

Unpacking Writing Assessment Tasks for Junior High School Students: A Comprehensive Analysis

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Article History

Received: 02 June 2023

Reviewed: 28 June 2023

Accepted: 30 June 2023

Published: 10 July 2023

Keywords: analysis, assessment tasks, writing

Abstract: This research addresses the issue of using course books as the sole source for writing assessment tasks in junior high schools without considering students' diverse learning needs and capabilities. The study aims to identify and describe the assessment tasks employed by teachers to evaluate the writing skills of junior high school students and investigate students' perceptions of these tasks. A descriptive qualitative method was used, focusing on MTs Hidayatullah Bahaur in Central Kalimantan as the research setting. Two English teachers and ten students of Class VIII from MTs Hidayatullah Bahaur participated in the study. The data collection techniques included observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that the English teachers primarily used two categories of assessment tasks: imitative writing, encompassing handwriting, spelling, and punctuation tasks, and intensive writing, which involved grammatical transformation, picture cues, vocabulary assessment, ordering, short-answer, and sentence-completion tasks. Furthermore, interviews with student representatives indicated that the overall quality of the assessment tasks was satisfactory. However, students emphasized the importance of teachers actively explaining the task requirements, as understanding the tasks was crucial for successful completion. Consequently, this study highlights the significance of well-designed assessment tasks accompanied by clear explanations to ensure students' comprehension and accurate task execution.

INTRODUCTION

The lesson is typically concluded with some evaluation tasks in addition to teaching and learning activities to reflect on the day's lessons. This type of assessment in language learning aims to summarize what students have learned by the end of a class. On the other hand, formative assessment aims to evaluate students as they are "forming" their competencies (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2018). Multiple assessment tasks are used in language learning depending on the evaluated ability. It could be a hearing task involving information transfer, a speaking task including role-playing, a reading task involving scanning and skimming, and a

writing assignment involving paragraph creation. The students may now acquire all the language abilities simultaneously thanks to integrating all language skills into each lesson according to a specific theme.

According to the learning objectives, all language abilities are intended to advance. However, depending on the student's educational background, some skills receive more attention than others. Writing proficiency is introduced in junior high school in accordance with the 2013 curriculum's framework of learning materials, which mainly consists of several forms of text, including transactional and interpersonal conversation text, descriptive text, recount text, and report text. It is clear why this writing ability has been prioritized since junior high school because there are more types of texts to master at the next high school level. Additionally, the college level demands them to have the skills to produce scientific writing in the form of papers, journals, theses, etc.

Currently, teachers are not required to create their instructional materials because all necessary materials are already contained in the course book that the school provides. Instead, teachers only need to arrange learning activities connected to the course book's materials. For instance, in an English course book, everything required to teach is mostly provided, from the exercises and assessment assignments to the learning resources and activities. Some course books offer resources already categorized according to language abilities, including conversation, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, all teachers require is knowledge of the course book's contents and instructions on presenting it to the students.

The assessment job is a crucial element of evaluations. A specific action or cue intended to elicit a response from the person being assessed is referred to as an assessment task. Writing-related assessment assignments are designed to gauge students' writing abilities, such as speaking clearly, applying acceptable language, and expressing ideas logically.

Writing assessment exercises have a variety of uses in the classroom. They provide feedback to help students improve their writing skills and gauge their ability in written expression and comprehension of particular writing genres or styles. Students are frequently required to produce written compositions, essays, or other types of written work as part of these assignments to exhibit their critical thinking, organization, and originality. It emphasizes the necessity of a thorough evaluation to raise the standard, reliability, and effectiveness of writing assessment assignments, thereby boosting students' writing abilities and academic results.

A junior high school in Bahaur, Central Kalimantan, was discovered to have an issue with the teaching and learning process due to using course books for language instruction. Particularly when it comes to writing assessments, teachers simply take into account the assessment tasks included in the course book when evaluating students' writing skills; they do not take into account the student's learning needs and capacities to understand the contents. Teachers can employ a variety of writing evaluation activities to judge their students' writing talents following their capacities. The right kind of assessment tasks can assist teachers in forming students' abilities in line with learning objectives, resulting in learning results that are more optimal than planned.

