment for writing skill, the lecturer used performance-based assessment as purposed by Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) in which there are six types of authentic assessment that can be used in assessing language skills. One of them is performance-based assessment. Performance-based assessment is an assessment which is conducted by observing student's activities in doing particular thing (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). Performance assessment requires students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and strategies by creating a response or a product (Sarwanti, 2015). The students of writing class were required to create a product related to their daily life such as writing a caption on the Instagram; writing a WhatsApp message; writing an email; and writing announcement, poster, and invitation using Canva App. These kinds of digital activities are really related to the students since now they use smartphones in doing the assessment. All this digital assessment become authentic since now they are living in a digital environment (Nieminen et al., 2022).

The lecturer implemented several steps in using authentic assessment for writing as suggested by O'Malley & Pierce (1996). However, the lecturer had not implemented two steps that is not sharing rubrics with the students, and not identifying bench-mark papers. The lecturer only did the following steps: selecting topic that is appropriate for the students; selecting rubrics students can use, reviewing how students write not just what they write, having a conference with the students on their writing results.

In addition, the lecturer used a holistic rubric in assessing the students' writing performance. A holistic rubric requires a teacher to score the

overall process or product as a whole, without judging the component parts separately (Nitko, 1983). Since this authentic assessment belongs to formative assessment, so that the lecturer decided to use a holistic rubric.

Conclusions

Various digital authentic assessments were used by the lecturer in assessing students' writing in the Sentence-Based Writing course at English Education Study program of UIN Saizu Purwokerto. All of the writing assessment in this course are related to the students' real life which are using digital App. Particularly, the assessments involve writing a caption on the Instagram, writing a message on WhatsApp, writing an email on Mobile Email App, creating poster, infographic and announcement on Canva; and writing invitation on the Telegram. A holistic rubric was used in assessing students' writing performance. However, the lecturer does not implement all the steps in assessing writing using authentic assessment as proposed by O'Malley & Pierce (1996).

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