

## **WRITING ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES BY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The research intends to define assessment in writing and implement writing assessment. The evidence of this research is descriptive and qualitative by distributing questionnaires as research instruments in the form of Google form. The result data were collected by utilizing the data from the essay test results. This study shows that writing assessments are in the form of planning, implementation, and assessment which are obstacles for teachers in learning. In this study, the teacher's strategies in assessing students' abilities in writing skills were found, namely; Constructive and Contextual methods; rubrics; Simple Text; Essays; Case Studies; Problem Based Learning. Moreover, the result of this study indicates that learning to write can improve vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling well.

**Keywords:** Assessment Strategies, Writing Assessment

### **INTRODUCTION**

Writing is the process of describing a language so the reader can understand the message conveyed by the author. In learning English, there are four aspects of language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Although writing is placed, last writing is not an unimportant skill.

According to Tarigan in Syarif, Zulkarnaini, and Sumarno (2009), writing means expressing in writing ideas, opinions, or thoughts and feelings. According to McCrimmon (1988), writing is an activity of thinking and feeling about a subject,

determining the date to be written, and determining the writing technique so that people who read the writing can understand it easily.

According to Overtun (2011), assessment is a process of gathering information to monitor progress, and if it is mentioned in my definition of a test, an assessment may consist of a test, or it can also consist of various methods such as observation, interviews and behavior monitoring and so on.

Writing is a communication activity in the form of delivering messages (information) in writing to other parties using written language as a tool or medium (Dalman, 2015). This means that writing activities involve several elements, including the author as a messenger, the content of the writing, channel or media, and as a reader.

Assessment is one aspect of teaching that teachers must master. It is one of the activities carried out in teaching and online teaching. Assessment is a process to measure learning through documents as evidence (Bkerson, Trotier, and Mansfield, 2020). Assessment is carried out to measure the extent to which students' mastery of the material is seen from the ability of students to apply knowledge about the material to real-life problems; therefore, the assessment must be meaningful and authentic related to everyday life (Cuming & Maxwell, 1999; Dennis, Rueter and Simpson, 2013). In addition, the assessment includes knowledge/understanding, skills, attitudes, and behavior (Wragg, 2003), for example, Portfolio (Lam, 2016).

There are two kinds of assessment, namely formative and summative assessment. These two assessments are different, but both are used to decide on student learning. Formative and Summative are different concerning the time when they are implemented (Rowe and Wilson, 2015; Slomp, 2016). Assessment in the learning process consists of formative and summative assessments (Nitko & Susan, 2011; Huang, 2012). Formative assessment can help educators to monitor student progress, and assessment results are used to improve students' abilities and detect student learning difficulties. Formative assessment is carried out as daily tests or mastery during the learning process. The summative assessment/Middle Semester Examination (UTS) is conducted to determine students' achievement after the learning process lasts one semester or one year of learning in the form of a semester exam/Semester Final Examination (UAS) Class Advancement Examination or final exam.

A standardized test, but in the form of a standardized test, is contrary to the principle of authentic assessment and is considered only capable of assessing low-level thinking skills (Attali, 2016). On the other hand, the final project is more authentic to use as an assessment because completing the final project is also assessed. The final project can assess higher-order thinking skills since students must plan, implement, and evaluate. While Summative assessment, i.e., generally informal assessment, is used to record student progress, which helps report to parents. Summative assessment is carried out during the learning process. In addition, summative assessment results from a paradigm shift in teaching and the development of technology that enables the provision of instruction such as distance education.

In writing in the classroom, the teacher often only gives students a title or a topic. Students make a text, and the teacher only assesses its grammar, vocabulary,

and spelling errors. Therefore, assessing students' writing ability is not an easy task. We must make clear goals and criteria, what we want to score, students' writing ability, correct word or fifth structure, paragraph arrangement, topic development, and so on.

. Furthermore, writing is divided into several types: Academic writing, which consists of papers, general reports, and essays. Work-writings include letters, e-mails, small notes, and announcements. Personal writing consists of greeting cards, invitations, messages, etc.

A person is said to be successful in a writing test if he can solve the test problem well with the specified standard value. So that these values can be achieved perfectly, the teacher prepares excellent and exciting material. When carrying out the exam, the teacher provides a written assessment strategy so that the exam goes well and gets the desired results. In a test, writing assessments can be assessed in various forms, such as examples of vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation.

In this case, the teacher can use various types of questions in the Writing exam. First of all, the question type is the limited response. This test is usually used for beginners, where this test requires simple physical actions such as showing a straightforward answer such as "Yes" or "No ."It can also be used by performing simple commands, such as "Hands up, etc.". The second is multiple choice. This test is usually done by presenting a sentence with four answer choices where one of the choices is the correct answer. The third is an essay. This test is usually in the form of a question where the answer is based on the thoughts or opinions of each individual.

There are still many teachers who are unable or do not understand how to perform a service, such as determining what strategies are used in writing assessments so that students cannot achieve the predetermined target. Many teachers still teach simply without any strategy, so students' ability is also minimal. The results are very disappointing when the exam is carried out. This research summarized what strategies the teacher used in writing assessments and how the teacher set the targets by determining the strategies used in the future.

Research benefits include researchers (teachers), students, other researchers, and Universitas Prima Indonesia. Firstly, this research can be used as reflection material for teachers to seek children's creativity in writing and to learn more about improving language literacy skills by implementing the Google Meet or Zoom online application for junior high school students. Secondly, for students, as an addition to knowledge and experience that can be used and practiced in the world of education. Thirdly, The results of this study can be used as documentation and reference sources and as a reference or as comparison material for researchers or other researchers in the future. The last is as material for scientific studies and adding research references for S-1 English Education Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Prima Indonesia University.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to determine the strategies or techniques teachers use to assess writing, develop ideas, use correct grammar, and use mechanisms including spelling conventions, capitalization, punctuation, and style in writing.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

From the issues associated with measuring student learning, assessment of student learning is a fundamental part of instruction. Although many students complain about having too many assignments, assignments can be an opportunity to boost student learning. One of them is learning how to use the language. Students will be taught a variety of linguistic skills while studying English. Language skills are divided into four categories: hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is a fundamental language ability, much like reading, listening, and speaking (Harmer, 2004). Writing skills necessitates practice, precision, and intellect. As a result, a teacher must be more innovative in developing successful writing tasks for students (Dwiyanti and Suwastini, 2021). Writing exercises can be done by providing some assessment tasks to the students.

According to Nunan (2003), writing is an intellectual activity that involves gathering ideas and deciding how to communicate and organize them into a statement and paragraph that people can understand. It suggests that the writers should communicate their thoughts and structure them into a well-written essay. Furthermore, writing communicates the author's point of view on a subject to the broader public. It demands the systematic recording of thoughts. According to the definitions, they were writing attempts to transmit the writer's thoughts, feelings, or ideas in written form while considering writing elements and phases so that the readers may properly grasp them.

Student writing evaluation is a process. Evaluation of students' writing and class ability should occur at various points throughout the course and can take many different forms. Teachers typically play multiple roles during the evaluation process, including facilitator, contributor, critique, and assessor (Horvath, 2000). One of the primary goals of writing assessments is to offer students feedback. We all know how important it is for writers (Berge, et al, 2019).

Brown (2003) defines evaluation as a continuous process that includes a broader domain. A teacher should examine numerous factors when conducting an assessment to determine the students' final results. Aside from the mid-semester and final semester grades, the teacher should consider the students' engagements, motivations, presentations, skills, papers, portfolios, presences, and assignments. In this scenario, before assigning final scores to learners, a teacher must go through numerous writing processes and weigh many factors.

