Chapter Four
The Teaching Program

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the phases of teaching program conducted in the present study. In general, the teaching program followed the phases of action research used in the present study, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting as indicated in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3. The planning phase was concerned with the data gained from the pilot study. It provided an analysis and reflection about the data. The acting phase consisted of two stages: preliminary and main stages. The preliminary stage involved introducing the idea of portfolios, presenting the syllabus to the class, and explaining the criteria for student writing assessment. The main stage concerned writing activities undertaken in the study, namely writing with free topic, writing a response to news items, and writing an opinion about controversial issues. All the activities in the acting phase involved planning, observing, and reflecting aspects to see the strengths and weaknesses to be considered for the next instructions. The observing phase concerned the evaluation about what worked and did not work in the teaching program. The reflecting phase was to do with researcher's reflection and evaluation about the overall program whether the program was successful or not.

4.2 The Planning Phase

In this phase, the researcher analyzed, evaluated, and reflected data of the pilot study. From the analysis and evaluation, it was concluded that the implementation of writing course in the research site was not satisfying for students. Most students responded negatively to the course. Students' dissatisfaction concerned several reasons, among them, less time to complete the writing task, lower motivation to join the class, and lack of creativity due to topic limitations by the lecturer. The following are some students' responses about the

writing course implemented in the research site originally quoted by the researcher:

Dalam perkuliahan writing selama ini, kami banyak diberikan tugas menulis pastinya. Tapi terkadang waktu yang diberikan sangat singkat sehingga kurang membuat saya fokus.

(In the current writing course, we are given a lot of assignments of writing of course. However, the time is so short sometimes that I cannot be focused)

Selama ini menulis hanya berdasar kebutuhan dan tidak berdasar kebebasan sehingga siswa agak enggan menulis dalam perkuliahan serta belum adanya penghargaan secara langsung dalam penulisan yang telah dilakukan.

(So far, writing is based on needs, not freedom, so students are less motivated in the course, and there has not been a direct appreciation to writing results)

Menurut saya, karena masalah topik yang selalu ditentukan oleh dosen membuat saya sangat minim dalam menulis. Karena tidak adanya kebebasan menulis dan kebebasan memilih topik yang disenangi dan dikuasai.

(To me, due to the topic always determined by the lecturer, I write very little. This is because I have no freedom to write and choose the topic I know and I am interested in)

Kayaknya sih penjelasan dosen kurang menarik jadinya susah dicerna. Kata-kata suka dibatasin, ngehambat kreativitas tuh.

(It seems that the lecturer's explanation is less interesting, so it is not easily understood. The words are often limited. That hinders creativity, you know)

Mendingan mahasiswa dikasih kebebasan dulu buat nulis, terus baru dikasih "rules"-nya. Kalo dikasih rules *dulu,* I have no idea to write down on paper.

(It would be better if students are given freedom to write, and then they are just provided with rules. If rules first, I have no idea to write down on paper)

Taking into account students' responses about the writing course in the research site above and the findings of the pilot study as indicated in Section 3.2 of Chapter 3, the researcher planned to conduct a teaching program of portfolio-based instruction to empower EFL students in writing. The teaching program was undertaken for one semester including twenty two meetings with two meetings in each week as described in Appendix 1.

4.3 The Acting Phase

The acting phase is the phase where students wrote a text. It consisted of two stages: preliminary and main stages. The preliminary stage involved introducing the idea of portfolios, presenting the syllabus, and explaining the criteria for student writing assessment. The main stage consisted of three writing activities, namely writing with a free topic (freewriting), writing a response to news items, and writing an opinion about controversial issues as already mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.3. These three types of writing were conducted through a process of writing including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing as indicated in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1.

4.3.1 The Preliminary Stage

Before asking students to write, the researcher did several activities preparing students for writing. First, he introduced the idea of portfolios to the class. Second, he presented the syllabus of the writing course. Third, the lecturer explained about the criteria of writing assessment produced in the teaching program.

4.3.1.1 Introducing the Idea of Portfolios

In order that students understood about the teaching program, the researcher introduced the idea of portfolios to the class. It was found out that students seemed to have not been familiar with portfolios. This can be seen from their answers related to the portfolio questions. For example, students did not answer appropriately the question concerning the definition of portfolios. Besides, they seemed to have no experience with reflective activities which is the key to portfolio-based instruction (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996; Hamp-Lyons, 2006).

