

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is framed in six points: (1) background of the problem, (2) formulation of the problem, (3) objectives of the research, (4) uses of the research, (5) scope of the research and (6) definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the Problem

In today's world the emergence of modern technology works together with our daily routine. Computer is one of modern technology that is assistive and beneficial to create a more effective work. In this digital era, the role of technology, particularly computer, in academic setting is very undeniable. From faculty members to staffs, headmaster, teachers, students, they all have to master the basic skill of computer operation.

In Indonesian education system, students are taught the skill of computer since they are in the middle school. Students are taught the basic skill of typing, editing, printing, etc. By the times they are in high school, they have developed a fluency in typing.

At times, when technology develops rapidly, and the demand of computers is high, people start to leave the traditional technology. Computers have become the mighty tools at home, school, workplace, etc. Students across Indonesia are taught

how to use computers at a young age and are often instructed to complete written assignments using them. This practice of requiring all written assignments to be word processed eliminates the inequality in assessment that can occur from varying handwritings among students.

In college life particularly, the lecturers and instructors often assign students to type their tasks instead of handwrite them. The hardship of writing down word by word of sentences of an essay has been replaced by the magic tool of computer. Students feel more confident when completing their assignments with computer rather than with handwriting. They are confident that they can gain higher score when they complete the assignment with computer rather than with handwriting.

Recently, our education system has started to implement the test administration via computer on the national examination for high school students. Even though it was still a trial, but it revealed that the government has put extra efforts on the more effective assessment via computer. There were two kinds of the test administration on the national examination: Paper Based Test (PBT) and CBT (Computer Based Test). The test administrations were only for multiple-choice tests, which mean that the comparability between the two different test administrations will likely gain the same result.

A different perspective is applied on the test administration for open-ended test, for instance, essay. Unlike multiple-choice test, essay is subjective test which requires more complex aspects of scoring; thus, investigating the equality between both Computer Based Test (CBT) and Paper Based Test (PBT) is highly recommended.

In L1 setting, a research on testing via computer done by Bunderson, Inouye, and Olsen (1989) and also by Mead and Drasgow (1993) suggests the same results for multiple-choice tests administration between CBT and PBT as administering tests via paper-and-pencil. Then in the early 1990s, several research were conducted to investigate the effects of two modes of answering an examination questions on students' scores via handwritten or word processed. Powers, Fowles, Farnum and Ramsey (1994) conducted a research to examine whether Computer Based Test (CBT) gained the higher scores compared with Paper Based Test (PBT). In conducting the research, these authors converted a sample of original handwritten essay answers into word processed versions and transcribed a sample of original word processed essay into handwritten versions. The finding of this research revealed that handwritten answers were awarded higher average scores than word processed answers, regardless the original mode in which the answers were produced.

Earlier before a research by Powers, et al, several studies were conducted to find out the influence of "neat" and "sloppy" penmanship upon students' scores. The result reported that that essays presented with neater penmanship receive higher scores than those presented with sloppy penmanship (Marshall & Powers, 1969; Markham, 1976; Bull and Stevens, 1979). This finding drew a further thought about the neatness of writing appearance on scores. Thus, one would expect that essays presented as neatly formatted computer-printed text would receive higher scores than essays presented in handwritten form.

More recently, Russell and Plati (2000) have advocated that state testing programs that employ extended open-ended items also allow students the option of composing responses on paper or on computer. In response to these findings, ETS recently conducted a study that involved administering the National Assessment of Educational Progress Writing test on paper and on computer. As more testing programs offer students the option of producing essay responses on paper or on computer, the presentation effect reported by Powers et al. (1994) and Russell and Tao (2004) raises a serious concern about the equivalence of scores.

In this research, the writer tried to compare between two different formats of original handwritten and computer printed of the same essay, in which formats would result in higher scores. This study is a half replicate with the study conducted by Russell and Tao (2004) which investigated the same problem about assessment in both presentation mode.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

After concerning the background of the problem above, the researcher formulates two research questions as follows:

1. Is there any difference on raters' scores when essay is presented as handwritten and computer text at third semester students of English Education Study Program of Lampung University?
2. Does the length of essay eliminate the presentation effect?

1.3 Objectives of the research

1. To find out whether there is any difference on raters' scores when essay is presented as handwritten and computer text at the third semester students of English Education Study Program of Lampung University.
2. To find out whether the length of essay eliminate the presentation effect or not.

1.4 Uses of the research

The findings of the research are expected to benefit both theoretical and practical.

1.4.1 Theoretical

Theoretically, the finding of this research can be used to verify the previous research in the focus of writing assessment which includes the role of computer and the comparison with handwritten format.

1.4.2 Practical

Practically, this research is hoped to benefit both English instructors and future researchers as follows:

a. Instructors

It is hoped that the writing instructors or teachers are more aware of such influence from the presentation effect. They are expected to put it into account when scoring writing through the different presentation.

b. Future Researchers

Likewise, the future researcher might benefit from this research as one of the literary review to compare and contrast in developing similar or linier research.

1.5 Scope of the research

This research is a comparative study between two different presentation of essay; handwritten and computer printed. The population in this research was taken from the forty one (41) submitted essays produced by 41 students of English Education study program of Lampung University. The sample was determined by random sampling through lottery. There were twenty one (21) sample essays to be the sample of this research. The sample essay were gathered from a writing task during *Introduction to Literature* class. Later, those original handwritten would be transcribed verbatim in the formats of computer printed text prior to the scoring process by raters.

1.6 Definition of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in the context of research, the following key terms are defined as follows:

1. Assessment is all activities teachers use to help students learn and to gauge student progress.
2. Argumentative Essay is a genre of writing that requires the student to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.
3. Essay is a short literary composition on a particular theme or subject, usually in prose and generally analytic, speculative, or interpretative.

4. Beowulf is an Old English epic poem consisting of 3182 alliterative long lines. It is possibly the oldest surviving long poem in Old English and is commonly cited as one of the most important works of Old English literature.
5. Computer text is a product of typing on computer using keyboard.
6. Hand-written text is a product of writing by hand on paper using pen or pencil.
7. Mode of presentation is a mental state or perception towards the presentation medium.
8. Rater is a person who estimates or determines a rating.
9. Rubric is a scoring rubric is a set of ordered categories to which a given piece of work can be compared.
10. Writing prompt is an entry that generally contains a question to help you pick a topic to write about.