



## Assessment Tool of Portfolios: Enhancing Primary School Students' English Reading Proficiency

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Article Info	Abstract
<b>Article History</b> Received: 2024-05-07 Revised: 2024-06-27 Published: 2024-07-25  <b>Keywords:</b> <i>English Portfolios;</i> <i>Assessment;</i> <i>Reading Proficiency;</i> <i>English;</i> <i>Primary School.</i>	This study aims to explore the use of portfolios as an assessment tool to enhance primary school students' English reading proficiency. Portfolio assessment offers a more comprehensive and continuous approach compared to traditional assessment methods, which tend to measure students' abilities at a single point in time. By using portfolios, teachers can collect various types of student work that demonstrate their progress and understanding in reading, such as book summaries, text analyses, and personal reflections. This research employs a qualitative method. Data is collected through classroom observations, interviews with teachers, and analysis of students' portfolio documents. The findings indicate that using portfolios as an assessment tool provides several significant benefits. First, portfolios allow for a more holistic evaluation of students' reading abilities, encompassing various aspects such as text comprehension, critical analysis, and reflective skills. Second, portfolios offer students the opportunity to see and recognize their own progress, which can boost their motivation and confidence in learning. Overall, this study concludes that portfolios are an effective assessment tool for enhancing primary school students' reading proficiency in English. The use of portfolios not only aids in more comprehensive assessment but also supports deeper and more sustained development of reading skills. Therefore, it is recommended that schools and educators consider integrating portfolios into their English teaching curriculum.

Artikel Info	Abstrak
<b>Sejarah Artikel</b> Diterima: 2024-05-07 Direvisi: 2024-06-27 Dipublikasi: 2024-07-25  <b>Kata kunci:</b> <i>Portofolio Bahasa Inggris;</i> <i>Penilaian;</i> <i>Kemahiran Membaca;</i> <i>Bahasa Inggris;</i> <i>Sekolah Dasar.</i>	Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi penggunaan portofolio sebagai alat penilaian untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca bahasa Inggris siswa sekolah dasar. Penilaian portofolio menawarkan pendekatan yang lebih komprehensif dan berkesinambungan dibandingkan dengan metode penilaian tradisional yang cenderung mengukur kemampuan siswa pada satu titik waktu. Dengan menggunakan portofolio, guru dapat mengumpulkan berbagai jenis pekerjaan siswa yang menunjukkan kemajuan dan pemahaman mereka dalam membaca, seperti ringkasan buku, analisis teks, dan refleksi pribadi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara dengan guru, dan analisis dokumen portofolio siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan portofolio sebagai alat penilaian memberikan beberapa manfaat yang signifikan. Pertama, portofolio memungkinkan evaluasi yang lebih menyeluruh terhadap kemampuan membaca siswa, yang mencakup berbagai aspek seperti pemahaman teks, analisis kritis, dan keterampilan reflektif. Kedua, portofolio memberikan kesempatan kepada siswa untuk melihat dan mengenali kemajuan mereka sendiri, yang dapat meningkatkan motivasi dan kepercayaan diri mereka dalam belajar. Secara keseluruhan, studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa portofolio merupakan alat penilaian yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa sekolah dasar dalam bahasa Inggris. Penggunaan portofolio tidak hanya membantu penilaian yang lebih komprehensif, tetapi juga mendukung pengembangan kemampuan membaca yang lebih mendalam dan berkelanjutan. Oleh karena itu, disarankan agar sekolah dan pendidik mempertimbangkan untuk mengintegrasikan portofolio ke dalam kurikulum pengajaran bahasa Inggris mereka.