Concerning the importance of introducing the idea of portfolios, Lala, one of the participants expressed her difficulties when she firstly attended the class. In the first topic, she only produced 231 words for her final draft. Nevertheless, her capability in producing ideas improved in the final drafts of the second and third

topics, namely 352 words for the second topic and 686 words for the third topic as will be discussed in Chapter 5. Lala stated:

> The difficulties I had during the course occurred only in the beginning of the class. It might be caused that I had not understood the system of the class (what I meant here is the portfolio). I found it very difficult when I firstly got a writing task. Firstly, I got difficulties in idea development or organization. The idea I developed in every paragraph could only be written in not more than three supporting sentences. Secondly, the grammar I used was only limited to simple tense, not various. Beside that, there were still some grammatical mistakes I made. The last difficulty was concerned with word choices. My habit was that I always repeated the same words. It also happened in the conjunction usage. However, when I had to write for the next topics, I came to find it easy. I really caught the lecturer's point that I used the thesaurus to help write the essay rich of words. Here, I think I have found the solution of my problem [May 21, 2011].

To solve this problem, it was important to introduce the concept of portfolio to students in which they considered it as a new experience. This was also stated by the classroom observer who viewed portfolio-based instruction as a new culture for students. In facing the new culture, students had to deal with a new rituality, property, attitude, and social relations, particularly among students and the lecturer. The classroom observer noted:

> During my observation on the instructional process implemented by the lecturer and his fifteen students, I can witness that writing is basically not just about a skill that can be separated from a culture. I mean that writing is so cultural that learning to write is to learn a new culture. In some early meetings, students seemed to be unaccustomed to some aspects of the new culture. Some of them looked surprised, and some others got enthusiastic. For example, when the lecturer introduced the way of scoring called portfolio assessment, the students expressed their astonishment upon multiple drafting with some feedback from peers or lecturers plus self-reflection from the writer. Such a surprise shows that they have not realized the importance of other's comments and self-reflection in the process of writing. Some students demonstrated their enthusiasm when they began to realize that portfolio approach is different from the traditional one. When they were told to be more independent and were more cooperative one another in producing a piece of writing in the course, they appeared to come to be glad and motivated. The students' surprise and enthusiasm is an important fact that combines pessimism and enthusiasm in facing a new situation, or, in this case, a new culture, that is writing culture with new demands of rituality, property, attitude, and social interactions among students and the lecturer [June 25, 2011].

This suggested the necessity of introducing the concept of portfolios to students. To follow Kemp & Toperoff (1998), the researcher started with the explanation of the etymology of the word 'portfolio' from *portare* (carry) and *foglio* (sheet of paper). Even, according to Kemp & Toperoff, the teacher can ask an artist or a student of art, architecture, or design to bring in their portfolios. In this line, Tanner, et.al (2000: 21) mention that in introducing the idea of portfolios

to students, there are several points to include: a portfolio definition, a rationale for using portfolios, a framework in the shape of a suggested contents list, checklists used for feedback, and ideas for themes and evidence. By so doing, students can understand what is actually meant by the concept of portfolios.

4.3.1.2 Presenting the Syllabus to the Class

After introducing the notion of portfolios to students, the researcher informed students with the syllabus of the writing course which was going to be used in the teaching program as indicated in Appendix 1. Regarding this, students were told about what topics to be written and how they had to do with the topics. In order that students understood the content of the syllabus, they were allowed to ask a question. Therefore, in this stage, there was a question and answer session between the lecturer and students.

4.3.1.3 Explaining Criteria for Student Writing Assessment

Before students were asked to write, they were told about the criteria of proficient text. This was to follow the suggestions that "students need to know how their work will be evaluated and by what standards their work will be judged" (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996: 36). In this line, Gottlieb (2000: 91) explains that portfolios must have a specified purpose matched to defined targets with clear-cut criteria. With regard to the present study, students had to write a text by paying attention to the four dimensions of writing: idea development or organization, fluency or structure, word choice, and mechanics (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996: 143) as indicated in Section 2.2.6 of Chapter 2.

In terms of lingual or practical empowerment, the criteria of success were determined by the improvement of writing in respect to the four dimensions of writing. In other words, student writing was getting better and better from draft to draft as indicated in Chapter 5. Meanwhile, the criteria of success of personal or individual empowerment were established by the conditions in which students had a positive response (attitude) towards their writing abilities as illustrated in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1.

