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AN ANALYSIS OF MARKING SYSTEM USED BY WRITING LECTURERS OF STAIN CURUP IN TESTING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY

Leffi Noviyenty, M. Pd.

Dosen Tarbiyah Tadris Bahasa Inggris STAIN Curup


Abstrak : Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif yang akan dipresentasikan secara kualitatif (naratif). Peneliti akan mengumpulkan informasi secara mendalam tentang format penilaian keterampilan menulis (writing) mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris STAIN Curup, kriteria penilaian yang digunakan serta sistem penilaian yang diterapkan. Adapun subjek penelitian ini adalah dosen-dosen *Writing Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris STAIN Curup*. Sebuah checklist dan pedoman wawancara digunakan untuk menggali informasi tentang format dan kriteria penilaian serta sistem nilai dari subjek penelitian secara langsung. Catatan lapangan (*fieldnotes*) juga dimaksudkan untuk memperoleh data yang tidak tampak pada performansi di kelas dan untuk kepentingan triangulasi data yang diperoleh secara keseluruhan nantinya. Adapun observasi, analisis dokumen dan wawancara adalah teknik dalam pengumpulan data. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dosen-dosen *writing* menggunakan Gap Filling, Form Completion, Information transfer task, Letter writing, Integrating reading into Writing, Open-ended Essay Test, Responding to a given Information. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa kriteria penilaian yang dominan digunakan oleh dosen-dosen *writing* adalah Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Relevance and Adequacy of Content. Keempat dosen *Writing* tidak menyertakan skor untuk tiap kriteria seperti yang disarankan oleh teori. Skema penilaian para dosen tersebut hanya berdasarkan rentang nilai yang dibuat oleh institusi (STAIN Curup) yakni: 00 – 49 = E (gagal), 50 – 59 = D, 60 – 69 = C, 70 – 85 = B dan 86 – 100 = A. Nilai untuk tiap kriteria juga tidak jelas dan dibuat berdasarkan pertimbangan para dosen sendiri setelah mereka mengevaluasi materi *writing* secara keseluruhan. Penelitian ini juga tidak menemukan skala penilaian untuk tiap kriteria. Sangatlah perlu bagi para dosen *writing* untuk mempedomani teori tentang kriteria penilaian serta penentuan skor untuk tiap kriteria dalam melakukan penilaian keterampilan menulis (*writing*) mahasiswa. Hal ini akan meningkatkan objektivitas penilaian dan meminimalisir subjektivitas. Walaupun klasifikasi penilaian harus tetap merujuk pada aturan yang dibuat institusi (STAIN), diharapkan para dosen juga mempertimbangkan tujuan pengajaran *writing* itu sendiri.

Keywords : *Format of test, criteria of marking dan scoring scheme*

#2853 Summary

[SUMMARY](#) [REVIEW](#) [EDITING](#)

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Authors	Leffi Noviyenty
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Title and Abstract

Title	LECTURERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING TOEFL TO NON ENGLISH DEPARMENT STUDENTS AT STATE COLLEGE FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES STAIN CURUP
Abstract	The objectives of this research are to find out the strategies, the reason the lecturers use the strategies, the way they implement the strategies and the problems they faced in implementing the strategies. The data is collected through deep interview and observation. The findings shows that the strategies used are: Teaching the usage not the rules, helping the students with the four skills, teaching the students the strategies in doing the TOEFL, using appropriate material, note taking, doing the preparation and using students' psychic abilities. The reason the English lecturers use the strategies are to build the students self confident, to train the students using the time effectively, to minimize the students weaknesses and strengthen their power in order to get good score, to make the students find their own strategies in doing the test as fast as they can, and to train the students do self correction by note taking. While the implementation of strategies perform in variety ways. Some problems are also found such as the students have low motivation on TOEFL, very limited background on TOEFL, rarely read English text outclass and the students have bad score in English Subject.

Indexing

Academic discipline and sub-disciplines	English Education for Islamic Students
Keywords	Teaching strategies, TOEFL, non English Department students
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Supporting Agencies

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References

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#2853 Editing

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WRITING LECTURERS OF STAIN CURUP IN TESTING
STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY**

Leffi Noviyenty

**HASAN AL-BANNA THOUGHT ACTUALISATION IN THE
ISLAMIC EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT**

Mualimul Huda

الأهداف التشريعية لنظام الوقف الإسلامي

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Keywords : *Format of test, criteria of marking dan scoring scheme*

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Abstract

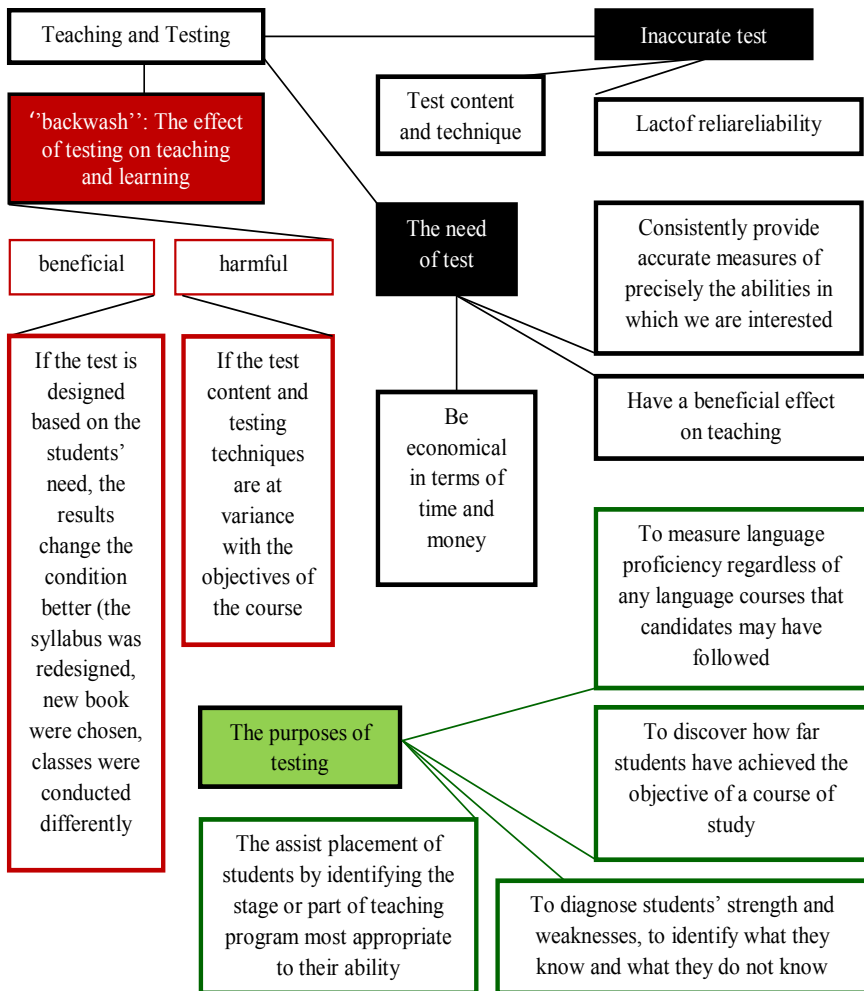
This is a descriptive study which is presented in narrative way since the data is analysed by using verbal explanation. The researcher collects the data about Writing test format, the criteria of marking and the scoring system used by Writing lecturers of STAIN Curup deeply. The subjects of this research are Writing Lecturers in English Tadris Study Program of STAIN Curup. A checklist and an interview guidance are used as the instruments of this research to gain the data on format of writing test and the criteria of marking. Fieldnotes are also taken in order to observe some data which is not performed in observation and also used to triangulate the whole result. Observation, document analysis and interview are the techniques in collecting data. The finding of this research shows that Writing lecturers use Gap Filling, Form Completion, Information transfer task, Letter writing, Integrating reading into Writing, Open-ended Essay Test, Responding to a given Information are their formats in testing students' writing ability. The finding also finds that the criteria of marking used by the Writing lecturers are Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Relevance and Adequacy of Content. Unfortunately the

writing lecturers do not include the score for each criteria. The scoring scheme is only based on the scheme designed by institusion (STAIN Curup) they are: 00 – 49 = E (gagal), 50 – 59 = D, 60 – 69 = C, 70 – 85 = B dan 86 – 100 = A. There is also no scale of scoring for each aspect of writing. It is important for writing lecturers to include the score for each criteria of marking in writing test as suggested by the theory. It can improve the objectivity of scoring and directly minimize the subjectivity. Eventhough the institution has its own regulation in calculating the score, the writing lecturers also need to consider the purpose of teaching writing skill itself.

Keywords: *Format of test, Criteria of Marking, scoring scheme*

A. Introduction

Communicative testing must be devoted not only to what the learner knows about the foreign language and about how to use it (competence) but also to what extent the learner is able to actually demonstrate this knowledge in a meaningful communicative situation. Testing plays a very important role in teaching as in following diagram(Bachman F, Lyle,1990:18):

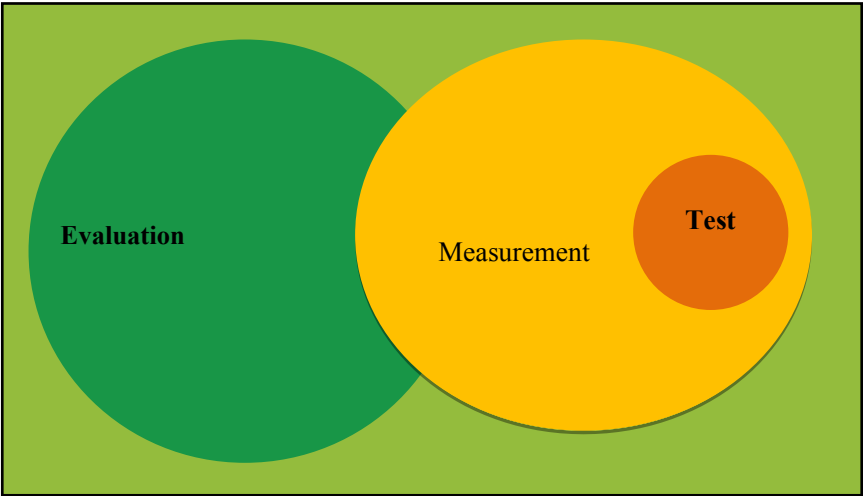


Nunan argues that the measurement of student performance is the key to program evaluation (David Nunan, 1992:185). The researcher who uses assessment data as the key element in a evaluation has to give careful consideration to three factors: these are: 1. The nature of the evidence to be used, 2. The relationship between evaluation and the program goals, and 3. The appropriate measurements to be used (David Nunan,1992:186). A test of discrete grammatical items constructed for this purpose might be found to correlate highly with an external criterion, for instance another established test concurrently administered or a measure taken at a later date,

such as final academic grades.