Assessment is the collection of data concerning student learning. It is used for formative purposes (adjusting instruction) or summative purposes (judging the quality of student work) (Javed, et.al. 2013). It is an essential educational practice that teachers work in daily in various casual and formal settings. There have been various methods for evaluating writing. The most typical approach is to use a rubric (Han and Huang, 2017). The rubric includes everything from nation writing criteria

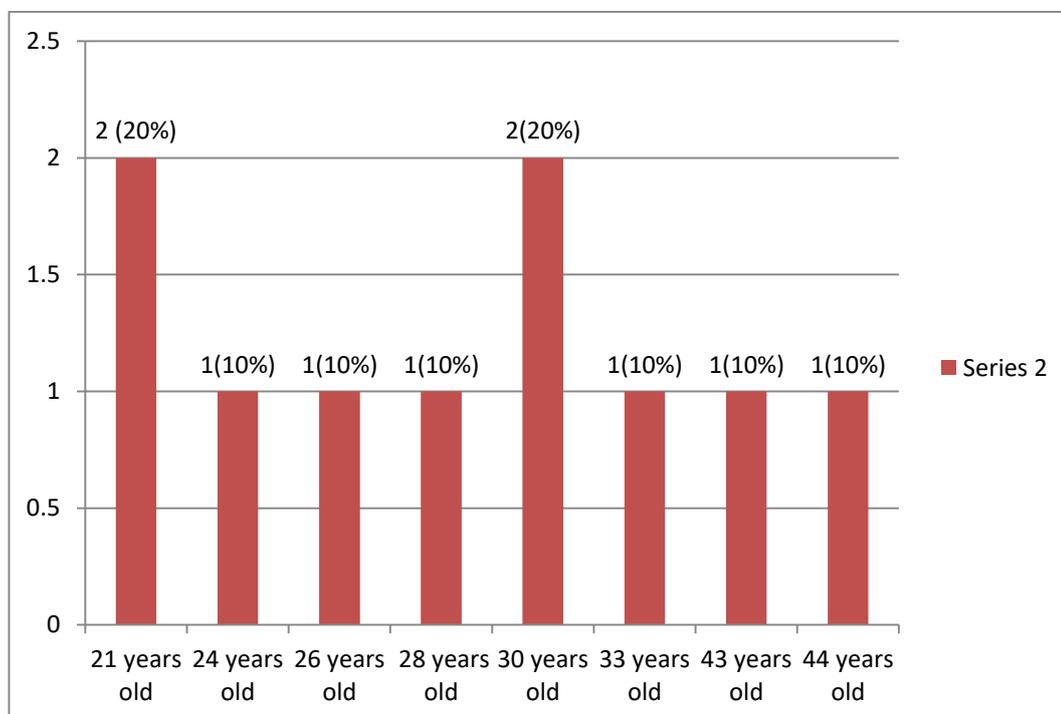
to individual criteria relevant to an assignment. Other types of writing evaluation employ a checklist or rating scale.

### RESEARCH METHOD

This study used the descriptive qualitative method. The descriptive qualitative method is a research method based on post-positivist philosophy used to examine the condition of natural objects (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument of data collection techniques carried out by triangulation or combination. In this case, this research reveals events or facts, circumstances, phenomena, variables, and circumstances that occurred during the research by presenting what happened.

Data collection is a necessary process to obtain data in research. Research design is a plan that guides researchers in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting observations. It means a logical proof model that allows researchers to make inferences about causal relationships between variables in a study. Moreover, this qualitative research uses narrative inquiry. The data is collected through a questionnaire distributed to junior high school teachers.

In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire as a research instrument distributed via a google form. The respondents used were ten English teachers teaching junior high schools in North Sumatra, divided into three boys and seven girls aged 21-45 years. Then the results of these answers will be summarized or analyzed by a researcher.



*Diagram 1. The ages of the Respondents*

The educational background of the respondents is from S1 English Education and S1 English Literature. To collect data, researchers performed several procedures, namely; 1) in this study, they compiled ten questionnaire questions related to the assessment of writing strategies; 2) after that, they entered the question into the Google form; 3) they distributed or give the questionnaire to 10 English teachers from various schools; and 4) after getting answers from the teachers, they analyzed the results of the answers and provided conclusions.