The current study's strength is its emphasis on offering a thorough analysis particularly suited to writing assessment assignments for junior high school students. For kids in junior high school, the analysis is intended. Concentrating on this particular age range, it recognizes the special traits, skills, and difficulties these kids encounter when taking writing examinations. It also implies that the analysis probes into the complexities of the jobs, dissecting them into their component elements, and goes beyond a cursory overview. This strategy indicates a dedication to offering a thorough grasp of the tasks. Additionally, it suggests that the assessment tasks are carefully evaluated, considering factors such as work requirements, evaluation criteria, writing tactics, and procedures. This comprehensive approach offers a detailed and holistic view of the writing assessment tasks for junior high school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Nature of Writing

Writing is the one language ability that teachers and students find the most challenging to concentrate on since it requires extra work (Harmer, 2015). On the other hand, whenever a teacher and student interact during the learning process, listening and speaking occur simultaneously. Reading is included in the majority of English learning resources used in instruction at all educational levels. Due to its intricacy, writing is less common than other abilities covered in the learning materials.

The fact that humans do not automatically acquire writing ability from birth, even in their original language, is more evidence of the complexity of writing ability. Since early childhood, someone else must have taught you how to write (Miftah, 2015). This is evident from the actual practice at the elementary school level, where pupils are still unable to express any thoughts in writing. They could seem challenging to read, but they can begin learning word by word until

they can comprehend a sentence or paragraph. As a result, both the students who learn and the teachers who teach in the classroom must put in a lot of work to help their students learn to write. Compared to spoken text, hundreds of different sorts of written texts are available today (Brown & Lee, 2015). Written texts are part of the junior and senior high school curricula in Indonesia's educational system. The 2013 curriculum specifies that various written texts, including descriptive, recount, and report texts, are taught to students, particularly in junior high school.

Assessment Tasks

Brown and Abeywickrama (2018) describe assessment in educational practice as a continuous process that incorporates a variety of methodological strategies to evaluate learners' levels of certain traits. It might be used to assess every student's participation in the teaching and learning process, including when they participate in role plays, ask questions, react to the teacher's inquiries, talk with their friends, and so on. An assessment must be conducted to determine learners' level and quality of content understanding and competencies. The assessment generally seeks to gauge how well different facets of people are in a similar situation. For example, various tests or evaluations are used to gauge the quality of a person's religion in Islam.

According to Nunan (2004), a task is "a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language." Because it happens in the classroom while teaching and learning activities are taking place, it is also known as pedagogical tasks. Teaching tasks require the use of communicative language or the application of grammatical skills to convey meaning. It implies that grammar exists to allow language users to communicate various communication meanings and that meaning and form are intimately intertwined. To describe various classroom projects developed to test students' four language abilities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), grammar, and vocabulary, Brown and Abeywickrama (2018, p. 136) integrate the term "task" with the phrase "assessment" into "assessment tasks." The assessment tasks used in this study are closely tied to the writing proficiency that the instructor utilizes during teaching and learning in junior high school.

Summative and formative evaluations are the two types of assessments that are frequently mentioned in the literature. According to Brown & Abeywickrama (2018), formative

assessment involves “evaluating students as they are “forming” their competencies and skills to help them to continue that growth process.” The key to such development is the teacher’s delivery of and the student’s acceptance of appropriate performance feedback with an eye toward future learning. Because the continual growth of the learner’s language is the main focus, all informal assessments are mostly formative.

According to Brown & Abeywickrama (2018), summative assessment “aims to measure or summarize what a student has grasped and typically occurs at the end of a course or unit of instruction.” A summary of what a pupil has learned suggests looking back to see how successfully the student has met goals, but it does not always indicate future improvement. Examples of summative evaluation include course final exams and general competency assessments. Evaluation (decision-making) is frequently a part of summative assessment.

Assessment Tasks in Writing

According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2018), four writing tasks can be used to categorize different forms of written output: imitative, intensive, responsive, and extended writing. The form of writing is the main focus of this work because imitation writing involves some fundamental skills that students should be able to perform, including writing letters, words, punctuation, and simple sentences. When writing intensively or under strict supervision, students should use language to demonstrate their command of grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. When writing in response to a prompt, students must communicate at a basic discourse level and combine two or three logically connected paragraphs. Extensive writing entails effectively administering all the procedures and techniques for all audiences, up to the length of an essay, a term paper, a substantial research project report, or even a thesis.