Related to this argument, the researcher tries to describe the relationship among evaluation, measurement and test as in following diagram:

Diagram 2
The Relation among Evaluation, Measurement and Test



Evaluation can be defined as the systematic gathering of information for the purpose of making decisions(Bachman, F. Lyle, 1990:22). Evaluation, does not necessarily entail testing, while tests are often used for pedagogical purposes, either as a means of motivating students to study, or as reviewing material taught. Test may also be used for purely descriptive purposes only when the results of tests are used as a basis for making a decision that evaluation is involved. Test is a measurement instrument designed to elicit a specific sample of an individual’s behavior.

Nowadays a goal of testing English skills is not only to the competence of English language that is the knowledge of language but also to the performance of those skills. This term is familiar with communicative competence which can be applied for all English skills, reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

In related to this goal, it is important to carefully design test for testing English skills. There are variety of tests formats offered by some English experts which is suitable for each skill, such as multiple choice, essay, short answer question for testing reading, role play for testing speaking, summary for testing writing and many others. The variety of test format need to introduce to the students in order to elicit their knowledge not only the competence but more to the use of the knowledge in communication.

Other aspect of communicative language testing is validity and reliability (Weir, Cyril J, 1993:19). Weir includes the point of validity and reliability as the general principles for test construction. To the extent that tests can have a beneficial influence on the teaching that precedes them, there can be a positive wash back effect from tests on teaching. It is important therefor that test sample. As widely as possible relevant, criteria and communicative items from the syllabus or from the future target situation where this can be specified. The more representative the sample of tasks from their domain, the better the washback effect. The purpose of the test must be clear to all students taking it and teachers preparing candidates for it. The more it enhances the achievement of desirable language objectives the greater its contribution to successful teaching and the more all concerned will see the value of testing in the curriculum. If a test is unreliable, it cannot be valid. For a test to be valid, it must reliable. However, just because a test is reliable does not mean it will be valid. Reliability is necessary but not sufficient condition for validity.

Scoring procedure is another important aspect of testing. Subjective tests are distinguished from objective tests entirely in terms of scoring procedure. All other aspects of tests involve subjective decisions. The teacher uses the best information at hand (Curriculum content) to subjectively determine the content to be covered, in the other side, he makes subjective decisions about how best to construct the test items. Tests are

also subjective in the taking, since the students are also make decisions how best to answer the questions, be they essay or multiple choice. In an objective test the correctness of the students' response is determined entirely by predetermined criteria so that no judgement is required on the part of scores. In subjective test, on the other hand, the teacher must make a judgement about the correctness of the response based on his subjective interpretation of the scoring criteria. Cloze tests and dictations, for example, can be scored objectively by providing the students with scoring keys that specify exactly which words are acceptable and which are not. Tests such as oral interview or the written composition that involve the use of rating scale are necessarily subjectively scored, since there is no feasible way to objectify the scoring procedure.

In STAIN Curup, the evaluation system is given to the lecturers independently. The institution only writes the marking guidelines and for the final achievement test. Lecturers' knowledge and understanding about how to design communicative language test is not yet evaluated and supervised. In other side, the goal of teaching the four basic English skills is to develop students' communicative competence. Moreover, the role of *Dosen payung* who act as senior lecturers is also not yet maximal since their credits are over limites and almost have no spare time to discuss the evaluation, particularly the marking system, for each English skill.

Moreover, as one of the four basic skills, testing writing is likely to be more subjective test than the others. As a productive and written test, it also has some aspects to be tested as the marking criteria and needs spesific attention on scoring scheme. It is important to design a marking system that may represent the real ability of students. The students will be able to evaluate themselves by recognising their weaknesses and developing their strengths. By offering some criteria of marking, the teacher would also be proffesional in helping the students to develop their communicative competence.

Furthermore, the marking system which has detail supported criteria and clear scoring scheme could become a valid source to describe the level of testees, the students. The marking of writing tests will always be at least somewhat subjective, but the use of descriptors for each level of the marking scheme can at least help make the marking consistent. One possibility is to make a marking scheme for the overall quality of the writing, but the problem is that, for example, the grammar can be good but the organization poor. It is perhaps more useful to have different sets of descriptors for each aspect of writing that the teacher wants to consider. Teacher might want to have descriptors for grammatical correctness, use of vocabulary, content, organization, and mechanics. These categories might be weighted differently, depending on what your teacher wants to emphasize.

Based on some theories and facts above, the researcher is intended to investigate the marking system used by English lecturers of STAIN Curup in testing students' writing ability.

B. Formats for Testing Writing

In deciding the formats to be used in testing writing, there are several points should be considered. It should be clear enough about what operations can be tested through the formats, the advantages and disadvantages of each format, the conditions under which the test is performed, and the criteria that would be employed in judgement of level. The particular conditions or operations in some formats may well be inappropriate for the students in particular context. The purpose of testing writing should also become another important consideration. There are two major uses of test: as sources of information for making decisions within the context of educational program and as indicator of abilities or attributes that are of interest in research on language (Bachman, Lyle. F, 1990:55). The following are the formats used to test writing ability (Weir, C. J, 1993:137):

1. Gap Filling

One of the most controlled ways of testing writing is gap filling. Testees are presented with a passage with blanks, and they fill in the blanks. This is a mixture of both reading and writing skills, which is sometimes a problem, because it makes it difficult to decide what the scores really mean. However, with lower level students, it might be the only reasonable test of productive ability. The potential value of these techniques for testing the more specifically linguistic skill such as understanding of vocabulary, structure or cohesion devices. A gap-fill test is an exercise in which words are removed from a text and replaced with spaces. The learner has to fill each space with the missing word or suitable word.

2. Copying

This is among the very first tasks along the road to productive writing. The test writer has managed to ensure that all the letters in the alphabet are contained in these sentences. The words in the test should be selected from the material covered in the course book and should not be too heavy a burden on the learners. The students are asked to copy the sentences that have been written before. This formats include the use of the semi-cursive script, spacing, writing on the line, punctuation, and spelling.

3. Form Completion

Another controlled way of testing writing is to have the testees fill out a form, for example, an application. The advantage of such a task is that it is at least somewhat communicative, but the disadvantage is that it does not require any connected discourse or any use of language greater than lexical knowledge and a small amount of grammar. Form filling examinations occurs in many examinations which lay claim to being communicative, since it has the outward appearance of being an authentic task which many students might have to perform in real

life. These would appear to be limited to expressing/giving specific information and the task involves reading as much as writing. In addition the criteria that can be applied to the product of this task are limited. Little more than spelling and lexical knowledge is available for comment. These formats ask the students to finish some incomplete forms, such as personal data and curriculum vitae.

4. Editing

In this task, the student is given a text containing a number of errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation typical of learners in his/her discourse community and is asked to make all necessary corrections. The tasks provide an objectively scored measure of linguistic competence, and in addition it may have a good washback effect in that students may be taught and encouraged to edit their written work more carefully. It is certainly more face valid than other indirect techniques we have looked at in this section, and it comes closer to stimulating a valuable part of the writing process. Furthermore, even if this task does relate to part of the writing process, it does not represent what people do when they write. It takes account of a very restricted range of the operation and conditions we have identified as potentially important.

5. Open-Ended Essay Test

This is a short literary composition on a particular theme, usually in prose and generally analytic, speculative or interpretative writing. The stimulus is usually written and can vary in length from a limited number of words to several sentences. Setting the tasks is a relatively easy affair. The topics tend to be very general and rely heavily on the candidate providing the content either through background or cultural knowledge, or through imagination. The students tend to approach an open-ended question in different ways, and may produce quite different text types, exhibiting a wide variety of operations. Essay writing

is probably one of the more common writing tasks, but it should be used carefully. If the future situation of the students will not include writing essays, the tester should carefully consider whether it is the best test of the students' writing ability.

6. Responding to given information

The students are invited to write their responds, for example, to a letter, responding to comments in form of semi-scripted, responding to information given in chart form, responding to information from a variety of written sources.

7. Information Transfer Task

This format ask the students to write the information they can see from a picture, for example, a process of making something; write the information that they see from the map by writing directions. These information transfer tasks, employing a largely non-verbal stimulus, may not prove as suitable in those contexts where the desire is to asses the ability to produce interactional, social and service texts. With concise, clear, accessible stimuli (tabulated data, graphs, pictures and drawings) the students do n ot have t o spend a long period of time decoding an extended written text. The more visual and the less verbal these stimuli are, the more efficiently they can be decoded. These semi-verbal to non-verbal stimuli can be used to elicit written performance of a number of different language operations such description of phenomena and ideas, argumentations, description of process, and also directing.

8. Integrated Reading into writing

This a test of students' ability to read and to write in English about what you have read. The students then have two tasks. The students are given a short reading text to be understood and later they are told to write the summary of the text.

9. Making Correction

In some situations, students are presented with a short piece of writing which has deliberate grammar, punctuation and spelling errors, and they are asked to correct the errors. While this task does related to one thing that people do when they write--editing--and it is objectively corrected, but it does not represent the writing task as a whole.

10. Letter Writing

Letter writing is a common task for writing tests. The stimulus for the letter may be a situation that is explained in the instructions, a letter to which the students are instructed to respond, information given in chart or graph form that is to be summarized in the students' letter, pictures or drawings that give information about a situation the students are expected to write a letter about, etc. In all of these possibilities, the tester must keep in mind that the situation must be as clear as possible for the testee, unless there is an intention to test reading and writing together. If the testee does not understand, for example, a letter that he/she is expected to respond to, it will be impossible to get a sample of writing to evaluate.

C. Criteria of marking for Writing Test

The ability to write involves at least six component skills. They are (Bachman, L. F. And S. J. Savignon, 1986:380-90):

1. grammatical ability. This is the ability to write English in grammatically correct sentences.
2. Lexical ability. The ability to choose words that are correct and used appropriately.
3. Mechanical ability. The ability to correctly use punctuation, spelling, capitalization, etc.
4. Stylistic skills. The ability to use sentences and paragraphs appropriately.
5. Organizational skills. The ability to organize written

work according to the conventions of English, including the order and selection of material.

