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THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE WRITING PORTFOLIOS FOR SOPHOMORE IN A SOCIAL ENGLISH COURSE AT ULIS

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Abstract

In language assessment, authenticity has been considered one of the crucial elements defining the standard of an assessment process. However, little research in the field of ESL/EFL education has been conducted to specify how that quality is evaluated. This study focused on constructing a framework for authentic writing portfolios which was then applied to investigate the authenticity of the writing portfolios for sophomores in a Social English course at Vietnam National University, the University of Languages and International Studies (ULIS, VNU). A qualitative approach with four phases including document analysis, interviews with ESL/EFL assessment experts, observation, and semi-constructed interviews with students was adopted for concrete results. According to the findings, a framework for authentic writing portfolios should base on five main aspects: tasks, goals, context, assessment criteria, and roles of assessors. Regarding the ULIS second-year students' writing portfolios, the authenticity quality was generally ensured, but some adjustments still needed making. The study hopefully will benefit researchers and teachers who are interested in the same topic.

Keywords: EFL/ ESL education, language assessment, authenticity, writing competence, and writing portfolios

Introduction

Statement of Research Problem and Rationale for The Study

With regard to English Language Teaching, the concept of writing and writing assessment have undergone immense changes throughout centuries. In the past, writing was taught based on product-oriented approaches in which “students are encouraged to mimic a model text, usually is presented and analyzed at an early stage” (Gabrielatos, 2002, p.5). Consequently, timed tests were employed to assess students' writing capacity. When the notion of writing as a process was introduced, there arose a need for alternative assessment methods, leading to the born of writing portfolios. There has been an ample body of research providing empirical evidence for the crucial role of using portfolios as assessment devices. For instance, many researchers have emphasized that writing portfolios enhance students' ownership in their learning process (Ingalls, 1993; McClelland, 1991; Pierson, 2000; Weiser, 1992). Another often-cited benefit of portfolios is assisting students with their self-learning (Bursaitiene & Tereseviciene, 2008; Murphy; 1994a; Song & August, 2000). However, Arter and Spandel (1992) have pointed out that one of the main problems occurring when using portfolios as assessment devices is the possibility of lacking authenticity. Until now, this is a still a controversial issue since the number of research on authenticity of writing portfolio is insignificant. Few works such as Hamp-Lyons (2003) and Kingore (2007) have pointed out some crucial requirements to evaluate authenticity of writing portfolios, but the content is either too brief or limited to a small

group of L2 learners. The gap in L2 research indicates a need for further work, which is also a motivation for the present study.

In Vietnamese context, the term “authenticity” of language assessment in general and portfolios in particular is still new to a large number of teachers and learners. Even at ULIS, VNU (Vietnam National University, University of Languages and International Studies) where EFL students need to build writing portfolios in English every year, hardly could readers find any official studies about the authenticity of such assessment method. Since authenticity is crucial for assessment tools (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Estrem, 2004; Nitko (2001), it is believed that evaluating the authenticity of those portfolios might offer some contributions to the development of writing courses. All of the above mentioned reasons have led to researcher’s decision on conducting a study entitled:

Objectives of the Study and Research Questions

This study aimed at building a framework to evaluate authenticity in writing portfolios and then investigating the authenticity of the writing portfolios for the second-year students in a Social English course at ULIS, VNU based on that framework. Two research questions were focused on:

1. What aspects of the authenticity need to be demonstrated in writing portfolios?
2. From the teacher perspective, which aspects of authenticity are demonstrated in the writing portfolios for Sophomores in a Social English Course at ULIS?

Scope of the Studies

The research was conducted within fifteen weeks (the third semester) with 67 participants who were the sophomores from three Social English classes that the researcher was teaching. Regarding language assessment experts, although there are numerous of them in language assessment field, only experts at ULIS, VNU were invited to join the two semi-structured interview phases due to their favorable conditions as well as their willingness to help with the data collection.

