



A Study Of Students' Assessment In Writing Skills Of The English Language

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Abstract:

Assessment and evaluation is obligated of the subject in this semester of English Department Tuanku Tambusai Riau. This research addresses to evaluate and assess the students' competency in writing skills at Second semester level in the English Language that focusing five major content areas: They are critical response to a text; explanation and support of ideas; organization of a response that has a clear beginning, middle, and two elements of language use: sentence construction and word choice, and grammar, usage, and mechanics. The model of assessment is CUNY assessment in writing that is a measures a student's ability to do college-level writing. The model is to determine their placement into English composition, or developmental courses. The purpose of the research is to description assessment and evaluation writing skill and the result of the research will hope giving the new model of learning in assessment in writing skill.

Abstrak:

Penilaian dan evaluasi wajib dalam Pembelajaran Menulis semester ini di lingkungan Jurusan Bahasa Inggris Tuanku Tambusai Riau. Penelitian ini untuk mengevaluasi dan menilai kompetensi siswa dalam keterampilan menulis pada tingkat semester kedua dalam bahasa Inggris yang memfokuskan lima bidang konten utama: Tanggapan kritis terhadap teks; penjelasan dan dukungan dari ide-ide; organisasi respon yang memiliki awal yang jelas, tengah, dan dua elemen penggunaan bahasa: konstruksi kalimat dan pilihan kata, dan tata bahasa, penggunaan, dan mekanik. Model penilaian adalah penilaian CUNY secara tertulis yang merupakan langkah kemampuan siswa untuk melakukan penulisan tingkat perguruan tinggi. Model ini untuk menentukan penempatan mereka ke dalam komposisi bahasa Inggris, atau perkembangan menulis bahasa inggris. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan penilaian dalam menulis bahasa inggris dan hasil penelitian diharapkan memberikan model baru dalam pembelajaran keterampilan menulis.

Key Words: Writing Skills, CUNY Assessment

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Introduction

Background of the problem

The four Basic English language skills are divided into two categories such as receptive skills and productive skills. Reading and listening are considered receptive skills whereas speaking and writing are known as productive skills. Writing is one of the four basic skills. The students start learning to communicate through written form as they begin to interact with others at collage level. The writing skill is more complicated than that of other language skills. Even sometimes a native speaker of the English language may experience complication in a tricky situation. Basically the writing skill requires a well-structured way of the presentation of thoughts in an organized and planned way (Braine & Yorozu, 1998).

In the learning of writing that we found of writing assessment. The writing assessment that the process of collecting, analyzing and recording information about student progress towards achievement of syllabus outcomes. An important purpose of assessment is to design appropriate learning programs for all students. The principles below underpin effective assessment. Assessment is integral to teaching and learning. It should be based on learning outcomes that specify what students know, understand and are able to do with language. A variety of assessment strategies and contexts should be used to give students opportunities to demonstrate, in an authentic manner, what they know and understand about language as well as what they can do. Assessment procedures should relate to the knowledge and skills that are taught within the school program, and to the syllabus outcomes.

I propose here to set out the assumptions, perspectives, and demands of several of the principal interest groups concerned with writing assessment. I hope this research can promote a respectful conversation among them and thus foster orderly progress in writing assessment, which has reflected political power struggles and educational faddism as much as the findings of research over the last several decades.

Certainly, the key problem in writing assessment is beyond specific issues, problems, or technical concerns and is one the new way to resolve: Which method will accumulate the power to *define*

the issues and problems of writing assessment, what are different perspectives on assessment but also have developed different definitions of the purposes of writing.

For example: Writing teachers concerned about individual student growth and the writing process as a means of discovery are at odds with state and local governing bodies interested in reducing costs and identifying minimally proficient individuals and the programs which produce them.

I want to try a method of the writing assessment that The CUNY assessment in writing. The CUNY assessment is a standardized writing test that measures a student's ability to do college-level writing in English. Entering first-year students take the test to determine their placement into English composition, ESL, or developmental courses. The term "standardized test" means that the test is given to all test takers in the same manner and under the same conditions; it is scored by trained readers using "standard" rules or criteria.

Formulation of the Problem

1. What is the Assessment in writing skill in TEFL?
2. What is the model Assessment in writing skill in TEFL?
3. How the Analysis Assessment writing skill in TEFL?

The Benefit of the Mini Research.

Hopefully, after conducting this mini research, the writer would like to get the following contributions as the significance of this study:

1. The mini research was given significant contribution to the student in writing.
2. The mini researcher expects that this research can also give ideas to other English teacher.

Discussion

What is the Assessment in writing skill in TEFL?