## **FINDING**

The result is a place to report research findings based on the applied methodology. The results section must state the research findings arranged in a logical order without bias or opinion. Moreover, the results of a discussion or problem are being studied and are the end of the discussion.

The following authors describe the research results obtained from the respondents as for the strategies used in assessing students' writing skills are:

### **Constructive and contextual method**

The constructive and contextual method is a holistic educational process. It aims to motivate students to understand the meaning of the subject matter they are studying by relating the material to the context of their daily lives (personal context, social context, and culture) so that students know/skills flexibly that can be applied (transferred) from one problem/context to another. This learning aims so that learning is not just memorizing but needs understanding and so that this learning can run more productively and meaningfully. Furthermore, the aspects of writing include spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, and the use of paragraphs.

### **Rubric**

A rubric is a tool that contains a set of rules used to assess the quality of student/student performance/performance, and a rubric is a tool for teachers to set assessment criteria for assignments. Not only useful for teachers, but this tool is also helpful for students. A rubric is defined in writing what is expected of students to get a particular value on an assignment which helps assess assignments consistently and objectively among students. Saving time in assessment, providing effective feedback, and the aspect must be Fluency, Content, Conventions, syntax, and vocabulary.

### **Simple Text**

Simple text is simple or short writing given by the teacher to students. In this activity, the teacher will assess the text written by students from its spelling, vocabulary, pronunciation, and aspects of the assessment students.

### **Essay**

An essay is a form of writing that describes an author's opinion on a particular subject. The essay contains the author's opinions, views, or personal expressions about a thing happening or taking place in society. Moreover, the assessment aspect is through the assessment of his neat writing and vocabulary, and content.

**Case Study**

A case study is a method for understanding the individual that is carried out integrative and comprehensive to obtain a deep understanding of the individual and the problems they face to solve the problem and gain good self-development. And aspects of the assessment through Verbal and Non-verbal.

**Problem Based Learning**

Problem-based learning is a learning model that presents contextual problems to stimulate students to study in groups to solve problems from real-world problems and bind students to curiosity about learning so that they have their learning model. At the same time, students are expected to have skills in solving problems and aspects of the assessment through Verbal and Nonverbal. The following figure shows the writing assignment related to the students' daily lives.