Literature review

Before the researcher explains her framework to evaluate authenticity of writing portfolios, it is essential to have a close look into features of writing portfolios and authenticity in language assessment.

Writing portfolios

Writing teachers and other educators have varied the concept of portfolios (Belanoff and Dickson, 1991; Gentile et al, 1995; Graves and Sunstein, 1992). In attempt to define writing portfolios, says Hamp-Lyons (2003): “a writing portfolio is a collection of the writer’s own work over a period of time, usually a semester or school year” (p. 29). Additionally, Yancey (1992, cited in Park, n.d) points out:

1. A portfolio is a collection of work, but it is a collection that is a subset of a larger archive. Theoretically, the archive is the whole of a student’s work, but more practically and more frequently, it is a subset of writing completed in a class, a program, and a school.
2. The process by which the subset is created is one of selection, which is the second principle of portfolios. How entries are selected varies according to the rhetorical situation contextualizing the portfolio.
3. A third principle is reflection, the process by which a student explains his or her learning.
4. A fourth principle is communication, in the sense that the writing portfolio, like

any portfolio, will communicate something about the writer, about what he or she values, about the context in which the writer has worked, and so on. (p. 2)

In this study, the chosen definition is an adaptation from the above theories:

Portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that demonstrates the student’s efforts, progress, or achievement in (a) given area(s). This collection must include student participation in selecting portfolio content; the guidelines for selection; the criteria for judging merit; and evidence of student self-reflection. (Arter & Spandel, 1992, p.37).

Authenticity

Authenticity in language assessment. Since the early 90’s, authenticity in language assessment has captured the attention of numerous teachers, educators, theorists and researchers throughout the world. There have been hundreds of books as well as journal articles written about such complex topic. The literature on how authenticity should be understood and demonstrated in language assessment is, hence, extensive. Within the limited scope of this research, only three magnificent views are expounded.

Concerning the domain of test, Bachman and Palmer (1996) consider authenticity “the degree of correspondence of the characteristics of a given language test task to the features of a TLU (target language use) task” (p.23):

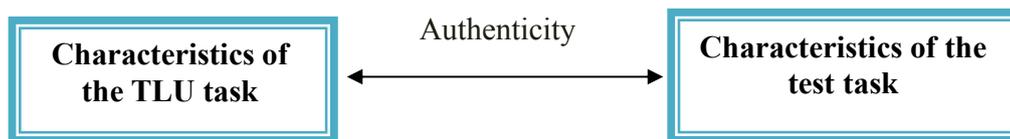


Figure 1. Authenticity (Bachman& Palmer, 1996)

Bachman and Palmer developed a framework for authentic test tasks which embodies a set of five aspects of test authenticity: setting, test rubric, input, expected response, and relationship between input and response. During the process of framework explanation, those two authors not only base on their extensive pedagogic experience but also mention various opinions from prestigious researchers to support their assertions. This is probably the reason why many testing experts, for example Purpura (2004), have utilized that framework as a solid ground for their studies. Nevertheless, Bachman and Palmer particularly focus on test, a form of summative assessment while features of tests, for instance time or purpose, are not always as same as those of other assessment methods. Consequently, that framework may not be suitable for language assessment tasks in general.

The next view is stated by Nitko (2001). According to Nitko, “realistic” and “meaningful” are the two terms often used as talking about authentic assessment. Furthermore, to craft authenticity, assessment designers should take the following features into account:

1. Emphasize applications: assessing whether a student can use his knowledge in addition to assessing what the students knows
2. Focus on direct assessment: Assess the stated learning target directly in contrast to indirect assessment.
3. Use realistic problems: Frame the tasks in a highly realistic way so that the students can recognize them as a part of everyday life.
4. Encourage open-ended thinking: frame the tasks to encourage more than one correct answer, more than one way of expressing the answer, groups of students working together, and taking a relatively long time to complete (e.g, several days,

weeks, months). (p. 245)

Compared with Bachman and Palmer (1996), Nitko's opinion about "authenticity" seems to be broader. Nonetheless, his own conception is merely given without a justification or further supporting details. Thus, from researcher's perspective, Nitko's arguments of authenticity seem insufficiently persuasive.

Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004) also propose another definition of authentic assessment. To them, an assessment is authentic if it requires task takers to "use the same competences, or combinations of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, that they need to apply in the criterion situation in professional life" (p. 69). Basing on such notion, the researchers build a five-dimensional framework for authentic assessment (Figure 3-Appendix 1, p. 86). As its name implies, that framework concludes five aspects.

The first one is "task" which "resembles the criterion task with respect to the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, its complexity and its ownership" (p. 71) and should be seen as relevant and meaningful by different people. Besides, physical context is mentioned as one dimension. In consonance with Resnick's view of the relationship between social system and learning-out-of-school activities, Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004) comprise "social context" in their framework. The fourth and the fifth one are "assessment result", and "criteria" used to assess such result is the final dimension.

While formulating their argumentation, Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004) conducted a systematic literature review. Different viewpoints are discussed critically before the conclusion is stated. Additionally, the three authors carried out an empirical research with students and teachers from a nursing college in order to examine whether their dimensions are complete or not. An electronic group support system (GSS) at the Open University of the Netherlands was used as the research tool. According to the collected results, their framework is adequate. However, that framework is initially developed to shed light on the concept of authenticity in general. There has not been any scientific evidence that it can work appropriately in language education field in particular.

In a nutshell, different viewpoints of authenticity exist, but there are still some common features. With regard to the definition of authenticity in language assessment, all the three viewpoints refer to the characteristic of "realistic" and "meaningful". In this research, the notion that authenticity is the quality resembling real-life situation and addressing learners' needs in further professional life is adopted. The word "resembling" here means making the assessment close to real life. That leads to the other concerns: "how close is appropriate?" and "which framework is the most suitable one to evaluate authenticity of a language assessment?"

Toward a Framework to Assess Writing Portfolio Authenticity

After conducting thorough literature reviews concerning related materials, the researcher decided to build the framework to evaluate authenticity in writing portfolios developed based on the framework for authentic assessment created by Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004). Within the limited scope of this paper, the initial version of the framework can be briefly described in the following table:

Table 1

Authenticity in writing portfolios

<p>I. AUTHENTIC INSTRUCTION</p> <p>1. Authentic learning tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are meaningful/ relevant/ representative in the eyes of students (value to students, value to other people) - Allow students to retain their ownership - Resemble the complexity of the real-life or professional task at students' educational level - Provide support/scaffolding. <p>2. Physical learning context</p> <p>Resembles criterion or real-life physical environment in which target language use (TLU) take place</p> <p><i>Elements of physical learning context</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location ▪ Seating condition ▪ Light <p>Time</p> <p>Kind & amount of available resources</p> <p>3. Social learning context</p> <p>Resembles criterion or real-life interaction forms (individual or collaborative).</p> <p><i>Collaborative</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social interaction ▪ Positive interdependency ▪ Individual accountability <p><i>Individual</i></p> <p>4. Authentic learning goals</p> <p>Provide scaffolding in terms of targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes.</p> <p>II. AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT</p> <p>1. Authentic assessment tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resemble authentic learning tasks - Demonstrate the integration/ coordination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. - Reflect students' writing progress over a period of time (Multiple indicators of learning) <p>2. Authentic assessing methods</p> <p><i>Self-assessment guided by learners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is at the heart of writing portfolio assessment - Allows learners to provide a portrait of their own learning (self-reflection). <p><i>Peer-assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is carefully designed and guided. <p><i>Teacher-assessment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assist in developing self-learning. <p>3. Authentic marking criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be transferred to students beforehand. - Are related to realistic outcome - Are clear-cut and detail. - Base on criteria used in real-life - Represent what are valued in an expert performance

Methodology

Research Questions and Design

As stated before, this study focused on two research questions: (1) What aspects of the authenticity need to be demonstrated in writing portfolios? (2) From the teacher perspective, which aspects of authenticity are demonstrated in the writing portfolios for Sophomores in a Social English Course at ULIS?. It is believed that the most appropriate and rigorous way to answer the questions was using qualitative methods which focused on “describing a phenomenon in a deep comprehensive manner” (Adar, 2013). To be more specific, a combination of four phases with three qualitative methods had been employed.