Assessment is the systematic collection of data to monitor the success of a program or course in achieving intended learning outcomes (ILOs) for students. Assessment is used to determine: What students have learned (outcome), The way they learned the material (process), Their approach to learning before, during, or after the program or course.

You can assess students before instruction to get a baseline of what students know (for example, by administering a pretest). During instruction, assessment can be used to determine what students are learning so you can adjust your teaching, if needed. Quizzes or mud cards, which ask students to identify the “muddiest point” that remains for them after the class, are two methods of this kind of “formative assessment.” After instruction, you can use assessment for two purposes: (1) to determine if there has been a change in knowledge (final exams can be used for “summative assessment”); and (2) to provide you with information to revise the class or program.

Their concern is understandable, for writing assessment not only sets out to measure the effectiveness of their work but actually defines to a considerable extent the content of their work; teachers speak disparagingly of “teaching to the test,” but in fact they have no choice but to do so. Teachers feel the power of assessment even more keenly, because they often have little influence over assessment criteria, instruments, or scoring. Many of those teachers are aware that composition theory has been developing at a rapid pace recently and that writing assessment has not kept up; they also tend to see themselves as powerless, overworked, and underappreciated by their institutions and society at large.

The ability to write something in a productive way is an indicator of success during the learning process (Geiser & Studly, 2001). Academic achievement is considered as a token of a good indicator in language learning process (Benjamin & Chun, 2003) The productive writing skill is considered a cognitive challenge, because it helps to assess language competency, recalling capability and thinking ability. It demands to recall information from long-term memory (Kellogg, Olive, & Pilot, 2001). Moreover, the ability of productive writing requires sound ability of thinking on comprehensible matters (Nickerson, Perkins, & Smith, 1985).

In the past, most of the attention was paid to marks/grades on student work. Today, there is increased focus on on-going, descriptive feedback that teachers give to students so that students can clearly understand what they need to do to improve. Educators recognize that individual

students learn differently, and that regular feedback and “coaching” during the teaching-learning process can help each student to both improve the work at hand and to grow as an independent, self-assessing learner for life. While the final mark/grade on a report is important, it is provided at the end of the learning cycle when students have had opportunities to practise and to provide multiple demonstrations of learning.

Advanced writing skill is one of the basic requirements for better academic performance as well as other activities related to writing presentation (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2002). Writing is the one of the basic skills of the English language. It is generally considered one of the most difficult that other skills for foreign language students. Even native speakers feel difficulty in showing a good command of writing. (Johnstone, Ashbaugh, & Warfield, 2002). The ESL teachers include writing skills in the syllabus because this is an essential element for students' academic success. (Kellogg, 2008) because writing helps to i) reinforce the grammatical structure, ii) enhance the students' vocabulary, iii) and assist other language skills such as reading, listening and speaking.

When teachers are forced-as they often are-to choose between teaching to an inappropriate institutional test and helping their students learn how to write, they are bound to consider evaluation as an intrusion into the classroom. But writing teachers also experience considerable internal conflict because they probably do more evaluation of student work than anyone else on the faculty.

What is the model Assessment in writing skill in TEFL?

Creating Assignments, Here are some general suggestions and questions to consider when creating assignments. There are also many other resources in print and on the web that provide examples of interesting, discipline-specific assignment ideas.

Consider your learning objectives, What do you want students to learn in your course? What could they do that would show you that they have learned it? To determine assignments that truly serve your course objectives, it is useful to write out your objectives in this form: I want my students to be able

to use active, measurable verbs as you complete that sentence (e.g., compare theories, discuss ramifications, recommend strategies), and your learning objectives will point you towards suitable assignments.

Design assignments that are interesting and challenging.

This is the fun side of assignment design. Consider how to focus students' thinking in ways that are creative, challenging, and motivating. Think beyond the conventional assignment type! For example, one American historian requires students to write diary entries for a hypothetical Nebraska farmwoman in the 1890s. By specifying that students' diary entries must demonstrate the breadth of their historical knowledge (e.g., gender, economics, technology, diet, family structure), the instructor gets students to exercise their imaginations while also accomplishing the learning objectives of the course (Walvoord & Anderson, 1989, p. 25).

After creating your assignments, go back to your learning objectives and make sure there is still a good match between what you want students to learn and what you are asking them to do. If you find a mismatch, you will need to adjust either the assignments or the learning objectives. For instance, if your goal is for students to be able to analyze and evaluate texts, but your assignments only ask them to summarize texts, you would need to add an analytical and evaluative dimension to some assignments or rethink your learning objectives.