6. Judgements of appropriacy. The ability to make judgements about what appropriate depending on the task, the purpose of the writing, and the audience.

Perhaps the most difficult--and most important--of these skills is the last. Native English speakers develop a sense of what is appropriate in different writing situations (though they may be taught to use specialized registers, such as academic English or business English). Registers of English range from very informal forms such as colloquialisms, slang, and jargon to standard English to more formal forms, such as the language used for business letters, legal documents, and academic papers. Writers must be aware of these differences and learn to follow the conventions of different situations. A writing test needs to take these skills into account.

Mark Scheme on Global Assessment scale for writing and International English Language Test System (IELTS) draws a range of marking the writing test into 5 grade as in the following (Bachman, L. F. And S. J. Savignon,1986:157):

1. Grade 1 (IELTS 4)

A text which significantly fails to achieve the task in terms of content and organisation. It may be quite short. High incident of errors in grammar, vocabulary and spelling. Frequently incomprehensible. Argument falls into incoherences. Expression not appropriate to the situation or context. May lack control over syntax. Overall impression is of somebody using the language with considerable difficulty.

2. Grade 2- (IELTS 5-)

The text may either be under-developed or contain irrelevant information. Organisation is falwed or lacking in control. Student may be 'over-cautious' about exposing weaknesses. May be occasionally incomprehensible. Expression largely or consistenly unidiomatic. Ocasional

gross inadequacy of grammatical usage. Cohesion barely adequate, unsatisfactory use or absence of connectors. Conclusion of tenses evident. Overall impression is of someone using the language with difficulty.

3. Grade 2+ (IELTS 5+)

Content may be relevant and given some degree of development but is probably rather simplistic. Likely to show at least a modicum of skill in organisation. Occasionally more ambitious use of vocabulary. Unidiomatic expression evident, though simpler uses may be accurate. Relatively satisfactory use of connectors. Simple sentence without much variety of structure. Some lapses in coherence, but errors do not seriously interfere comprehension. Overall impression is of someone able to communicate at superficial level with limited accuracy.

4. Grade 3 (IELTS 6)

Content is relevant, adequately developed and organised. Communicate meaning without undue demands on the reader. Expression is occasionally unidiomatic, though lapses from standard English are not gross. Mostly coherence and cohesive. Appropriate to the context in terms of expression. Largely accurate in the use of relative structures, where appropriate. Overall impression is of someone operates competently within a limited range of language and has some command over style and expression.

5. Grade 4 (IELTS 7/8)

Content is relevant and well developed. Shows clear competence in organisation. Very few if any errors of grammar, vocabulary and spelling. Language is largely idiomatic, though there may be occasional minor lapses. Points are interesting, appropriately-expressed and coherently-organised at both paragraph and essay level. Fluent command over style and expression.

6. Grade 5 (IELTS 9)

Content is relevant. Fully developed and comprehensive. May be imaginative in its approach. Organisation is excellent. Virtually indistinguishable from the English of well-educated native speaker. Literate, coherent, interesting and of some length. High degree of fluent command over style and expression.

While Mark Scheme from TEEP attribute writing scales explains the marking system for writing test more practice to the component being marked: relevance and adequacy of content, organisation, cohesion, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, punctuation and spelling. This can include, for example, what to do if a student writes a very short piece of work, what to do if he/she writes a prepared script which is only tangentially connected to the task set, what to do if the candidate does not take risks and uses an extremely limited structural range.

The detail description for each range of scale in marking system according to Mark Scheme in TEEP is explained in the following table ((Bachman, L. F. And S. J. Savignon, 1986:160):

Table 1
Mark Scheme from TEEP Attribute Writing Scales

No	Criteria	scales	Description
1	Relevance and Adequacy of Content	0	The answer bears almost no relation to the task set. Totally inadequate answer.
		1	Answer of limited relevance to the task set possibly major gaps in treatment of topic and/or pointless repetition.
		2	For the most part answers the tasks set, though there may be some gaps redundant information

		3	Relevant and adequate answer to the task set
2	Compositional organisation	0	No apparent organisation of content
		1	Very little organisation of content. Underlying structure not sufficiently apparent.
		2	Some organisational skills in evidence, but not adequately controlled.
		3	Overall shape and internal pattern clear. Organisational skills adequately controlled.
3	Cohesion	0	Cohesion almost totally absent. Writing so fragmentary that comprehension of the intended communication is virtually impossible.
		1	Unsatisfactory cohesion may cause difficulty in comprehension of most of the intended communication
		2	For the most part satisfactory cohesion though occasional deficiencies may mean that certain parts of the communication are not always effective
		3	Satisfactory use of cohesion resulting in effective communication
4	Adequacy of Vocabulary for purpose	0	Vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication
		1	Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps frequent lexical inappropriacies and/or repetition
		2	Some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.
		3	Almost inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.

5	Grammar	0	Almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate
		1	Frequent grammar inaccuracies
		2	Some grammatical inaccuracies
		3	Almost no grammatical inaccuracies
6	Mechanical accuracy 1 (Punctuation)	0	Ignorance of conventions of punctuation
		1	Low standard of accuracy in punctuation
		2	Some inaccuracies in punctuation
		3	Almost inaccuracies in punctuation
7	Mechanical Accuracy 2 (spelling)	0	Almost all spelling inaccurate
		1	Low standard of accuracy in spelling
		2	Some inaccuracies in spelling
		3	Almost no inaccuracies in spelling

Not every scoring system will give equally reliable results. The system has to be appropriate to the level of the students and the purpose of the test. For university students, the scoring system for testing writing should also consider these two points. Some universities already referred the following scoring system:

NS	Native speaker standard
NS-	Close to native speaker standard
MA	Clearly more than adequate
MA-	Possibly more than adequate
A	Adequate for study at this university
D	Doubtful
NA	Clearly not adequate
FBA	Far below adequacy

This worked perfectly well in the situation for which it was designed. The purpose the writing component of the test was to determine whether a student's writing ability was adequate

for study in English in that university. The standard set were based on an examination of undergraduate student's written work and their teachers' judgement as to the acceptability of the English therein. Students have to be prepared to modify existing scales to suit their own purposes. The following is the banding system as a revised scale for British Council's ELTS test (Hughes, Arthur, 1989:87).

Table 2
**Banding System of Writing Test Scale
from British Council's ELTS Test**

No	Band	Description
1	9	The writing displays an ability to communicate in a way which gives the reader full satisfaction. It displays a completely logical organizational structure which enables the message to be followed effortlessly. Relevant arguments are presented in an interesting way, with main ideas prominently and clearly stated, with completely effective supporting material; arguments are effectively related to the writer's experience or views. There are no errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar and the writing shows an ability to manipulate the linguistic systems with complete appropriacy.
2	8	The writing displays an ability to communicate without causing the reader any difficulties. It displays a logical organizational structure which enables the message to be followed easily. Relevant arguments are presented in an interesting way, with main ideas highlighted, effective supporting material and they are well related to the writer's own experience or views. There are no significant errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar and the writing reveals an ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately.

3	7	The writing displays an ability to communicate with few difficulties for the reader. It displays good organizational structure which enables the message to be followed without much effort. Arguments are well presented with relevant supporting material and an attempt to relate them to the writer's experience or views. The reader is aware of but not troubled by occasional minor errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar, and/or some limitations to the writer's ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately.
4	6	The writing displays an ability to communicate although there is occasional strain for the reader. It is organized well enough for the message to be followed throughout. Arguments are presented but it may be difficult for the reader to distinguish main ideas from supporting material; main ideas may not be supported; their relevance may be dubious; arguments may not be related to writer's experience or views. The reader is aware of errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar, and/or limited ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately, but these intrude only occasionally.
5	5	The writing displays an ability to communicate although there is often strain for the reader. It is organized well enough for the message to be followed most of the time. Arguments are presented but may lack relevance, clarity, consistency or support; they may not be related to the writer's experience or views. The reader is aware of errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar which intrude frequently, and of limited ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately.
6	4	The writing displays a limited ability to communicate which puts strain on the reader throughout. It lacks a clear organizational structure and the message is difficult to follow. Arguments are inadequately presented and supported. They may be irrelevant; if the writer's experience or views are presented their relevance may be difficult to see. The control of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar is inadequate, and the writer displays inability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately, causing severe strain for the reader.

7	3	The writing does not display an ability to communicate although meaning comes through spasmodically. The reader cannot find any organizational structure and cannot follow a message. Some elements of information are present but the reader is not provided with an argument, or the argument is mainly irrelevant. The reader is primarily aware of gross inadequacies of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar; the writer seems to have no sense of linguistic appropriacy, although there is evidence of sentence structure.
8	2	The writing displays no ability to communicate. No organizational structure or message is recognizable. A meaning comes through occasionally but it is not relevant. There is no evidence of control of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar, and no sense of linguistic appropriacy.
9	1	A true non-writer who has not produced any assessable strings of English writing. An answer which is wholly or almost wholly copied from the input text or task is in this category
10	0	Should only be used where a student did not attend or attempt this part of the test in any way. (example: did not submit an answer paper with his/her name and student number written on)

As can be seen, there are nine bands, each one having a description of the writer at each level. Band 7 is a not untypical standard demanded for entry into British universities. These descriptions have two advantages. First, they may help the scorer assign students to bands accurately. Secondly, they make the band scores more meaningful to the people to whom they may be reported.

American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) describes another criteria by including external criteria against which foreign language learning in schools and colleges can be assessed. They are novice-low, novice-mid, novice-high, intermediate-low, intermediate-mid and intermediate -high. The criteria covers spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the control of writing system. The descriptions imply a pattern of development common to all language learners.

Based on some thories above, it can be concluded that the criteria of marking for writing test which is commonly used for university students are:

1. Relevance and adequacy of content
2. Organisation
3. Cohesion
4. Adequacy of vocabulary for purpose
5. Grammar
6. Punctuation
7. Spelling
8. Appropriateness of language to context, function and intention and appropriateness of layout.

D. The Scoring System of Writing Test

Methods of scoring which require a separate score for each of a number of aspects of a task are said to be analytic. In discussing the theories about criteria of marking for writing test above, it has been explained clearly also the bands and scale for each criteria.

