The Assessment of Writing Skill English Students at University

Leonita Maria Efipanias Manihuruk[1], Esti Marlina Sirait[2]

manihuruknita@gmail.com[1],estimarlina28@gmail.com[2]
[1,2]Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas HKBP Nommesnen Pematangsiantar

Abstract

This research aimed to analyze how the assessment of writing skill English students at University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. This research was carried out at UHKBPNP. The researchers used qualitative approach with case study method. The subject of this research is 2th semester students of UHKBPNP, with consist of 25 students. The research design of this research was qualitative approach with case study method. The instrument of collecting data used writing test. The findings of the research: (1) Content aspect score was 16,52; (2) Organization aspect score was 15,4; (3) Vocabulary aspect score was 15,48; (4) Language use aspect score was 15,64; (5) Mechanics aspect score was 15,68. The result of the research showed that the students experienced mostly in excellent to very good level

Keywords: *assessment, writing, procedure text*

Introduction

Writing is crucial in language education for several reasons. It reinforces learning by providing a visual representation of language, which helps students understand and remember new concepts. The process of writing also aids language development, as it encourages critical thinking and deeper processing of the language (Ginting and Zaim 2023). Additionally, writing caters to different learning styles, offering time for reflection and thorough language production (Jufri 2016). Lastly, writing is a vital skill for real-world tasks such as composing letters, creating reports, and responding to advertisements, making it essential for academic and professional success.

Moreover, writing fosters creativity and critical thinking by requiring students to generate ideas, develop arguments, and present information clearly. It also provides a tangible record of progress, allowing teachers to assess understanding and offer targeted feedback. This continuous feedback loop helps students improve their writing skills over time. Emphasizing writing in the curriculum equips students with comprehensive language skills necessary for success in various aspects of life (Biju, Society, and Selvaraj 2023).

In writing, Jacobs et al. identified five critical components: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (Muck and Cope 2021). "Content" involves planning, writing, and editing to ensure clarity and understanding. It includes developing ideas and conveying the intended message accurately. "Organization" refers to arranging ideas logically and chronologically, ensuring smooth transitions and coherent paragraphs. "Vocabulary" focuses on selecting precise and varied words to engage the reader and avoid repetition. "Language use" emphasizes correct grammar, including verb tense, subject-verb agreement, and proper use of nouns and pronouns. Mastery in this area ensures clarity and coherence, maintaining a consistent tone and style. "Mechanics" covers capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, which are essential for readability and professionalism. Attention to these technical details ensures polished writing that adheres to standard conventions. Together, these components create clear, well-structured, and engaging text.

Assessment is a crucial tool in evaluating student achievement and serves as valuable feedback for both students and teachers in the context of language learning (Dwiyanti and Suwastini 2021). Evaluation refers to the process of collecting and analyzing data to assess student progress and achievement (Marpaung, Ginting, and ... 2023). For students, assessments provide insights into their progress, highlighting areas of strength and pinpointing areas needing improvement (Mai 2019). This self-awareness allows students to take control of their own learning process, helping them to develop and refine their skills over time. For teachers, assessments offer critical data that can be used to adapt and enhance their teaching strategies, ensuring that they meet the diverse needs of their students (Mai 2019). However, assessing student assignments can be challenging, especially when adequate tools and facilities are lacking (Cleveland 2018).

According to Ripley, using computers for assessments offers several benefits that address these challenges (Bearman, Nieminen, and Ajjawi 2023). Computer-based assessments have been shown to positively impact students' motivation, concentration, and performance. They provide teachers with access to high-quality

materials and, through automatic scoring, free up teachers' time to focus on the analysis and interpretation of results. This allows for more detailed feedback on student performance. Recent advancements in e-assessment applications further support this by providing comprehensive reports that outline students' strengths and weaknesses, thus enhancing formative assessment (Enders, Gaschler, and Kubik 2021). Moving towards paperless language learning is not only environmentally friendly but also represents a modern and sophisticated approach to education. The integration of digital technology in teaching and learning facilitates adaptable and interactive learning experiences, paving the way for innovative and efficient educational practices in the future. This shift towards digital assessments promises to revolutionize the way we approach education, making it more efficient, personalized, and accessible.

