

Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter explains and elaborates the literature related to the study. The first section discusses assessment, including the definition of assessment. The second section discusses the types of assessment which include formative and summative assessment. The third section explains essay, specifically its definition, benefits, and problems. The fourth section is about essay at English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta. The fifth section is the review of related studies which talk about prior studies. The last section is conceptual framework.

Assessment

Test, assessment, and evaluation are related topics that are used to assess students. People often cannot tell the difference between test, assessment, and evaluation. Test is used to check someone's knowledge in a given time. Brown (2003) said that test is an instrument to check someone's knowledge, ability, and performance in a given time. Brown (2003) further pointed out that assessment is a process which takes place in wide areas. Genesee and Upshur (1996) mentioned that evaluation is used to increase the achievement of students and educational program by analyzing, collecting, and interpreting information gathered in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, test, assessment and evaluation are the tools to measure students' knowledge which has their own purpose.

Definition of assessment. This part contains the definition of assessment.

Assessment is the instruction given by the lecturer to measure knowledge to make judgment of the knowledge. Mussawy (2009) said that assessment is important in teaching and learning and it relates with the teacher's teaching method and the outcomes of students. Shaaban (2001) stated that assessment is related to instruction. Assessment is one of the teacher's methods to measure students' development of learning. Earl and Katz (2006) said that the teacher can observe the development of students' knowledge with assessment. In assessment, the teacher gives an instruction to the students about what they have to do to show their knowledge. Watering, Gijbels, Dochy and Rijt (2008) proposed that varieties of assessment depend on how people treat the role of assessment in the educational process.

Assessment informs the teacher about students' knowledge. According to Sun and Suzuki (2013), the function of assessment is to inform the teachers about how far the students understand the knowledge they have learned. Assessment is important for the teachers to see the developments of the student's knowledge. The teachers also know the percentage of their success in teaching. By conducting an assessment, the teacher can make judgments about what should be done to improve the teaching process.

Assessment can also become a tool for the students to tell others about the knowledge they have gained. Dhindsa, Omar and Waldrip (2007) argued that assessment is a data collection method of students' knowledge. It means that it is an opportunity for the students to show their knowledge. Assessment is one of the

students' tools to demonstrate their knowledge they got in the teaching and learning process.

Types of Assessment

Assessment consists of two types. Brown (2003) pointed out that there are two types of assessment which are formative and summative assessment. Formative and summative assessments are different. The main differences of those are in the time of implementation and also the function.

Formative assessment. Formative assessment is used to control the students' knowledge progress. Hudesman, Crosby, Flugman, Issac, Everson and Clay (2013) stated that formative assessment is an ongoing assessment. Brown (2003) further asserted that formative assessment helps the students to establish their skills and advance their competencies. Formative assessment is called as ongoing assessment because it can collect information about students' progress on learning. Formative assessment helps the teacher to know the students' strengths and weaknesses. Finally, the information helps the teacher to change or to modify their teaching method to be more effective for the students.

Summative assessment. Summative assessment is an assessment to give judgment on students' knowledge. Summative assessment is implemented at the end of the course. Brown (2003) argued that summative assessment is an assessment which is conducted in the end of the course to measure the students' achievement. The function of summative assessment is to give judgment of the students' overall competence. Taras (2005) remarked that a judgment is given at the end of the course.

Summative assessment does not interrupt the teaching and learning process.

Therefore, summative assessment should never precede formative assessment.

Essay as an Assessment Tool at an English Language Education Department in a Private University in Yogyakarta.

At English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta, essay is a written assignment used by the teachers to measure the students' achievement. Essay as assessment is considered as an alternative tool to check students' achievement of knowledge in given time. Some of teachers at English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta have used this method. However, each teacher has their own rules regarding the creation of essay.

The first difference is formatting. Based on the researcher's experience, there are some teachers who set an essay format, and there are teachers who do not set it. The second difference is the method of collecting information. Sometimes the teacher asks the students to read journals, read textbooks, interview someone or read a novel.