ELTS test uses 9 bands: 0- 9, Global Assessment Scale for writing in Mark Scheme uses Grade 1, grade 2-, grade 2+, grade 3, grade 4 till Grade 5, IELTS simplifies the scales into ranges. TEEP attribute writing scales explains 7 level by using 0 untill 3 scale for each aspect of marking. The following scale, devised by John Anderson, is based on an oral ability scale in Haris (Harris. D. P, 1968).

Tabel 3
Scales of Scoring for writing test proposed by John Anderson

No	Criteria	Scale	Description
1	Grammar	6	Few (if any) noticeable errors of grammar or word order
		5	Some errors of grammar or word order which do not, however, interfere with comprehension.

		4	Errors of grammar or word order fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension
		3	Errors of grammar or word order frequent; efforts of interpretation sometimes required on reader's part;
		2	Errors of grammar or word order very frequent; reader often has to rely on own interpretation
		1	Errors of grammar or word order so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible
2	vocabulary	6	Use of vocabulary and idiom rarely (if at all) distinguishable from that of educated native writer
		5	Occasionally uses inappropriate terms or relies on circumlocution; expression of ideas hardly impaired
		4	Uses wrong or inappropriate words fairly frequently; expression of ideas may be limited because of inadequate vocabulary
		3	Limited vocabulary and frequent errors clearly hinder expression of ideas
		2	Vocabulary so limited and so frequently misused that reader must often rely on own interpretation
		1	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make comprehension virtually impossible
3	Mechanics	6	Few (if any) noticeable lapses in punctuation or spelling
		5	Occasional lapses in punctuation or spelling which do not, however, interfere with comprehension
		4	Errors in punctuation or spelling fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension.
		3	Frequent errors in spelling or punctuation; lead sometimes to obscurity
		2	Errors in spelling or punctuation so frequent that reader must often rely on own interpretation

		1	Errors in spelling or punctuation so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.
4	fluency	6	Choice of structures and vocabulary consistently appropriate; like that of educated native speaker
		5	Occasional lack of consistency in choice of structures and vocabulary which does not, however, impair overall ease of communication
		4	'Patchy', with some structures or vocabulary items noticeably inappropriate to general style
		3	Structures or vocabulary items sometimes not only inappropriate but also misused; little sense or ease of communication
		2	Communication often impaired by completely inappropriate or misused structures or vocabulary items
		1	A 'hotch-potch' of half-learned misused structures and vocabulary items rendering communication almost impossible
5	form	6	Highly organised; clear progression of ideas well linked; like educated native writer
		5	Material well organised; links could occasionally be clearer but communication not impaired
		4	Some lack of organisation; re-reading required for clarification of ideas.
		3	Little or no attempt at connectivity, though reader can deduce some organisation
		2	Individual ideas may be clear, but very difficult to deduce connection between them
		1	Lack of organisation so severe that communication is seriously impaired.

SCORE: Grammar + Vocabulary + Mechanics + Form

The following is an example of IELTS Writing Mark Schemes
The two writing questions are marked out of 9 according to

the following criteria:

1. Task Achievement
2. Coherence and Cohesion
3. Lexical Resource
4. Grammatical Range and Accuracy

E. **Finding**

It is found that Writing lecturers used Editing mostly but in different way, they asked each student to write a passage based on the selected theme and then asked another students or their friends to edit the writing. The proses of editing covered the grammar/tenses, punctuation and the letter writing. In conclusion, the format used by Writing Lecturers in testing their students' writing ability are Gap Filling, Form Completion, Information transfer task, Letter writing, Integrating reading into Writing, Open-ended Essay Test, Responding to a given Information, Moreover, there are three formats of test that never been used by the lecturers, they are copying, editing and making correction. The finding also shows that The Criteria of marking that are dominantly used by the writing lecturers are Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Relevance and Adequacy of Content. There are some criteria do not perform at all, they are Appropriateness of language context function and intention and appropriateness of lay out, Organization, Relevance and adequacy of content, Adequacy of vocabulary for purpose. The four writing lecturers do not include the score for each criterion of marking suggested by the theories. The lecturers' marking scheme for speaking subject is based on the marking scale given by STAIN as the following:

1. 00 – 49 = E (failed)
2. 50 – 59 = D
3. 60 – 69 = C
4. 70 – 85 = B
5. 86 – 100 = A

The score for each criteria is not clear. The score for writing comes from the consideration of the lecturers themselves after they evaluate all task in unity. The researcher didn't find any scales in accordance to the theory, particularly for each criteria.

Setting writing tests that are properly representative of the population of tasks that we should expect the students to be able to perform and eliciting samples of writing which truly represent the students' ability which are essential that the samples can and will be scored reliably, are not easy. Even professional testing institution are unable to construct indirect tests which measure writing ability accurately. However, in designing writing test, it is important for the teachers to guide theory and use it in contextual situation.

A teacher's first responsibility is to provide opportunities for writing and encouragement for students who attempt to write. A teacher's second responsibility is to promote students' success in writing. The teacher does this by carefully monitoring students' writing to assess strengths and weaknesses, teaching specific skills and strategies in response to student needs, and giving careful feedback that will reinforce newly learned skills and correct recurring problems. These responsibilities reveal, upon inspection, that assessment is clearly an integral part of good instruction. In their review of the existing research on effective instruction Christenson, Ysseldyke, and Thurlow found that, in addition to other factors, the following conditions were positively correlated to pupil achievement: The degree to which there is an appropriate instructional match between student characteristics and task characteristics (in other words, teachers must assess the student's prior knowledge and current level of skills in order to match them to a task that is relevant and appropriate to their aptitudes); The degree to which the teacher actively monitors students' understanding and progress; and the degree to which student performance is evaluated frequently and appropriately (congruent with what is taught).

Assessment, therefore, is an essential component of effective instruction. Airasian identified three types of classroom assessments. The first he called "sizing-up" assessments, usually done during the first week of school to provide the teacher with quick information about the students when beginning their instruction. The second type, instructional assessments, are used for the daily tasks of planning instruction, giving feedback, and monitoring student progress. The third type he referred to as official assessments, which are the periodic formal functions of assessment for grouping, grading, and reporting. In other words, teachers use assessment for identifying strengths and weaknesses, planning instruction to fit diagnosed needs, evaluating instructional activities, giving feedback, monitoring performance, and reporting progress. Simple curriculum-based methods for assessing written expression can meet all these purposes.

Curriculum-based assessment must start with an inspection of the curriculum. Many writing curricula are based on a conceptual model that takes into account process, product, and purpose. This conceptual model, therefore, forms the framework for the simple assessment techniques that follow. The diagnostic uses of assessment (determining the reasons for writing problems and the student's instructional needs) are best met by looking at the process of writing, i.e., the steps students go through and strategies they use as they work at writing. How much planning does the student do before he or she writes? Does she have a strategy for organizing ideas? What seem to be the obstacles to getting thoughts down on paper? How does the student attempt to spell words she does not know? Does the student reread what she has written? Does the student talk about or share her work with others as she is writing it? What kind of changes does the student make to her first draft?

In order to make instructionally relevant observations, the observer must work from a conceptual model of what

the writing process should be. Educators have reached little consensus regarding the number of steps in the writing process. Writing experts have proposed as few as two and as many as nine. Englert, Raphael, Anderson, Anthony, and Stevens provided a model of a five-step writing process using the acronym POWER: Plan, Organize, Write, Edit, and Revise. Each step has its own substeps and strategies that become more sophisticated as the students become more mature as writers, accommodating their style to specific text structures and purposes of writing. Assessment of the writing process can be done through observation of students as they go through the steps of writing.

Having students assess their own writing process is also important for two reasons. First, self-assessment allows students an opportunity to observe and reflect on their own approach, drawing attention to important steps that may be overlooked. Second, self-assessment following a conceptual model like POWER is a means of internalizing an explicit strategy, allowing opportunities for the student to mentally rehearse the strategy steps. Figure 1 is a format for both self-observation and teacher observation of the writing process following the POWER strategy. Similar self-assessments or observation checklists could be constructed for other conceptual models of the writing process.

An effective writing process should lead to a successful product. A writing product fulfills its communicative intent if it is of appropriate length, is logical and coherent, and has a readable format. It is a pleasure to read if it is composed of well-constructed sentences and a rich variety of words that clearly convey the author's meaning. When various conceptual models of writing are compared side by side (Isaacson, 1984) five product variables seem to emerge: fluency, content, conventions, syntax, and vocabulary. Too often teachers focus their attention primarily on surface features of a student's composition related to the mechanical aspects of writing, or conventions. A balanced

assessment should look at all five aspects of a student's writing. The following are simple methods for assessing each product variable. In some instances quantifiable measures are used; in others, qualitative assessments seem more appropriate.

The first writing skill a teacher might assess with a beginning writer is fluency: being able to translate one's thoughts into written words. As concepts of print and fine motor skills develop, the student should become more proficient at writing down words and sentences into compositions of gradually increasing length. The developmental route of very young writers involves trying to understand what written language is about as they look at books, become aware of environmental print, and put pencil to paper. Then children try to relate their experiences in writing using invented spelling. As they begin to construct little stories they explore spelling patterns and develop new language patterns. Clay recommends a simple rating scale for emerging writing skills that focuses on language level (from only letters to sentences and paragraphs), message quality, and directional principles.

In answering the second research question of this research, the finding shows that, the writing lecturers put great concern on grammar, punctuation, spelling and content as the main criteria of marking. Grammar covers how accurate the grammatical patterns used. Punctuation is defined as mechanical accuracy, almost no inaccuracies in punctuation is considered highly. The second mechanical accuracy is spelling. The other criteria is relevance and adequacy of content. The phenomena is all lecturers did not include clear marking scheme for each criteria while from interview, all of them confesses that they use scale in classifying the mark. The mark of their scoring scheme was only the scale of final result for writing test made by institution: (00 – 49) = E (failed), (50 – 59) = D, (60 – 69) = C, (70 – 85) = B, (86 – 100) = A. There is only one lecturer classifies each criteria into specific mark. The following is the scoring scheme:

4 Accomplished (Shows skill; many strengths present); 3. Competent (On balance the strengths outweigh the weaknesses); 2. Developing (Strengths and need for revision are about equal); 1. Beginning (Need for revision outweighs strengths) Overall. The composition for the mark for each criteria is as follow:

24% , 24%, 52%, 0%. Thesis: 22%, 37% , 37%, 4%. Organization: 18%, 39% 43%, 0%. Support: 22%, 37%, 41%, 0%. Style: 26%, 52%, 22%, 0% Mechanics: 28%, 57%, 15%, 0%. The total mark is 100.

