

## THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE WRITING ASSESSMENT FOR SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

*Assessment plays a crucial role for teachers in monitoring students' performance and evaluating the students skills. Alternative writing assessment aims to foster a deeper understanding of students' capabilities in expressing themselves through writing. The research was conducted in the 11th-grade students at SMAN Umbulsari, utilizing a descriptive qualitative design as the research approach. Data collection methods included observations, interviews, and document reviews. To ensure data validity, triangulation of sources and techniques was employed. From the data revealed several findings for the forms are; journals, observations, self-peer assessment. The procedures were: a) Journal, teacher gave guidelines, designed scoring rubric, calculating the score. b) Self-peer assessment, students exchange their work with their partners, then correct each other, gave correct and incorrect assessments. c) Observation, students mention the difficulties of their writing, then teacher gave feedback. Strengths from assessment alternative writing are: students could wrote well according to the lesson theme, easily created outlines based on the lesson theme, also easily discussion with partners to improves understanding. Meanwhile, the weakness is the students needed sufficient time to do their writing tasks. It can provide some additional information about alternative writing assessments, and provide an overview for their use during the learning process.*

**Key Words:** *alternative assessment, writing skill, senior high school*

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the important complex processes of activity that focuses on content first using the appropriate language through several stages of rehearsing, drafting, and revising. It is for students to know the process of achieving indicators, measuring the extent of student abilities, and as feedback for teachers in improving methods, approaches, activities, and learning resources used in the learning process.<sup>1</sup>

Assessment is one of the key duties of teachers in order to monitor student performance and gauge the abilities they have acquired. It is a part of teaching and learning process, aim to bring improvement for the assessor and the individual assessed. An assessment has been described variously in the literature and labeled as the outcome of the 20th century. According to Linn and Miller says that Alternative assessment is a systematic process of collecting information about the improvement of the students towards the learning goals.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, assessment can be a method used to improve the quality of education because it can enhance life-long learning skills and elevate performance in various educational contexts. Therefore, assessment can be concluded as a method used to improve the quality of education because it can enhance life-long learning skills and elevate performance in various educational contexts.<sup>3</sup> According to Belk and Calais, assessment enables the teacher to gather information about the students' progress, program goals and objectives as well as the extent to which methods of instruction deployed in the classroom are helping the students achieve the goals.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fitri Nurdianingsih, Yuniarta Ita Purnama, *Thematic Progression Pattern : A Technique To Improve Students' Writing Skill Viewed From Writing Apprehension*, Journal of Linguistic and English Teaching, Vol. 2, No. 2, October 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Linn, Robert L and Miller, M. David. *Measurement and Assessment in Teaching*. The University of Michigan. 2005

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Javed, Wu Xiao Juan, Saima Nazli, "A Study of Students' Assessment in Writing Skills of the English Language", *International Journal of Instruction* : Vol.6, No.2, July 2013, e-ISSN: 1694-609X

<sup>4</sup> Belk, J.A. & Calais, G.J. *Portfolio Assessment in Reading and Writing: Linking Assessment and Instruction to Learning*.1993, 104

According to H. Douglas Brown alternative writing assessment is an assessment approach that includes various methods and different tests to assess students' writing ability. Alternative assessment is designed to provide a more comprehensive and authentic picture of students' writing ability by considering the writing process, creativity, and self-reflection.<sup>5</sup> The form of assessment divided into two, there are regular and alternative. Regular assessment as product refers to the assessment of results or products produced by students, such as writing, projects, or artwork. This assessment provides an overview of students' ability to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned. Meanwhile, alternative assessment as process focuses on evaluating the learning process carried out by students, such as critical thinking, collaboration, or problem solving skills.

In the process of learning English, of course the students who have difficulties in developing ideas, in the end students are required to intensively develop writing individually or in groups. Based on the results of the interview with the English teacher, information was obtained the teacher said that the alternative writing assessment method was designed to encourage students to think critically and develop higher-order thinking skills. It's help the teachers will be able to develop a deep understanding of what students understand, and the students easily applies the knowledge learned in class. SMAN Umbulsari is one of the schools located in Jember Regency, East Java. This school applies the practice of alternative writing skill assessment because it was one of the teacher's methods to facilitate the learning process.

