

## Issues and Challenges of E-Portfolio in Micro Teaching Class: Students' Perspectives

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### Abstract

Technology and innovation are forging ahead the demand of tomorrow's teachers to use technology critically and reflectively. In the era of modern technology self-access learning can be done through online. This means internet has become a popular medium for online educational information retrieval (Hambali, 2016). The use of E-portfolio, specifically in micro teaching class therefore might be one of the solutions to prepare better English student teachers before they face the real world of teaching. This study examines the issues and challenges that have been revealed after the E-portfolio implementation. The E-portfolio was designed to ensure an assessment focus on student learning through intentional teaching practices and the systematic collection of teaching artifacts. The participants involved in this study were the English student teachers enrolling in microteaching class. The A and B classes are chosen purposively as only that class applies microteaching in the morning regular sessions. The number of English student teachers as the participants of this study is fifty-two. However, not all participants were included due to the research feasibility. Some Issues due to the quality of E-portfolio gave clear insights of what the English student teachers expect from the product and how it can be developed more to meet their needs as prospective teachers. The challenges found in its implementation are from the overload informations that can make the English student teachers easily overwhelmed with the excessive, disorganized information in the electronic form, moreover how to use the technology effectively is away challenging.

*Keywords:* assessment, e-portfolio, English student teachers, micro teaching, perspectives

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## Introduction

Assessment in teacher education has been based on different models of the relationship among theory, knowledge and practice. The ultimate teaching performance's assessment of the teaching competencies can be reflected through micro teaching course. In this course, the English student teachers must show their teaching ability in front of the peers. Unfortunately, the teaching assessment could not reflect the theory and knowledge which have been taught in one semester only. The quality of the assessment practices has been monitored and should be assured in increasingly explicit and regulated ways.

Costa & Kallick (2010) asserts that assessments policies at universities require criterion-based assessments and multiple forms of assessments, including formative feedback to students throughout the semester. Nonetheless, the separation of practice from theory and knowledge has been challenged as inadequate and alternative forms of integrated assessment have been proposed. These include authentic assessment tasks and extended placements at school sites where experiences in the classroom can be theorized and reflected upon and thereby inform future plans and actions

In this study, E-portfolios were used as a form of formative and summative assessment for the micro teaching class. The English student teachers were required to collect and comment on how pieces of work reflected their achievement of particular competencies (Klenowski, 2000). The study sought to determine the effect of portfolios in developing teaching and reflective skills. This was a relatively new concept of assessment, particularly given the history of examination-based assessment in the previous micro teaching classes since 2011. The E-portfolio was designed to ensure an assessment focus on student learning through intentional teaching practices and the systematic collection of teaching artefacts. The design principles require that a teacher performance assessment should: maintain the complexity of teaching; Focus on content/pedagogy within disciplines embedded in the teacher preparation curriculum; Examine teaching practice in relationship to student learning; Provide analytic feedback and support; Be both adaptive and generalisable.

In the assessment literature on English student teacher education a number of specific assessment tasks have been proposed that enable more authentic assessment to be conducted. These tasks (Cases; Exhibitions; Portfolios; e-Portfolios; Inquiries and Teacher Research) require English student teachers to integrate knowledge across domains and to consider in a reflective and reflexive manner the nexus between theory, knowledge and practice. These tasks can be designed in various ways and are open to innovation.

Emphasis on English student teachers collecting and commenting on how pieces of work reflected their achievement of particular competencies. It is the facts that occur around the E-portfolio that appear to be crucial and this has effects both on the way the English student teachers plan and implement lessons and how the teacher educators provide guidance and clear expectations about what is required. E-portfolios which is described as a move in a new direction and approach to the assessment and validation of graduates' achievement of the four teacher competencies: professional competences, pedagogical competences, social competences and personal competences are aimed at developing the reflective teacher. Moreover, Matra (2016) found in her research that e-portfolio assessment produces some positive effects on learning,

such as building a community of practice, facilitating peer learning, enhancing learning of content knowledge, promoting professional development, and cultivating critical thinking.

### **The Role of Teacher Education Program**

Teacher education programs in Indonesia is also challenged to prepare graduates to teach a more diverse student population with increasing expectations from governments, educational systems, and the community. In this context, the quality of assessment practices in English education programs is under scrutiny, and trust in these practices needs to be ensured and communicated clearly to stakeholders.

