

DESIGNING AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WRITING SKILL AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Assessing writing is one of the difficulties most English teachers face. Compared to other English skills, writing is generally regarded as the most complicated skill. The media for assessing writing should preferably cover several principles to face this challenge, one of which is authenticity. Authentic assessment is a form of assessment that connects learners to actual life and promotes the fair exploration of three domains. The main objective of this research is to design authentic assessment model for assessing writing skill at junior high school students. This research utilized Research and Development approach which carried out the first years students of Islamic Junior High school (MTsN) Batusangkar and two English teachers as participants. In gaining data, researcher used questionnaire and structured interview. The questionnaire consisted of 30 question related to the authentic assessment. In order to dig deep data related to writing assessment for junior high school students, researchers used unstructured questions. The finding revealed that the personal report is ideally an effective authentic evaluation model for assessing students' writing skills, especially for junior high school students.

Keyword: *Authentic assessment, junior high school students, writing skill*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is believed to be EFL's most dynamic skill since it is a productive skill that needs a significant degree of accuracy. Hyland (2003) maintains that many language teachers believe that writing is the most difficult language skills to acquire as opposed to other language skills such as reading, speaking and listening. Why is it difficult to teach writing? This question may buzz in the minds of teachers over and over. One potential response is that writing can incorporate multiple knowledge of the English language. In order to write a good paragraph, the learner must read more resources and try to understand the idea. A writer must be good at mastering grammar or structure, as a good writer expresses a grammatically correct definition, and the interpretation is logically and smoothly picked up by the reader. As explained in the previous paragraph, asking students to write a sentence is not a piece of cake. They need more initiative and an efficient model. Teachers should find the easiest and most effective way to teach students.

It is also very difficult, in relation with the previous explanation, to analyze the writing. Teachers should provide students with a proper model that encourages students to compose the sentence and in a paragraph of their own accord. Brown and Abeywickrama (2004:218) advocate writing assessment is not an easy task. The criteria and objective of the writing must be clearly specified by the tester or the assessor. Simply put, the instructor should create a variety of styles of writing tests that match students' knowledge and experience.

Many scholars have sought to find ways to test the writing of junior high school students, one of which is an authentic assessment model. This form of assessment addresses the needs of students and plays a relevant role for the learner. It also encompasses three essential areas, namely cognitive, emotional and psychomotor. In a wider term, there is a balance to improve cognitive and other fields, allowing more students the ability to explore their brain, actions and willingness at once. This concept relates to the purpose of assessment as described in *Permendikbud* (Regulation of education and culture ministry) No. 23 of 2016, assessment is the method of collecting information or data on student achievement in the competence of behaviors, knowledge and skills that are systematically carried out in the learning process.

Authentic assessments have been conducted by several researches in assessing English language in several places. First of all, Fook and Sindhu (2010) evaluate the implementation of an authentic higher education evaluation in Malaysia. The finding showed that alternative and authentic assessment more acceptances from students. Then, Natalia, Asib and Kristina (2018) did research on “The Application of Authentic Assessment for Students Writing Skill” for senior high school students. The results revealed that an authentic assessment for writing skills has been carried out by the teacher. The teachers used a range of methods and tools to apply authentic evaluation to students' writing skills.

The present study was aimed at developing an authentic assessment model for the evaluation of the writing skills of junior high school students. Researcher developed an authentic assessment that could cover three areas at once: cognitive, emotional and psychomotor. Students may explore their experience, knowledge and willingness to follow this model.

Authentic assessment and the purposes

Authentic assessment is a multi-form assessment covering three facets, such as affective, psychomotor and cognitive. Some experts have reiterated their comments in a variety of ways. O'Malley and Pierce (1996:4) describe authentic assessment as an appraisal process involving multiple types of performance measurement representing student learning success, motivation and attitudes towards instruction-relevant activities.

Compared to other forms of assessment, there are three basic attributes of authentic assessment: cognitive growth, psychomotor motivation, and affective aspect enhancement. First of all, authentic assessment offers students a great opportunity to improve their knowledge and expertise during classroom activities and everyday life. This form of evaluation evokes the ability to exercise their experience and insight into the material/subject presented. In order to advance their progress, they have to try something new and different. It also helps students to find their own way of modifying their habits and opinions. This suggests, during classroom activities, there is substantial change.