Although there are differences of essay from the teachers, they also have two similarities. The first similarity is the assessment's purpose. Based on the informal conversation with some of the students, the teachers always ask the students to write an essay-based on the subject that they have learned. One of the purposes of using essay is to measure students' knowledge. The second similarity is the deadline. All teachers give more time to the students to finish essay. Usually, to make essay, the

teachers at English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta give two weeks to finish it.

Writing assessment is often used to evaluate students' performance. The most often used writing assessment at English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta is essay. The literature which will be used is the literature about essay.

Essay as an Assessment Tool

Knowing the students' achievement becomes something important for the teachers. One of the ways to find out the students' achievement is by doing assessment. One of the assessments was used by the lecturers in a private university in Yogyakarta is essay. In assessing the students using essay, the teachers ask the students to make an essay in which the topic is given by the teachers. The essay consists of some paragraphs.

Each paragraph of an essay consists of several parts. Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (2002) defined that essay is a long written text. The parts of essay are introduction, content, and conclusion. One paragraph consists of five sentences minimally. Each paragraph must be related with the topic or the question. The number of paragraphs in the essay are not specified, but it has to cover the criteria requested by the teachers.

Essay has a lot of variety on topics. According to Dikli (2003), essay is a paper which answers flexible questions and it can measure students' skills on learning. The flexibility of the essay's question means that the question can ask the students to

describe, to interpret, or to compare something. Usually, essay has question that is based on the topic the students have learned. To answer the question, the students have to explain and describe their knowledge on writing form. A flexible question means that the students have no limitations in describing their answer. The students should use their own words on writing an essay because the students must understand the point of question and the subject to answer the question. Therefore, the term of essay-based assessment will be used interchangeably with the term of essay.

Benefits of essay as an assessment tool. In making an essay, the students can get benefits from it. The students will see the benefits when they make essay. The benefits of creating essay are explained as follows:

Memorizing a subject. According to Booth, Colomb and Williams as cited in Derntl (2014), writing can help students to memorize the subject. It is possible for someone to forget about something they have learned. Essay helps the students to remember the subject. This is because the students need to read their book again to help them to write. Rereading source materials helps the students remembering the subjects.

Motivating students to learn the learning material. Motivation is important to the students to increase their interest in learning. According to Borthwick and Brown as cited in Wagner (1998), essay can also be a motivator to the students in learning. It means that the students demonstrate their knowledge in awritten form. The students need to make a good essay, so they need to learn. Essay can be a motivation because the students have to learn the previous material to make a good essay. Therefore, the

enhancement of the students' knowledge can motivate the students and make them more confident in writing an essay.

Improving writing skill. Writing is one of skills used by the students when they are making an essay. Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012) argued that by giving an essay, the students learn how to increase their writing skills. Ali as cited in Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012) stated that essay can improve the students' writing skills and performance. Writing skill also includes several aspects such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Barabouti (2012), Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012) stated that the view that essay is one of the assessment techniques to improve students' writing skill. Barabouti (2012) further pointed out that students will be aware on the importance of strategies to make an essay well. Barabouti (2012) further suggested the strategies to share and gather the information about the subject; paraphrasing the information; grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Increasing critical thinking. According to Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012), essay helps the students to increase their critical thinking. The teachers at English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta give essay to the students in every batch start from semester 2. Giving essay regularly helps the students to think more critically, academically, and rationally.

Problems of essay as an assessment tool. In making essay, the students also encounter some difficulties. The problems faced by the students in creating essay are explained below.

Ignoring other skills. To write essay, the students is often asked to read a text book. According to Birgin and Baki (2007), in assessment, essay makes the students ignore the other skills and the development of the students' potential. The skills that are ignored are the speaking skill and listening skill. The students are rarely asked to listen to something or speak in the process of writing an essay.

Word choices problem. English language is rich of vocabulary. Alfaki (2015) stated that one of the problems faced by the students' in essay is the use of right words and related each other. Furthermore, the use of mother tongue also influences in selecting and writing the right word. Those problems are often faced by the students when they write essay. The interference of mother tongue and right word choices sometimes make the students difficult to make essay-based assessment. The use of mother tongue as daily speaking language influences the used of wrong word choice when they write in foreign language.

