

ANALYZING THE WRITING ASSESSMENT TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING PERFORMANCE

Septika Ariyanti, Dyah Fitri Mulati, Defy Gustianing, Eka Pratiwi Yuniarti, Arif Alexander Bastian

Aisyah University of Pringsewu
Lampung, Indonesia
Email: septika.ariyanti@gmail.com

Abstract

A writing assessment is a review of an individual's writing abilities and skills. Usually, the goal is to assess a person's written communication skills. There are numerous various ways to evaluate writing, including essays, performance tasks, and multiple-choice exams. The purpose of a writing evaluation is to thoroughly evaluate an individual's writing abilities, including their command of syntax, vocabulary, style, and organization. The purpose of this research is to analyze the writing assessment of some previous research related for students' ability in writing. The amount of the research are three research. This research belongs to library research. In collecting the data, the writer use documentation. The instrument used was the writer itself. The data will be analyzed descriptively by use table and words explanation. The result of this research reveals some ways to analyze students' writing paragraph.

Keyword : Writing, Assessment, Improving, Students, Ability

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to our own language, writing is typically the fourth ability we master. It is also a means of human communication that uses signs and symbols to convey meaning and emotion. Writing is a type of technology, not a language. Writing is a challenging task when it comes to language proficiency. The complexity of writing lies in the demands of

the writer's ability to manage and organize ideas systematically and logically, and to present them in various written languages according to the rules of writing. Behind the complexity, writing promises enormous benefits in fostering initiative and creativity, confidence and courage, and build the habits and the abilities to find, collect, process, and organize information.

Language acts as a mediator in writing. The language, which is made up of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and discourses in all of their entirety—including proper spelling and punctuation—is the tool. The language used to communicate ideas to the reader must accurately support the meaning and reflect the author's intentions. For readers to understand what you're trying to convey, your words should be placed consistently in your sentences and clauses. The reader will find it easier to understand the ideas conveyed through language if it is employed more consistently.

Generally speaking, writing exercises cannot be isolated from the educational system since they allow students to develop their creativity. The teacher or lecturer plays a crucial role in the learning process, particularly when teaching writing, by providing students with strategies, tactics, and other tools to help them become better writers. It is expected that students would be able to articulate their thoughts and emotions in order to produce quality writing using effective means.

Beside giving the treatment towards the student in teaching writing, the teacher and lecturer also have to compose the writing assessment begin from making some task up to scoring the result. In this paper the writer try to focus analyzing the writing assessment which are taken from some research article. Evenly, the topic of those article is about improving writing skill through some ways.

Defintion Writing and Writing Assessment

Definition of Writing

First definition of writing come from Nunan (2003: 88), he states that writing is the mental work of finding the ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into sentences and paragraphs that can be read by the reader clearly. Furthermore, according to Harmer (2004 : 7) writing is production skill which can make the real product because writing can be read and felt as well. It can be said that the proof of writing can available for a long time. Besides, Brown (

2000: 335) reveals that writing is a product which has passed some process, because before create the good writing, the writer must thinking the idea, planning, drafting and doing a revision. In addition, it is important to set the writing coherently, using clear vocabulary and accurate grammar.

Based on all of the statements above it can be concluded that writing is productive skill with a complex process. Usually, the product of writing will be last longer than speaking, because in writing the information delivered in detail and more exact. Sometimes it uses particular characteristic for making clearer to the reader and minimize the confusion and misunderstanding

Definition of Writing Assessment

In the process of teaching writing, the teacher and lecturer must prepare the appropriate assessment, because the function of assessment will be useful for both teacher and student, such as to know the achievement of learning objective. Generally, in the research side, giving the assessment is to know the effectiveness of the particular methods or strategy towards students' ability. Therefore , in this paper will show some treatment which is applied to detect how far the students' ability especially in writing skill.