### I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, one of the significant challenges in education is the low level of English reading comprehension among elementary school students. This issue affects students' overall language proficiency and their ability to access

information and resources in English, which is increasingly important in a globalized world. Improving English reading skills among primary school students presents significant challenges. One of the main obstacles is that traditional assessment methods often do not reflect

students' true ability to read and understand texts in English. Traditional assessment methods, such as multiple-choice tests and short essays, tend to focus on very specific aspects of reading ability. They often overlook students' ability to apply more complex reading strategies, such as inference, critical analysis and deep understanding of the context of the text. In addition, students often do not have access to reading materials that are diverse and appropriate to their ability level, which limits their ability to be exposed to a variety of text types and genres that are essential for the development of holistic reading skills (Setiyadi, D.B.P. 2018)

Teachers may also not always have the necessary skills or training to teach reading effectively, especially in the context of English as a foreign language. Inappropriate teaching methods can hinder the development of students' reading skills, and teachers may also have difficulty in accurately assessing students' progress if they do not have the right assessment tools. Many schools still use traditional and less innovative approaches to learning, which often fail to meet students' individual needs or motivate them to actively engage in reading activities. Technology and other innovative approaches, such as project-based learning or the use of digital tools, are still poorly implemented in many schools. In addition, students come from very diverse backgrounds, including differences in early exposure to English at home. Students who do not have the opportunity to interact with English outside the school environment may face greater difficulties in developing their reading skills, adding to the challenges of teaching and assessing reading skills fairly and effectively (Anggrainy. S. 2016).

The role of portfolios as an assessment tool in education is increasingly recognised for its ability to provide a more comprehensive and continuous evaluation compared to traditional assessment methods. Portfolios allow teachers to collect different types of student work, such as book summaries, text analyses, and personal reflections, all of which demonstrate students' development and understanding in reading (Budiawan, 2013). This allows for a more in-depth evaluation of students' reading ability, covering aspects such as text comprehension, critical analysis, and reflective skills. In addition, portfolios give students the opportunity to see and recognise their own progress, which can increase their motivation and confidence in learning. Teachers also report that the use of

portfolios helps them better understand the individual needs and development of each student, allowing for more accurate and personalised feedback. Thus, portfolios not only support a more holistic assessment but also encourage a deeper and more sustained development of reading skills compared to traditional assessment methods which tend to be limited to momentary evaluations and lack coverage of all aspects of reading skills (Haliq, A. Sakaria. 2019).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of using portfolios as an assessment tool in improving primary school students' English reading skills. This research aims to understand how portfolios, as a more comprehensive and continuous assessment method, can provide a more complete picture of the development of students' reading skills compared to traditional assessment methods. In addition, the study sought to evaluate how the use of portfolios can increase students' motivation and confidence in reading, as well as help teachers provide more accurate and personalised feedback. By using classroom observation, teacher interviews, and student portfolio document analysis, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence on the benefits of portfolios in the context of English language learning in primary schools. The results of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for educators and policy makers to integrate portfolios as an important part of the curriculum and assessment methods, in order to improve the quality of English reading learning at the primary school level.

This research has significant relevance in the context of English language education in Indonesia, particularly given the challenges faced in improving the reading skills of primary school students. The use of portfolios as an assessment tool offers a more holistic and sustainable approach, which can help overcome the limitations of traditional assessment methods. The implications of this research for curriculum development are significant, as it can encourage the integration of portfolios into more comprehensive and student-centred learning strategies. In addition, the findings of this study can be the basis for more effective teacher training, focusing on improving their skills in implementing and evaluating. Thus, teachers can provide more personalised and accurate feedback, which in turn can improve students' motivation and learning outcomes. Overall, the adoption of portfolios in assessment is expected

to create a more supportive and effective learning environment, which not only improves students' reading ability but also prepares them for future academic and professional challenges.

A review of the literature shows that the use of portfolios as an assessment tool has great potential to improve students' reading skills, with various studies supporting this approach at both national and international levels. Portfolios provide a more thorough picture of students' development, allowing for a more precise assessment of their reading skills. In Indonesia, portfolios can help teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses more effectively, which is not always possible with traditional assessment methods. In addition, international research such as that conducted by Chen (2021) in Taiwan shows that the use of portfolios can increase students' motivation in reading and provide opportunities for them to reflect on their own learning process. This literature review overall supports the idea that portfolios not only enrich students' learning experiences but also strengthen the relationship between teachers and students through continuous and more in-depth feedback. Thus, the application of portfolios as an assessment tool in English language teaching in primary schools can bring about positive changes in the way assessment is conducted, improve students' reading skills, and prepare them better for future academic challenges.