Lack of practice. Practice in writing is needed to make people more competence. Nyasimi (2009) found that one of the students' problems in essay-based assessment is lack of writing practice. Practice in writing helps the students to be more competent in writing. Lot of practices helps the students to improve vocabulary mastery and to master grammar. Furthermore, writing practice helps the students to resolve their problem in writing. Lack of practice influences students' skills in writing.

Review of Related Studies

There are some researchers who conducted a study about students' perception on the essay-based assessment. The first study was conducted in English Foreign Language context in Iran. The participants were university students. Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli and Ansari (2010) conducted a quasi-experimental research design on the impact of portfolio of students' essay as instrument of process of assessment on essay writing. The researchers found out the effect of portfolio assessment to the participants' achievement in the overall essay writing ability; the effect of portfolio assessment to the participants' essay writing ability in terms of focus, elaboration, organization, conventions and vocabulary; and the perception of the use of portfolio. They used writing test and interview to collect data. They found that there were two findings of results. The first finding was the effect of essay writing assessment showed an improvement of students' writing ability on vocabulary, explanation, focus, association, and convention. The second finding was the portfolio of students' essay writing improved vocabulary, writing skill, and awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses of writing.

The second study was conducted in English Foreign Language in Egypt by Ahmed (2010). The topic of this study is student teachers' problem of cohesion and coherence on essay writing. This study aimed to find out Egyptian students', teachers', and lecturers' ways to perceive the cohesion and the coherence of the written essay. The research design used was mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative research design. The data collection method included questionnaire and

interview. Ahmed (2010) found that the writing problems often faced by student teachers were cohesion and coherence.

Those studies have similarities and differences with this research. The similarity between those two previous studies and the researcher's study is the context. The context is English Foreign Language setting. The other similarity from the first study and the researcher's study is that the participant is undergraduate university students. Meanwhile, the participants of the second study were student teachers in university. The difference is the research design of the first study is quantitative research design and the second study is mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative research design while this research used qualitative research design. The first study used quasi-experimental research and the second study used questionnaire and interview while this study applied interview to collect the data as the instrument.

Conceptual Framework

At English Language Education Department of one Private University in Yogyakarta, one of the writing assessments used is essay. Essay has flexible questions which asked the students to describe something clearly. Therefore, before writing an essay, the students need to have knowledge about the topic in order to be able to explain the topic using their own words. The contents of every student's essay are different, but the meaning and structure are the same.

Essay has several benefits. According to Booth et al. as cited in Derntl (2014), writing is important for students to memorize a topic or subject. According to

Borthwick and Brown as cited in Wagner (1998), essay motivates the students to learn. Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012), Ali as cited in Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012) and Barabouti (2012) mentioned that the view that essay improves students' writing skill. According to Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012), essay improves the students' critical thinking.

The students also have problems when making an essay. According to Birgin and Baki (2007), essay makes the students ignore other skills and the development of the students' potential. According to Alfaki (2015), the students' problem in essay-based assessment is word choices. Nyasimi (2009) found that the students' problem in essay-based assessment is lack of practice. Finally, the conceptual framework can be figured out below:

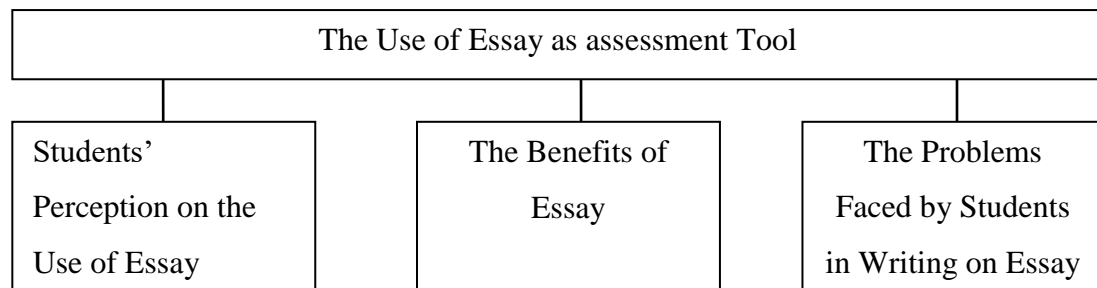


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework