CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In education, the emergence of digital technology has helped in a new learning, teaching, and assessment era. Traditional methods of documenting and assessing student work, particularly paper-based assignments and exams, have been increasingly augmented and, in some cases, replaced by digital alternatives. Among these alternatives, electronic portfolios, commonly called eportfolios, have emerged as powerful tools with diverse roles in modern education.

Higher education has experienced a significant paradigm shift in recent years. Traditionally, assessments are only given by lecturers to students. However, more and more colleges are moving toward a formative assessment approach, where students also have an active role in assessing themselves and their peers. Peer assessment is one tool for implementing this approach, and eportfolio can effectively support it.

The development of peer assessment as a new medium within the Assessment in ELT (English Language Teaching) class framework, which the

lecturer in charge spearheaded, presents interesting and varied opportunities for in-depth research and exploration. This innovative approach to assessment, characterized by the incorporation of peer assessment and facilitated through eportfolios, not only reflects the evolving educational landscape but also raises many interesting research questions that require systematic investigation and analysis. This approach changes the traditional assessment paradigm in ELT, as it encourages students' active involvement in the evaluation process, strengthens their role in measuring the work of their peers, and harnesses the potential of technology, realized in the form of eportfolios, to facilitate and improve this complex process.

The emergence of this research idea is further informed by the intriguing historical precedent of older studies that have explored the utilization of peer assessment within the framework of eportfolios. These earlier research endeavors have contributed to the body of knowledge in educational assessment and technology-enhanced learning, offering valuable insights and establishing a foundation for current and future investigations. By drawing upon and revisiting these earlier research findings, the current research can aim to ascertain whether the principles and practices of peer assessment within eportfolios have evolved or remained consistent over time. It can investigate whether technological advances, changes in pedagogical approaches, or shifts in student demographics have

influenced the efficacy and acceptance of this assessment method. Moreover, it can examine how the lessons learned from earlier studies can be applied to optimize the integration of peer assessment and eportfolios in the contemporary ELT classroom, especially in the context of the specific challenges and opportunities presented by the University Ahmad Dahlan's educational environment.

Furthermore, these historical studies can serve as a reference point for identifying research gaps and unanswered questions in the field. By conducting a comprehensive review and synthesis of the older literature, the current research can identify areas where further investigation is warranted and where the knowledge base needs to be expanded. This reference to past research not only provides a historical context but also helps chart the trajectory of developments in the use of eportfolios for pedagogical purposes. Additionally, comparing the findings of previous research and the outcomes of the current study can offer valuable insights into the continuity or evolution of practices related to peer assessment within eportfolios. This comparative analysis can help elucidate the extent to which historical findings remain relevant and valid in the ever-changing landscape of ELT and educational technology. By contextualizing the present study within the framework of these earlier works, it becomes possible to assess

whether the principles and practices of peer assessment within eportfolios have evolved or remained consistent over time.

Eportfolios, or electronic portfolios, are being increasingly employed in inventive ways, particularly in higher education, with the potential to revolutionize teaching, learning, and assessment (Donaldson, 2018; Elliott & Adachi, 2020; Rowley, 2016; Saeed et al ., 2020; Scully et al., 2018). Eportfolios can transform teaching by encouraging active and reflective learning. They provide a means for students to document their progress and reflect on their learning journey. Faculty can use eportfolios to provide guidance, feedback, and support for students' academic and personal development. An eportfolio is a digital repository that allows individuals, whether students or professionals, to curate and exhibit artifacts representing their learning, skills, achievements, and experiences. These digital collections can include various materials, including written essays, multimedia projects, videos, presentations, and reflective statements.

Education has recently witnessed a significant shift towards student-centered learning, where learners are actively involved in their own education. The effectiveness of eportfolios is rooted in their widespread adoption of reflective learning techniques. By engaging with content and interacting with peers, students develop self-learning and self-assessment skills through well-

designed learning activities, ongoing feedback, and real-world evaluation. This enables them to become proficient in self-directed learning and evaluation and subsequently collaborate with peers in knowledge co-creation (Cheng & Chau, 2013; de Jager, 2019). Peer Assessment is one of the pedagogical approaches that has gained prominence in this evolving educational landscape. This empowers students to actively evaluate and provide feedback on their peers' work, fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of the course material. However, as peer assessment becomes increasingly integrated into educational practice, there is a growing need for innovative tools and methodologies to support and improve this process.