4.4   The Main Phase

In this phase, students wrote three different texts. First, they wrote with free topic (freewriting). Second, they wrote a response to news items. Third, they wrote an opinion about controversial issues. These three texts were produced through the same stages of writing employed in the present study, namely prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing as already mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1. In addition, in some stages of writing, particularly in revising and editing, students were asked to conduct peer or self review or assessment and conferencing to apply the principle of collaborative learning in portfolio-based instruction.

4.4.1 Writing with Free Topic (Freewriting)

In freewriting students were asked to write on the basis of their own topic. This was to apply the principle of portfolio-based instruction that students involve in decision making (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996; Genesee & Upshur, 1996; Gottlieb, 2000). One of the activities in decision making is that students choose their own topic for their writing (see Graves, 1994: 42). Hence, there was not any intervention from the lecturer to students in freewriting. However, students could ask for an aid or consideration from their peers or lecturer if they needed it as suggested by Kroll (2003), Rao (2004), and Hamp-Lyons (2006). Because of free topic, students produced different types of texts. Of the fifteen students, eight of them wrote about argumentative writing, five students wrote about descriptive writing, and two students about narrative writing.

4.4.1.1 Prewriting

Before students wrote a draft, they were asked to get prepared with the planning of writing. They were given around five minutes to think of ideas to be developed into a piece of writing. After that, the lecturer approached them to find out what topic the students selected for their writing. As soon as the students were finished with the topic selection, they were asked to develop it into a framework of writing. This was intended to make them easier in organizing their ideas into a

complete piece of paper. All these activities of planning were carried out in the classroom and follow the suggestions that students choose a topic, gather and organize ideas, and identify the purpose of writing before they write a draft (National Writing Project of America, 2006; Tompkins, 2008).

Regarding prewriting, Sharples (1999: 75) argues that a writing plan plays a role as "a mechanism for idea exploration and creative design". In processing the design, according to Sharples, students should always revisit it and adapt it with the changing situation in order to produce a good piece of writing. In other words, the success and failure of a writing task can be determined in this stage. In this context, Sharples (see also Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005: 157-158) claims:

> Making a writing plan organizes thoughts and guides the production of text. A plan needs to satisfy both of these purposes. If it is illogical and fails to organize ideas then it will not form the basis of a coherent argument. If it does not offer a coherent rhetorical structure, then the resulting text is likely to be shapeless and rambling….At the very least, time spent on planning is time well-spent. It gives an opportunity to reflect on the content and structure of the text, and this appears to pay dividends in improved quality (1999: 88-89).

The following are several testimonies of the importance of establishing prewriting in writing. These testimonies were taken from the reflective notes written immediately as soon as the course was over by the researcher during the teaching program:

> …. A student asked about the possibility for topic change because he thought that the topic was too simple to develop. My answer is that he must not change the topic because so far the text produced has got some feedback from many people. This means that the text has been written through some processes. If he changes the topic, he must process the text from the beginning again, and that is not possible. He seemed to understand my explanation. I told him that if it is not possible anymore for him to develop the text on the idea aspect, he still may develop it on other aspects, such as grammar and vocabulary [October 1, 2010].

> Generally, I can see that the students are enthusiastic enough and involved with their topic. Being involved here means that the students seemed to realize that planning in writing is important because it will determine the next writing processes. For example, the case that happened to Fredi and Agus deals with the planning of writing. Fredi said that the topic he wrote was too simple, so it could not be developed anymore. At the moment, he wrote about 'Our Trip to Garut'. According to Fredi, he could not develop his topic anymore, and Agus could not either. He thought that his writing about 'Gold' was not too interesting and it was difficult to develop [October 27, 2010].

Data above indicate that planning was important in writing. In this case, the difficulties encountered by students were to do with the lack of planning, especially topic selection. Concerning this, Graves (as cited in Tompkins, 2008: 8)

admits that planning is important for children to be able to deal with writing topics regardless of personal interests.

Pertinent to the whole writing process conducted in the present study, one of the students admitted that the way of teaching writing like in the teaching program should be implemented in every writing class. The student stated:

> The way of writing class like this should be applied by every writing lecturer. The way of lecture like this helped me very much in developing ideas without being afraid to make mistake in grammar or other writing aspects.