In addition to these advantages, digital assessments foster a more engaging and interactive learning environment. They often incorporate multimedia elements such as videos, audio clips, and interactive exercises that cater to different learning styles, making the learning experience more dynamic and enjoyable. This can lead to increased student engagement and retention of information. Furthermore, digital platforms can offer instant feedback, allowing students to quickly understand their mistakes and learn from them in real time. This immediacy helps to reinforce learning and encourages a continuous improvement mindset. As technology continues to evolve, the potential for even more sophisticated and personalized learning experiences grows, promising to make education more effective and accessible for all students.

This study began with concerns about how the assessment of students' writing skills at HKBP Nommensen University, Pematangsiantar, was carried out. There were indications that the existing assessment methods might not be effective enough in measuring students' writing competence. The challenges faced included the limited tools and adequate facilities for assessment, as well as the ability of traditional assessments to provide detailed and constructive feedback to students. Therefore, it is important to evaluate and understand how the current assessment of writing skills is carried out and how these methods can be improved.

The second issue relates to the level of students' writing competence itself. There is a concern that students might not achieve the expected level of writing competence, which could have a negative impact on their future academic and professional performance. This study aims to identify the level of students' writing competence and the factors that influence it, and how more effective assessment

can support the development of students' writing skills. Challenges in this regard include providing appropriate assessment and useful feedback that can help students improve their writing skills.

These two issues highlight the importance of effective assessment and improvement of writing competence as part of a comprehensive language education. This study seeks to explore and provide solutions that can improve both aspects.

Based on above, the researcher formulates research question as follow:
1. How is assessment of writing skill English students at University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar?
2. How is the students' competency in writing skill at University of HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar?

Method

In this research, the researchers used a case study as a method. A case study is a research strategy that involve empirical investigations of contemporary phenomena in real life contexts using various sources of evidence, and very valuable when the boundaries between phenomena and contexts are blurred (Wen 2017). Case study method enables researchers to closely examine the data within a specific context (Zuhriyah and Pratolo 2020). It is conducted to investigate a condition or other phenomenon of which the result represented in a report. Therefore, this research calls analysis because it tries to analyze objectively about students' ability in writing procedure text. Vocabulary, mechanics, content, grammar and organization are the focus of the research.

The subject of the research was the second semester students of UHKBPNP which consisted of 25 students. Furthermore, the object of this research is the students' writing skill.

In this research, the researchers used observation as a method for data collection. The data analyzed based on the descriptive analysis. The steps which are done by the researcher in analyzed writing procedure text; the researchers formulated the result of the writing test to get the total score.

To determine the level or score of the best, the researchers were going to use the test specification theory. The criteria of the score can be seen in the table below:

Test Item	Composition Test	Criteria	Score	Kind of Test
Writing Recount Text	Content	the content of the sentence is conveyed according to context	20	E S S
	Organization	1. Orientation 2. Sequences of Events 3. Re-Orientation	20	A Y T
	Vocabulary	Affective word, idioms and word forms	20	E S T

In this research, the researchers used observation as a method for data collection. The data analyzed based on the descriptive analysis. The steps which are done by the researchers in analyzing writing procedure text; the researchers formulated the result of the writing test to get the total score by using this formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

m: The average the main score
N: Total number of the student
$\sum fx$: The total of obtain score

To get percentage the researcher used the formulation as below:

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

p: percentage
f: frequency
N: the number of students

Result

The research described how the assessment of writing skill English students in writing procedure text. The students writing have average ability in terms of content, grammar, and mechanics are average category in each aspect. It can be seen from the students" mean score was 78,36 or in an average category. Sometimes the students had problems in writing it. It is because in writing recount text, the students should be aware in using the schematic structure of recount text

including orientation, record of events, and reorientation. Besides, the students should apply the linguistic features of recount in their text, including specific participants, circumstance of time and place, first person, additive conjunction, material process, and past tense. So those three aspects are the problems of the students in writing recount text.

The results of student's writing skill could be seen from the mean of the student's score in content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics aspects.

Table 1.