Alternative assessment is about determining what a student knows and can do and what a student doesn't know and cannot do. The teachers could consider if they need to modify the teaching methods, activities, and materials, to improve students learning and development especially in writing skills. Alya Rahma Adriani explained that the authenticity or traditional of assessment in writing skill could find out about the aspects of writing skills assessed by teachers are cognitive aspects.<sup>6</sup> The types of cognitive aspects of writing skills are multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and

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<sup>5</sup> H. Douglas Brown, Priyavanda Abeywickrama, *Language Assessment principle and Classroom Practices*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Pearson ESL 2019, 14

<sup>6</sup> Alya Rahma Adriani, "Assessment of writing skills at SMA Muhammadiyah PK Kottabarat Surakarta" (Thesis, University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2022)

short answer. While the types of writing skills aspects use writing samples called essays.

According to Mohammad Javed, Wu Xiao Juan and Saima Nazli from International Journal of Instruction entitled "A Study of Students' Assessment in Writing Skills of the English Language".<sup>7</sup> This paper addressed to evaluate and assess the student's competency in writing skills at the secondary school level in the English Language. Based on the t-value, revealed no significant difference between the performance of male and female students, the students of public, and private schools, whereas there was a significant difference between the performance of urban and rural students. Particularly students from rural areas should lay stress to improve their writing skills which can boost them to enhance their studies.

Other studies carried out by Nurhasanah with entitled "The application of authentic assessment for Students' writing skill."<sup>8</sup> The subject of this research is the 10th grade of MAN 1 Tangerang City. The teacher applies authentic assessment on students' writing skills through three aspects - affective, cognitive, and skills. In the affective aspect: teachers use observation and journal techniques, teachers do not use them for students' writing. Cognitive aspect: written test and assignment techniques, both of these techniques were are not published for audience purposes. Skill aspect: project assessment, this aspect is also the same as the cognitive aspect.

Yustika Prastiwi also did the studies with entitled "The Implementation of Authentic Assessment in Assessing Writing Skill at Senior High School Pekanbaru"<sup>9</sup>. The focus of this study on the process of the authentic assessment in assessing students' writing skill and to find out the problem of the teachers in implementing authentic assessment. The results of the study found three problem faced by the teacher in implementing authentic assessment first lack of time. Complex assessment procedures and last, and student understanding about material.

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<sup>7</sup> Muhammad Javed, Wu Xiao Juan, Saima Nazli, "A Study of Students' Assessment in Writing Skills of the English Language", International Journal of Instruction : Vol.6, No.2, July 2013, e-ISSN: 1694-609X

<sup>8</sup> Nurhasanah, "The application of authentic assessment for Students' writing skill", (Thesis, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta, 2020)

<sup>9</sup> Yustika Pratiwi, *The Implementation of Authentic Assessment in Assessing Writing Skill at Senior High School Pekanbaru*, (Thesis Sultan Syarif Kasif Riau State Islamic University, 2022)

Based on the above description the researchers decided to a study with the qualitative research method entitled “The Practice of Alternative writing assessment in the 11th grade at SMAN Umbulsari”. The research question of the research there are : 1) What are the form of Alternative writing assessment applied in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at SMAN Umbulsari? 2) What are the procedure of Alternative writing assessment applied in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at SMAN Umbulsari? 3. What are the strengths and weakness of Alternative writing assessment applied in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at SMAN Umbulsari?. The objectives of the research is to describe about form, procedures, strengths and weakness of alternative writing assessment in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at SMAN Umbulsari.

## METHODS

The research used qualitative research as the research method, descriptive qualitative as a research design. The research was conducted at senior high school Umbulsari in Jember, East Java. The study involved English teacher and 11th-grade students, with purposive sampling used to select 4 students out of 36. The students were selected based on recommendation from English teacher depending on their ability in alternative writing assessments.

This research utilized observation and semi-structured interviews to examine the interactions between teachers and students during reading lessons. Observation sheets were created to record every behavior, and data was analyzed to conclude. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to analyze alternative writing assessments in the teaching-learning process. Researchers created questions that could be adapted to the chosen topic, adjusted the time and place for answers, and recorded responses considering their environmental context. Data was analyzed and drawn about alternative writing assessments. Documentation in qualitative research includes public and private records acquired from participants, such as newspapers, meeting minutes, diaries, personal journals, and letters. These sources provide valuable insights into the lives and perspectives of research participants, aiding researchers in understanding the phenomenon under investigation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The goal of this article is to describe the impact of alternative assessment in the classroom of English at senior School on writing skills. After analyzing data was done, 3 points were find out about alternative writing assessment at SMAN Umbulsari. There are: the

first question we know that the teacher already understands what form of alternative writing assessment applied. The second question about the procedures of alternative writing assessment. In the third question shows that the teacher also sees strengths and weakness in using alternative assessments.