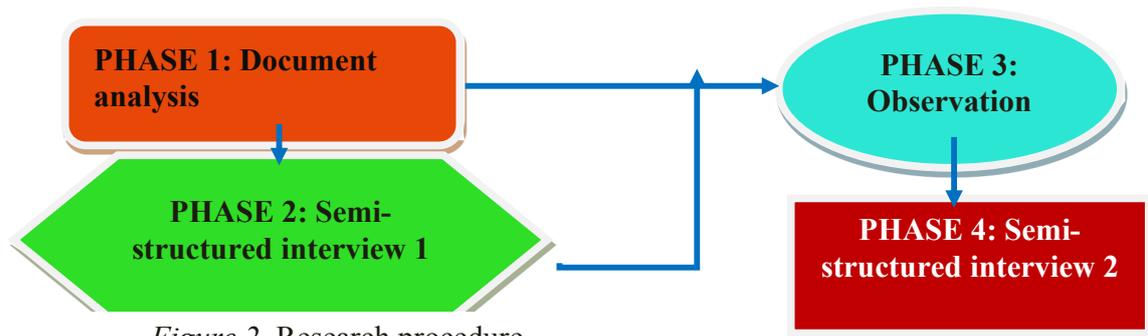


Figure 2. Research procedure

Phase 1: Document analysis. Document analysis (with in-depth literature reviewed) aimed at developing a framework (table 1) of authentic writing portfolios. Journals, articles, thesis, survey data, organizational websites related to writing portfolios, authenticity, and language assessment were collected from libraries (Eg: Library at ULIS or ProQuest library), research websites (Eg: Google scholar, ResearchGate), newspaper archives, books and so forth. Once essential sources were found, they will undergo checking, categorizing and thematic analyzing processes in order to build a desired framework.

Phase 2: Semi-structure interview 1. In the second phase (semi-structured 4 experienced lecturers and experts at ULIS whose research interest in testing and assessment were invited to join face-to-face interviews with the researcher to evaluate the framework. There were three main questions discussed during the interviews. The first one asked participants whether the newly-built framework in phase 1 lacked any crucial elements regarding the authenticity of writing portfolios. Besides, an interview question to determine the practicality of the framework in Vietnamese context was taken into account. The third question was to determine if any ambiguous terms existed in the framework.

Phase 3: Observation. After all necessary modifications, the new framework (figure 3) was used in observing the writing portfolios practice of three Social English classes whose learners were sophomores majoring in English Language Teaching at ULIS, VNU. This phase had two purposes: examine the practicality of the framework and collect data for the final phase (semi-structured interview 2).

Phase 4: Semi-structured Interview 2. With this phase, fifteen ULIS teachers-specialists in the field of testing and assessment and/or Social English teaching were invited to join the interviews. Phase 4 consisted of three consecutive parts: the explanation of the researcher’s framework, detailed description of the Social English course in accordance with all collected data in phase 3, and interviews in which the participants were asked to evaluate the authenticity of the targeted writing portfolios basing on the provided framework. Data obtained was again categorized, analyzed and synthesized carefully to ensure the validity and reliability of the research result.

Findings

A Framework for Evaluating the Authenticity of Writing Portfolios

Based on the findings from phase 2 (semi-structured interview 1) and an extensive literature review, the first framework for authentic writing portfolio was adjusted and condensed into five dimensions: tasks, goals, context, marking criteria and roles of assessors (*figure 2*). Compared to the initial version, the new framework has noticeable changes.