In this context, Matra (2016) concerns about the quality and competence of graduating teachers and the adequacy of teacher education programs for the demands of the 21st century. Teaching as complex and committed practice in considering best practices in assessment we need to foreground that teaching is complex and accordingly assessment needs to be sophisticated to capture that complexity. At the core of the professional activity of teaching are processes of making judgements, interpreting information, and planning and implementing actions to promote the learning of students who vary greatly both in terms of their readiness to learn at school, and the support available to them from families and the community. The complex and situated nature of teaching increases the need to consider carefully how to design assessment practices that can capture such complexity in different schooling contexts.

Matra (2016) argues that teaching is also not simply an activity of enhancing learning in a technical sense. Rather the development of students as persons with physical, cognitive and emotional capacities and needs has to remain central to the professional activity of teaching. That is, teaching is a normative and ethical activity that requires consideration of the best interests of the students and community. The professional values endorsed and enacted by English student teachers are crucial when considering assessment. Thus, assessing what teachers “know and can do” in a technical sense is necessary but not sufficient because authentic assessment of English student teachers requires attention also to their values and professional commitment to ethical standards and practices. This requires wise and considered judgement by assessors across time.

Preparing English student teachers for this complex and ethical professional activity requires enabling them to draw upon a range of relevant teaching strategies that include ways to build connections between their students’ prior knowledge and interests and the knowledge and skills embedded in the 2013 curriculum. The capacity to engage in this sophisticated performance as a teacher is an on-going professional learning task that is a lifelong activity. It is in this context that we have reviewed the evidence regarding best practices in assessment of what English student teachers know and can do.

### **Technology and ELT in Indonesia**

The education world nowadays is required produce individuals who excel in science and technology. Tokmak (2013) states that the growth of the internet, rapid development of technology, great demand for higher education, lifelong learning have meant that educational institutions are now must equipped with variety of information and communication technologies. In line with the statements, to be successful, individuals must keep abreast of new technologies and information.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century curriculum trend demands teachers to play their role as an agent of changes. Costa and Kallick (2010) argues that curriculum should offer learners three tenets: creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaborations. Costa and Kallick further assert that curriculum of for 21<sup>st</sup> century education should offer pedagogical implications that promote student-centered learning, process-based (and self-development) assessment, and life-skills. The Indonesian Qualification Framework, the so-called *Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia/KKNI* (PP No.8/2012) outlines the national qualification standard of implementing education to match education outputs with real workplace. The framework is referred to a process of realization of expected quality and nation identity. The Indonesian Government Law (UU RI No. 14/2005) for regulating the roles of teachers and higher education instructors or educators has outlined four competencies: personal, social, pedagogical, and professional academic competencies. The role of Teacher Education is then very important in training the pre-service teachers to get those required competencies.

Johnston et al. (2005) suggest the study of developing professionalism in teaching be based on the consideration of sociopolitical and socio-cultural context accommodating teachers' life stories, professional development, teacher beliefs and knowledge, and teacher identity.

The pre-service teachers are demanded to be competent in creating interactive classroom management that promotes student-centeredness. Richards (1990) recommends that the goal of teacher preparation be to impart strategies used in classroom interaction as "competencies to teachers-in-preparation", which is referred to as competency- or performance-based teacher education.

### **Assessment in Teacher Education**

Brown & Knight (1994) states that assessment in teacher education has been based on different models of the relationship between theory, knowledge and practice. The most common model has separated theory, knowledge and practice. Theory and knowledge have been taught and assessed on the university campus while practice has been enabled and assessed at school sites, and other educational settings. The quality of these assessment practices has been monitored and assured in increasingly explicit and regulated ways. Assessment policies at universities require criterion-based assessments and multiple forms of assessments, including formative feedback to students throughout the semester. Nonetheless, the separation of practice from theory and knowledge has been challenged as inadequate and alternative forms of integrated assessment have been proposed. These include authentic assessment tasks and extended placements at school sites where experiences in the classroom can be theorised and reflected upon, thereby informing future plans and actions.