Students' Score in Writing Procedure Text

No.	Students	Rating Score					Total Score
		C	O	V	L	M	
1	SS	18	15	15	16	14	78
2	BZ	18	15	14	16	14	77
3	LEM	15	14	18	17	13	77
4	FBT	16	15	14	16	17	78
5	ZG	17	13	16	16	17	79
6	RPN	17	15	14	17	16	79
7	YPH	18	14	15	12	16	75
8	SM	18	15	17	17	18	85
9	MM	14	16	17	14	16	77
10	EYS	17	18	14	15	14	78
11	FAS	19	13	14	15	13	74
12	FF	13	19	17	15	14	78
13	GDS	13	17	15	15	17	77
14	JOS	17	15	15	18	16	81
15	KS	17	15	16	14	15	77
16	MAH	18	16	17	15	16	82
17	MRA	17	15	16	16	17	81
18	NAR	14	16	17	15	14	76
19	NEB	16	17	15	13	17	78
20	NAP	19	16	14	16	16	81
21	NM	14	16	14	16	18	78
22	NS	16	13	15	18	17	79

23	PJS	18	16	14	15	17	80
24	RA	18	17	18	17	15	85
25	RAS	16	14	16	17	15	78
TOTAL		413	385	387	391	392	1968
MEAN SCORE		16.52	15.4	15.48	15.64	15.68	78.72

Based on the table above, the lowest score was 75, and the highest score was 85. There was 1 student who scored 74. Then, there was 1 student who scored 75. There was 1 student who scored 76. There were 5 students with a score of 77. There were 7 students with a score of 78. There were 3 students with a score of 79. There was 1 student with a score of 80. There were 3 students with a score of 81. There were 1 student with a score of 82. And lastly, there were 2 students who get a score of 85. The average for the scores is 78,72.

Table 2. Students' Score Percentage

Score	Level of mastery	Frequency	Percentage
91- 100	Excellent	0	0 %
81-90	Very good	7	24 %
71- 80	Average	18	76 %
61- 70	Poor	0	0%
Below 60	Very Poor	0	0 %
Total		25	100%

After correcting students written test, it can be stated that generally students skill in writing recount text is in average category. The mean score of the students was 78,72. It can be seen from number of the students who are in average category is the biggest one. There were 18 students (76%) got score 71-80 (average), and 7 students (24%) got 81-90 (very good).

Discussion

The vocabulary aspect in writing ability can be shown in some fragments, there are sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice and usage, word form mastery, and appropriate register (Razokovna, Ganiyevna, and ... 2022). The language use aspect is one of the scoring methods to assess students' work in writing skill. Language use contains the complicated constructions, agreement,

tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, and prepositions. There were many students experienced the low capability in language use. The researchers found there were many participants experienced mistakes in agreement, tense, articles, and prepositions. The average level of student was in 'good to average' by the dominant participants.

The rest of it experienced in the level of 'fair to poor'. The research described how the students' skill in writing procedure text. The students writing have average ability in terms of content, grammar, and mechanics are average category in each aspect. It can be seen from the students" mean score was 78,72 or in an average category. Sometimes the students had problems in writing it. It is because in writing procedure text, the students should be aware in using the schematic structure of procedure text including goals/purposes, materials/tools, and methods/steps. Besides, the students should apply the linguistic features of procedure in their text, including specific participants, circumstance of time and place, first person, additive conjunction, material process, and past tense. So those three aspects are the problems of the students in writing procedure text.

Conclusion

According to the discussion above, the difficulties encountered when writing procedure text are as follows: first, when writing the procedure text's content, students encountered difficulties determining the appropriate content and providing an insufficient explanation of detail. Second, the students are unable to develop their ideas and have a limited understanding of the subject being discussed. As a result, they are unable to adequately describe the object. Thirdly, they struggle with the simple past tense. Fourth, students struggle with selecting appropriate vocabulary when writing procedure text. Finally, they made an error in their mechanics because they misspelt words and were unsure of proper punctuation.

Regarding this research's result and conclusion, the researchers would like to suggest the English researchers give a deeper and clear explanation about the procedure text, especially in generic structure. In this case, the researchers can give brainstorm about the procedure text before giving them the task. Therefore, the students can build their idea related to the topic in writing procedure text. Next, the researcher is suggested to stimulate and give motivation to students to improve their vocabulary knowledge. For the next researcher, the last is important to research different aspects of English procedure text that were not discussed in this research.