Data above indicates that the writing stages conducted in the present study, in which prewriting is one of the stages, has played a role in increasing students' ability in developing ideas. Through prewriting, students were guided in generating ideas and developing their texts without being worried to make mistakes.

4.4.1.2 Drafting

As soon as students were finished with their writing framework, they were asked to develop it into a real piece of writing. This was done in the classroom around twenty minutes. To encourage students generate ideas, the lecturer reminded them not to worry about grammatical mistakes. This is relevant with the suggestions that in drafting students just pour out ideas and neglect mechanics (Tompkins, 2008: 12; Shield, 2010: 14). Tompkins (2008: 12-13) further explains that there are two main activities at this stage. First, students produce a rough draft. In this case, the emphasis is on content rather than mechanics (see also Dorn & Soffos, 2001: 33). Second, students make opening sentences or a composition's leads to grab readers' attention.

As part of the whole writing process, drafting has been considered as a not-once-time-finished product of writing. Instead, it involves multiple drafting (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Harmer, 2004; Dorn & Soffos, 2001). Dorn & Soffos explain:

> The drafting stage can consist of several attempts to construct an idea; for instance, a writer might draft different lead sentences to introduce his topic. The point here is that drafting is not restricted to a first copy of the entire paper; it can also include multiple drafts of particular sections of the paper, such as character development, good setting, interesting lead sentences, and catchy endings. Good writers use drafting as an important

tool for organizing, reorganizing, and reflecting on the quality of their compositions. Thus, drafts can be numerous and messy (2001: 33).

Thus, in drafting, students were asked to express ideas as many as possible without paying too much attention on mechanical or grammatical errors. In this case, the objective is that students were able to state their thesis clearly and develop the content of their paper with sufficient specific details (Langan, 2001: 32). The weaknesses that occur in drafting will be revised in the next stage, namely the revising stage. Concerning the drafting, some students expressed that they were confident and motivated in writing because they were given freedom to develop ideas without having to be worried about mistakes (Rita, Anggi, Mira, Wati).

4.4.1.3 Revising

Basically, to follow the suggestions from Tompkins (2008: 13), in this stage, students "clarify and refine ideas" in order to build idea development. Students establish "substantive changes" (Tompkins, 2008: 7) or "macro editing" (National Writing Project of America, 2006: 26) rather than focus on minor changes of the paper. Concerning the present study, there were three important activities done in this stage: peer review, self review, and conferencing. These three activities were to apply the principle of portfolios that students should be collaborative to improve their writing. Concerning the present study, collaboration happened between student-student and student-lecturer.

4.4.1.3.1 Peer Review/Assessment

In this stage, students were asked to share their rough draft with their friends for their writing improvements (Tompkins, 2008: 13). Every draft was reviewed in ten to fifteen minutes in order to help students develop editing skills and a sense of authentic audience (National Writing Project of America, 2006: 27). This activity was also intended to teach students to become "a critical friend and audience for another's work" (Writing Project of America, 2006: 27). In this

case, students discussed the strengths and weaknesses of their papers and suggest for improvement (Kern, 2000: 206).

Peer-assessment has been considered crucial in the writing process (Harmer, 2004; Hyland, 2003). From peer-assessment, students can move to independent self-assessment (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996: 40). In view of the concern of this present study, as the key to the portfolios (Hamp-Lyons, 2006, 2003; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996), self-assessment will lead students to personal empowerment (Montgomery & Wiley, 2004: 4; Gottlieb, 2000: 103).

Peer-assessment can take place in a number of forms and at various stages of the writing process (Hyland, 2003; Kern, 2000; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). The most common way is that the teacher assigns students to work in pairs or small groups of tree or four to exchange drafts, read and give comments on one another's papers before they revise them (Hyland, 2003: 200; Kern, 2000: 207). According to Hyland (2003: 202), what makes peer-assessment important is that it can help students become more aware of their target readers when writing and revising. In addition, it can also help them become more sensitive to problems in their writing and more confident in correcting them.

Theoretical foundation for peer-assessment comes from the idea that knowledge develops through social interaction (Williams, 2005; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In this case, students are viewed as participants in a community of writers rather than as solitary writers (Williams, 2005: 93). Through self-assessment, students are encouraged to work collaboratively (Harmer, 2004: 115) and are supposed to develop linguistic knowledge and writing skills in a mutually supportive environment (Williams, 2005: 93).