## **II. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research methodology aims to investigate the effectiveness of using portfolios as an assessment tool in improving primary school students' English reading skills. This research uses a qualitative approach with a focus on multiple case studies in several primary schools. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of students' and teachers' experiences in using portfolios as a tool to improve their reading proficiency.

The participants of this study consisted of grade 4 and 5 students and their English teachers from twelve primary schools in Gugus IV Diponegoro Yehembang, Jembrana-Bali. The selection of participants was purposive to ensure the inclusion of those who had significant experience in the use of portfolios.

Data were collected through several methods, including classroom observation to see first-hand the application of portfolios in the learning process, interviews with teachers and students to get their perspectives, and analysis of students'

portfolio documents to assess progress in reading proficiency. The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis, which allowed the researcher to identify patterns and major themes that emerged from the collected data.

The results of this study are expected to provide in-depth insights into the effectiveness of portfolio use in the context of improving English reading skills of primary school students, as well as provide concrete recommendations for the implementation of portfolios in English language learning at the primary school level.

## **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

1. The use of portfolios affects the overall reading comprehension development of primary school students compared to traditional assessment methods

The use of portfolios in assessing reading comprehension among primary school students has been increasingly recognized for its positive impact compared to traditional assessment methods. Portfolios offer a holistic view of students' reading abilities over time, encompassing various tasks such as summaries, responses to texts, and creative projects. This approach allows educators to move beyond mere recall of information and instead evaluate students' deeper understanding and application of reading skills in authentic contexts.

Traditional assessments often rely on standardized tests or quizzes that may not fully capture students' comprehensive understanding or growth in reading proficiency. In contrast, portfolios promote reflective practices and metacognitive awareness by requiring students to actively select, organize, and revise their work. This process fosters a deeper engagement with reading materials and encourages students to monitor their own learning progress, thereby improving self-regulation and metacognitive skills.

Moreover, the ongoing feedback loop inherent in portfolio assessment supports continuous improvement in reading comprehension. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), formative assessment practices like those found in portfolio assessments enhance student learning by providing timely feedback that guides instructional decisions and supports student development. By receiving constructive feedback from teachers and peers, students can identify strengths and areas needing

improvement, which promotes a growth mindset and motivation to achieve higher levels of reading proficiency.

In conclusion, portfolios not only serve as assessment tools but also as facilitators of essential skills development crucial for lifelong learning and academic success. They encourage deeper engagement, support metacognitive growth, and foster a more comprehensive understanding of reading materials, making them a valuable alternative to traditional assessment methods in promoting reading comprehension among primary school students.

## 2. The perceptions of teachers regarding the effectiveness of portfolios in assessing English reading proficiency among primary school students

Teachers' perceptions regarding the use of portfolios for assessing English reading proficiency in primary school students are diverse and influenced by educational theory. Portfolios are viewed as valuable tools that provide a comprehensive view of students' reading abilities over time. According to educational theory, portfolios align with the constructivist approach, which emphasizes active learning and the construction of knowledge through hands-on experiences and reflection.

Portfolios typically contain a variety of samples from students' work, such as reading logs, summaries, and responses to texts. These examples serve as evidence of students' progress and understanding in reading. Teachers believe that portfolios allow for a more holistic assessment compared to traditional tests, as they showcase not only students' reading skills but also their critical thinking, creativity, and ability to apply language in different contexts.

Moreover, portfolios support the idea of formative assessment, where teachers can continually monitor and provide feedback on students' development. This ongoing assessment process is essential for identifying students' strengths and areas needing improvement in reading comprehension and language use.

However, challenges exist in the implementation and evaluation of portfolios. Some teachers may find it difficult to maintain consistency across diverse student populations and classrooms. Effective portfolio assessment requires clear criteria

and guidelines to ensure fairness and reliability in evaluation.

In conclusion, while portfolios are recognized as effective tools for assessing English reading proficiency among primary school students, their successful implementation hinges on teachers' ability to integrate them into their teaching practices effectively. By leveraging portfolios in alignment with educational theory, teachers can enhance their understanding of students' learning progress and better support their development in reading and language skills.