Tasks. Lecturers and experts in language assessment field at ULIS pointed out in their interviews that there was no clear distinction between learning tasks and assessment ones in writing portfolio. Similarly, other researchers have emphasized on the integration of assessment and instruction in writing portfolios (Arter & Spandel, 1992; Wolfe & Miller, 1997). From this perspective, “authentic learning tasks” and “authentic assessment tasks”, two separate strands in the first framework, were merged into one with four sub-criteria adopted from the framework for task structure of Nunan (1989) consisting input, activities, student roles and teacher roles. As being stated by Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004), the authenticity of a learning task is shown via the extent to which the characteristics of tasks correspond to those of real-world/ professional task at students’ educational level. This feature is deemed suitable for the tasks in authentic writing portfolios in particular. Furthermore, “learner ownership” is another indispensable element. Regarding writing portfolios, ownership implies some control over what goes into the portfolios and, probably, over where and how they are moved (Arter & Spandel, 1992). Duffy (1995) also declares that it is important to decide early on who “own” the portfolios since that is one of the key features making the writing portfolios authentic. Last but not least, scaffolding is taken into consideration as a feature for the authentic writing tasks. As the name has implied, scaffolding refers to the process of bridging the gap between the learner’s actual developmental level and that of his potential one. According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), there is a link between authenticity and construct validity. Hence, the initial goal of authentic instruction must be providing support/scaffolding in terms of targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes mentioned in the course objective so that learners can apply what they learn in assessment tasks.

Goals. Overall, interviewed teachers in phase 2 agreed that learning goals should be taken into account. According to expert B and D, whenever building a course, course designers have to consider students’ language levels, majors, social demands and many other elements thoroughly before setting out course objectives. Consequently, *course goals are authentic to some extents*. Since the nature of tasks is goal-oriented, the authenticity of the writing tasks would be shown via the degree they attain the course objectives. Besides, expert C asserted that during the learning process, students’ knowledge, skills and attitudes did not develop separately, but grew together. Therefore, the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes mentioned in course objectives should be simultaneously investigated while evaluating authentic goals in writing portfolios.

Authentic context.

Authentic physical context. Numerous previous researchers in assessment field have mentioned physical context when discussing about authenticity. According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), authentic physical context (settings) of test should be similar to the physical context that target language use takes place in real-life. Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner (2004) also declare physical context of authentic assessment has to resemble realistic context or professional context. From this perspective, the physical context is regarded necessary in the framework for authentic writing portfolios.

Authentic social context. Not only physical but also social context influences the authenticity of classroom instruction since learning and performing out of school mostly

take place in a social system (Resnick, 1987). “The term Social context can have many meanings or definitions, but most of them focus on “the possible forms of relationships, and interaction among people.” (Endler, Alexandre, Schuster & Springer, 2011). Basing on that notion, social context in writing portfolios can be understood as the interaction forms among learners and within the learners themselves in the process of completing their writing tasks.

Authentic assessment criteria. The notion of authentic criteria is adopted from the definition of Gulikers, Bastianens and Kirschner (2004):

“Criteria are those characteristics of the assessment result that are valued. [...]criteria should be related to realistic outcome, explicating characteristics or requirements of the product, performance, or solutions that students need to create. Furthermore, criteria and standards should concern the development of relevant professional competences and should be based on criteria used in real life situation” (p. 75).

The three researchers also emphasized that it is very important to set and transfer assessment criteria to students beforehand because criteria guide learning. The same things happen in real world. As employees do some things (for example, write a journal), they normally know on what criteria their performance will be judged. All interviewed experts participating in this research also agreed with this view point. Therefore, little changes except the wording of the first framework were made.

Roles of assessors. Roles of assessors” is the dimension deriving from the proportion titled “authentic assessing methods” of the drafted framework. It refers to the positions of teacher, students, and peers in the process of assessing students’ works. After asking experts for advice and synthesizing more materials related to this aspect, researcher comes to the conclusion that in authentic writing portfolios, learners still play the central roles in assessing their own works whereas the roles of teacher and peers need to be flexible to help students reach the pre-set goals.