Below are the participants' responses pertaining to peer-assessment undertaken during the teaching program:

> Interacting with friends is an important part during the course. From their suggestions and comments, I realize that I have done many mistakes. This activity, I think, has played an important role to improve my quality of writing [Wati, March 31, 2011].
> Sometimes, a friend has a different opinion toward our writing. This can be made as inputs to develop our writing [Ria, March 31, 2011].

Sharing ideas can improve the content of the text we write, and, indirectly, it makes us know about the important ideas of the texts they write [Lala, March 28, 2011].

Data above show that peer-assessment has played a role in improving the quality of student writing. Through peer-assessment, students will get feedback from their peers about the advantages and disadvantages of their writing so that their writing improves.

4.4.1.3.2 Self Review/Assessment

In this stage, to follow the suggestions from Tompkins (2008: 13), students were asked to reread the rough draft. They were given an opportunity to reflect the strengths and weaknesses of their writing. The duration for this review was around five minutes. Students were given freedom to agree or disagree with the feedback from their friends. To this end, they were suggested that they consulted credible sources, such as books, dictionaries, and source persons.

As the core of portfolio-based learning approach (Hamp-Lyons, 2006, 2003; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996), self-assessment plays a role for student empowerment (Montgomery & Wiley, 2004: 4; Gottlieb, 2000: 103). Through self-assessment, students make a review on the strengths and weaknesses of their work by developing their learning autonomy and responsibility (Williams, 2005: 161; Brown, 2004: 270). In this relation, Tompkins stipulates:

In self-assessment, children assume responsibility for assessing their own writing and for deciding which pieces of writing they will share with the teacher and classmates and place in their portfolios. This ability to reflect on one's own writing promotes organizational skills, self-reliance, independence, and creativity (2008: 84).

The following are the participants' responses in accordance with self-assessment or reflection they conducted during the teaching program:

I can correct and reread my own writing more carefully [Ambar, no date].

I can recognize that my writing is not perfect. There are still a lot of mistakes I did in every piece of my writing [Wati, March 31, 2011].

When I write, sometimes, I just express the ideas I have without paying attention on the structure. By rereading, I can see which sentences have wrong structures and do not match with the topic sentence of the paragraph [Ria, March 28, 2011].

I can recognize my mistakes and realize what I have to do. I would like to make my writing better [Yuni, March 29, 2011].

I can improve my writing so that it is ready to correct by my friends [Lala, March 28, 2011].

Data above indicate that self-assessment has contributed to the improvement of student writing. In this way, students were given opportunities to reflect the strengths and weaknesses of their writing so that "their sense of authority grows" (Hirvela & Pierson, 2000: 109). Through the sense of authority or ownership, it is expected that students will be responsible to improve the quality of their writing.

4.4.1.3.3 Conferencing

In this stage, to follow Tompkins (2008: 77), the lecturer approached students to discuss their writing at their desk by moving around the classroom. However, sometimes, the student was asked to come to the lecturer's desk for the discussion. In this conferencing, the lecturer conducted a conversation or dialogue with the student to find out how he or she would improve the paper (Tompkins, 2008; Brown, 2004; Hyland, 2003; Genesee & Upshur, 1996). In this case, the lecturer positioned himself as a facilitator and guide as suggested by Tompkins (2008: 77) and Brown (2004: 265).

Regarding this study, in the sense that giving feedback to student writing always takes more teacher time and energy (Ferris, 2003: xi), it was anticipated that students would not had more opportunities for individual feedback. Therefore, the lecturer provided the class with an in-class review (see Appendix 1). In this way, the lecturer invited some students to share their writing with the whole class. The class gave some feedback to the samples of writing that could be used as the recommendation for revision. The following were several questions employed in conferencing of the present study:

Table 6: Writing conference questions adapted from Tompkins (2008: 78)

Prewriting	What are you going to write about?
	How did you choose your topic?
	What prewriting activities are you doing?
	How are you organizing your writing?
	What do you plan to do next?
Drafting	How is your writing going?
	Are you having any problems?
	What do you plan to do next?
Revising	What did you learn about your draft from the rubric?
	What questions do you have for your writing group?
	What help do you want from your writing group?
	What compliments or suggestions did your writing group give you?
	What changes are you planning to make?
Editing	What kinds of mechanical errors have you found?
	How has your editor helped you proofread?
	How can I help you identify (or correct) errors?
	Have you completed the editing checklist?
	What do you plan to do next?
Publishing	Are you ready to make your final copy?
	How will you format your final copy?
	Are you ready to share your writing with the class?
	What do you like best about this piece of writing?
	What would you like to learn to do better?