F. Conclusion

The objective of the teaching of writing in a foreign language is to get learners to acquire the abilities and skills they need to produce a range of different kinds of written texts similar to those an educated person would be expected to be able to produce in their own language. Writing is widely used within foreign language courses as a convenient means for engaging with aspects of language other than the writing itself. For example: learners note down new vocabulary; copy out grammar rules; write out answers to reading or listening comprehension questions; do written tests. In these examples, writing is simply used either as a means of getting the students to attend to and practice a particular language point, or even more frequently as a convenient method of testing it: providing information as to how well something has been learned in a form which the teacher can then check at his or her leisure.

Other activities take as their main objective the writing itself. At the micro level they practice specific written forms at the level of word or sentence (handwriting or typing, spelling, punctuation); at the macro level the emphasis is on content and organization: tasks invite learners to express themselves using their own words, state a purpose for writing. And often specify an audience. Examples of such activities would be: narrating a story, writing a letter. A third kind activity combines purposeful

and original writing with the learning or practice of some other skill or content. For example, a written response to the reading of a controversial newspaper article (combines writing with reading); the writing of anecdotes to illustrate the meaning of idioms combines writing with vocabulary practice). In principle, the purpose of writing is the expression of ideas, the conveying of a message to the reader; so the ideas themselves should arguably be seen as the most important aspect of writing. On the other hand, the writer needs also to pay some attention to formal aspects, neat handwriting, correct spelling and punctuation, as well as acceptable grammar and careful selection of vocabulary.

It is important to review the theories in deciding the criteria, the format and the scoring scheme of testing writing skill. The lecturers are supposed to be consistent, if they have selected the criteria of marking, they should draw a scale or a specific mark for each criteria. In conclusion, the testing should represent students' ability in writing.

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VISITOR

AN ANALYSIS OF MARKING SYSTEM USED BY WRITING LECTURERS OF STAIN CURUP IN TESTING STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY

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Abstract

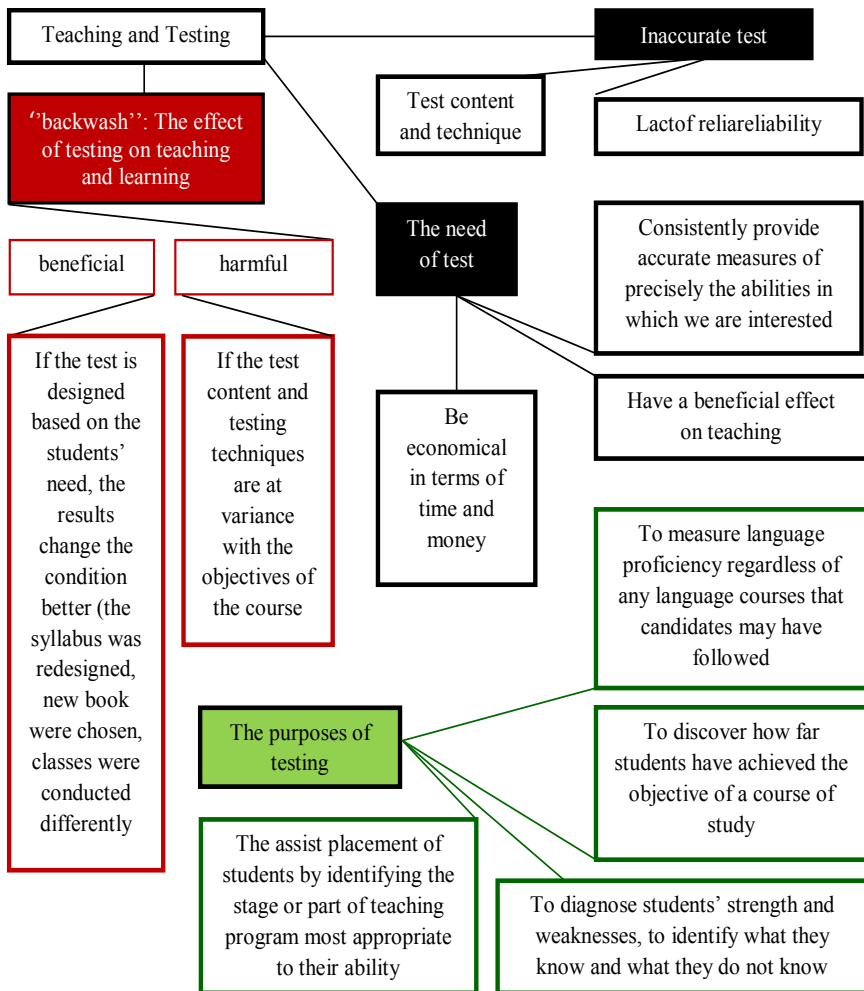
This is a descriptive study which is presented in narative way since the data is analysed by using verbal explanation. The reseracher collects the data about Writing test format, the criteria of marking and the scoring system used by Writing lecturers of STAIN Curup deeply. The subjects of this reserach are Writing Letcurers in English Tadris Study Program of STAIN Curup. A checklist and an interview guidance are used as the intruments of this research to gain the data on format of writing test and the criteria of marking. Fieldnotes are also taken in order to observe some data which is not performed in observation and also used to triangulate the whole result. Observation, document analysis and interview are the techniques in collecting data. The finding of this research shows that Writing lecturers use Gap Filling, Form Completion, Information transfer task, Letter writing, Integrating reading into Writing, Open-ended Essay Test, Responding to a given Information are their formats in testing students' writing ability. The finding also finds that the criteria of marking used by the Writing lecturers are Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Relevance and Adequacy of Content. Unfortunately the

writing lecturers do not include the score for each criteria. The scoring scheme is only based on the scheme designed by institusion (STAIN Curup) they are: 00 – 49 = E (gagal), 50 – 59 = D, 60 – 69 = C, 70 – 85 = B dan 86 – 100 = A. There is also no scale of scoring for each aspect of writing. It is important for writing lecturers to include the score for each criteria of marking in writing test as suggested by the theory. It can improve the objectivity of scoring and directly minimize the subjectivity. Eventhough the institution has its own regulation in calculating the score, the writing lecturers also need to consider the purpose of teaching writing skill itself.

Keywords: *Format of test, Criteria of Marking, scoring scheme*

A. Introduction

Communicative testing must be devoted not only to what the learner knows about the foreign language and about how to use it (competence) but also to what extent the learner is able to actually demonstrate this knowledge in a meaningful communicative situation. Testing plays a very important role in teaching as in following diagram(Bachman F, Lyle,1990:18):

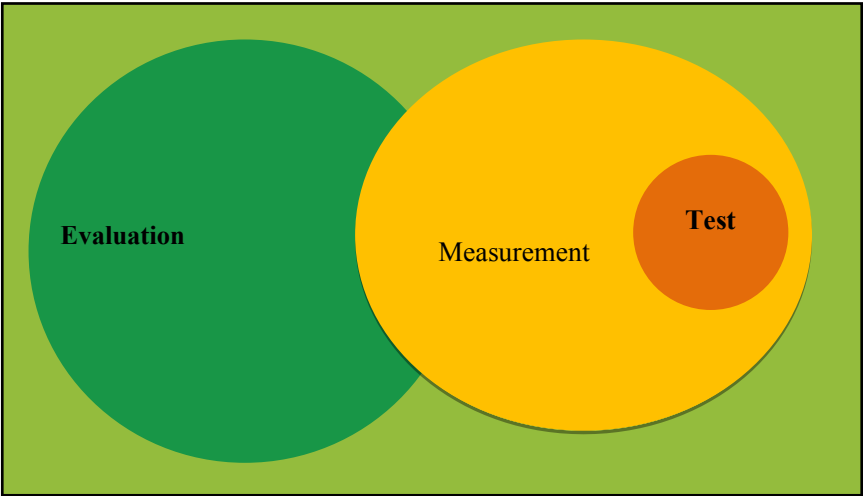


Nunan argues that the measurement of student performance is the key to program evaluation (David Nunan, 1992:185). The researcher who uses assessment data as the key element in a evaluation has to give careful consideration to three factors: these are: 1. The nature of the evidence to be used, 2. The relationship between evaluation and the program goals, and 3. The appropriate measurements to be used (David Nunan,1992:186). A test of discrete grammatical items constructed for this purpose might be found to correlate highly with an external criterion, for instance another established test concurrently administered or a measure taken at a later date,

such as final academic grades.

Related to this argument, the researcher tries to describe the relationship among evaluation, measurement and test as in following diagram:

Diagram 2
The Relation among Evaluation, Measurement and Test



Evaluation can be defined as the systematic gathering of information for the purpose of making decisions(Bachman, F. Lyle, 1990:22). Evaluation, does not necessarily entail testing, while tests are often used for pedagogical purposes, either as a means of motivating students to study, or as reviewing material taught. Test may also be used for purely descriptive purposes only when the results of tests are used as a basis for making a decision that evaluation is involved. Test is a measurement instrument designed to elicit a specific sample of an individual’s behavior.

Nowadays a goal of testing English skills is not only to the competence of English language that is the knowledge of language but also to the performance of those skills. This term is familiar with communicative competence which can be applied for all English skills, reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

In related to this goal, it is important to carefully design test for testing English skills. There are variety of tests formats offered by some English experts which is suitable for each skill, such as multiple choice, essay, short answer question for testing reading, role play for testing speaking, summary for testing writing and many others. The variety of test format need to introduce to the students in order to elicit their knowledge not only the competence but more to the use of the knowledge in communication.

Other aspect of communicative language testing is validity and reliability (Weir, Cyril J, 1993:19). Weir includes the point of validity and reliability as the general principles for test construction. To the extent that tests can have a beneficial influence on the teaching that precedes them, there can be a positive wash back effect from tests on teaching. It is important therefor that test sample. As widely as possible relevant, criteria and communicative items from the syllabus or from the future target situation where this can be specified. The more representative the sample of tasks from their domain, the better the washback effect. The purpose of the test must be clear to all students taking it and teachers preparing candidates for it. The more it enhances the achievement of desirable language objectives the greater its contribution to successful teaching and the more all concerned will see the value of testing in the curriculum. If a test is unreliable, it cannot be valid. For a test to be valid, it must reliable. However, just because a test is reliable does not mean it will be valid. Reliability is necessary but not sufficient condition for validity.