Some are of the opinion that the assessors’ role should be decided in consonance with specific cases. For example, in case students’ language proficiency is too low, teacher has to act as the main assessor; but if students are proficient enough, self-assessment is chief. It cannot be denied that this view is true to some extent. However, such belief seems to go against the nature of writing portfolios. Chancer (1993) and Gottlieb (1995) declare in their research that portfolios are, by definition, student-directed, as students have a voice in their creation and maintenance. Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (1991) also consider portfolio the vehicle to facilitate self-assessment and reflection. From this perspective, there is no doubt that in spite of playing an essential and active role in assessing process, teacher is still considered expert who provides learners adequate support or scaffolding. The ownership still belongs to students.

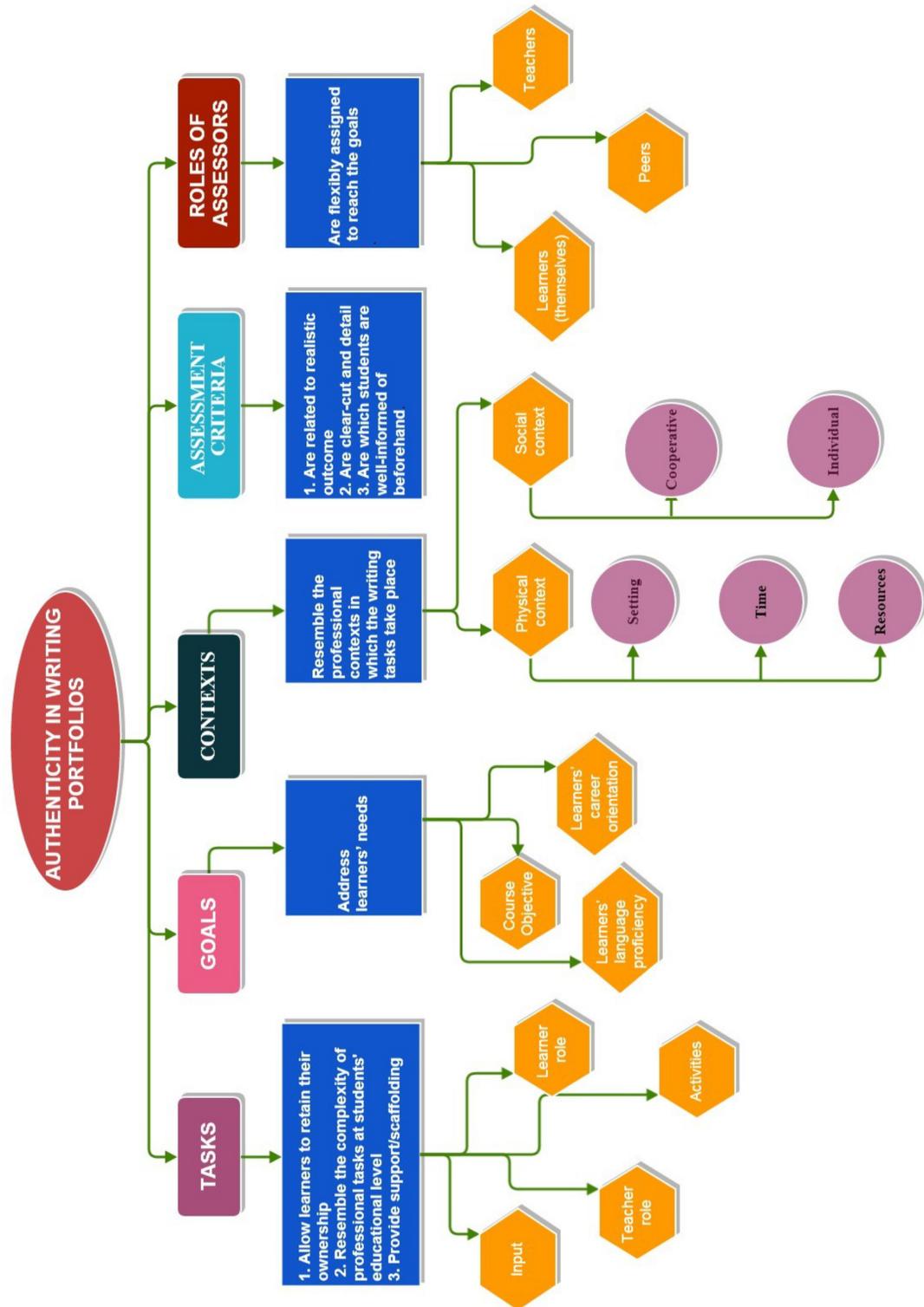


Figure 2: Authenticity in Writing Portfolios

To sum up, the framework to investigate authenticity in writing portfolio was evaluated and adjusted according to the evaluation of competent and experienced teachers in language testing at ULIS and literature reviews. Although further comparison with other frameworks and further validation are certainly needed, it is safe to say that the final framework has high potential to be reliable and practical for use at ULIS, VNU.

Finding from Phase 3- Observation and Phase 4-Semi-Structure Interview 2

Tasks. Regarding students' writing tasks, the collected data from phase 3 and phase 4 have revealed that the investigated writing portfolios were authentic to some extent. Firstly, the students were given adequate freedom during their learning process. To be more specific, they could always choose their positions and freely added extra details as completing their own writing about a given topic. They were also encouraged to interact with each other, give peer comments, respond to their classmates' opinions and do self-evaluation and rather than passively listen to their teacher's instruction. In addition, all three required topics including a review of a travelling destination, a letter of complaint and a letter of job application highly resembled the real-life tasks which conceivably confront the students either in their future daily life or at work. The interviewees likewise acknowledged that appropriate scaffolding was provided since all steps in the teaching process upheld each other quite effectively. For example, sample analysis activities helped deepen the students' understanding of the targeted writing genres during their learning process while extra reading tasks seemed to be fruitful sources of background information enabling students to reach the expected outcome. Moreover, timed writing and at-home writing tasks provided students with opportunities to practice and make progress over time.

