

The Use of Portfolio to Improve Translation Ability of English Department Students in State Polytechnic of Padang

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Abstract

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of students' work that exhibit the students' effort, progress, and achievement in one area. It can be useful media for both teacher and students or for the institution in order to see the progress and achievement in teaching learning process. This paper will discuss the use portfolio by students that is useful in order to improve their ability in translation. As one of compulsory subjects in English Department, Translation must be comprehended both in theory and practice. A research about the use of portfolio has been conducted in English Department, State Polytechnic of Padang. It was studying about the use of portfolio to improve the students' translation ability. It proposed an alternative hypothesis that the use of portfolio would improve the translation ability of English Department students in the State Polytechnic of Padang. An experimental research design was conducted to prove the hypothesis above. It was found that there were significant progress getting by Experimental Group which got the treatment. The use of portfolio could help students to manage their assignments and the material related to the subject. It showed that the experimental group of students who used the portfolio got higher score in post test than the control group.

Key words: *Portfolio, Translation Ability*

Introduction

It is important to record the students activities during the session to see how far the progress in comprehending of a subject. A portfolio is one of the records that the teachers can conduct to their students. According to Paulson, Paulson and Meyer (2003), a purposeful collection of students' work that exhibit the students' effort, progress, and achievement in one area is the definition of a portfolio. In addition, the collection must include student's participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student's self-reflection. As a result a portfolio is very useful for both the student and the teacher to identify and evaluate the progress of learning process in a simple way.

Furthermore, the portfolio can be used by all teachers in this world including English teacher in the State Polytechnic of Padang. The simple way to explain it is that the teacher asks his/her students to collect all their works and assignment from the beginning of the semester until the end of the semester. It is very useful to evaluate their progress, achievement, and effort during their learning about the subject. Teacher and students can discuss if there is any problem to meet the objective of the learning.

By finding the benefit of the portfolio for the students from some research, the writers were eager to conduct a research of the use of portfolio in the State Polytechnic of Padang where they teach. In the pre research observation that the writers did, it is found that there is no any single English teacher apply this portfolio in his or her teaching process. It might because they have very little knowledge about this or it might be no standardized form that they can use. In fact, some of them might have the collection of students work but they do not know how to organize it well to become a portfolio that might be useful both for teacher and students.

Knowing that portfolio is very useful in teaching learning process, the researchers have studied the usefulness of it in the State Polytechnic of Padang, especially in English Department

since all of the researchers are English teachers who are working in teaching team of translation. Beside the researchers are joined in teaching team of translation they agreed that the activities in translation subjects represent the maximum use of a portfolio. Since the students are asked to translate some text and find some parallel texts in order to support to their background knowledge about the topic, they will many materials which they can collect in a portfolio.

The research has proposed the following hypothesis:

H₁: “The use of portfolio will improve the translation ability of English Department students in the State Polytechnic of Padang.”

H₀: “The use of portfolio will not improve the translation ability of English Department students in the State Polytechnic of Padang.”

An experimental study has been conducted to answer the hypotheses. There were Control and Experimental group in which must be assigned randomly (Shuttleworth, 2008). The group got the same pre-test and post- test in order to get the same performance of the students toward the test content. In this study the researchers will use statistical value from the pre and post test of each group to prove that a research hypothesis (H1) is true and vice versa.

A. Portfolio

1. Concept

Portfolio is a media used in many fields of work in which contain the collection of one's or corporate working or product so that is useful for others to see his or their track record in the field. In education field the term of portfolio is common. Venn in Valenzuela (2002) defines a student portfolio is organized collection of student work and related material that describe a student's activities, accomplishments, and achievements in one or more school subjects. The collection should include evidence of student reflection and self-evaluation, guidelines for selecting the portfolio contents, and criteria for judging the quality of the work. The goal is to help students assemble portfolios that illustrate their talents, represent their writing capabilities, and tell their stories of school achievement.

The concept above mention that a portfolio can show a student's achievement, talents, and work, his or her strength and weakness in one or more subject during the study. Winsor and Ellefson in Birgin and Baki (2007), define that “portfolio is a fusion of process and product. It is the process of reflection, selection, rationalization, and evaluation, together with the product of those processes”. However, Barton and Collin (1997) states that a portfolio is not a collection of a students' work haphazardly over time. Thus, in developing a portfolio it is important to decide its' purpose, evidence consisting of portfolio, and its' assessment criteria (Birgin and Baki, 2007). In addition, Grace (1992) defines “a portfolio allows students to evaluate their own work, provides students to see their personal development and creates a basis for evaluating their performances individually (Tosunn and Baris, 2011).”