Rahmawati, Yanto, and Ahmad (2021) used a narrative case study to learn more about how pre-service English teachers perceive using online formative assessment to evaluate writing skills while participating in a microteaching program. According to the study’s findings, people have different perspectives on the issue at hand, including the writing skill evaluation’s flaws, the tools utilized to carry out the assessment, and the benefits that were discovered as a result of it. This study differs from the current study in that it involves pre-service EFL teachers rather than actual EFL teachers. Because genuine teachers have greater classroom experience than pre-service teachers, the findings will present a different perspective on the research topic.

To build an authentic assessment model for evaluating writing proficiency in junior high school pupils, Sahyoni (2021) undertook research and development studies. The results showed that the personal report is the optimal authentic evaluation format for gauging students' writing abilities, especially for junior high school students. This study includes a new writing evaluation task, the personal report. This might be characterized as lengthy writing work because it demands the students to write a report about their daily lives. However, this study focuses on one product because it employs the research and development technique. The current study uses a descriptive qualitative methodology to explore a different kind of assignment used to judge writing ability.

A pre-experimental study was undertaken by Hafiz, Hakim, and Harun (2021) to determine the efficacy of portfolio assessment in Islamic junior high school students' English writing abilities. The results demonstrate that (1) students' writing before and after treatment differs significantly in terms of the mean score, (2) portfolio assessment improves students' writing scores at the level of belief 95%, and (3) portfolio assessment is positively correlated with students' writing ability. This study also introduces a new writing ability assessment task: portfolio evaluation of the creation of descriptive text. However, the present study investigates a different form of the writing assessment task, whereas the pre-experimental research solely focuses on investigating one type of assessment task.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative methodology to explore students' perceptions of the writing assessment tasks that instructors gave to junior high school students and identify and describe the assessment tasks that teachers used to evaluate students' writing abilities. The researchers are the key instrument who gather the information and interprets it, and focusing on the participants' meaning about the issue as the main source of interaction are all characteristics of the qualitative approach that research experts have identified as being appropriate for the aim of this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Ten eighth-grade students and two English teachers served as the only subjects for this study, stressing a more thorough analysis of the junior high school students' writing assessment activities. Although the results might not be broadly generalizable, they offer insightful information on this particular group's situations, actions, and viewpoints, adding to a thorough examination of the subject. The purposive sampling technique was used to choose the subjects

because of specific goals or selection standards. These class VIII junior high school students were deemed suitable for the research because, according to early observations with the teacher, they studied various subjects connected to writing tasks.

This study observed teaching and learning activities using writing skill materials, particularly the evaluation phase, which English teachers carried out. This method enhanced the data and the teaching and learning context to address the initial study topic. The primary data collection method in this study, interviews, was used to identify and explain the assessment tasks that teachers used to evaluate junior high school students' writing abilities as well as to learn about the perspectives of the students who took part in the interviews. At MTs Hidayatullah Bahaur, the interviewees included two English professors and ten students.

Basrowi and Suwandi (2008) state that documentation gathers significant documents connected to the research issue under consideration. This could contribute new data that can't be obtained through other data collection methods, or it could only serve as confirmation of what was said during the interview. The results of the students' English exams and practice tests, as well as the assessment tasks utilized by the English teachers to gauge the writing abilities of junior high school students, are the records that are deemed crucial to gather for this study.