This research was conducted to know the practice of alternative writing assessment at the 11th grade students of SMAN Umbulsari-Jember. The data collection technique the researcher used was interview and observation at SMAN Umbulsari. The result of this research showed that, the teacher used journaling to starting learning activities, teachers applied self-peer assessment, and used observation during learning activities. It is relevant Brown's theory with form of alternative writing assessment using observation, self-peer assessment, and journals.<sup>10</sup>

The result of the procedures alternative writing assessment were;

Procedures of form journals are: 1) The teacher made a rating scale to assess the students in writing. 2) The teacher designed the scoring rubric about alternative writing assessment, based on rubric teacher used holistic scoring for the rubric. 3) The last, after teacher did all the procedures, teacher calculated the total score.

Procedures of form peer assessment are: 1) The teacher made a rating scale to assess the students in writing, 2) The teacher designed the scoring rubric about peer assessment, and then wrote it down on board. 3) The teacher wrote the scoring guide on the board, teacher ask the students to assign score their friends. 4) If completely, teacher asked the students to submitted to teacher. 5) Teacher made sure that is false or wrong. 6) The last, after teacher do the procedures, teacher ask the students to calculate the total score. Procedures of form observation are: 1) The students finished their writing. 2) Teacher asked the students to submitted to teacher. 3) Teacher made sure that is false or wrong. d) Teacher asked the students mention the difficulties of their writing after that teacher give feedback or reflection of their writing.

The finding was related to Weigle's theory of the procedures alternative writing assessment included: 1) rating scale, the three basic scoring methods of holistic, primary trait, and analytical

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<sup>10</sup> H. Douglas Brown, Priyavanda Abeywickrama, *Language Assessment principle and Classroom Practices*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Pearson ESL 2019, 425

scoring. 2) designing scoring rubric. 3) writing scale descriptor. 4) calculating the total score.<sup>11</sup>

Alternative writing assessment certainly has own strengths and weakness. Strengths and weakness described as a person's ability that difference from others. The strengths of alternative writing assessment, were; students could wrote according the lesson theme, easily to make outline according the lesson theme to be written, easily understand when discussing the task of writing to their group. While the weakness was the students find do not have sufficient time to doing the task to finishes their writing.

Based on finding above, the finding was related theory of the strengths and weakness of alternative assessment according to Murphy and Camp, in the process students learn to exercise judgment about their own work, monitor their own progress, set goals for themselves, and present themselves and their work to others'.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, another beneficial is can promote the process of revision, which is a major focus of much contemporary writing instruction. If students know that they have the opportunity to address weaknesses in their writing before the portfolio is turned in, they may be more willing to revise their writing than they might otherwise be.<sup>13</sup>

Limitation of time between the learning and assessment process. This situation made teachers have difficulty to master the whole class since the students' quantity. It related to applying an authentic assessment to be limited in the classroom. Whereas, an assessment must be performed in the learning process at one time. The claim appeared in student capability and learning style differences. For confronting the student who gains a late response in understanding the materials. It evolved into the learning teaching process ineffective.<sup>14</sup> In this report, the teacher answers that the alternative assessment that she does makes students showing a good attitude although the alternative assessment does not depend on the

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<sup>11</sup> Weigle, *Assessment Writing*. 127

<sup>12</sup> Weigle, *Assessment Writing*. 204

<sup>13</sup> Weigle, *Assessment Writing*. 205

<sup>14</sup> H. Douglas Brown, Priyavanda Abeywickrama, *Language Assessment principle and Classroom Practices*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Pearson ESL 2019, 329



students' social behavior. The teacher in this report uses performance and discussion in her alternative assessment.

## CONCLUSION

In this article, the writer concludes that alternative assessment has a significant impact on both teachers and students. Starting from the application of the forms used, the procedures, and the strengths and weaknesses that have been implemented in the 11th grade at SMAN Umbulsari, all contribute to the development of students' writing skills. By utilizing alternative writing assessment methods, students can become more engaged and creative in the writing process, resulting in more meaningful and reflective work.

In Conclusion, alternative assessment as an essential part of the learning process, embodies a different concept of assessment, a new understanding of learning itself, and a different relationship between student and teacher. It is not simply that tasks are different and require the student to produce a response but it does indeed come from and requires a different way of thinking about assessment rather than when they are in their routine schedule.

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