2. Organizing a portfolio

To organize a portfolio, there are three aspects which must be considered (Birgin and Baki, 2007). There are the aspects:

(a) Determining the purpose of the portfolio

It is a significant act of portfolio preparation to determine the purpose for the portfolio. It can be used for different purpose in education.

(b) Determining the evidence including in portfolio

The evidence including in portfolio is as significant as determining the purpose of portfolio. It is about what evidence collected in portfolio. Teachers can discuss it with their students. For example, a portfolio can contain visual or activity materials such as individual or group studies, his/her best studies, tests, projects, presentations, control lists, problem solutions, questionnaire, teacher

comment, reading list and reviews, self-assessment/peer-assessment checklist, interview notes, course note, cd and disks (Birgin and Baki, 2007).

(c) Determining assessment criteria

Since a portfolio can be used and mainly use as one way in assessing student's progress, it is important to determine the criteria of assessment. According to Birgin and Baki (2007), "Assessment criteria which have been used to determine the quality of the student's performance should be clear and easy to understand."

3. Types of Portfolio

Base on the objective of this research which its research subject is the students, there will explain about two types of student portfolio. Firstly, according to Valenzuela (2002), is a process portfolio which documents the stages of learning and provides a progressive record of student growth. The second type is a product portfolio which demonstrates mastery of a learning task or a set of learning objectives and contains only the best work.

B. Translation

Translation is the process of transferring message from the source text into target text by considering the equivalent aspect. Catford (in Hatim, 2001) states that translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language. In addition, Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia (2007) formulates that translation is the interpretation of the meaning of a text in one language (the "source text") and the production, in another language, of an equivalent text (the "target text," or "translation") that communicates the same message.

According to Newmark (1988), translation is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text. He said that all the text can be translated. It is supported by Danila Seleskovitch (in Newmark, 1988:6) who said that: 'Everything said in one language can be expressed in another – in condition that the two languages belong to cultures that have reached a comparable degree of development.' In addition, Bell (1991) says that the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another, source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences is a definition of translation.

Then, Suryawinata and Haryanto (2003) collected some definition of translation appearing from 1960s until 1970s. He concludes that translation are: (1) a change of expression from one language to the other, (2) the meaning and message that are rendered in the TL, and (3) that the translator has an obligation to seek for the closest equivalent in the target language (TL). In conclusion, translation can be said as a process in which the translator transfer equally the idea, meaning, and may be the style of the author or writer of source language into target language (Aulia, 2008).

In another way translation can be said as the way to express the meaning of a text in another language. A translator should have deep understanding of the ideas expressed by the author in the text. It is an attempt of finding the good ways to express ideas in source language with appropriate sentences in target language. Here, a translator is required to know the culture both languages. It is useful to obtain the equivalences in meaning of the two languages.

C. Translation ability

The ability in rendering the message from the source language into the good, right and acceptable target language can be the definition of translation ability. Stansfield, Scott and Kenyon (1992) suggested that the Accuracy and Expression of the translation result can be the criteria of translation ability. They explained that Accuracy involves content; i.e., the mistranslation, omission or addition of information in the score document. Expression

involves form; i.e., the linguistic variables such as grammar, syntax, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, style and tone, as produced in the translation.

Moreover, Razmjou (2003) explained:

One of the most important points to consider in the act of translating is understanding the value of the source text within the framework of the source-language discourse. To develop this understanding, the translator must be aware of the cultural differences and the various discursal strategies in the source and target languages. Therefore, the hidden structure of the source text should be discovered through the use of various discursal strategies by the translator.

It can explain that there are many aspects that a translator must have when he decided to be a translator. The points above are required as well in the class of translation where the students act as a translator. And there must be pre activities which influence the student as a translator in producing good target text.

Student's comprehension about the concept of translation and the role of a translation include in the translation ability since he is taking the translation subject. In the translation course both theory and practice are taught. As Al-jehani (2010) mentioned in her slideshare that the translation class is designed in which between the theory and practice should be balance but it lean little bit more on practice so the student will practice as much as possible.

Angelelli (2009) stated that there must be many aspects when we decide to measure one's translation ability, such as discourse and grammatical competence. Moreover Machali (2000) in her book *Pedoman bagi Penerjemah* explained more detail about translation ability in which she categorized from the worst translation result to the almost perfect translation result.

However, the teacher cannot adopt all the suggestion above. She/he should know which criteria of translation ability that appropriate to the characteristic of his/her class. Since translation class is a process so the teacher cannot measure only the result of his/her students' translation result but also their process during studying translation.