Analyzing qualitative data entails carefully reviewing the information acquired to develop relevant interpretations and gain more knowledge (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the initial stage, known as data condensation, study data are focused on extracting meaningful meanings that align with the research objectives (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). As the data collection procedure may take a long time, additional research activities are ongoing during this phase, allowing for the quick condensation of the gathered data. Data presentation comes after data condensation and entails presenting the information in a variety of ways, including tables, narrative explanations, diagrams, and charts. An explanatory framework served as this study's main data display method. The conclusion drafting and verifying stage compiles the final findings into succinct summaries. It is essential to analyze the results before this stage to ensure that all parts of the research process are compatible with one another and the study objectives. In conclusion, processes like data condensing, data visualization, and conclusion formulation and verification are all included in qualitative data analysis. These procedures enable a thorough comprehension of the obtained data, allowing for meaningful interpretations and the development of a conclusion backed up by sufficient evidence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

FINDINGS

Assessment Tasks Used to Assess Writing Skill

The topic of conversation turns to the kind of assessment activities that English teachers employ to gauge their students' writing proficiency at the beginning of the presentation of the findings. The researchers uncovered this component using two study data collection methods, namely classroom observation while the teachers were in the classrooms and teachers' interviews to clarify the notes acquired during the classroom observation. According to the theoretical sources included in this study, three sorts of writing assessment tasks—intensive writing, responsive and extensive writing, and imitative writing—were seen in the observation section. The researchers visited many classrooms where the English teachers were teaching while gathering all the data for the observation part.

Intensive Writing

It was discovered throughout the observation process that Ms. RS did two types of writing assessment tasks classified as imitative writing, namely tasks in handwriting letters, words, punctuation, and spelling, and identifying phoneme-grapheme correspondences. She introduced pupils to handwriting in the first type so they could become accustomed to tidy writing with the appropriate word choice and punctuation. She also taught kids to handwrite in the second type to prepare them for accurate spelling. Not all evaluation assignments in the intensive writing category were completed by Ms. RS. Throughout the learning process, various assessment tasks, including grammatical transformation, vocabulary evaluation, and ordering tasks, were completed.

A focused and rigorous style of writing that prioritizes depth, accuracy, and attention to detail is referred to as intensive writing. It entails consciously practicing and improving on particular areas of the writing process to acquire good writing skills. In the context of education, intensive writing frequently entails focused instruction and practice sessions that seek to improve students' capacity for concept expression, coherent thinking organization, and proper language use. It helps students go deeper into their subject matter, critically examine ideas, and express them elegantly and clearly. It goes beyond simple writing assignments. Students can gain from intensive writing by improving their critical thinking, communication, and writing capabilities, which are crucial in academic, professional, and personal situations.

Responsive Writing

Several additional forms of assessment activities, such as dictation and dicto-comp, picture-cued tasks, short-answer questions, and sentence completion questions, were not completed. According to notes taken during the observation process, variations in how different types of assessment tasks were used in the intensive writing category were brought about by subject matter that did not align with specific types of assessment tasks and was, therefore, irrelevant when used to evaluate student learning outcomes. Ms. RS admitted during the interview that the textbook was the only source she consulted to choose the kind of assessment activity to gauge the student's learning outcomes. She uttered:

“Due to the students' inadequate language proficiency, I only used assignments from the textbook, and at each meeting, they were only required to respond to the book's questions. Because they merely mirrored what was contained in the book, the questions were not particularly diverse.”

Students could successfully finish their projects by employing the questions or assessment activities Ms. RS described above as not overly diversified. Only a few challenges remained for the kids to overcome. Students nonetheless encountered challenges in completing the assignments, according to Ms. RS, including a lack of vocabulary knowledge, a shortage of textbooks that were only adequately photocopied, and a dearth of dictionaries among many students. They were striving hard enough to get top marks on all their tasks and report cards, even though they still needed much assistance learning English.

Writing immediately inspired or shaped by a certain setting, audience, or goal is called responsive writing. It entails modifying one's work to satisfy the requirements and expectations of the target audience or to communicate in a certain circumstance successfully. Responsive writing means that the writer must modify their approach, tone, style, and content to meet the needs of the writing task. The power of responsive writing rests in its capacity to forge a bond between the author and the audience. Responsive writing increases the likelihood of successfully expressing ideas, capturing readers' attention, and meeting the writing task's goals by considering the audience, context, and purpose. Overall, responsive writing is a flexible and dynamic strategy that places a premium on successful communication by modifying the writing to fit the audience's needs, expectations, and circumstances. It enables authors to develop a connection with their readers, demonstrate relevance, and engagingly deliver their message.

Extensive Writing

Along with Ms. RS, Mr. RH also taught class VIII, albeit in a different order than Ms. RS. The outcomes of the observations and interviews between the two professors had a few minor variances.