Trustworthiness of assessment is enhanced when the assessment process and practices are based on the features of authentic assessment as outlined in the following key points according to Brown & Knight (1994):

- 1) Authentic assessment samples the actual knowledge, skills and dispositions required of teachers as they are used in teaching and learning contexts.
- 2) The assessments require the integration of multiple kinds of knowledge and skill as they are used in practice. For example, enhancing a child's literacy development might rely

upon: (i) knowledge of research and theory about literacy development, processes of learning, curriculum design and assessment; (ii) instructional skill in the use of literacy strategies and diagnostic and formative assessment practices; (iii) expertise in the collection and analysis of data about children's literacy learning; and, (iv) reflection upon the data collected, its meaning, and implications for instruction.

- 3) Multiple sources of evidence about the competence of English student teachers are collected over time and in diverse contexts; for example, written analyses, observation data (such as from a supervisor's observation), and samples of student work from the English student teacher's classroom. Performance in different contexts of teaching and different communities is assessed.
- 4) Assessment evidence is evaluated by teacher educators and experienced teachers using explicit criteria that align with agreed professional standards and the specific educational commitments of the teacher education program.
- 5) The assessment includes multiple opportunities for the English student teachers to learn and practice the desired outcomes, to receive feedback and coaching, and to be encouraged to reflect on and learn from experience.

We need to consider what we are assessing, how we are doing it but also why (Brown & Knight, 1994). Assessment in teacher education has the primary goal of developing English student teachers as self-monitoring and self-assessing professionals who are able to learn reflectively from their experiences and practices. In this context formative assessment and feedback is crucial in directing the learning of English student teachers. Formative assessment tasks can be designed as rich tasks that integrate learning across different units of study, and entail connecting learning in schools with knowledge acquisition and enquiry at the university site. Summative assessment tasks need to develop from these formative assessment tasks and offer the English student teachers the opportunity to demonstrate the improvements that they have achieved and the learning journey they have accomplished.

It captures the complexity of teaching is a professional activity that draws upon multiple sources of knowledge and requires the capacity to act flexibly and effectively in different contexts with diverse students. Teaching entails:

- 1) Integrating the various professional knowledge types (content, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners etc.) required in the act of teaching.
- 2) Teaching skillfully by drawing flexibly on a repertoire of practice relevant to different contexts and student needs.
- 3) Forming professional relationships with students, their carers and communities in order to respond to their needs and promote excellence in learning outcomes.
- 4) Enacting value commitments to equity and care in teaching.

It captures the multifaceted nature of teaching in a comprehensive manner Teaching has been divided into four interconnected stages by most researchers and practitioners : (i) Planning and preparation; (ii) Classroom instruction and implementation; (iii) Assessment and feedback;

(iv) Reflection and professional dialogue linked to future teaching episodes. Teaching extends beyond the classroom walls and the school gate, and this is clear particularly in considering the first (Planning and preparation) and last stages (Reflection and professional dialogue).

In elaborating components of the four stages the following multi-faceted aspects of teaching should be included in assessment tasks for English student teachers. The following is indicative of the key tasks involved at each of the four stages.

- 1) Planning involves: Knowing the importance of, and procedures for, researching the local community and the relationship of the school to the community; Knowing the importance of, and procedures for, diagnosing the funds of knowledge, interests and relevant learning history of students.
- 2) Preparation involves: Using knowledge of the community and students to select options offered in the curriculum; Planning curriculum units taking into account what students know and bring to the classroom.
- 3) Classroom instruction involves: Designing and implementing sequential episodes of teaching for diverse students; Adjusting teaching in responsive ways to evidence of student learning and engagement.
- 4) Assessing involves: Ongoing formative assessment and feedback designed to enhance student learning and promote engagement; Summative assessment designed to provide evidence of current attainments and to inform decisions about choices and future plans of students.
- 5) Reflection and professional dialogue involves: Sharing problems and issues with colleagues and consulting with them about different strategies; Reviewing the outcomes of teaching and considering ways to improve the learning of students; Considering what worked well or not and why.

### **E-portfolios**

In many ways e-portfolios are similar to traditional portfolios of professional learning and development evidence. These similarities include the typical content of the portfolios (such as lesson plans, student work samples, assessment items) and the purposes that they serve (including English student teacher growth and development, demonstration of specified standards and as basis for certification/registration) (Wray, 2007). In general, e-portfolios can be observed as operating in two forms (Gibson & Barrett, 2003). The first form are commercially or systemically developed and administered products that provide an electronic framework with predetermined elements to be populated with relevant evidence by English student teachers (Wray, 2007). The second general form that e-portfolios can take is more student or participant driven where the standards (or prescribed learnings) are defined systemically, while students have greater autonomy over the way the evidence is collected and presented in electronic forms (Gatlin & Jacob, 2002). Since portfolios can have such different purposes and characteristics there is a need to define what kind of portfolio should be used before the implementation process is initiated (Granberg, 2010).