Scoring procedure is another important aspect of testing. Subjective tests are distinguished from objective tests entirely in terms of scoring procedure. All other aspects of tests involve subjective decisions. The teacher uses the best information at hand (Curriculum content) to subjectively determine the content to be covered, in the other side, he makes subjective decisions about how best to construct the test items. Tests are

also subjective in the taking, since the students are also make decisions how best to answer the questions, be they essay or multiple choice. In an objective test the correctness of the students' response is determined entirely by predetermined criteria so that no judgement is required on the part of scores. In subjective test, on the other hand, the teacher must make a judgement about the correctness of the response based on his subjective interpretation of the scoring criteria. Cloze tests and dictations, for example, can be scored objectively by providing the students with scoring keys that specify exactly which words are acceptable and which are not. Tests such as oral interview or the written composition that involve the use of rating scale are necessarily subjectively scored, since there is no feasible way to objectify the scoring procedure.

In STAIN Curup, the evaluation system is given to the lecturers independently. The institution only writes the marking guidelines and for the final achievement test. Lecturers' knowledge and understanding about how to design communicative language test is not yet evaluated and supervised. In other side, the goal of teaching the four basic English skills is to develop students' communicative competence. Moreover, the role of *Dosen payung* who act as senior lecturers is also not yet maximal since their credits are over limites and almost have no spare time to discuss the evaluation, particularly the marking system, for each English skill.

Moreover, as one of the four basic skills, testing writing is likely to be more subjective test than the others. As a productive and written test, it also has some aspects to be tested as the marking criteria and needs spesific attention on scoring scheme. It is important to design a marking system that may represent the real ability of students. The students will be able to evaluate themselves by recognising their weaknesses and developing their strengths. By offering some criteria of marking, the teacher would also be proffesional in helping the students to develop their communicative competence.

Furthermore, the marking system which has detail supported criteria and clear scoring scheme could become a valid source to describe the level of testees, the students. The marking of writing tests will always be at least somewhat subjective, but the use of descriptors for each level of the marking scheme can at least help make the marking consistent. One possibility is to make a marking scheme for the overall quality of the writing, but the problem is that, for example, the grammar can be good but the organization poor. It is perhaps more useful to have different sets of descriptors for each aspect of writing that the teacher wants to consider. Teacher might want to have descriptors for grammatical correctness, use of vocabulary, content, organization, and mechanics. These categories might be weighted differently, depending on what your teacher wants to emphasize.

Based on some theories and facts above, the researcher is intended to investigate the marking system used by English lecturers of STAIN Curup in testing students' writing ability.

B. Formats for Testing Writing

In deciding the formats to be used in testing writing, there are several points should be considered. It should be clear enough about what operations can be tested through the formats, the advantages and disadvantages of each format, the conditions under which the test is performed, and the criteria that would be employed in judgement of level. The particular conditions or operations in some formats may well be inappropriate for the students in particular context. The purpose of testing writing should also become another important consideration. There are two major uses of test: as sources of information for making decisions within the context of educational program and as indicator of abilities or attributes that are of interest in research on language (Bachman, Lyle. F, 1990:55). The following are the formats used to test writing ability (Weir, C. J, 1993:137):

1. Gap Filling

One of the most controlled ways of testing writing is gap filling. Testees are presented with a passage with blanks, and they fill in the blanks. This is a mixture of both reading and writing skills, which is sometimes a problem, because it makes it difficult to decide what the scores really mean. However, with lower level students, it might be the only reasonable test of productive ability. The potential value of these techniques for testing the more specifically linguistic skill such as understanding of vocabulary, structure or cohesion devices. A gap-fill test is an exercise in which words are removed from a text and replaced with spaces. The learner has to fill each space with the missing word or suitable word.

2. Copying

This is among the very first tasks along the road to productive writing. The test writer has managed to ensure that all the letters in the alphabet are contained in these sentences. The words in the test should be selected from the material covered in the course book and should not be too heavy a burden on the learners. The students are asked to copy the sentences that have been written before. This formats include the use of the semi-cursive script, spacing, writing on the line, punctuation, and spelling.

3. Form Completion

Another controlled way of testing writing is to have the testees fill out a form, for example, an application. The advantage of such a task is that it is at least somewhat communicative, but the disadvantage is that it does not require any connected discourse or any use of language greater than lexical knowledge and a small amount of grammar. Form filling examinations occurs in many examinations which lay claim to being communicative, since it has the outward appearance of being an authentic task which many students might have to perform in real

life. These would appear to be limited to expressing/giving specific information and the task involves reading as much as writing. In addition the criteria that can be applied to the product of this task are limited. Little more than spelling and lexical knowledge is available for comment. These formats ask the students to finish some incomplete forms, such as personal data and curriculum vitae.

4. Editing

In this task, the student is given a text containing a number of errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation typical of learners in his/her discourse community and is asked to make all necessary corrections. The tasks provide an objectively scored measure of linguistic competence, and in addition it may have a good washback effect in that students may be taught and encouraged to edit their written work more carefully. It is certainly more face valid than other indirect techniques we have looked at in this section, and it comes closer to stimulating a valuable part of the writing process. Furthermore, even if this task does relate to part of the writing process, it does not represent what people do when they write. It takes account of a very restricted range of the operation and conditions we have identified as potentially important.

5. Open-Ended Essay Test

This is a short literary composition on a particular theme, usually in prose and generally analytic, speculative or interpretative writing. The stimulus is usually written and can vary in length from a limited number of words to several sentences. Setting the tasks is a relatively easy affair. The topics tend to be very general and rely heavily on the candidate providing the content either through background or cultural knowledge, or through imagination. The students tend to approach an open-ended question in different ways, and may produce quite different text types, exhibiting a wide variety of operations. Essay writing

is probably one of the more common writing tasks, but it should be used carefully. If the future situation of the students will not include writing essays, the tester should carefully consider whether it is the best test of the students' writing ability.

6. Responding to given information

The students are invited to write their responds, for example, to a letter, responding to comments in form of semi-scripted, responding to information given in chart form, responding to information from a variety of written sources.

7. Information Transfer Task

This format ask the students to write the information they can see from a picture, for example, a process of making something; write the information that they see from the map by writing directions. These information transfer tasks, employing a largely non-verbal stimulus, may not prove as suitable in those contexts where the desire is to asses the ability to produce interactional, social and service texts. With concise, clear, accessible stimuli (tabulated data, graphs, pictures and drawings) the students do n ot have t o spend a long period of time decoding an extended written text. The more visual and the less verbal these stimuli are, the more efficiently they can be decoded. These semi-verbal to non-verbal stimuli can be used to elicit written performance of a number of different language operations such description of phenomena and ideas, argumentations, description of process, and also directing.

8. Integrated Reading into writing

This a test of students' ability to read and to write in English about what you have read. The students then have two tasks. The students are given a short reading text to be understood and later they are told to write the summary of the text.

9. Making Correction

In some situations, students are presented with a short piece of writing which has deliberate grammar, punctuation and spelling errors, and they are asked to correct the errors. While this task does related to one thing that people do when they write--editing--and it is objectively corrected, but it does not represent the writing task as a whole.

10. Letter Writing

Letter writing is a common task for writing tests. The stimulus for the letter may be a situation that is explained in the instructions, a letter to which the students are instructed to respond, information given in chart or graph form that is to be summarized in the students' letter, pictures or drawings that give information about a situation the students are expected to write a letter about, etc. In all of these possibilities, the tester must keep in mind that the situation must be as clear as possible for the testee, unless there is an intention to test reading and writing together. If the testee does not understand, for example, a letter that he/she is expected to respond to, it will be impossible to get a sample of writing to evaluate.

C. Criteria of marking for Writing Test

The ability to write involves at least six component skills. They are (Bachman, L. F. And S. J. Savignon, 1986:380-90):

1. grammatical ability. This is the ability to write English in grammatically correct sentences.
2. Lexical ability. The ability to choose words that are correct and used appropriately.
3. Mechanical ability. The ability to correctly use punctuation, spelling, capitalization, etc.
4. Stylistic skills. The ability to use sentences and paragraphs appropriately.
5. Organizational skills. The ability to organize written

work according to the conventions of English, including the order and selection of material.

6. Judgements of appropriacy. The ability to make judgements about what appropriate depending on the task, the purpose of the writing, and the audience.

Perhaps the most difficult--and most important--of these skills is the last. Native English speakers develop a sense of what is appropriate in different writing situations (though they may be taught to use specialized registers, such as academic English or business English). Registers of English range from very informal forms such as colloquialisms, slang, and jargon to standard English to more formal forms, such as the language used for business letters, legal documents, and academic papers. Writers must be aware of these differences and learn to follow the conventions of different situations. A writing test needs to take these skills into account.

Mark Scheme on Global Assessment scale for writing and International English Language Test System (IELTS) draws a range of marking the writing test into 5 grade as in the following (Bachman, L. F. And S. J. Savignon, 1986:157):

1. Grade 1 (IELTS 4)

A text which significantly fails to achieve the task in terms of content and organisation. It may be quite short. High incident of errors in grammar, vocabulary and spelling. Frequently incomprehensible. Argument falls into incoherences. Expression not appropriate to the situation or context. May lack control over syntax. Overall impression is of somebody using the language with considerable difficulty.

2. Grade 2- (IELTS 5-)

The text may either be under-developed or contain irrelevant information. Organisation is falwed or lacking in control. Student may be 'over-cautious' about exposing weaknesses. May be occasionally incomprehensible. Expression largely or consistenly unidiomatic. Ocasional

gross inadequacy of grammatical usage. Cohesion barely adequate, unsatisfactory use or absence of connectors. Conclusion of tenses evident. Overall impression is of someone using the language with difficulty.

3. Grade 2+ (IELTS 5+)

Content may be relevant and given some degree of development but is probably rather simplistic. Likely to show at least a modicum of skill in organisation. Occasionally more ambitious use of vocabulary. Unidiomatic expression evident, though simpler uses may be accurate. Relatively satisfactory use of connectors. Simple sentence without much variety of structure. Some lapses in coherence, but errors do not seriously interfere comprehension. Overall impression is of someone able to communicate at superficial level with limited accuracy.