As one of the forms of giving feedback, conferencing is often preferable rather than the other forms of feedback in writing, for example peer-assessment. Students tend to prefer teacher feedback than student feedback. In this case, Hyland (2003: 198) reveals "….teachers have generally been more positive than students…." As observed in the present study, several students expressed their opinions in respect to the conferencing activities during the course:

> The lecturer gave much feedback for my writing improvement, especially about ideas. Suggestions and feedback from the lecturer helped me very much direct my ideas [Wati, March 31, 2011].

> I got a lot of feedback. I am sure that the lecturer knows better and has more experiences so that he can give more enrichment to my writing after, previously, it got a lot of feedback from my friends [Lala, March 28, 2011].

> I got feedback and critiques from the lecturer based on his more experienced writing skills, for example about grammar, idea development, and punctuation problems [Rita, March 30, 2011].

Data above indicate that conferencing, interactions between the lecturer and students, has contributed to the improvement of student writing. In this context, to some extent, teacher feedback was still preferable than student

feedback in view of that the lecturer was considered more experienced than students.

4.4.1.4 Editing

In this stage, students were asked to focus the improvements more on smaller mistakes than bigger mistakes as suggested by Grabe & Kaplan (1996), National Writing Project of America (2006), and Tompkins (2008). In this case, the goal was to make the piece of writing optimally readable (Tompkins, 2008: 15). The improvements included, among them, spellings, punctuations, and capitalization. To this end, students were given an opportunity around ten to fifteen minutes to check again their paper. Similar to the revising stage, in editing, students were involved in peer review, self review, and conferencing. In this case, students were asked to prepare their writing for publication (National Writing Project of America, 2006: 27).

Concerning this study, to follow Tompkins (2008: 17), there were two important activities undertaken in editing. First, the lecturer displayed a sample of student writing, and then gave feedback by marking the possible errors. With regard to the syllabus used in the present study, this activity referred to in-class review (see Appendix 1). Secondly, students corrected errors. In this case, they corrected the errors individually or in a consultation with the teacher.

4.4.1.5 Publishing

In this stage, students were asked to publish their writing in order that public knew their writing. Basically, regarding this study, since the students were asked to share their writing with peers (a peer review), they had published their writing. In this case, to follow the suggestions from Tompkins (2008: 19), publishing has been the only best way to motivate students to revise and edit their writing, one of which is through a peer review.

In addition to a peer review, concerning this study, students were encouraged to publish their writing in a bulletin board, like *Majalah Dinding (Mading)* at the department. This was to follow the suggestions from Tompkins

(2008), Grabe & Kaplan (1996), and Hewitt (1995). According to Grabe & Kaplan (1996: 296), the use of publishing in writing course is a strong motivator for students because this makes students proud. The published pieces of writing, according to Grabe & Kaplan, often look very good. In this line, Tompkins (2008: 19) also believes that publishing can motivate students to improve their writing because the students can share it with a real audience. This was confirmed by a participant named Yuni saying that:

> The course played an important role in several aspects: motivation and confidence. Because we wrote and practiced a lot, we became confident, and we felt motivated if others agreed with our writing. We also felt confident if our writing had to be published.

From the description above, it is clear that the teaching program could empower students. In this concern, students increase motivation and confidence in writing.

4.4.2 Writing a Response to News Items

In freewriting students wrote different texts, and this had caused some difficulties for the researcher in scoring. Some students wrote a descriptive or narrative genre of writing, but some others wrote an argumentative text, which was considered a more difficult genre of writing (see Alwasilah & Alwasilah, 2005; Emilia, 2010). Besides, some principles of portfolio-based instruction, such as collaborative learning, to some extent, have a disadvantage in the implementation. Therefore, the researcher asked students to write another text, namely writing a response to news items.

In writing a response to news items, students wrote based on a reading text. Students read a news item, and then they responded to it. To support their response, students had to read several other similar pieces of reading texts. Writing through reading in the present study was employed to apply the principle of writing-reading connections (Kroll, 1990/ 2003; Alwasilah & Alwasilah, 2005; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005; Wyrick, 2008). In this way, it is believed that writing needs information, and the information can be gotten from reading.