Discussion

A. Experimental Group

1. Treatment

The treatment given in experimental group was the use of portfolio. The researchers have given the folders to each student in this group which was purposed to put their materials and assignments. Every student was responsible to his/her portfolio. They were welcome to decorate their own with pictures, art wallpaper and motivation sentences. There were two types of portfolio according to Valenzuela (2007). They were process portfolio and product portfolio. Based on the purpose of this research, process portfolio was suitable. In this type, the students documented the stages of learning and provided a progressive record of student growth.

2. Data Analysis

The pre test was given to the experimental group named Alpha group consisted 16 students or participants. It was given before they got portfolio folder from the researchers. After getting the pre test they were given portfolio folder as the treatment in this research. They were asked to put all materials related to the subject Theory and Practice of Translation in the portfolio included syllabus, parallel texts, and assignments. Post test was given after they had studied for 7 weeks.

It was found that there was significant progress of average score from pre test to post test of the experimental group. All students' post test score were higher than their pre test. It means that 100% students in the experimental group got their progress after the treatment was given.

According to SPSS analysis, t test was gotten with confidence intervals 95% is -6.351. Seltman (2013) said that confidence intervals help a researcher focus on substantive significance in addition to statistical significance. After confirming to t-test distribution the t value of -6.351 was less than t_{α} : -2.131. It meant that H_0 was rejected. In addition, it could be explained that there was statistically significant progress in the experimental group after they got the treatment.

It could also be explained that the high differences of mean between pre test and post test shown that the treatment given could improve students' translation ability. Mean of pre test in experimental group was 50 and its mean for post test was 71. It told us that the students gave better performance in doing post test after they got the treatment of using portfolio folder after getting the pre test. These significant differences explained that null hypothesis could be disapproved (Shuttleworth, 2008).

There were also the records about their portfolio content that could support the quantitative data of the research. The portfolio folders were checked when the post test given. However, there were not all students could show their folder. There were three students who could not show theirs at the time. The content itself are same with the control group.

It was 69% students put the copy of syllabus in their folder. The students need to have the syllabus of the subject in order to let them know the topics which would be discussed during the semester. After getting the syllabus, the students were asked to put their reading reports which were as one of some assignments given during the class. 85% students put their reading reports about the topics in their folder. It was 31% students in experimental group stuck handout. The number of students who stuck parallel text 1 and 2 were 81% and 63%. For assignment 1 and 2, there was 92% students who put the result of assignments which had been returned to them.

The contents of portfolio folders which were put by the students in experimental group could influence their performance in doing post test in the end of the research. It was related to Valenzuela (2000) who defines that a student portfolio is organized collection of student work and related material that describe a student's activities, accomplishments, and achievements in one or more school subjects. In here the researcher gave direction to students in experimental group to use their portfolio folder as the place to save their works and materials. They could use the portfolio folders to review the materials.

B. Control Group

As the experimental group, the control group was also given pre test and post test. The students were also given same instruction and assignments as given in experimental group. For example, the students were asked to copy the syllabus and handout. They were also asked to do some assignments and find parallel texts. Base on the purpose of the research which was to see if there was any improvement after getting the treatment –portfolio by experimental group, the researchers did not ask the students in control group to collect all the assignments and materials at the end of the research.

It was found that Mean of pre test in this control group was 54, higher than experimental group 50. There was very little progress which the students got in post test that is 57. Based on the data gathered from the control group, there were 4 students who got regress. The differences of regress score were significant. However, this research would not discuss why it occurred.

Compared with experimental group which there were significant differences between mean of pre test and post test, in control group, the progress were not highly significance. In SPSS analysis, it was found that the t-test value was -0.901 higher than t-table -2.131. This result could be explained that there were no significant progress between the pre test and post test and it retained H_0 .

Conclusions

The result of the research showed some points below:

1. The treatment which was given to the sample of population of experimental group gave significant change toward the result of their post test. There was significant progress after getting the treatment by the experimental group which meant that null hypotheses – “The use of portfolio will not improve the translation ability of English Department students in the State Polytechnic of Padang” – could not be proved.
2. The use of portfolio as supporting tool used by English Department students in the State Polytechnic of Padang could help them to manage their assignments and the material related to the subject. It would be easy to them, especially for the students who were taking subjects Theory and Practice of Translation, to find all materials when they needed to review them.
3. Although assignments and instructions were the same between experimental and control group, the result of control group in pre test and post test were not showing significant progress.
4. This research could prove what suggested by some experts like Valenzuela (2003), Birgin and Baki (2007) that portfolio can help both students and teacher to evaluate their progress in studying a subject. It was also useful as the place to put the materials related to the subject.

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