4. Grade 3 (IELTS 6)

Content is relevant, adequately developed and organised. Communicate meaning without undue demands on the reader. Expression is occasionally unidiomatic, though lapses from standard English are not gross. Mostly coherence and cohesive. Appropriate to the context in terms of expression. Largely accurate in the use of relative structures, where appropriate. Overall impression is of someone operates competently within a limited range of language and has some command over style and expression.

5. Grade 4 (IELTS 7/8)

Content is relevant and well developed. Shows clear competence in organisation. Very few if any errors of grammar, vocabulary and spelling. Language is largely idiomatic, though there may be occasional minor lapses. Points are interesting, appropriately-expressed and coherently-organised at both paragraph and essay level. Fluent command over style and expression.

6. Grade 5 (IELTS 9)

Content is relevant. Fully developed and comprehensive. May be imaginative in its approach. Organisation is excellent. Virtually indistinguishable from the English of well-educated native speaker. Literate, coherent, interesting and of some length. High degree of fluent command over style and expression.

While Mark Scheme from TEEP attribute writing scales explains the marking system for writing test more practice to the component being marked: relevance and adequacy of content, organisation, cohesion, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, punctuation and spelling. This can include, for example, what to do if a student writes a very short piece of work, what to do if he/she writes a prepared script which is only tangentially connected to the task set, what to do if the candidate does not take risks and uses an extremely limited structural range.

The detail description for each range of scale in marking system according to Mark Scheme in TEEP is explained in the following table ((Bachman, L. F. And S. J. Savignon, 1986:160):

Table 1
Mark Scheme from TEEP Attribute Writing Scales

No	Criteria	scales	Description
1	Relevance and Adequacy of Content	0	The answer bears almost no relation to the task set. Totally inadequate answer.
		1	Answer of limited relevance to the task set possibly major gaps in treatment of topic and/or pointless repetition.
		2	For the most part answers the tasks set, though there may be some gaps redundant information

		3	Relevant and adequate answer to the task set
2	Compositional organisation	0	No apparent organisation of content
		1	Very little organisation of content. Underlying structure not sufficiently apparent.
		2	Some organisational skills in evidence, but not adequately controlled.
		3	Overall shape and internal pattern clear. Organisational skills adequately controlled.
3	Cohesion	0	Cohesion almost totally absent. Writing so fragmentary that comprehension of the intended communication is virtually impossible.
		1	Unsatisfactory cohesion may cause difficulty in comprehension of most of the intended communication
		2	For the most part satisfactory cohesion though occasional deficiencies may mean that certain parts of the communication are not always effective
		3	Satisfactory use of cohesion resulting in effective communication
4	Adequacy of Vocabulary for purpose	0	Vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication
		1	Frequent inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps frequent lexical inappropriacies and/or repetition
		2	Some inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Perhaps some lexical inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.
		3	Almost inadequacies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare inappropriacies and/or circumlocution.

5	Grammar	0	Almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate
		1	Frequent grammar inaccuracies
		2	Some grammatical inaccuracies
		3	Almost no grammatical inaccuracies
6	Mechanical accuracy 1 (Punctuation)	0	Ignorance of conventions of punctuation
		1	Low standard of accuracy in punctuation
		2	Some inaccuracies in punctuation
		3	Almost inaccuracies in punctuation
7	Mechanical Accuracy 2 (spelling)	0	Almost all spelling inaccurate
		1	Low standard of accuracy in spelling
		2	Some inaccuracies in spelling
		3	Almost no inaccuracies in spelling

Not every scoring system will give equally reliable results. The system has to be appropriate to the level of the students and the purpose of the test. For university students, the scoring system for testing writing should also consider these two points. Some universities already referred the following scoring system:

NS	Native speaker standard
NS-	Close to native speaker standard
MA	Clearly more than adequate
MA-	Possibly more than adequate
A	Adequate for study at this university
D	Doubtful
NA	Clearly not adequate
FBA	Far below adequacy

This worked perfectly well in the situation for which it was designed. The purpose the writing component of the test was to determine whether a student's writing ability was adequate

for study in English in that university. The standard set were based on an examination of undergraduate student's written work and their teachers' judgement as to the acceptability of the English therein. Students have to be prepared to modify existing scales to suit their own purposes. The following is the banding system as a revised scale for British Council's ELTS test (Hughes, Arthur, 1989:87).

Table 2
**Banding System of Writing Test Scale
from British Council's ELTS Test**

No	Band	Description
1	9	The writing displays an ability to communicate in a way which gives the reader full satisfaction. It displays a completely logical organizational structure which enables the message to be followed effortlessly. Relevant arguments are presented in an interesting way, with main ideas prominently and clearly stated, with completely effective supporting material; arguments are effectively related to the writer's experience or views. There are no errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar and the writing shows an ability to manipulate the linguistic systems with complete appropriacy.
2	8	The writing displays an ability to communicate without causing the reader any difficulties. It displays a logical organizational structure which enables the message to be followed easily. Relevant arguments are presented in an interesting way, with main ideas highlighted, effective supporting material and they are well related to the writer's own experience or views. There are no significant errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar and the writing reveals an ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately.

3	7	The writing displays an ability to communicate with few difficulties for the reader. It displays good organizational structure which enables the message to be followed without much effort. Arguments are well presented with relevant supporting material and an attempt to relate them to the writer's experience or views. The reader is aware of but not troubled by occasional minor errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, or grammar, and/or some limitations to the writer's ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately.
4	6	The writing displays an ability to communicate although there is occasional strain for the reader. It is organized well enough for the message to be followed throughout. Arguments are presented but it may be difficult for the reader to distinguish main ideas from supporting material; main ideas may not be supported; their relevance may be dubious; arguments may not be related to writer's experience or views. The reader is aware of errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar, and/or limited ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately, but these intrude only occasionally.
5	5	The writing displays an ability to communicate although there is often strain for the reader. It is organized well enough for the message to be followed most of the time. Arguments are presented but may lack relevance, clarity, consistency or support; they may not be related to the writer's experience or views. The reader is aware of errors of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar which intrude frequently, and of limited ability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately.
6	4	The writing displays a limited ability to communicate which puts strain on the reader throughout. It lacks a clear organizational structure and the message is difficult to follow. Arguments are inadequately presented and supported. They may be irrelevant; if the writer's experience or views are presented their relevance may be difficult to see. The control of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar is inadequate, and the writer displays inability to manipulate the linguistic systems appropriately, causing severe strain for the reader.

7	3	The writing does not display an ability to communicate although meaning comes through spasmodically. The reader cannot find any organizational structure and cannot follow a message. Some elements of information are present but the reader is not provided with an argument, or the argument is mainly irrelevant. The reader is primarily aware of gross inadequacies of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and grammar; the writer seems to have no sense of linguistic appropriacy, although there is evidence of sentence structure.
8	2	The writing displays no ability to communicate. No organizational structure or message is recognizable. A meaning comes through occasionally but it is not relevant. There is no evidence of control of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or grammar, and no sense of linguistic appropriacy.
9	1	A true non-writer who has not produced any assessable strings of English writing. An answer which is wholly or almost wholly copied from the input text or task is in this category
10	0	Should only be used where a student did not attend or attempt this part of the test in any way. (example: did not submit an answer paper with his/her name and student number written on)

As can be seen, there are nine bands, each one having a description of the writer at each level. Band 7 is a not untypical standard demanded for entry into British universities. These descriptions have two advantages. First, they may help the scorer assign students to bands accurately. Secondly, they make the band scores more meaningful to the people to whom they may be reported.

American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) describes another criteria by including external criteria against which foreign language learning in schools and colleges can be assessed. They are novice-low, novice-mid, novice-high, intermediate-low, intermediate-mid and intermediate -high. The criteria covers spelling, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the control of writing system. The descriptions imply a pattern of development common to all language learners.

Based on some thories above, it can be concluded that the criteria of marking for writing test which is commonly used for university students are:

1. Relevance and adequacy of content
2. Organisation
3. Cohesion
4. Adequacy of vocabulary for purpose
5. Grammar
6. Punctuation
7. Spelling
8. Appropriateness of language to context, function and intention and appropriateness of layout.

D. The Scoring System of Writing Test

Methods of scoring which require a separate score for each of a number of aspects of a task are said to be analytic. In discussing the theories about criteria of marking for writing test above, it has been explained clearly also the bands and scale for each criteria.

ELTS test uses 9 bands: 0- 9, Global Assessment Scale for writing in Mark Scheme uses Grade 1, grade 2-, grade 2+, grade 3, grade 4 till Grade 5, IELTS simplifies the scales into ranges. TEEP attribute writing scales explains 7 level by using 0 untill 3 scale for each aspect of marking. The following scale, devised by John Anderson, is based on an oral ability scale in Haris (Harris. D. P, 1968).

Tabel 3
Scales of Scoring for writing test proposed by John Anderson

No	Criteria	Scale	Description
1	Grammar	6	Few (if any) noticeable errors of grammar or word order
		5	Some errors of grammar or word order which do not, however, interfere with comprehension.

		4	Errors of grammar or word order fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension
		3	Errors of grammar or word order frequent; efforts of interpretation sometimes required on reader's part;
		2	Errors of grammar or word order very frequent; reader often has to rely on own interpretation
		1	Errors of grammar or word order so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible
2	vocabulary	6	Use of vocabulary and idiom rarely (if at all) distinguishable from that of educated native writer
		5	Occasionally uses inappropriate terms or relies on circumlocution; expression of ideas hardly impaired
		4	Uses wrong or inappropriate words fairly frequently; expression of ideas may be limited because of inadequate vocabulary
		3	Limited vocabulary and frequent errors clearly hinder expression of ideas
		2	Vocabulary so limited and so frequently misused that reader must often rely on own interpretation
		1	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make comprehension virtually impossible
3	Mechanics	6	Few (if any) noticeable lapses in punctuation or spelling
		5	Occasional lapses in punctuation or spelling which do not, however, interfere with comprehension
		4	Errors in punctuation or spelling fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension.
		3	Frequent errors in spelling or punctuation; lead sometimes to obscurity
		2	Errors in spelling or punctuation so frequent that reader must often rely on own interpretation

		1	Errors in spelling or punctuation so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.
4	fluency	6	Choice of structures and vocabulary consistently appropriate; like that of educated native speaker
		5	Occasional lack of consistency in choice of structures and vocabulary which does not, however, impair overall ease of communication
		4	'Patchy', with some structures or vocabulary items noticeably inappropriate to general style
		3	Structures or vocabulary items sometimes not only inappropriate but also misused; little sense or ease of communication
		2	Communication often impaired by completely inappropriate or misused structures or vocabulary items
		1	A 'hotch-potch' of half-learned misused structures and vocabulary items rendering communication almost impossible
5	form	6	Highly organised; clear progression of ideas well linked; like educated native writer
		5	Material well organised; links could occasionally be clearer but communication not impaired
		4	Some lack of organisation; re-reading required for clarification of ideas.
		3	Little or no attempt at connectivity, though reader can deduce some organisation
		2	Individual ideas may be clear, but very difficult to deduce connection between them
		1	Lack of organisation so severe that communication is seriously impaired.