Nevertheless, hardly could the target learners make decision on course materials, types of genres or evaluation methods. Those aspects were all chosen and pre-set by teachers and course designers.

Goals.

The general aims of the course were to assist students in reaching B2+ level of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference). However, no particular objectives could be found for writing skills in the course guide of the investigated Social English course. Therefore, the interviewees and the researcher agreed that further interviews with course designers should be conducted before a valid conclusion is made regarding the goals of the writing portfolios.

Contexts.

Physical contexts. All interviewed lecturers held that the amount of time for in-class writing tasks was quite short compared with the time needed in real life but still reasonable in this case since the tasks were radically simplified according to students' level. Although it is undeniable that the degree at which in-class setting resembled real physical setting was limited, students could still get access to a more authentic environment as they searched for extra resources and revised their work outside the classroom.

Social context. when it comes to social context, the authenticity of the writing portfolios remained controversial. Around 67% of the interviewees believed that the social context resembled the professional context quite well since students had chances to work individually or with partners as they would in the future jobs. On the other hand, the others argued that the authenticity of the social context depended on specific circumstances. For instance, teacher F said:

“In this research, the students' major is English teaching. If they become English teachers in the future, they normally have to read numerous materials. However, they would not discuss with other teachers about what they have read all the time, especially when their fields of interest are not the same”.

Assessment Criteria. According to direct observation and interviews with experts, the assessment criteria used in the writing portfolio lacked a clear-cut and detailed guidance for the learners. Despite the writing band descriptors and marking samples printed in the course guides, there was little time for students to learn how to use the

assessment rubrics. 80% of the interviewers claimed that the 45-minute course orientation in the first week was just enough for the sophomores to *knew* about the criteria rather than to be able to apply the criteria appropriately in peer assessment and self-assessment. “It usually took a long time to fully understand and use any assessment criteria. Even the teachers who have been trained extensively in assessment field and gained considerable experience still may encounter some marking issues”, said teacher H. Therefore, specific guidance and constant practices were believed to be needed to enhance the quality of students’ self-assessment and peer comments.