4.4.3   Writing an Opinion about Controversial Issues

To strengthen students' ability in writing a response, students were asked to write an opinion about controversial issues. Response and opinion have similarities in the sense that both are an argumentative genre of writing. Argumentative writing is important to promote student empowerment because it plays a decisive role in academic discourse (Bizzell as cited in Emilia, 2005: 59). Nevertheless, regarding the present study, these two argumentative genres of writing have a difference. In writing a response students were still restricted by basing on their writing to a reading text, but in writing an opinion they were given freedom to determine the topic. This was an effort to balance the existence of portfolio principles and the institutional needs where a particular genre of writing should be taught to students.

4.5   The Observing Phase

In this phase, the researcher investigated what worked and did not work in the teaching program as the effort to empower EFL students in writing. What worked in the teaching program was maintained, but what did not work was given a follow-up. For example, in freewriting the lecturer did not provide enough time for individual conferencing. In this concern, one student said that in freewriting "we did not get a direct feedback from the lecturer" (Lala). Thus, in the next writing, the lecturer planned to provide more time for individual conferencing with students.

More complete descriptions of the observing phase were provided in Chapters 5 and 6, but a glance that the teaching program brings about student empowerment, either lingual or personal empowerment will be exemplified below. In this concern, the example was derived from student text analysis involving the first, middle, and final drafts of student text named Lala (for a complete discussion, see Section 5.3.1.1 of Chapter 5).

Draft 1

Watching Movie

Many peoples are entertained themselves with watching movie. They fill free time for watching movie. Peoples who has hobby watching movies spend their weekend with watching movie. Sometimes, other peoples watching movies just to relieve feeling bored with their work for a while.

Peoples actually hunting newer movies. Sometimes, they update in newspaper or view resume in magazine, got to DVD or VCD store to buy some video, or they just go to rental DVD or VCD to rent some videos. Peoples also relieve their boredom with watching movie at cinema in the weekend. They go accompanied with their girlfriend, friends, or family. Peoples choose movie to relieve their boredom because, movie has short conflict than serial movie in the television. Movie also do not need much time to watch it.

Peoples entertaining themselves with spend their free time to watch movies might it just a hobby or just to relieve their boredom with their work (*158 words*).

Draft 3

Watching Movie

The people have many way to make an entertainment by themselves. One kind of an entertainment is watching, in case watching movie. Many reasons that people choose watching movie. Two major reasons that people choose it are they want to relieve their boredom and enjoy watching movie as a hobby. So, i want to figure out about that.

Sometimes, people feel bored with their jobs, activities, assigntments, or somebody. And they try to relieve their boredom by watching movie. They watch movie at cinema in the weekend or other free time accompanied by their girlfriend, friends, or family.

Other reason is people make watching movie as their hobby. Actually, they watching movie not only in the weekend to spend their time but also they spend their free time with it. The people who have its hobby actually hunting newer movies, then they share with their friend who have same hobby. They update newer movie in newspaper or in magazine, go to DVD store to buy newer movie, or just rent some movies in the rental DVD. People who have this hobby, not only watch in but also collect the movie.

People entertain themselves by spending their free time to watch movies might it just hobby or relieve their boredom with their work (*214 words*).

Draft 6

Watching Movie

The people have many ways to make an entertainment by themselves. One kind of an entertainment is watching, in case watching movie. There are many reasons why people choose watching movie. Two major reasons that people choose it are they want to relieve their boredom and enjoy watching movie as a hobby. So, I want to figure out about that.

Sometimes, people feel bored with their jobs, activities, assigntments, or somebody. And they try to relieve their boredom by watching movie. If they do not have much time, they will watch movie in their house. And, if they feel that watching movie in their house is so boring, they will go out then watching movie in the cinema. They watch movie at cinema in the weekend accompanied by their girlfriend, friends, or family. They enjoy the weekend together.

Other reason is people make watching movie as their hobby. The people who have this hobby actually hunting newer movies, then they share with their friend who have same hobby. They update newer movie in newspaper or in magazine, go to DVD store to buy newer movie, or just rent some movies in the rental DVD. People who have this hobby, not only watch but also to collect the movie.

People entertain themselves by spending their sparetime to watch movies might it just hobby or relieve their boredom with their work (*231 words*).