SCORE: Grammar + Vocabulary + Mechanics + Form

The following is an example of IELTS Writing Mark Schemes
The two writing questions are marked out of 9 according to

the following criteria:

1. Task Achievement
2. Coherence and Cohesion
3. Lexical Resource
4. Grammatical Range and Accuracy

E. **Finding**

It is found that Writing lecturers used Editing mostly but in different way, they asked each student to write a passage based on the selected theme and then asked another students or their friends to edit the writing. The proses of editing covered the grammar/tenses, punctuation and the letter writing. In conclusion, the format used by Writing Lecturers in testing their students' writing ability are Gap Filling, Form Completion, Information transfer task, Letter writing, Integrating reading into Writing, Open-ended Essay Test, Responding to a given Information, Moreover, there are three formats of test that never been used by the lecturers, they are copying, editing and making correction. The finding also shows that The Criteria of marking that are dominantly used by the writing lecturers are Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, Relevance and Adequacy of Content. There are some criteria do not perform at all, they are Appropriateness of language context function and intention and appropriateness of lay out, Organization, Relevance and adequacy of content, Adequacy of vocabulary for purpose. The four writing lecturers do not include the score for each criterion of marking suggested by the theories. The lecturers' marking scheme for speaking subject is based on the marking scale given by STAIN as the following:

1. 00 – 49 = E (failed)
2. 50 – 59 = D
3. 60 – 69 = C
4. 70 – 85 = B
5. 86 – 100 = A

The score for each criteria is not clear. The score for writing comes from the consideration of the lecturers themselves after they evaluate all task in unity. The researcher didn't find any scales in accordance to the theory, particularly for each criteria.

Setting writing tests that are properly representative of the population of tasks that we should expect the students to be able to perform and eliciting samples of writing which truly represent the students' ability which are essential that the samples can and will be scored reliably, are not easy. Even professional testing institution are unable to construct indirect tests which measure writing ability accurately. However, in designing writing test, it is important for the teachers to guide theory and use it in contextual situation.

A teacher's first responsibility is to provide opportunities for writing and encouragement for students who attempt to write. A teacher's second responsibility is to promote students' success in writing. The teacher does this by carefully monitoring students' writing to assess strengths and weaknesses, teaching specific skills and strategies in response to student needs, and giving careful feedback that will reinforce newly learned skills and correct recurring problems. These responsibilities reveal, upon inspection, that assessment is clearly an integral part of good instruction. In their review of the existing research on effective instruction Christenson, Ysseldyke, and Thurlow found that, in addition to other factors, the following conditions were positively correlated to pupil achievement: The degree to which there is an appropriate instructional match between student characteristics and task characteristics (in other words, teachers must assess the student's prior knowledge and current level of skills in order to match them to a task that is relevant and appropriate to their aptitudes); The degree to which the teacher actively monitors students' understanding and progress; and the degree to which student performance is evaluated frequently and appropriately (congruent with what is taught).

Assessment, therefore, is an essential component of effective instruction. Airasian identified three types of classroom assessments. The first he called "sizing-up" assessments, usually done during the first week of school to provide the teacher with quick information about the students when beginning their instruction. The second type, instructional assessments, are used for the daily tasks of planning instruction, giving feedback, and monitoring student progress. The third type he referred to as official assessments, which are the periodic formal functions of assessment for grouping, grading, and reporting. In other words, teachers use assessment for identifying strengths and weaknesses, planning instruction to fit diagnosed needs, evaluating instructional activities, giving feedback, monitoring performance, and reporting progress. Simple curriculum-based methods for assessing written expression can meet all these purposes.

Curriculum-based assessment must start with an inspection of the curriculum. Many writing curricula are based on a conceptual model that takes into account process, product, and purpose. This conceptual model, therefore, forms the framework for the simple assessment techniques that follow. The diagnostic uses of assessment (determining the reasons for writing problems and the student's instructional needs) are best met by looking at the process of writing, i.e., the steps students go through and strategies they use as they work at writing. How much planning does the student do before he or she writes? Does she have a strategy for organizing ideas? What seem to be the obstacles to getting thoughts down on paper? How does the student attempt to spell words she does not know? Does the student reread what she has written? Does the student talk about or share her work with others as she is writing it? What kind of changes does the student make to her first draft?

In order to make instructionally relevant observations, the observer must work from a conceptual model of what

the writing process should be. Educators have reached little consensus regarding the number of steps in the writing process. Writing experts have proposed as few as two and as many as nine. Englert, Raphael, Anderson, Anthony, and Stevens provided a model of a five-step writing process using the acronym POWER: Plan, Organize, Write, Edit, and Revise. Each step has its own substeps and strategies that become more sophisticated as the students become more mature as writers, accommodating their style to specific text structures and purposes of writing. Assessment of the writing process can be done through observation of students as they go through the steps of writing.

Having students assess their own writing process is also important for two reasons. First, self-assessment allows students an opportunity to observe and reflect on their own approach, drawing attention to important steps that may be overlooked. Second, self-assessment following a conceptual model like POWER is a means of internalizing an explicit strategy, allowing opportunities for the student to mentally rehearse the strategy steps. Figure 1 is a format for both self-observation and teacher observation of the writing process following the POWER strategy. Similar self-assessments or observation checklists could be constructed for other conceptual models of the writing process.

An effective writing process should lead to a successful product. A writing product fulfills its communicative intent if it is of appropriate length, is logical and coherent, and has a readable format. It is a pleasure to read if it is composed of well-constructed sentences and a rich variety of words that clearly convey the author's meaning. When various conceptual models of writing are compared side by side (Isaacson, 1984) five product variables seem to emerge: fluency, content, conventions, syntax, and vocabulary. Too often teachers focus their attention primarily on surface features of a student's composition related to the mechanical aspects of writing, or conventions. A balanced

assessment should look at all five aspects of a student's writing. The following are simple methods for assessing each product variable. In some instances quantifiable measures are used; in others, qualitative assessments seem more appropriate.

The first writing skill a teacher might assess with a beginning writer is fluency: being able to translate one's thoughts into written words. As concepts of print and fine motor skills develop, the student should become more proficient at writing down words and sentences into compositions of gradually increasing length. The developmental route of very young writers involves trying to understand what written language is about as they look at books, become aware of environmental print, and put pencil to paper. Then children try to relate their experiences in writing using invented spelling. As they begin to construct little stories they explore spelling patterns and develop new language patterns. Clay recommends a simple rating scale for emerging writing skills that focuses on language level (from only letters to sentences and paragraphs), message quality, and directional principles.

In answering the second research question of this research, the finding shows that, the writing lecturers put great concern on grammar, punctuation, spelling and content as the main criteria of marking. Grammar covers how accurate the grammatical patterns used. Punctuation is defined as mechanical accuracy, almost no inaccuracies in punctuation is considered highly. The second mechanical accuracy is spelling. The other criteria is relevance and adequacy of content. The phenomena is all lecturers did not include clear marking scheme for each criteria while from interview, all of them confesses that they use scale in classifying the mark. The mark of their scoring scheme was only the scale of final result for writing test made by institution: (00 – 49) = E (failed), (50 – 59) = D, (60 – 69) = C, (70 – 85) = B, (86 – 100) = A. There is only one lecturer classifies each criteria into specific mark. The following is the scoring scheme:

4 Accomplished (Shows skill; many strengths present); 3. Competent (On balance the strengths outweigh the weaknesses); 2. Developing (Strengths and need for revision are about equal); 1. Beginning (Need for revision outweighs strengths) Overall. The composition for the mark for each criteria is as follow:

24% , 24%, 52%, 0%. Thesis: 22%, 37% , 37%, 4%. Organization: 18%, 39% 43%, 0%. Support: 22%, 37%, 41%, 0%. Style: 26%, 52%, 22%, 0% Mechanics: 28%, 57%, 15%, 0%. The total mark is 100.

F. Conclusion

The objective of the teaching of writing in a foreign language is to get learners to acquire the abilities and skills they need to produce a range of different kinds of written texts similar to those an educated person would be expected to be able to produce in their own language. Writing is widely used within foreign language courses as a convenient means for engaging with aspects of language other than the writing itself. For example: learners note down new vocabulary; copy out grammar rules; write out answers to reading or listening comprehension questions; do written tests. In these examples, writing is simply used either as a means of getting the students to attend to and practice a particular language point, or even more frequently as a convenient method of testing it: providing information as to how well something has been learned in a form which the teacher can then check at his or her leisure.

Other activities take as their main objective the writing itself. At the micro level they practice specific written forms at the level of word or sentence (handwriting or typing, spelling, punctuation); at the macro level the emphasis is on content and organization: tasks invite learners to express themselves using their own words, state a purpose for writing. And often specify an audience. Examples of such activities would be: narrating a story, writing a letter. A third kind activity combines purposeful

and original writing with the learning or practice of some other skill or content. For example, a written response to the reading of a controversial newspaper article (combines writing with reading); the writing of anecdotes to illustrate the meaning of idioms combines writing with vocabulary practice). In principle, the purpose of writing is the expression of ideas, the conveying of a message to the reader; so the ideas themselves should arguably be seen as the most important aspect of writing. On the other hand, the writer needs also to pay some attention to formal aspects, neat handwriting, correct spelling and punctuation, as well as acceptable grammar and careful selection of vocabulary.

It is important to review the theories in deciding the criteria, the format and the scoring scheme of testing writing skill. The lecturers are supposed to be consistent, if they have selected the criteria of marking, they should draw a scale or a specific mark for each criteria. In conclusion, the testing should represent students' ability in writing.

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