Talking about writing assessment, there are some types of writing performance which can be applied in learning process. Consider the following list of writing performance (adapted from Brown 2003) :

- a. Imitative : In order to produce written language, students must master the essential, elementary abilities of writing words, punctuation, short sentences, and letters.
- b. Intensive : Beyond the principles of imitation writing, there are abilities in creating relevant language for the context, collocations, and idioms, as well as proper grammar up to the sentence length.
- c. Responsive : In order to complete the assessment task, students must demonstrate a limited discourse level by joining phrases to make paragraphs and putting two or three paragraphs together logically.

- d. Extensive : Writers concentrate on establishing a goal, rationally arranging and developing ideas, employing details to clarify or bolster the main points, exhibiting a range of phrasing and vocabulary, and, frequently, going through several iterations before producing a finished piece.

After giving the assessment, usually, the result of the instrument will be scored. There are some ways to give a score towards the writing product. In some research, generally, the researchers use some scoring rubric to help them measure the writing. Generally, they use the rubric scoring of extensive and responsive writing, because most of the research about writing skill applying those types of writing performance.

In one book that described by Brown (2003 : 242) there are some types of scoring in writing, such as holistic scoring, primary trait scoring, and analytic scoring. Holistic scoring usually used to measure the overall writing. Then, the primary trait is applied to score that just focus of one aspect. Lastly, the analytic scoring is used to score some criteria in writing. It is more detail than the other types. There are some criteria which is included in analytic scoring such as content, organization, grammar, etc.

In this paper will try to explain some article related to writing skill, wherein the analysis of article will show how to score or measure the writing itself.

METHODS

This research belongs to library research where the technique of collecting data use documentation of previous research related to writing assessment. The data will be analyzed based on the result of previous research qualitatively. Supporting the explanation of this paper, the writer will show some research article related to the title. In this case, the writer takes three research articles and the topic is about research in writing skill and also will be described the assessment of writing within.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first study, "Improving English Writing Skill: A Case of Problem Based Learning," was carried out in 2015 by Ghulam Dastgeer and Dr. Muhammad Tanveer

Afzal. Its main goal was to determine how PBL affected the writing skills of secondary school students by comparing their achievement after learning through PBL to that of the students who received instruction via traditional lecture methods. This study uses an experimental design and includes a control class. The study's instrument is a writing test in which students are required to compose essays.

In the research process, the researcher use pretest and posttest as the data collection. In the pretest, the students are given the particular topic and they have to make it in an essay writing. While in the posttest, the students are given the passage and the students try to analyze it, then make an essay.

Before analyzing the data, surely, the researcher scores the product of students' writing. In this case the scoring rubric will be as follow :

Table 1. First Rubric Scoring of Writing

Feature of Essay/rubric	Marks
Content : Convincing, pertinent, specific, perceptive	5
Point of view : clear, consistent, appropriate in approach	3
Essay organization, Logical, coherent, unified, suitable to purpose, orderly development, to an effect or conclusion	5
Language use and style : Sentence structure : skillfull use of variety of sentence pattern (contrast, balance, repetition, and exclamation) Diction : vocabulary appropriate for grade level, vivid, precise Style : interesting, original, expression suited to content, flow	5
Mechanics : Correctness in punctuation, spelling and grammar	2
Total	20

The data was analyzed by use t-test. The finding of the result will be mentioned in followong list :