Roles of Assessors. The researcher and other interviewers shared the same view that in the investigated writing portfolios, the teacher played the role of the main assessor providing detailed comments on each students’ papers while peer assessment and self-assessment were quite marginable. The comparison between the first and the second versions of each student’ writings revealed that students tend to put premiums, not to say rely on teacher’s feedbacks instead of peers’ comment to edit their work. This led to a decrease in learners’ autonomy. An interviewed expert also emphasized that the writing portfolio should have promoted the students’ ownership in assessment process more since in real-life, it is an individual who mainly took charge of his or her own tasks. Others’ opinions will merely be a source of reference, especially when the individual’s experience increases overtime.

Discussion

Recommendations to Improve the Authenticity of the Writing Portfolios for the sophomores in Social English Course at ULIS

The collected data reveals some suggestions to improve the quality of the investigated writing portfolios.

Firstly, more attention needs paying to students’ ownership. In other words, students should be allowed to participate in choosing the content of the portfolios as well as deciding how their results will be assessed. However, if students have complete control, they may not know what are essential for them. Probably the best compromise is for students, teachers and other stakeholders to work together in determining what will be included and to make their decisions in light of some nonrestrictive guidelines.

Secondly, to have more positive impacts on students’ development, peer assessment should be treated with caution. Only when students understand the meaning and the benefits of peer assessment do they actually involve in that activity. Besides, teacher needs to ensure that peer assessment is supported by detailed and explicit criteria and standards in the form of a rubric. If students are engaged in the process of developing the criteria, they will probably gain a clearer understanding of how assessment is carried out. It also results in an increased sense of ownership and makes students become more active in evaluating themselves.

In addition, students should be provided with more precise instruction on how to conduct constant self-reflection for the sake of enhancing their development. For instance, after every several weeks, teachers may list out some specific questions for learners to answer about themselves (eg: their strengths, weaknesses, improvements) in the form of bullet points instead of delaying until the end of the semester to ask students to write a general report.

With regard to the fulfillment of the course objective, there is a need of increasing learners’ exposure to non-academic writing style; otherwise the vocabulary in non-academic fields will be limited, so is the flexibility of student’s language use in a variety of social situations.

To sum up, the writing portfolios for the second year students in Social English course at ULIS is regarded authentic to some extent. That is the first time such new type of writing portfolios was implemented. The above-mentioned suggestions are proposed with the hope that some contribution can be made to the improvement of the portfolios.

Limitations

Despite the researcher's efforts in justifying the methodology as well as the collecting and analyzing data with careful consideration, certain limitations could be detected in this study due to time constraint and other unexpected factors. Firstly, in terms of the developed framework, under restricted circumstances, the research could only verify the framework with a certain number of experts. ensure the completion and the practicality of the framework in other contexts, further validations are needed. Secondly, due to the time constraint, the authenticity of the writing portfolios for the second year students at ULIS has not been investigated in some aspects. Authentic learning goals are salient examples. Therefore, the contribution to the improvement of the writing portfolios is still restricted.

Recommendation

If further research continues, the researcher hopes to conduct longer observations and larger interviews including more participants, the experts in language assessment fields for more precise and reliable findings. Besides, the paper placed its focus on evaluating authenticity from teacher perspective, other researchers may wish to evidence students' awareness of authenticity and how such perception affect students' performance in writing portfolios. Additionally, owing to the fact that authenticity has an inextricable link to validity, further research on validity of the writing portfolios is also an option for future research. Last but not least, the developed framework includes five main dimensions. Focusing on one dimension to develop deeper researches is a worth considering direction.

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