Almost in similar tone, Choate and Evans (1992:9) confirm the aim of authentic assessment as follows: first, authentic assessment offers students several opportunities to perform their success or function. There are several tests that can be used to evaluate the knowledge of students. Second, there's an instructional time. When authentic assessment is incorporated in training, less precious teaching time is stolen for assessment.

In more detail concept, Wiggins (1998) advocates that an assignment is authentic if it comprised ample features as following:

Table. 1. Features of Authentic Assessment

Features	Description
(a) Being realistic	The assessment is possible to be conducted and it reveals students performance and ability
(b) Narrating innovation and judgment	The assessment is full of innovation that accommodates students' need and enhances the students creativity to show up their skill
(c) Performing the subject	The assessment facilitates student to "do" the subject or practice the material given. Students get opportunity to practice their work
(d) Simulating the context in personal life	The assessment replicates or simulates the contexts in which adults are "tested" in the workplace or daily life
(e) Sounding effective and efficient	The assessment assesses the student's ability to efficiently and effectively use a repertoire of knowledge and skills to negotiate a complex task
(f) Having myriad time for practicing and feedback	The assessment allows appropriate opportunities to rehearse, practice, consult resources, and get feedback on and refine performances and products.

Simply put, six of the above authentic assessment features illuminate the position of students when asked to conduct authentic assessment. The key is "student-centered," where teachers have less opportunity to dominate the activities of the classroom. Students have to practice their ability in a sense of real life that is largely artificial society. Students become aware of their strengths and weaknesses by doing so. Authentic activities thus serve as an efficient instrument for evaluating critical thinking by students, complex problem solving, and creativity and innovation. Authentic tasks seek various evidence of student performance over time and the causes or theories for a performance's success and failure. Students have ample time allocating to perform their ability and provide a supportive feedback in order to improve their weaknesses.

According to Shepard (2000) the aim of authentic assessment is to give students enough opportunity to participate in authentic tasks in order to build, use and broaden their skills, higher-order thought, and other competencies of the 21st century. Authentic activities are often performance-based and involve challenging and ill-structured issues in a reformed curriculum vision that are well matched with the comprehensive and higher-order learning goals.

Teaching writing for Junior High School

BNSP (2006) points out in more detail the purpose of teaching English to junior high school students: (a) to improve the skills of oral and written communication at the practical level. (b) to recognize the essence and value of English in enhancing the competitiveness of the nation in the global community.

(c) to improve students' understanding of the relationship between language and culture.

As regulated by the Indonesian National Standard, the Indonesian government has sponsored teaching and learning activities. This suggests that English teaching is part of an attempt to advance education. BNSP has prioritized the creation of information for both oral and written English students. For junior high school students, the criteria are based on realistic dimensions, global community competitiveness and language and culture relationships.

English has two main strengths, as it is often believed, speaking and writing. Speaking practice used in classroom message, also for formal discussion as in international lecture, when delivered. Just a few scholars or students are even able to apply it to teachers, the majority is left behind. In comparison, most English teaching activities placed writing as the core of teaching especially for EFL. Students demanded that written language be used.

Most of students are more familiar writing in comparison with the speaking. Furthermore, the purpose of acknowledging English for junior high school level is to promote competitiveness of global community among EFL country. As widely known, English is one of the international languages that learned by many countries for myriad reasons. One of them is as a tool for winning global competition in many sectors: economics, education, culture, politics and social. Last, English is also a tool for language and culture transfer. Learning English means learning the culture, how their traditions are loved and how their social lives are created. Students therefore have a better chance of acculturating and filtering their information in everyday life.

In addition, *Depdiknas* (2006) notes that the teaching of English at junior high school covers the following: (1) discourse competence, (2) competence in understanding and generating various short functional and monologues, and (3) linguistic competence (use of grammar, vocabulary, phonology and written structure). Discourse competence is usually a term referring to the ability to understand and express oneself in a given language. Then, students are also asked to know short functional text and monologue dialogue. In order to conduct oral and written discussions, linguistic competencies are linked to the use of language through the expression and interpretation of concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts, and opinions. Linguistics competence can be found in social context of language use in the society.