Mr. RH utilized the same two assessment tasks found in the imitation writing category as Ms. RS: identifying phoneme-grapheme correspondences and tasks requiring the handwriting of letters, words, punctuation, and spelling. The category of extensive writing, however, showed considerable disparities. Mr. RH utilized almost all assessment task types in this category, including grammatical transformation tasks, picture-cued activities, vocabulary assessment tasks, ordering tasks, and short-answer and sentence-completion tasks. The procedure of evaluating the academic progress of students only utilized dictation and dicto-comp. Although the textbook was the primary source of instruction and evaluation, Mr. RH said in the interview that he also used resources and assessment tools from other sources.

“I frequently copied tasks on the internet for writing or speaking inquiries, such as composing a few greeting phrases and comments, identifying items nearby, and so forth. However, I also altered several from the internet to create tasks with my rendition, particularly for introducing grammar.”

The students’ ability to solve the problems differed significantly between using questions from textbooks versus questions modified from other sources. Only roughly 70–75% of students could complete the questions in the past since they were so focused on the contents presented in the textbooks, according to Mr. RH.

“In the end, they felt more capable of completing the writing assignments I assigned after looking for additional sources.”

The assessment tasks mentioned above are only a few examples. Depending on their unique goals and curricular requirements, educational institutions and teachers may employ a combination of these assignments or develop their own.

The term “extensive writing” is a writing technique that entails creating longer written works over an extended period. It focuses on fostering writing skills such as coherence, fluency, and the capacity to maintain a significant word count. The goal of extensive writing is to inspire readers or writers to engage in lengthy writing activities, frequently delving deeply into a subject or finishing long writing projects. Increased vocabulary, improved writing fluency,

enhanced critical thinking skills, and developing a more complex writing style are all advantages of lengthy writing. It enables writers to delve deeper into writing processes, express thoughts in more detail, and investigate challenging topics.

In general, extended writing is a strategy that encourages several revisions, larger texts, and consistent writing involvement. It encourages the growth of different writing abilities and allows authors to explore and express their ideas completely. Writers can hone their craft, develop confidence, and produce excellent written work by writing frequently.

Students' Perception of the Assessment Tasks for Writing Skill

There are several factors that the teacher must take into account while employing particular types of assessment activities to evaluate students' writing abilities, as stated in the observation and interview findings portion of the teachers above. The student is one of several factors to consider, particularly regarding their aptitude and subject-matter understanding. In general, a number of students who took part in the interview indicated that their English teachers were competent at assigning writing homework and encouraging practice. However, they did observe that before assigning homework, the teacher needed to be able to explain the subject clearly. Students MRM, FLN, FSR, and FAM concurred that the teacher's tasks were excellent and simple to understand. However, Student FNY, MGR, and FNS underlined that their comprehension of the assignment was mostly based on the teacher's explanation. FNY, a student, stated, "There were several assignments that were challenging to comprehend if the teacher didn't explain them adequately." A similar remark was made by students MGR and FNS, "If the teacher explains the assignment clearly, I will easily understand it."

All students who participated in the interview agreed that the assignments aligned with the material being studied. That is to say, there were no tasks that had nothing to do with the material covered in class. Students provided a variety of responses to the assignment type, including creating conversations, writing vocabulary, creating utterances, and responding to textbook questions. FAM for Students outlined:

"In most cases, we were required to respond to questions in the textbook before interpreting the language with the aid of a dictionary. Then, we might be required to compose a speech, a dialogue, or an opinion. Adapting to the lesson that day is the goal."

All students who participated in the interviews in the learning process also mentioned that writing practice was constantly discussed at every meeting, which made them feel

supported while practicing and helped by their teacher. Students MRM, FLN, FMR, MFK, and MGR agreed that it is always helpful if the teacher clarifies how to carry out the activities.

Nevertheless, some students complained that the teacher's format for assigning writing work was too routine and uninteresting. Almost all of the students who participated in the interviews indicated that the multiple-choice style of the questions was still quite challenging for them. They frequently relied on guesswork because there were options available. All the students who participated in the interviews indicated that these tasks continue to help them enhance their English abilities, particularly writing skills, despite numerous challenges in understanding English assignments connected to writing skills.