- ✓ The pretest results for both groups' combined scores on the t-test indicate that there was no significant difference in the mean scores for either group at a confidence level of $\alpha = 0.05$, indicating that the groups are equivalent. The mean difference is also not significant ($1.000 > 0.05$), supporting the null hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the scores for either group. The null hypothesis was accepted, suggesting that the groups were identical at the beginning of the experiment.
- ✓ The results of the comparison study between the experimental group's mean scores on the pretest and posttest show a significant difference in the experimental group's mean between the two tests ($p=.014$). This suggests that after receiving PBL instruction, the students made sufficient progress.
- ✓ The accomplishment of the experimental group was examined by comparing means utilizing paired differences. The experimental group's performance on the pretest and posttest differed significantly ($p=.000$) (mean difference of scores: 1.62), indicating that the PBL pedagogical treatment they received was beneficial.
- ✓ The analysis of the control group's mean scores for the pretest and posttest reveals a significant difference ($.036 < .05$) in the control group's mean scores, suggesting that the learners in the control group have also made significant progress after learning using the traditional lecture method in the classroom.
- ✓ Through the use of paired sample test paired differences, the control group's achievement was analyzed. The mean difference of scores between the pretest and posttest (.10) indicates that the control group performed significantly better (.745) in the posttest than in the pretest, suggesting that the conventional lecture method treatment they received was also effective.
- ✓ The experimental group's mean score of 7.95 is higher than the control group's score of 6.43, according to the findings of the t-test of the posttest scores for both groups.

The study's findings demonstrated that PBL was a more successful approach than traditional lectures for imparting writing skills in English to secondary school pupils. When the focus constructs under evaluation were at the second level of knowledge

structure—that is, comprehending the principles that connect concepts—PBL produced the greatest beneficial results.

The second research was written by Iman Muwafaq Muslim (2014) entitled : “Helping EFL Students Improve their Writing”. The current study was conducted in the English Department of the College of Education for Women, Baghdad University, in order to identify the writing shortcomings of second-year EFL students and to enhance their performance through a variety of repetitive writing exercises. To assess the experiment, the researcher used an experimental one group design with a pre-test and a post-test.

In this case, the researcher tried to attract the students’ attention to the importance following aspects of affective writing (it can be said as cognitive aspect of writing) :

- Paragraphing : For a reader to become interested in reading new material, a piece of writing needs to be engaging. A well-crafted topic sentence elevates a paragraph, and students who are adept at selecting strong topics for their paragraphs are better able to organize their ideas logically.
- Ideas : Selecting a topic sentence, or the main concept, is the first stage in writing. Ideas must be logically ordered and coherently connected to one another in order to be explicit. As a result, readers may quickly grasp the material and get interested in it.
- Grammar and spelling : According to Abbott (2007:6), writing clearly requires the use of words that follow specific guidelines. Moats (2005:1) emphasizes the significance of spelling in writing and notes that some authors confine their work to the words they have organized.
- Punctuation : According to Betham (2011, 37), punctuation is more significant than spelling. Just as pauses and tone shifts do, punctuation adds significance to words.
- Handwriting : Because teachers don't waste time trying to figure out what a student has written, handwriting is a factor in pupils' success or failure. Legible handwriting is characterized by readable letters and appropriate word and word spacing.

All of those of writing aspect, will be guidelines to give score of students’ writing product.

To determine how much the outcomes of the two tests differed from one another, the researcher had to evaluate the data after scoring the pre- and post-tests. To determine whether or not the difference is significant, the t-test was also employed. The findings of this research are mentioned as follows :

- ✓ In the pre-test, the mean score for paragraphing was 1.69, while in the post-test, it was 2.31. At the significance level of (.000), the estimated T-test value is (5.585).
- ✓ In the pre-test, the mean score of thoughts was 1.58, while in the post-test, it was 2.00. At the significance level of (.000), the computed T-test value is (3.759).
- ✓ The pre-test mean score for grammar and spelling is (1.02), while the post-test mean score is (1.16). At the significance level of (.032), the computed T-test value is (2.211).
- ✓ The average punctuation score on the pre-test is (1.42) whereas on the post-test it is (2.04). At the significance level of (.000), the computed T-test value is (4.243).
- ✓ The average handwriting score on the pre-test was 1.93, while on the post-test it was 2.36. At the significance level of (.001), the computed T-test value is (3.617).
- ✓ The average total score on the pre-test was 7.64, but on the post-test it was 9.91. At the significance level of (.000), the computed T-test is (13.625).