Assessing Writing

Like other skills, writing plays an important role in teaching and learning English. In reality, writing assessment is very different from reading or speaking assessment. There are several components of writing evaluation, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar and clarification. Each part has a certain function that makes it easy and concise for everyone to write. Ideally, some of the components must be learned by someone when writing English. Some experts share their opinion on the writing components that should be addressed by writer when he/se assesses writing.

First of all, Nation (2009:141) points out five essential components of writing, such as: vocabulary richness, mechanics (spelling and punctuation), grammatical precision and complexity, organization and continuity, and the substance of writing.

The richness of vocabulary in writing is a must for the writers. Since, adequate vocabulary may be used to construct strong sentences. Vocabulary leads the writer to know the sound of the writer in writing. Good writing must provide the reader with specific facts, one of the ways in which sufficient vocabulary is used. Mechanics is the next significant point in writing. Effective writing has to have proper spelling and punctuation

Spelling and punctuation are two essential elements that can contribute to a reader's comprehension of a piece of writing. Putting wrong spelling and punctuation contributes to misinterpretation. Having good spelling and punctuation skills helps writers to get their message or story to their readers in a straightforward and understandable way. It is important to know the rules of spelling and punctuation as well as how to use them properly. Grammar is a crucial point in writing that can help the reader to understand the text message well. Every sentence requires proper grammar; it means that the entire text is covered in grammar. Others consider strong grammar to be a symbol of intelligence and education. Don't allow outsiders to build a negative perception of writing based on weak writing skills.

Brown (2001) also reported that there are five significant components of writing. They are content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. The content relates to the point that has been written by the author. It plays a crucial role in the sharing of the concept, language, feeling and opinion that the author has encountered. Organization reports on the process of organizing the materials in writing includes coherence, order of priority, general precision, special to the general order, chronological.

Vocabulary implies the choice of the word used by the writer when writing. Choice of words has an impact number on someone's style or tone. It shows the degree of the author and also acknowledges the classification of the author's work. Language use deals with the use of grammar or structure when writing a passage or a sentence. Mechanics of writing deals with capitalization, spelling, and punctuation. Hughes (2003: 83) indicates that writing evaluation includes three issues. First of all, writing assignments should be set to be properly reflective of the variety of tasks that we would expect students to be able to undertake. Secondly, the tasks should lead to writing that is genuinely reflective of students' ability to write. Thirdly, samples of writing can be scored correctly

METHODOLOGY

The type of this research was *Research and Development*. Researcher utilized ADDIE model which is developed by Reiser and Mollenda (1990). The samples of this study were 32 students of Islamic Junior High School student at Batusangkar and 2 English teachers. Researcher used questionnaire and interview to obtain the data. Sukmadinata (2006:164) claims developmental research is a research that concerns to process or phase in designing new product or developing previous one. The measures or method are started by analyzing needs analysis, then researching the problem and seeking the solution. Researched conducted five steps to obtain the product namely: (1) conducting a needs analysis on students, (2) designing authentic assessment for writing skill, (3) developing authentic assessment for writing skill, (4) asking for expert opinion about the validity of

authentic assessment for writing and (5) checking the feasibility of the assessment model for writing skill.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

After conducting several steps, researcher had developed the model of authentic assessment for writing skill. This model has been validated by experts and match to be applied for assessing writing especially for junior high school level. The finding states several items as can be seen in the following explanation.

(a) The concept of personal report

Personal report is a kind of practice that evokes students to improve their ability to write about themselves. Students are exploring their personal knowledge about their writing idea that is close their daily life simply. They could say their families, hobby, regular activity, favorite sport, favorite movies, and a lot of other personal stuff. This practice provides a positive contribution to their ability to compose a sentence.