Comparing the three drafts above, it is clear that there has been an improvement of writing done by the writer. In terms of lingual empowerment in writing, the writer has been concerned with the improvement of the four dimensions of writing employed in the present study, namely idea development or organization, fluency or structure, word choice, and mechanics as indicated in Section 2.4.1 of Chapter 2. Concerning idea development, the writer has increased the number of words from 158 words in Draft 1 to 214 words in Draft 3. Then, in Draft 6, the writer added more words to become 231 words. Meanwhile, ideas were organized in paragraphs from three paragraphs in Draft 1 to become four paragraphs in Drafts 3 and 6.

Structural improvements happen, among them, to some cases. In Draft 1 the writer uses 'peoples' in almost all parts of the text. However, she does not use it anymore in Drafts 3 and 6 replacing it with 'people'. Besides, the writer is concerned with the fluency of sentence structure in developing the text. In the first paragraph of Draft 1, the sentence structures seem to be the same so that they read monotonous. But, in Draft 3 and 6 the structures are more various, among them, by involving an existential clause 'there' in Draft 6 (see Section 5.2.1.1 of Chapter 5 for a further discussion). In this way, the sentences read more fluent.

Regarding word choice, the writer varies the use of word in reference to 'movie'. In Draft 1, particularly in the first paragraph, the word 'movie' is used too often so that to some extent it sounds monotonous. But, in Drafts 3 and 6 the writer varies it with other words, namely 'entertainment' and 'it' to avoid monotonousness in the text. Meanwhile, in terms of mechanics, the writer improves the capitalization. In Draft 3 the writer uses 'i' with a small letter, whereas in Draft 6 she replaces it with 'I', namely a capital letter.

In respect to personal empowerment in writing, the writer was concerned with knowledge (ability) and attitudes realized into the text (see Table 9). Pertinent to knowledge (ability), for instance, the writer shows how she can

develop ideas by choosing the right words, varying them in reference to the same word. This occurs in the word 'movies' replaced with 'entertainment' and 'it'. This is also exhibited through interchangeability between the word 'free time' and 'spare time'. Meanwhile, the attitude is realized, among them, in sentence 'So, I want to figure out about that'. In this case, the writer seems to be self confident with her to elaborate her writing. From the student text analysis above, it can be revealed that the teaching program was successful in empowering EFL students in writing. In this concern, students could improve their writing, and they also had a positive attitude about themselves.

4.6 The Reflecting Phase

The reflecting phase described the overall picture of evaluation on success or failure of the study. This can be considered the final phase conducted in the present study. The researcher reflected the whole process of the implementation of the teaching program. In general, it can be revealed that the teaching program where action research used as the research design was successful in addressing the research problems proposed in the present study. The research design could explore the strengths and weaknesses of portfolio-based instruction in empowering EFL students in writing.

Basically, the teaching program was successful in addressing the research question proposed in the present study. With regard to student empowerment in writing, the teaching program could come to the findings that portfolio-based instruction could empower EFL students in writing in two aspects. First, it empowered students in terms of lingual or practical empowerment. Second, it empowered students in terms of personal or individual empowerment. Lingual or practical empowerment was to do with improving student writing with regard to the four dimensions of writing employed in the present study, namely idea development or organization, fluency or structure, word choice, and mechanics. Personal or individual empowerment concerned the psychological conditions in which students had a positive response toward their writing performance. In the present study, personal or individual empowerment included two aspects, namely

knowledge (abilities) and attitude. More complete discussions of the two aspects of empowerment in writing can be seen in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

4.7   Conclusion

This chapter has presented the teaching program undertaken in the present study where action research was employed as the research design. Basically, the discussion includes the phases of action research used in the study in which process writing was embedded as an effort to empower EFL students in writing. The following is the summary of the teaching program conducted in the present study.

Table 7: Summary of the Teaching Program

The Planning Phase
The Acting Phase:
- Preliminary Stage:
  - Introducing the idea of portfolios
  - Presenting the syllabus
  - Explaining criteria for student writing assessment
- Main Phase:
  - Writing with free topic (freewriting)
    - Prewriting
    - Drafting
    - Revising:
      - Peer review
      - Self review
      - Conferencing
    - Editing:
      - Peer review
      - Self review
      - Conferencing
    - Publishing
  - Writing a response to news items
  - Writing an opinion about controversial issues
The Observing Phase
The Reflecting Phase