The aforementioned findings demonstrate how well the experimental methods of practice with feedback, competition, and repetition work to assist students in becoming better writers.

The last research was conducted by Giti Mousapour Negari (2011) entitled : “*A Study on Strategy Instruction and EFL Learners’ Writing Skill*” The present study aims at investigating the effect of concept mapping strategy on EFL learners' writing performance. The study had a pretest-posttest control group design. The instrument used is writing task of Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency. The students were asked to make an essay related to the topic given.

Measuring the students’ writing ability, the researcher took a rubric scoring from Jacobs et al. (1981, as cited in Weigle, 2002) which each paper was scored on five aspect of writing. The weight of every aspect will be shown on the table below :

Table 2. Second Rubric Scoring of Writing

Writing Aspect	Marks
Content	30 points
Language use	25 points
Organization	20 points
Vocabulary	20 points
Mechanics	20 points

Consequently, an analysis of the experimental group's and the control group's mean posttest scores reveals that the experimental group's members fared better than the control group on post-essay writing assessments. Stated differently, the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of learner performance. Pre-writing achievement scores were used as a covariate in an ANCOVA on Post-writing achievement scores by group (experimental vs. control) to examine any significant differences between the two groups' performances. The ANCOVA results ($F = 100.92$, $p = .000 < .05$) showed that there is a significant difference between the two groups. Stated differently, the results indicate a noteworthy distinction in the posttest results between the two cohorts.

The current study's findings showed that learners' writing performances were considerably impacted by the idea mapping strategy's explicit instruction, which encouraged learners to apply it. The results demonstrated that teaching students explicit tactics that increased their awareness was beneficial when it came to their writing assignments. Notwithstanding the difficulties involved with process writing, placing more attention on the processes of writing in a second or foreign language will make writing assignments less confusing and challenging for both teachers and students.

CONCLUSION

Writing is essentially a complicated process that produces information, so proper grading is necessary to achieve excellent results. Even if various researchers utilize rubrics for evaluating writing in different ways, utilizing them to measure the results of writing is still very beneficial to researchers. In the aforementioned studies, the researchers attempted to conduct a thorough quantitative or qualitative analysis of the students' writing assessments. It is anticipated that a thorough assessment will raise the idea that there are certain prerequisites for producing quality writing.

Hopefully, the exposure of this paper can be useful for everyone who want to know or explore about the writing assessment further especially for students, teachers or lecturers. There is no harm try to dig deeply about the way how to improve students' writing ability, because so many strategy to achieve it.

REFERENCES

- Abbot, Edwin A. (2007). *How to Write Clearly: Rules and Exercises on English Composition*, University Press: John Wilson and Son, Cambridge.http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22600/22600-h/22600_h.htm
- Betham, Emmanuelle (2011). *Punctuation Today: A Qualitative Study*, Skepsi, Vol4, issue 2, University of Kent, UK.
- Brown, H. Douglas. 2004. *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- _____. 2000. *Principle of Language Learning And Teaching*. New York: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Dastgeer, Ghulam and Afzal, Muhammad. 2015. *Improving English Writing Skill: A Case of Problem Based Learning*. American Journal of Educational Research, 2015, Vol. 3, No. 10, 1315-1319
- Harmer, Jeremy. 2004. *How to Teach Writing*. England: Pearson Education Ltd. Longman.

Moats, Louisa C. (2005). How Spelling Supports Reading and Why It Is More Regular and Predictable than You May Think, citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/summary?doi=10.1.1.151.4584

Muslim, Iman.2014. *Helping EFL Students Improve their Writing*. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 4 No. 2 [Special Issue – January 2014]

Negari, Giti Mousapour. 2011. *A Study on Strategy Instruction and EFL Learners' Writing Skill*. International Journal of English Linguistics Vol. 1, No. 2; September 2011

Nunan, David.2003. *Practical English Language Teaching*. Singapore : Mc Graw-Hill company