(b) The way of scoring Personal Report

Score the rubric ultimately lets the instructor analyze the work of the students. The score section consists of several aspects where each aspect has its own score criteria. On this occasion, the score heading for a personal report is based on the analytical score heading. On this occasion, teachers will offer a comprehensive score on student writing. Simply put, the complete score headings for writing a personal report can be described as follows:

Table. 2. Scoring Rubric for Writing Personal Report

No	Aspect	Description	Grade
1	Vocabulary	Students uses appropriate vocabulary that related to personal information	4
		Students uses minor inappropriate vocabulary that related to the personal information	3
		Students uses some inappropriate vocabulary that related to the personal information	2
		Students uses inappropriate vocabulary that related to the personal information	1
2	Mechanics	Students write correct punctuation and spelling	4
		Students write minor mistake in punctuation and spelling	3
		Students write some mistakes in punctuation and spelling	2
		Students write incorrect punctuation and spelling	1
3	Grammar	Students use correct grammar	4
		Students make minor mistake in grammar	3
		Students make some mistakes in grammar	2
		Students use incorrect grammar	1
4	Content	Students write the personal information correctly and clearly	4
		Students write down the personal information with minor mistake	3

	Students write down the personal information with some mistake	2
	Students write the personal information incorrectly	1

The final score is calculated by counting the score from each element, which is the score obtained. The total score of each aspect is divided with the highest score (16) and then multiplied by 100. The highest score is extracted from the number of aspect (4) multiples by the highest score for each item (4). In short, the final score can be shown as follows:

Table.2. Score rank conversion

Range	Grade
85-100	A = Excellent
75-84	B = Very Good
55-74	C = Fair
0-54	D = Poor

(c). Procedure to conduct Personal Report

Personal report is a type of authentic assessment that helps students to improve their ability to write information about themselves. They should write down the details they have on a sheet of paper. The paper was designed by teachers to make it simpler and more appealing for students. Teachers give the students a piece of paper (form) and then get them to write about themselves in the available space. Students should write down the details in the available space.

Personal Report	
Grade	: I Junior High School
Skill	: Writing
Objective	: Students are able to write down simple personal report about themselves

Direction

1. Look at the form below
2. Read the heading information on the box below
3. Write down your personal information in the available space

<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">All about me</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">My birthday is</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">My family</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> </div>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">My name:</p> <p>_____</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">My favorite things are:</p> <p>Color : _____</p> <p>Book : _____</p> <p>Subject: _____</p> <p>Hobby: _____</p> <p>Place to visit: _____</p> <p>Food: _____</p> <p>Drink: _____</p> <p>Sport: _____</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">My activity on holiday:</p> <p>Morning: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>afternoon : _____</p> <p>_____</p> </div>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>I want to be a:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Because:</p> </div>		

CONCLUSION

In order to improve the writing abilities of students, authentic evaluation models are extremely essential for students. The conventional way this paradigm shifts becomes the newest one where teachers talk less and students speak more. In addition, authentic assessment allows students to face the experience of real life and the related evaluation context. Teachers set up tests that are closely linked to the life experience of students, making it easier for them to practice writing.

This model of authentic assessment is targeted at junior high school students. Authentic assessment was properly planned by the researcher at this stage, junior high school, in order to inspire students to write communicatively and creatively. Teachers must be more responsible for ongoing learning on the product in order to implement the established product, which is an authentic assessment model for writing. Personal report is a way of elaborating students' writing skill. The students feel free to explore their expression in a piece of paper, develop their creativity and advance their willingness.

In assessing writing, there are numerous advantages of using personal report: sense of real life, imaginative and rational. In the first concept, the personal report adopts a real assessment sense that definitely correlated the everyday lives of students. For example, when they take baths, study and go to bed, students also disclose their everyday activities to family members. This model assumes that students will burst their imagination in writing, such as everyday activity, preference for food choices, school time schedule, etc.

It gives students the willingness to be able to do so without paying any attention to the complete guidance of teachers. On this occasion, students have more time to explore themselves, and teachers have less time to master teaching and learning practices. Students may have more confidence when asked to perform individually. In the last issue, this form of authentic assessment model enables students to exercise a proportion of cognitive, emotional and psychomotor skills equally. Unlike other tests, such as a paper test that focuses on cognitive domains, personal reports make it easier for students to advance their cognitive memorization, improve their willingness or effort, and increase their limitless imagination.

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