The creating of assessment in writing is CUNY assessment writing that asks you to write an essay in response to a reading passage you are given and to show competency in five categories. The five categories, listed here, are discussed in depth starting on page 3. They are (1) critical response to a text; (2) explanation and support of ideas; (3) organization of a response that has a clear beginning, middle, and end; and two elements of language use: (4) sentence construction and word choice, and (5) grammar, usage, and mechanics. The purpose of the CUNY is to assess your skills in these areas to see if they are consistent with the instructional goals of college-level writing courses, and to assess your readiness for introductory college courses.

The learning skills taught in first-year college courses are reflected in the CUNY, which assesses your ability to read, understand, and respond

to a passage of 250-300 words. In the test, you are asked to: firstly, identify key ideas within the reading passage, second, write a brief summary of the key ideas in the reading, third, demonstrate basic critical thinking in response to these key ideas, fourth, identify a key idea in the reading passage and present a clearly written response to that idea, five, write an essay that is well organized and shows connections between ideas, six, support ideas with relevant personal experience, readings, schoolwork, and/or other sources of information, the last, demonstrate competence in sentence construction, sentence variety, and word choice, demonstrate correct usage, grammar, and mechanics.

The CUNY assessment writing uses a "scoring rubric," which is a tool or method for scoring, to measure students' writing skills. The CUNY assessment writing scorers are guided by the rubric so that each scorer will use the same standards or criteria as other scorers in the five categories of writing that are being assessed.

Specify the purpose of the assignment

If students are unclear about the goals or purpose of the assignment, they may make unnecessary mistakes. For example, if students believe an assignment is focused on summarizing research as opposed to evaluating it, they may seriously miscalculate the task and put their energies in the wrong place. The same is true they think the goal of an economics problem set is to find the correct answer, rather than demonstrate a clear chain of economic reasoning. Consequently, it is important to make your objectives for the assignment clear to students. If you have specific parameters in mind for the assignment (e.g., length, size, formatting, citation conventions) you should be sure to specify them in your assignment description. Otherwise, students may misapply conventions and formats they learned in other courses that are not appropriate for yours.

For teachers, "assessment" is the process of gathering information that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the expectations of a particular grade, subject, or course. Assessment itself has three roles:

- Providing students with feedback about their work (known as assessment for learning)
- Helping students to set learning goals and to monitor their own progress (known as assessment as learning)

- Evaluating and reporting of progress in the form of grades or marks (known as assessment of learning).

How the Analysis Assessment writing skill in TEFL?

How Your Writing Is Evaluated

The CUNY assessment writing uses an analytic scoring guide, called a scoring rubric, to evaluate student writing samples. Each test is scored independently by two faculty raters and both raters assign scores in each of five grading categories.

The Five Scoring Categories

1. “Critical Response to the Writing Task and Text”: This category emphasizes your ability to complete the writing task and to demonstrate understanding of the main ideas in the reading text, using critical analysis, and integrating your own ideas and experiences to respond to the main ideas in the text.
2. “Development of Writer’s Ideas”: In this category you are evaluated on your ability to develop your ideas (for example, by using summary, narrative, or problem/solution) in a clear and organized way. Your response should include both general statements and specific details and examples. *Specific references to the text must be included with these details and examples.*
3. “Structure of the Response”: This category evaluates your ability to organize ideas into a cohesive essay that supports a central focus, or thesis. The structure of your essay is evaluated for evidence of logical connections between ideas and the use of transitions to convey these connections.
4. “Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice”: This category evaluates the degree to which you demonstrate sentence control and variety in sentence structure. This category also evaluates your ability to use appropriate vocabulary to make your ideas clear.
5. “Language Use: Grammar, Usage, Mechanics”: This category evaluates your ability to follow the conventions of standard American English language use in terms of grammar and mechanics, so that your meaning is clear.

Process for assessing writing achievement

Within a planned whole-school approach, teachers gather assessment information based on contributions from a variety of sources by, for

example: collecting samples of students’ writing, carefully selected over time, to provide evidence of progress; criteria for assessing writing need to cover the whole text, sentence level and word-level aspects of the text observing students’ behaviour and interacting with them as they engage in the processes of writing during modelled, guided and independent writing. analysing the student’s Basic Skills Test (BST) results using student self-assessment recorded on self-editing checklists, self monitoring sheets and questionnaires, conducting three-way conferences where the teacher, parent and student meet to discuss the outcomes achieved and address relevant issues. Discussing student progress with teaching staff (including ESL teachers, community language teachers and support staff) consulting with outside specialists; for example, speech pathologist.

Teachers analyse teaching and learning experiences that develop the skills, knowledge and understandings needed to achieve the writing outcomes towards which students are moving. Principles of effective instruction are adhered to. Teachers monitor and record students’ evidence of progress.