An eportfolio is a digital repository that allows students to structure, organize, and present their work, including written assignments, multimedia projects, and other learning artifacts. They offer several advantages over traditional assessment methods, including increased accessibility, flexibility, and the ability to demonstrate a wider range of skills and achievements. Eportfolios also align with the principles of formative assessment, which emphasize feedback, self-assessment, and improvement over time. The inception of eportfolios at Ahmad Dahlan University was initiated in 2020, a year characterized by the sweeping global effects of the COVID-19 pandemic with the use of Google Sites as an eportfolio platform becoming an example of how technology and digital

tools can be integrated into the peer assessment process in the Assessment class at ELT. As the ramifications of the pandemic unfolded, one of the educators within the esteemed Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Ahmad Dahlan University began to recognize the intrinsic worth and the manifold advantages of integrating digital technology, which encompassed the utilization of eportfolios. This emergent digital tool was perceived as a pivotal instrument that could significantly underpin the evolving landscape of distance learning and peer assessment, especially within a swiftly evolving educational paradigm characterized by a predominant shift towards digitalization and online instruction. Notably, the incorporation of eportfolios emerged as a relevant and pragmatic solution, offering vital support for the enduring sustainability of the educational processes and the continuity of effective assessment practices in the face of the manifold challenges posed by these unprecedented times.

As the adoption of eportfolios grows, so does the need to examine the specific role and impact in the context of peer assessment. After analyzing several previous studies, the researcher conclude that although there is a substantial amount of research on eportfolios and peer assessment individually, there is still a gap in understanding how peer assessments can be specifically integrated with eportfolios to enhance their effectiveness in educational contexts.

Bearing these considerations in mind, this research aims to investigate and explain the role of peer assessment in supporting eportfolios in 5th-semester students in the Assessment in ELT class at the English Education Study Program, Ahmad Dahlan University. By exploring this challenges, and implications, researchers seek to contribute to the ongoing dialogue around effective pedagogical strategies and improved student learning outcomes in the digital era.

B. **Identification of Problems**

LinkedIn (2023) highlighted some of the challenges faced in implementing peer assessment on eportfolios. Problem identification in this research:

1. Lack of motivation and engagement among students when using peer assessment for eportfolios.

2. Peers may provide subjective assessments, leading to potential bias in the evaluation process.

3. Peers may lack expertise in the subject matter, impacting the quality of feedback.

4. Some students may be resistant to receiving feedback from peers, questioning the credibility of their evaluators

C.   Focus of the Study

This study explores the challenges and functions of implementing peer assessment in eportfolios. The study will investigate the difficulties, barriers, and hurdles that may be faced by students or educators when attempting to incorporate peer assessment in the eportfolios process. These may include technical challenges, resistance to change, or issues related to privacy and accessibility. Next, the focus of the study will examine the role of peer assessment in supporting eportfolios based learning. By focusing on the challenges and functions of peer assessment in Eportfolios, this research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the practical aspects of Eportfolio implementation.

D.   Formulation of the Problem

In contemporary education, there is a growing interest in leveraging digital tools and platforms to enhance student learning experiences and assessment methods. Eportfolios have emerged as a promising technology for documenting and showcasing student work, but the specific role and effectiveness of peer assessment, a new development in student eportfolios, remains unexplored. This study seeks to investigate the roles of peer assessment in facilitating and enhancing the eportfolios process of student. It aims to address the following key research questions:

1. What are the perceived challenges in using peer assessment as a means of supporting eportfolios student based learning in the class of Assessment in ELT C?

2. How does the peer assessment support Eportfolio based learning in the class of Assessment in ELT C?

E.   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To explore the challenges of implementing peer assessment in eportfolio based learning in the class of Assessment in ELT C.

2. To analyze the roles of peer assessment to support eportfolio based learning in the class of Assessment in ELT C.

F.   Significance of the Study

The importance of the study on "The Role of Peer Assessment in Supporting Eportfolios" extends to various stakeholders and contexts within the field of education. Here's a breakdown of the significance for different groups and areas:

a. Research community

The study contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of educational technology and assessment. It can serve as a foundation for future research and investigations into the roles and impact of eportfolios in education.

b. Students

Students can experience more meaningful and engaging assessment experiences through the use of eportfolios. They can gain skills in self-assessment and reflection, which are valuable for their personal and academic development. Understanding the roles of peer assessment can empower students to take more ownership of their learning and contribute to a collaborative learning environment.

c. Educators and Teachers

Educators can benefit from the study by gaining insights into how peer assessment can effectively support eportfolios. This knowledge can inform their teaching practices, allowing them to create more engaging and impactful learning experiences for their students. Teachers can use this study's findings to improve assessment methods among their students.