DISCUSSION

Assessment Tasks Used to Assess Writing Skill

According to the research findings already discussed, the two English teachers solely employed the categories of imitative writing and intensive writing to evaluate their students' writing skills. Intensive writing is marginally more challenging than imitative writing because the language produced must demonstrate the ability to use grammar, vocabulary, or sentence formation, as stated in the literature review section. Imitative writing is a category of fundamental tasks that students must complete, such as writing letters, words, punctuation marks, and short sentences. These two types of assessment tasks fall into the low and medium-difficulty categories; therefore, junior high school pupils can still complete them.

Considering the educational background of the students who participated in this study, it makes sense that teachers did not use assessment assignments in the responsive and elaborate writing category to gauge their writing skills. It is evident from the fact that the extensive writing category already leads to the process and strategy of writing a work for all purposes in the form of a structured report, whereas the responsive writing category only asks students to demonstrate their writing abilities at a basic discourse level (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2018). These tasks, which include paraphrasing, guided questions and answers, paragraph creation exercises, and strategic options, have high expectations and cannot be applied to junior high school students.

There was minimal variation in how the two English teachers used various evaluation assignments in the intense writing category. According to the findings of the observations and interviews conducted with them, the factor that gave rise to these differences was the teacher's

level of creativity in creating the teaching materials, including the assessment task used to gauge the student's level of success in comprehending the subject. When a teacher uses the information in the textbook, his creativity is severely constrained to the concepts presented by the book's author. On the other hand, the practice of adapting and integrating a variety of sources into the design of materials and assessment problems significantly fosters the development of teacher creativity. (Richards, 2014; Wen-Cheng, Chien-Hung, & Chung-Chieh, 2011).

Intensive writing in a disciplinary course provided crucial pedagogical insights on reconciling teaching subject-matter material with "writing to learn" and "learning to write" (Sung, 2021). In particular, the spontaneous delivery of lectures filled with incentive, responsibility, discipline, and flexibility supplied without interruption requires quality assurance efforts for intensive writing activities. The Internet has shown to be an excellent resource for education (Sheerah et al., 2022).

In this sense, making the best use of all possibilities that allow for diversity in learning instruments, particularly assessment tasks, is essential. According to two teachers' observations, neither used dictation as a kind of intensive writing. This result runs counter to earlier research that found dictation to be one of the most popular methods for evaluating young adult learners' writing abilities (Ketabi, 2015). However, there could be various reasons for the disparity, including educational systems and cultural variations.

A "responsive writing" assignment helps students organize sentences to form paragraphs and develop logical connections between two or three paragraphs. A task that calls for learners to perform at a limited discourse level is repeated in responsive writing. In this activity, students string together sentences to create a coherent paragraph and a series of two or three paragraphs. Form-focused attention strongly emphasizes meaning and context at the discourse level, where it predominates (Alfahad, 2021).

Another definition of responsive writing is a writing performance that calls for the writers to operate at a low level of discourse while connecting phrases with logical progressions into paragraphs of roughly two or three. Respondent writing allows authors to demonstrate their potential creative solutions to the challenge within a pedagogical or assessment framework. The criteria include the discourse and rhetorical conventions of paragraph structure and the logical sequences of each paragraph so that the writers may choose vocabulary, grammar, and discourse under the appropriate conditions (Fatimah & Yusuf, 2019).

Students' Perception of the Assessment Tasks for Writing Skill

Students' perceptions are formed based on the bottom-up theory, which was made popular by Gibson (1966) because the factors that lead to the emergence of these perceptions are external factors, specifically the assessment tasks that the teacher creates for them. The perceptions under this theory are based on internal elements, such as experience and past knowledge, as opposed to the top-down approach made popular by Gregory (1970). However, it can be argued that eighth-grade pupils in junior high school have not acquired enough past information and experience to serve as a determining factor in how they see something.

Through the results of interviews with several student representatives, it was discovered that the assessment assignments supplied by the teachers to evaluate students' writing talents were extremely high quality. But the crucial idea often underlined was the teacher's active engagement in guiding students through the assessment task. This is because many students submit incorrect answers to assignments, not because they don't comprehend the material but because they don't understand the purpose of the questions. Therefore, having well-designed assessment tasks is necessary, but it's even more crucial that students can grasp what the tasks mean to finish them correctly.