Calculating Your CUNY assessment Total Score

You should notice that the scoring rubric describes levels of performance in each of the scoring categories. You can get anywhere from 6 points from a rater for a very strong performance to 1 point for a very weak performance. Scores in the 1 & 2 point range identify weak responses to the assignment; scores in the 3 & 4 point range identify mid-level responses; scores in the 5 & 6 point range identify very good or superior responses.

Your response will receive a Weighted Total score on the CUNY assessment writing. Weighted Total scores are calculated by adding up the individual rater scores across the five scoring dimensions; however, scores in the three content dimensions – Critical Response, Development of Ideas, and Structure of Response – are weighted twice as much as those in the two language use dimensions – Sentence and Word Choice, and Grammar; and Usage and Mechanics. For example, if your response is rated 4 in each dimension by both raters, the total weighted score would be $2(4+4) + 2(4+4) + 2(4+4) + (4+4) + (4+4) = 64$.

A passing score on the CANY assessment writing is 56, which can be obtained by getting a combination of 3's and 4's in each of the scoring categories: $2(3+4) + 2(3+4) + 2(3+4) + (3+4) + (3+4) = 56$. Of course, there are other combinations of scores that will add up to a 56, but overall you should think of aiming your writing level at getting at least a 4 from at least one of the raters in each of the scoring categories and having no one give you a 2 in any category.

Here are some additional samples of score calculations on the new writing test:

Passing scores:

$$2(4+4) + 2(4+4) + 2(4+4) + (4+4) + (4+4) = 64$$

$$2(4+4) + 2(4+4) + 2(4+4) + (3+3) + (3+3) = 60$$

$$2(4+4) + 2(4+3) + 2(4+3) + (3+3) + (3+3) = 56$$

$$2(3+3) + 2(3+3) + 2(4+4) + (4+4) + (4+4) = 56$$

Failing scores:

$$2(3+3) + 2(3+3) + 2(3+3) + (3+3) + (3+3) = 48$$

$$2(2+2) + 2(2+2) + 2(3+3) + (3+3) + (3+3) = 40$$

The CUNY Reading Selection

One way to prepare for the test is to understand the types of readings used on the test. The reading passage that you will be asked to respond to will have the following characteristics: The text is 250-300 words in length.

Reading passages are at 10th to 12th grade reading level and appropriate for high school graduates. Topics are familiar and interesting to high school graduates, and they will come from general knowledge areas (for instance, sociology, psychology, technology, popular culture, etc.). Readings are clearly written, with the author's main idea placed early in the passage, so that you can better identify the writer's central point and write a response based on the text.

Readings come from the following sources: general interest magazines, newspaper articles, speeches, and excerpts of essays from academic anthologies. For example, *The Utne Reader*, *The New York Times*, *The Week* and *Slate.com* are good sources of engaging general interest articles. Reading passages will appear with a title and author's name. You are encouraged to refer to the author's last name and the title of the passage in your response.

Reading passages always appear with the following standard writing directions:

Read the passage above and write an essay responding to the ideas it presents. In your essay, be sure to summarize the passage in your own words, stating the author's most important ideas. Develop your essay by identifying one idea in the passage that you feel is especially significant, and explain its significance. Support your claims with evidence or examples drawn from what you have read, learned in school, and/or personally experienced.

Remember to review your essay and make any changes or corrections that are needed to help your reader follow your thinking. You will have 90 minutes to complete your essay.

How to Understand the CUNY assessment writing Directions

There are two parts to the CUNY Assessment Test in Writing. The first is the reading passage and the second, Writing Directions, follows the reading. The Writing Directions reflect the five categories of the scoring rubric, as illustrated below. (The Writing Directions are in quotation marks.)

"Read the passage above and write an essay responding to the ideas it presents." This sentence instructs you to respond directly to the reading passage and reminds you that your response must address the ideas presented in the text. "In your essay, be sure to summarize the passage in your own words, stating the author's most important ideas."

This direction focuses on your understanding of the reading passage, and your ability to demonstrate this understanding in an organized response, emphasizing the key ideas in the reading passage.

"Develop your essay by identifying one idea in the passage that you feel is especially significant, and explain its significance."

This direction instructs you to develop an organized piece of writing that focuses on a specific idea in the reading passage. You are free to choose any "significant idea" and develop your response to this idea by using one or more ways of organizing (for example, summarizing, analyzing, personal narrative, cause and effect, persuasion).

"Support your claims with evidence or examples drawn from what you have read, learned in school, and/or personally experienced."