References

Bearman, Margaret, Juuso Henrik Nieminen, and Rola Ajjawi. 2023. "Designing Assessment in a Digital World: An Organising Framework." *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 48(3):291–304.

Biju, Liyan, Navrachana Education Society, and Vijayakumar Selvaraj. 2023. "Peer Assessment and Evaluation Tools : Impact on Writing Skills Development in Online Language Learning - A Review of Recent Studies Harvest : An International Multidisciplinary and Multilingual Research Journal." (May):2–4.

Cleveland, Richard E. 2018. "Using Digital Portfolios: Reflection, Assessment & Employment." *TechTrends* 62(3):276–85. doi: 10.1007/s11528-018-0262-0.

Dwiyanti, Kadek Erlita, and Ni Komang Arie Suwastini. 2021. "Assessment for Writing Skills in Online Learning." *Lingua Scientia* 28(1):8–19. doi: 10.23887/ls.v28i1.29069.

Enders, Natalie, Robert Gaschler, and Veit Kubik. 2021. "Online Quizzes with Closed Questions in Formal Assessment: How Elaborate Feedback Can Promote Learning." *Psychology Learning and Teaching* 20(1):91–106. doi: 10.1177/1475725720971205.

Furwana, D., & Syam, A. T. (2019). Improving Students' Writing Skill on Descriptive Text By Estafet Strategy of the Eleventh Year Students of SMA 4 Palopo. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature, 7*(1).

Ginting, Donny Adiatmana, and M. Zaim. 2023. "Adopting Contextual Teaching and Learning Model in Creative Writing." 4(1):16–30.

Jufri, Jufri. 2016. "Teaching Speaking and Writing At Junior and Senior High Schools As Demanded By Curriculum 2013." *Lingua Didaktika: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Pembelajaran Bahasa* 10(1):60. doi: 10.24036/ld.v10i1.6329.

Niesya Ulul Azmi, N. (2021). *Error Analysis On Report Text Writing At The Fourth Semester Students English Study Program Of Iain Palopo* (Doctoral dissertation, Institut agama islam Negeri (IAIN Palopo)).

Masruddin, M., & Nasriandi, N. (2022). Kesalahan Leksikal dan Sintaksis yang Dilakukan Siswa SMP dalam Menulis Teks Deskriptif. *IDEAS: Jurnal Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, Linguistik dan Sastra , 10* (1), 1094-1100.

Masruddin, M., Furwana, D., & Jafar, A. (2021). The Efficacy of Think Talk Write Strategy in Improving Writing Skill for Teenagers at Batu Walenrang Palopo. *FOSTER: Journal of English Language Teaching, 2*(1), 252-260.

Mai, Duong Thu. 2019. "A Review of Theories and Research Into Second Language

Writing Assessment Criteria." *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies* 35(3). doi: 10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4371.

Marpaung, F. D. N., D. A. Ginting, and … 2023. "The Implementation of Evaluation and Assessment of Language Learning in Merdeka Curriculum at Vocational Schools." *… Seall Journal* 4(2):22–33.

Muck, Kátia, and Bill Cope. 2021. "A Proposal of Formative Assessment in EFL Teaching and Learning: Online Writing and Peer-Review Activities." *Ilha Do Desterro* 74(3):323–49. doi: 10.5007/2175-8026.2021.E80709.

Razokovna, O. M., H. N. Ganiyevna, and … 2022. "English Learning And Vocabulary Growing Methods." *Journal of Positive …* 6(4):10628–32.

Wen, Ru. 2017. "Reflections on the Innovation of College English Teaching Methods in the New Media Environment." 101(Icemct):1193–97. doi: 10.2991/icemct-17.2017.259.

Zuhriyah, Siti, and Bambang Widi Pratolo. 2020. "Exploring Students' Views in the Use of Quizizz as an Assessment Tool in English as a Foreign Language (Efl) Class." *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 8(11):5312–17. doi: 10.13189/ujer.2020.081132.