

# **Conferencing Sessions in 'KBKK (Kerja Kursus Berpotfolio)': How Do**

## **Trainees Teachers View Them?**

**1999**

**Maktab Perguruan Batu Lintang**

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### **Abstract**

The focus of this paper is to gain some insights into the portfolio conferences used by trainees while working on their KKB (portfolio coursework). A number of literature has stated the importance of conferencing in the process of a portfolio program. Farr and Tone (1994) stated 'successful use of portfolios depends on them (portfolio conferences)'. The study was carried out on 34 English Language trainee teachers. They indicated that conferencing sessions were helpful in helping them to improve their language and communication skills. The study showed that trainees' and mentors' support for each other was important in ensuring that the coursework was completed. The approach used in carrying out the conferencing promoted collaborative and cooperative learning among the trainees. These sessions created opportunities for them to increase their commitment to self-evaluation, self-direction and to establish goals and priorities - elements essential to the completion of their coursework and for their professional development and growth. However, they expressed that the question of the suitability of venue and the scheduling of conferencing time needed to be addressed. These sessions were informally scheduled and were carried out outside class contact hours. Some trainees pointed out that this caused some difficulties in planning and organizing sessions with their mentors as well as with their group members, particularly as they had to try to fit the sessions to accommodate everyone's time. It is therefore recommended that sessions should be formally scheduled into the timetable. A formal schedule as well as a structured approach of conducting the sessions could give the trainees' portfolios and their individual analysis of their portfolio a kind of weight, importance, or endorsement that they would otherwise not have.

### **Tujuan:**

Gain some insights into the portfolio conferences used by trainees while working on their KKB (portfolio coursework)

### **Metodologi (Sampel):**

This study was carried out on 34 PI/KT trainee teachers. They were working on their English KKB coursework from February to April, 1999.

### **Metodologi (Instrumen & Pentadbiran Kajian):**

1. A questionnaire comprising 9 questions was devised for this purpose. The questionnaire focuses on the trainees' perception on the effectiveness of the portfolio conferences in helping them carry out their KKB. A five-point Likert scale was used.
2. The trainees were required to carry out portfolio conferences regularly with their mentors. At the end of their coursework, the trainees were given a questionnaire to get them to evaluate the partnership approach used during the conferencing. The questionnaires were later analysed. Some trainees and the mentors were also interviewed to obtain more detailed feedback.

### **Dapatan Kajian:**

1. The results indicated that the portfolio conferences had been perceived as helpful to the trainees in doing their KKB.
2. In all the areas that were given focus in the study, the trainees gave very positive ratings.
3. The sessions had given them the confidence and the opportunity to use English extensively.
4. The approach used for the portfolio conferences had helped develop a partnership between the mentors and their mentees as well as among the group members.
5. The conferencing sessions were important in getting them to communicate their ideas, to focus on their individual goals and to realize the total process of learning.

### **Cadangan:**

1. Portfolio conferences should be time-tabled. These sessions are important stages in the process of portfolio form of assessment. It should be acknowledged that conferencing requires proper organisation and the time factor is an important element in carrying this stage out. Trainees have a very tight schedule and if the conferencing time is not time-tabled, it will be difficult to organise conferencing time for the trainees, particularly when they also have to take into consideration that all the group members need to be able to come for the sessions. The trainees' other commitments after class hours may disrupt the conferencing schedule.
2. A more conducive venue to be made accessible for conferencing sessions. 53% of the trainees felt that the place where the conferencing sessions were held was not wholly conducive. It is therefore recommended that specific rooms be made available for this purpose. Perhaps if the sessions are to be included in the time-table, then the trainees' own home room could be used for this purpose.
3. Trainees should take a keener interest in their own learning. Trainees need to take more responsibility for their own learning and to increase their own

self-motivation in their studies. A positive work attitude needs to be inculcated.