Here you are reminded that the ideas you present in the essay must be supported with details, examples, or personal experiences. You may use supporting details from a variety of sources, but whatever you use should demonstrate some ability to combine supporting details and examples to discuss specific ideas from the reading passage. *You must always refer to ideas from/in the reading in your response.*

“Remember to review your essay and make any changes or corrections that will help your reader follow your thinking.” You are reminded that you must edit and proofread the response for clarity and correctness. “You will have 90 minutes to complete your essay.” You should be careful to manage your time so that you can complete your response.

Writing the CUNY Response

To be successful on this test, you need to understand some basic ideas about the CATW response.

The Nature of the Test

The CUNY Assessment in Writing is a text-based writing sample that reflects the kinds of writing done in introductory college-level courses. (“Text-based writing sample” simply means that you are writing a response to a passage you have read.) The CUNY assesses your readiness for writing in English in college composition courses and other introductory college-level courses.

Your Response Should ...

To prepare for the CUNY assessment, you should be aware of the required components of the response, as described in the scoring rubric. You should be able to: read and understand a short (250-300 words) reading passage written at the 10th to 12th grade reading level. identify the author’s main ideas—and important supporting ideas—in the reading passage. read and understand the writing directions that accompany the reading passage, and address all parts of the writing task.

Your response should:

Include a brief summary of the author’s main ideas and supporting ideas (two or three key points in the

reading). This summary can be written either at the beginning of your response to the reading passage or throughout your essay makes direct reference to ideas in the reading passage, either with direct quotes or **paraphrasing**. A organized in a clear and logical way, with appropriate use of transitions to connect **your ideas, supporting details, and examples**. demonstrate your ability to write an essay that has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Combine ideas from the reading passage with your own ideas about the text.

Demonstrate the ability to identify and address a *specific* idea in the reading passage that you feel is “significant” (it needn’t be the author’s main idea) and develop an essay in response to that idea, expanding through the use of explanation, supporting details, personal experience, and/or other reading you may have done. demonstrate the ability to write clear and varied sentences, and use vocabulary that clearly and effectively communicates your ideas. You should: manage your time during the exam period (90 minutes) to allow for proofreading and editing eck your response for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Strategies for Taking the CUNY Assessment in Writing

The CUNY is a 90-minute test that measures your ability to write a college-level essay. Keep in mind that this test focuses on the following criteria:

addressing all parts of the Writing Directions in an essay that summarizes the main ideas **in the reading passage**; discussing a significant idea from the reading passage in a clear and coherent essay; integrating references to specific ideas and details in the reading passage with your own **ideas about the text**; constructing a written response that has a clear beginning, middle and end; writing sentences that are constructed correctly and use correct word choices; understanding and using good grammar and mechanics to convey your ideas clearly.

When you take the test, you may find the following strategies helpful in planning how to use your time:

Reading: Spend about 20 minutes reading the passage and underlining significant ideas. You should decide which ideas in the reading you will use to write your summary.

Planning and Pre-Writing: Spend about 10 minutes planning and pre-writing. Your test booklet gives you two blank pages for planning notes or writing an outline. Briefly write down the key idea from the passage that you will develop in your response, along with some significant details and/or examples. Make a note about the order you might use to present your ideas most clearly and effectively. *The planning work you do on these pages will not be evaluated.*

Writing the Response: Spend about 50 minutes writing your response. Be sure to use the lined pages in your test booklet. Refer to your plan, or outline, and remember that the Writing Directions require you to include a summary of key ideas in the reading, select one idea and explain its significance, make specific references to the reading in your response, and develop your response with relevant details and examples, using standard edited American English.

Revising and Editing: When you have finished writing your response, spend about 10 minutes proofreading and editing your response, and making any necessary changes.

Summary CUNY Assessment in writing in TEFL

Given that nowadays writing skill is included in main standardised tests worldwide as well as nationwide, as writing assessment is employed as a part of performance assessment in classroom testing at high school level in Korea, English teachers are first expected to establish the construct of writing ability explicitly prior to devising other test-related aspects such as test specifications, tasks and scoring/grading schemes for the sake of validity of the testing. The definition of writing ability can be formed depending on teachers' own experience as teachers and philosophy of writing, taken into consideration characteristics of learners and aims of pedagogy in a given context. It may also be formed according to pedagogical approaches to the teaching of writing which each teacher adopts.

The first two scoring categories on the CUNY scoring rubric evaluate your ability to understand the reading passage, and to use your own ideas and experiences to write about specific ideas in the reading passage. You are required to make specific references to the reading passage in your CUNY assessment in writing response. Therefore, it is important that you know how to correctly refer to the text.

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