Granberg (2010) explains that there are several examples of initiatives at the national level that demand or encourage teacher education institutions to use e-portfolios to ensure quality standards and/or support student teachers in lifelong learning (Butler 2006; Strudler and Wetzel

2005; Wray 2007). In Europe, in particular, e-portfolios in teacher education programs have become widely used for a number of purposes, including to meet national professional standards for registration; as a requirement for accreditation of programs; and to improve the quality of the students' learning (Butler 2006; Strudler & Wetzel 2005; Woodward & Nanlohy 2004). In these European contexts, portfolios have been categorised into different types depending on their purpose. These purposes have categorised as: (i) process, reflective or learning portfolios for encouraging student teachers to reflect on their learning process supported by teacher educators' formative assessment; (ii) credential or accountability portfolios for assessing student teachers summatively; and (iii) as marketing portfolios or showcases for showing student teachers' accomplishments to future employers (Butler 2006; Zeichner & Wray 2001).

Granberg (2010) summarised studies that have shown that e-portfolios can enhance student teachers' professional learning and their reflection on their work (Beck & Bear 2009; Hauge 2006; Pelliccione & Raisen 2009). E-portfolios may also serve summative assessment of student teachers, and different designs to carry out summative assessments of e-portfolios are presented in the literature (Strudler & Wetzel, 2005).

In summary, the numerous reported benefits of e-portfolios include: The promotion of English student teachers' reflective engagement with valued content or professional expectations (Pelliccione & Raison, 2009), as well as enhanced integration of professional standards and evidence (Wray, 2007). For example, the electronic medium allows for English student teachers' philosophical statements of practice to be instantiated by reproducible evidence through hyperlinks to repositories of such evidence.

The promotion of the English student teacher ownership of the evidence collected and the form of its presentation (Lin, 2008). Ease of evidence updating, as well as more efficient central storage and administration of English student teachers' evidence of professional competence (Wray, 2007). Versatility in the development of portfolios, including enhanced distribution, access and review of materials, and central exemplification of the forms of evidence required of English student teachers.

E-portfolios allow for the collection and presentation of more rich and valid forms of evidence such as digital videos and audio files, photos, and digitally annotated samples of student work. Moreover, the electronic platform also allows for feedback avenues that are more rich and helpful to the professional learning and development of English student teachers (Buckley et al., 2009). This final benefit of e-portfolios is particularly significant in professional fields that are characterised by competencies situated within both psychomotor and cognitive learning domains. Recognising the necessity for collecting, presenting and reviewing evidence of practical skills in more authentic contexts of practice, health and medical educators in Australia and internationally have increasingly employed e-portfolios as a means of assessing and verifying readiness for professional practice (Buckley et al., 2009).

The reported value of e-portfolios in these professional learning and recognition contexts has included: Improvement in student understanding and knowledge, including better integration of theory with practice (Buckley et al., 2009). Enhanced student self-awareness and reflection, including increased tendency to and quality of reflection (Buckley et al., 2009; Rees, Shepherd &

Chamberlain, 2005). More authentic and valid measures of practical skills and communication competence (Epstein, 2007; Miller & Archer, 2010).

Enhanced confidence of instructors and administrators in the general competence of developing health and medical practitioners. While the evidence supporting the use of e-portfolios for the assessment of developing professionals in fields such as teaching is compelling, there are nevertheless some difficulties associated with their deployment. These difficulties have been identified across a range of professional learning contexts, including teacher education and health and medical education. Notably, the time and technological competence required to compile an electronic portfolio was considered a challenge (Buckley et al., 2009; Wray, 2007; Wilhelm et al., 2006). However, the impact of technological competence on eportfolio efficacy generally depended on the degree to which the pre-professional students were required to manipulate the medium through which evidence was presented (Lin, 2008). Access to necessary peripheral technologies (such as digital video cameras and audio recording equipment) and high-speed internet can also pose difficulties for the implementation of e-portfolios. In order to optimise their effectiveness, e-portfolios should utilise a simple, clearly presented user interface (Wray, 2007) that is based on a concerted and demonstrable alignment of the standards, expected forms of evidence and media for their display (Wilhelm et al., 2006). While this is most likely to require centralised development and administration, offering presentation flexibility can enhance pre- and in-service teacher ownership of the evidence and process and promote reflective practices.

### Research Method

The study belongs to descriptive qualitative study, so that the data collected via questionnaires, observations, and document analysis. Since in Pekaongan the curriculum used both school based curriculum and 2013 curriculum, so the researcher divided the classes into several group based on the skills they got in micro teaching practices. The English student teacher who got the different skills as their roles in classroom. After the group skills are created, they must have focus group in the school leve to make it easier in performing the teaching learning process. So there were three big group consist of junior high school (SMP), senior high school (SMA) and vocational school (SMK).

### Participants

The participants of this study were fifty English student teachers in Pekalongan University who enroll in micro teaching class. The A and B classes (52 students) were chosen purposively since they are the regular morning session that mostly inexperienced in teaching. So they might be in the same level in showing their potential in micro teaching experiences rather than evening class (class C) who have already been teaching in schools or courses.

### Data Presentation and Discussion

The English student teachers should open up the web address <http://e-portofolio.online> to get E-portfolio online access. After they finished performing, they will be given one week time to upload the four different artefacts: the lesson plan, the teaching media, the teaching experiences video and the teaching reflections.



Figure 1 E-Portfolio Display

The students should write the lesson plan for 20 minutes teaching activities based on the skill and the grade they got randomly. In the lesson plan, they should upload the lesson plan written as the teaching scenarios of what they have done in delivering the materials from opening up to closing as presented in following screenshot. The lesson plan they upload has been revised previously by the micro teaching lecturer so that the students can share or exchange information with others.



Figure 2 The Lesson Plan

In the teaching media, they need to give the viewer a brief showcase on what and how to make and use the medium in the teaching learning process in teaching experiences. As seen in the screenshot below:



Figure 3 Teaching media

Next, they must upload the teaching videos through the link like youtube, tumblr or facebook. The video can be shared and watched by all of people in the worlds from the link used.