According to Pham & Vy (2022), extensive writing exercises may encourage pupils to write and improve the bond between teachers and students. Although encouraging students to write was a key element in helping them overcome their writing challenges, writing abilities should be objectively assessed to ensure growth. Keeping a detailed journal was a way to convey one's thoughts and beliefs. Students thus had a purpose for writing in a significant circumstance. The participants noticed their development and sense of competence. The results also revealed that although lower-proficient students concentrated on correctness, higher-proficient students tended to switch to complexity when they were secure in their fluency. After gaining some confidence, the students could also put down their thoughts swiftly.

CONCLUSION

This study has provided important insights into the assessment tasks used to evaluate the writing abilities of junior high school students. Two key conclusions can be drawn from the research questions explored. First, the findings indicate that English teachers primarily utilized imitative writing and intensive writing tasks to assess students' writing skills. Due to its higher difficulty level, the responsive and extensive writing category was deemed unsuitable for junior

high school students. This suggests the need for tailored assessment tasks that align with students' developmental stages and capabilities, ensuring a more effective evaluation of their writing abilities. Second, the interviews with student representatives revealed that the overall quality of the assessment tasks provided by teachers was commendable. However, the students consistently emphasized the crucial role of teachers in actively explaining and clarifying the requirements of the tasks. While well-designed assessment tasks are important, the students' understanding of the tasks proved to be even more crucial in enabling them to complete the assigned tasks successfully. Hence, effective communication and teacher guidance are essential in facilitating students' comprehension and accurate execution of assessment tasks.

These conclusions highlight the significance of incorporating appropriate assessment tasks that match the students' developmental level and ensuring clear task explanations to enhance students' understanding and performance. Future efforts should focus on developing a diverse range of assessment tasks specifically tailored to the writing abilities of junior high school students, accompanied by comprehensive guidelines and instructions to support their successful completion. By addressing these aspects, educators can foster a more meaningful and accurate assessment of student's writing skills, ultimately promoting their overall academic growth and achievement.

LIMITATIONS AND STUDY FORWARD

While this research has provided valuable insights into writing assessment tasks for junior high school students, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study employed a descriptive qualitative method, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to a wider population. To overcome this limitation, future research could incorporate broader quantitative methods, such as surveys or standardized tests, to gather data from larger sample sizes and enhance the results' generalizability. Secondly, the research was conducted in a specific setting, MTs Hidayatullah Bahaur in Central Kalimantan. Although this setting provided valuable context-specific information, it may not fully represent other regions' diverse educational landscapes and cultural variations. Future studies could include multiple research sites from different areas to understand better writing assessment tasks in junior high schools. Moreover, this research primarily focused on teachers' and students' perceptions of the assessment tasks. Incorporating additional stakeholders, such as parents and administrators, would be beneficial to gain a holistic view of the challenges and opportunities associated with writing assessment tasks.

Moving forward, researchers can delve deeper into the topic by conducting more in-depth qualitative investigations, such as case studies or action research, to explore the specific factors influencing the design and implementation of effective writing assessment tasks. Additionally, longitudinal studies can be conducted to assess the long-term impact of different assessment approaches on students' writing skills and overall academic development. Furthermore, it is crucial to continuously update and refine assessment practices in line with evolving educational needs and technological advancements. Researchers can explore the integration of innovative approaches, such as digital platforms or automated scoring systems, to enhance the efficiency and objectivity of writing assessments.

In conclusion, while this study has shed light on the current state of writing assessment tasks in junior high schools, there is ample room for further investigation. By addressing the limitations and incorporating more in-depth qualitative and broader quantitative methods, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of effective writing assessment practices, ultimately fostering educational improvements for junior high school students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The research team would like to express their profound gratitude to the participants of this study. This research would not have been possible without their active involvement and valuable contributions. The willingness of the participants to share their experiences and perspectives has paved the way for a deeper understanding of the field of educational changes. Their dedication and cooperation have been instrumental in advancing our knowledge in this area.

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