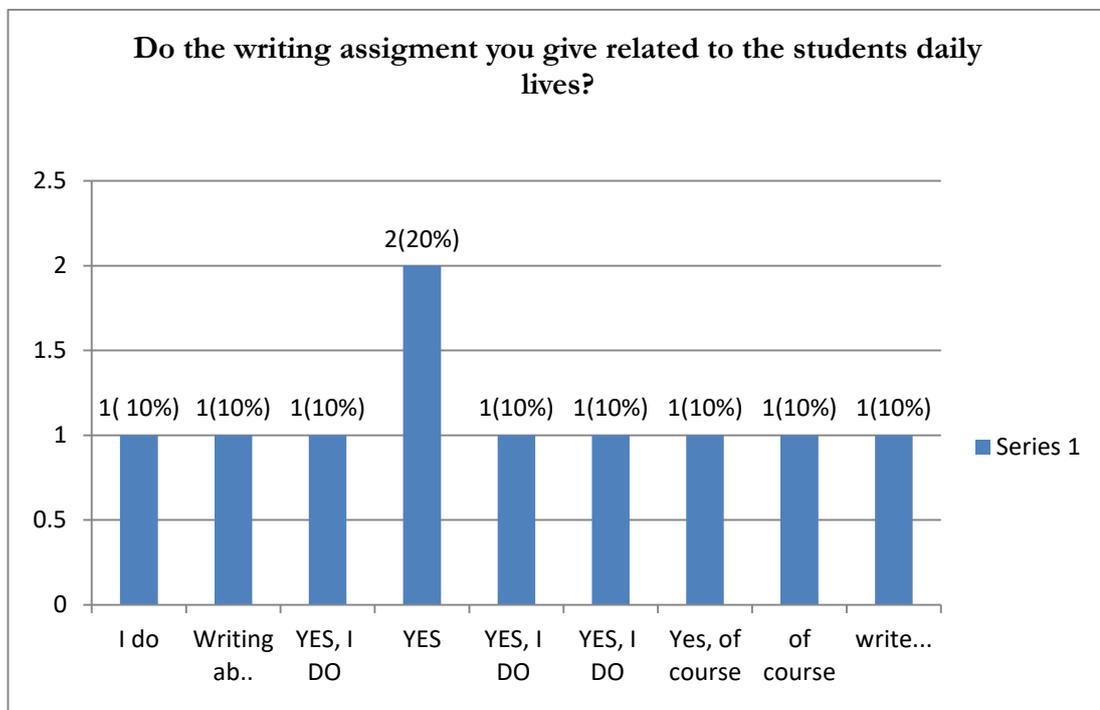


Diagram 2. The writing assignment that relates to the student's daily lives

As prospective teachers, they always try to connect assignments with students' daily lives, the idea is something that cannot be removed. Learning to write activities should provide the same composition as reading activities. The two activities run side by side. Because if a person can write, if he has much material obtained from reading. On the other hand, if someone needs to read as much as possible if he wants a structured writing and learning process, to train students to develop ideas and opinions, and through writing as it is today, teachers are required to carry out authentic assessments.

For example, when a teacher teaches biographies, she assigns her students to write a biography about one of their family members. It could be their mother, father, or brother who is related to their daily life.

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the findings, teachers employ a variety of writing assessment methodologies. They are the constructive and contextual technique, the rubric, the basic text, the essay, the case study, and problem-based learning. To begin, the constructive and contextual technique is a comprehensive educational process that tries to engage students to understand the meaning of the subject matter they are learning by connecting the content to their daily lives. It is consistent with the findings of a study conducted by Adang-Darmajari (2012) and Satriani, Emilia, Gunawan (2012).

The rubric comes next. A rubric is a tool that provides a collection of rules that are used to assess the quality of student/student performance/performance, and a rubric is a tool that teachers use to define assessment criteria for assignments. This technology is beneficial not only to teachers but also to learners. The third type is plain text. Simple text is simple or brief writing given to students by the instructor; in this activity, the teacher will assess the text written by students based on its spelling, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as other components of the evaluation given to students (Deane, 2011).

In addition, the next section is an essay. An essay is a type of writing that describes the author's opinion on a specific subject. An essay contains the author's thoughts, views, or personal sentiments on anything happening or happening in society. Moreover, the assessment is done through his neat writing, vocabulary, and content.

Furthermore, a case study is a strategy for understanding an integrative and complete individual to achieve a thorough understanding of the individual and the challenges they encounter to overcome the problem and gain positive self-development (Rahardjo and Gudnanto, 2011). As well as parts of the evaluation via verbal and nonverbal communication.

The final learning model is problem-based learning, which is a learning model that presents contextual problems in order to encourage students to study in groups to solve problems from real-world problems and to bind students to curiosity about learning so that they can develop their learning model (Kemendikbud, 2014; Sahrudin, 2019; Rahmayanti, 2017). At the same time, students are required to have problem-solving and evaluation abilities, both verbal and nonverbal.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that in assessing writing skills, there is a target that must be achieved by the teacher, the target is to find out the strategies used by the teacher in assessing writing skills. Learning strategies are also needed in the assessment of writing skills, while the strategies used by teachers in writing assessments are; Constructive and contextual methods, rubric, simple text, essays, case studies, and problem-based learning.

This study suggests that teachers should know the techniques in a writing assessment and also be able to assess students' writing results by giving students a writing assignment where later the teacher will assess the results of spelling, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Because writing is critical for a learner because it can be tangible evidence that something has happened at a time, writing is essential because our writing can provide helpful information for other people who need it. As a reliable means of communication, producing writing can be proof of one's expertise because it can be a means to develop oneself and also because writing can channel hobbies.

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