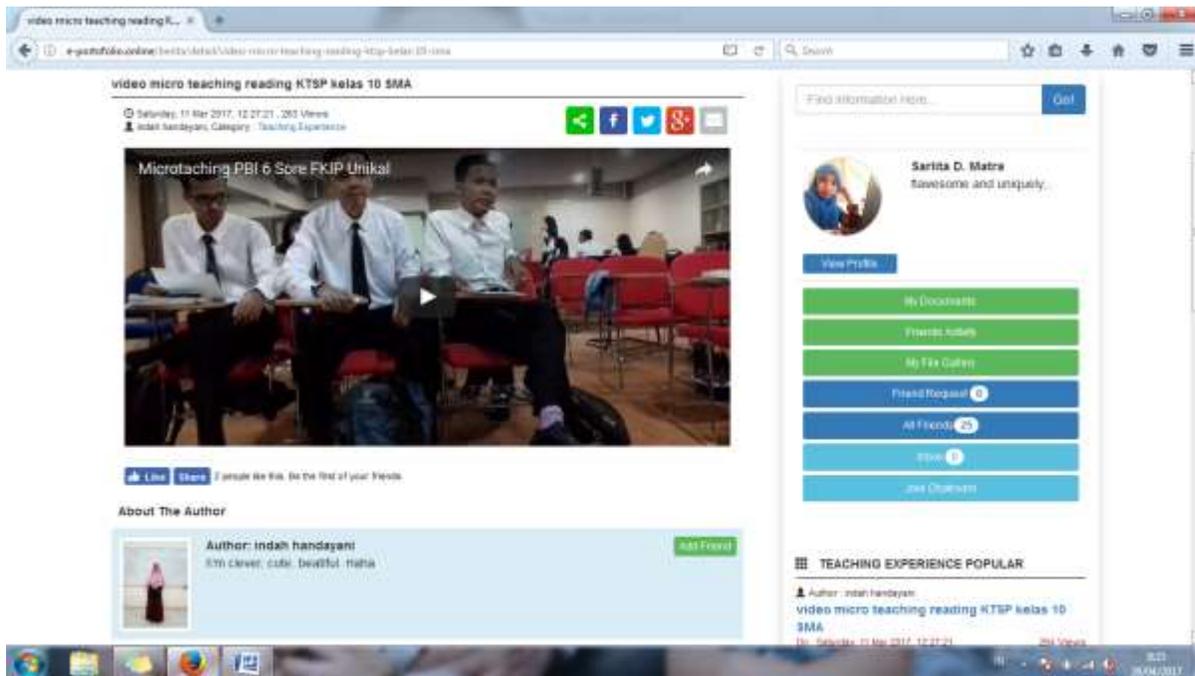


Figure 4 The teaching Experiences

The data collected through survey about the issues and challenges in the prototype E-portfolio within eight questions. One last questions should be described by the English student teachers as a brief comments toward their recommendation of the E-portfolio improvements.

Questions 1 was asked to know the English students perceptions on the display of this E-portfolio design, 50 students think that the E-portfolio was good. Only two students think that the design was just average and none of the students thinks the E-portfolio was bad. It is a good starting point on how they reponds positively to the use of E-portfolio.

Question 2 intends to know the clarity of the E-portfolio instruction used. All of students agree that the instruction given are clear. The procedures in signing up and uploading the documents are simple, clear and user friendly.

Question 3 was given to know how they think about the content of this E-portfolio 40 students answered the content is so simple and accomodate the comprhensive artefacts needed by the English student teachers during micro teaching learning activities. 10 students think that the content was average, and two students think the content was complicated since they have to upload so many things from the lesson plan up to teaching reflections in the end of the semester within a week after they finished performing.

Question 4 concerned on their expectation towards the content of the portfolio, All of students say YES. Acting as a platform, E-portfolios paved a way for professional development, enabling prospective language teachers to transfer knowledge into practice and heighten the level of pedagogical reflection.

Questions 5 was about to get the students' officially statement on their willingness to be participated in giving fully contribution during micro teaching class using this E-portfolio. Obviously, all the students respond this question positively.

Questions 6 wants to know what best describes the students feeling for having the E-portfolio assessment. Surprisingly, all the students feel excited. They are committed to give their best effort in collecting, analyzing, revising, uploading and actively engaged in discussion before they got their own teching reflection as the outcome of their reflective practices.

Questions 7 examined whether the students would give any recommendation of this E-portfolio to be implemented in the next course or not. All of students recommend the same decisions to have the new assessments tool in which they can get a lot of benefits and experiences both offline and online way.

The last questions explores the students' critiques in what ways this E-portfolio could be improved. Different arguments show that the students got different experiences to show that this E-portolio promotes their ownership or their authenticity in creating their own showcase during micro teaching class. Most of the answers complain on the error connection when they want to upload their works. This is a big challenges for the institution to facilitate the platform in a greater access for the students.

### Conclusion and Suggestion

The implementation of E-portfolio brings so many issues and challenges. The highly commitment from both students and lecturers becomes so crucial since E-portfolio needs a bunch of works to be viewed and reviewed. Due to time efficiency, the English student teachers must spend more time online and pay attention to the procedures in accessing the web. The challenges due to the overwhelming information should be well organized so that the documents can easily be accessed by the reader or the viewer. The comprehensive feedbacks from the peers and the micro teaching leacturers should be actively engaged in each posting. The last but not least the technology competencies must be prepared from the first semester to avoid the low ability in operating the computer and the internet at the same time.

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**Appendix**

Thank you for taking the time to complete the following evaluation. The information you provide will be used to help me improve the content and monitor the quality of the E-portfolio [online] prototype design:

1. What do you think of the display of this E-portfolio?
  - Good
  - Average
  - Bad
2. What do you think of the instruction of this E-portfolio?
  - Clear
  - Unclear
3. What do you think of the content of this E-portfolio?
  - Simple
  - Average
  - Complicated
4. Was the content of the E-portfolio in line with your expectations?
  - Yes
  - No
  - May be
5. Would you give the contribution during micro teaching class using this E-portfolio
  - Yes
  - No
6. Which of the following best describes your feeling for having the E-portfolio assessment?
  - Excited
  - Normal
  - Bored
7. Would you recommend this E-portfolio to be implemented in the next course?
  - Yes
  - No
8. In what ways could this E-portfolio be improved? Please describe!