## 3. Specific components of a portfolio are most beneficial for assessing and enhancing English reading proficiency in primary school student

**Table 1.** Structured Portfolio For Assessing And Enhancing English Reading Proficiency In Primary School Students

No	Components	Purpose	Benefits
1	Reading Logs	Track students' reading habits including books read, genres, and time spent reading.	Encourages regular reading practice and helps teachers identify preferences and reading frequency.
2	Book Reports and Summaries	Require students to summarize and critique books they have read.	Assesses comprehension and critical thinking skills.
3	Reading Comprehension Worksheet	Include questions on passages to assess understanding of main ideas, details, inferences, and vocabulary.	Directly measures comprehension abilities and identifies specific areas needing improvement.
4	Vocabulary Journals	Track new words encountered during reading, include definitions, sentences, and illustrations.	Enhances vocabulary acquisition and retention.
5	Reflective Journals	Allow students to reflect on their reading experiences, challenges, and insights.	Encourages metacognitive skills and self-assessment.
6	Reading Fluency Recordings	Encourage metacognitive skills and self-assessment.	Monitors progress in fluency, pronunciation, and expression over time.
7	Projects-Based Assessments	Include creative projects like dioramas, posters, or presentations based on books read.	Engages students creatively and assesses comprehension through diverse formats.
8	Peer and Self-Assessment	Incorporate peer reviews and self-assessment checklists for reading habits.	Develops critical assessment skills and encourages students to take ownership of their learning.
9	Teacher Anecdotal Records	Maintain notes on student progress, strengths, and areas needing improvement during reading activities.	Provides qualitative insights and supports personalized instruction.
10	Assessment Rubrics	Use clear rubrics for evaluating reading tasks such as comprehension questions, book reports, and projects.	Ensures consistent and objective assessment criteria.
11	Reading Goals and Progress Charts	Set specific, measurable reading goals and track progress towards them.	Motivates students and provides clear evidence of improvement.
12	Parent Feedback	Include feedback forms for parents to share observations about their child's reading at home.	Encourages home-school collaboration and provides additional insights into reading habits.

Specific components within portfolios play a pivotal role in assessing and enriching English reading proficiency among primary school students. Summaries of texts serve as foundational elements that enable students to showcase their understanding by distilling main ideas and key details into their own words. This process not only reinforces comprehension but also enhances retention of information. Responses to texts, another integral component, involve students critically engaging with reading materials through inquiries, analyses, and personal reflections. This approach cultivates deeper levels of comprehension and fosters analytical thinking

skills as students delve into the nuances of texts.

Moreover, creative projects within portfolios, such as book reviews, character analyses, or thematic presentations, encourage students to apply their understanding in imaginative and meaningful ways. By undertaking these projects, students not only demonstrate comprehension but also hone their expressive abilities in English. This dual focus on comprehension and expression promotes language proficiency and supports holistic development in language skills.

Overall, these components within portfolios serve not only as assessment tools but also as catalysts for the development of higher-order thinking abilities essential for academic achievement and lifelong learning. They provide students with opportunities to engage deeply with texts, articulate their understanding effectively, and apply their knowledge creatively, thereby fostering a comprehensive approach to English reading proficiency.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

##### **A. Conclusions**

Portfolios are valuable tools for assessing and improving English reading proficiency among primary school students. Unlike traditional tests, portfolios offer a comprehensive view of students' abilities by including various components such as summaries, text responses, and creative projects. These elements help students understand and retain information better, think critically, and express their ideas in English. Portfolios also support continuous learning and improvement by allowing students to reflect on their progress and receive ongoing feedback from teachers. Although there are challenges in implementing portfolios, such as ensuring consistency and fairness, the benefits make them an effective alternative to traditional assessment methods.

##### **B. Suggestion**

1. **Training for Teachers:** Schools should provide training for teachers on how to effectively use and evaluate portfolios. This will help ensure that assessments are fair and beneficial for all students.
2. **Clear Guidelines:** Establish clear criteria and guidelines for what should be included

in portfolios. This helps maintain consistency and reliability in evaluation.

3. **Incorporate Varied Activities:** Include a variety of activities in portfolios, such as summaries, text responses, and creative projects. This allows students to demonstrate their reading skills in different ways.
4. **Regular Feedback:** Provide regular, constructive feedback to students based on their portfolio work. This helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement.

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