

DEVELOPING DIGITAL WRITING TEST FOR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT

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Abstract

This study was aimed at developing Digital English writing test by using Quia or Quizziz for semester 2 students in Academic Year 2021/2022. Quizziz application is a digital application that has a colorful display with animation on its interface. This writing test is to find out the students' initial ability in writing text, such as making a simple outline and write them into a simple paragraph with main idea and topic determined by the researchers. This developing test is useful for students of English and Literature Department and developed as a pre-test for mapping freshmen students' competency in writing. Research and Development design was used in this study, with the data used from the result of need analysis as well as interviewing the lecturers and students. The data were chosen by random sampling with the total number is 60 students of the second semester in Academic Year 2021/2022 of English and Literature Department as well as 4 lecturers of writing course.

Keywords: digital English writing test, English, writing text, Quia, Quizzis

1. Introduction

As one of the four language skills, writing has always occupied a place in the most English language course. One of the reasons is that more and more people need to learn to write in English for occupational or academic purposes. As Walsh in Klimova (2013) states, writing is essential because it is used extensively in higher education and the workplace. If students do not know how to express themselves in writing, they will not be able to communicate well with professors, employers, peers, or just about anyone else. English department students need to learn writing and prepare themselves for the final academic assignment, thesis writing.

Chappel in Klimova (2013) describes some benefits of writing, such as expressing one's personality, fostering communication, developing thinking skills, making logical and persuasive arguments, giving a person a chance to later reflect on his/her ideas and re-evaluate them, providing and receive feedback, and preparing for school and employment. In order to write well, people must have good capabilities in writing. Moreover, someone who wants to write an essay or story must know the steps in the writing process and aspects of writing. The writer must organize the ideas to construct the sentences and use punctuation and spelling well. Besides, they must be

able to arrange the writing into cohesive and coherent paragraphs and the text. A measuring tool is needed to determine how far students' writing ability in the Department of English Language and Literature can support the Writing Course. Especially for new students in the first and second semesters, lecturers can map their initial abilities in writing and adjust them to the Achievement of Subject Acquisition (CPMK) for the Writing Course. In addition, the measuring tool for writing skills can also help the MBKM Program train students more extensively if they choose study programs and subjects outside the program.

The Department of English Language and Literature has held a Proficiency Test to determine students' competence. This test is intended to obtain information or a map of the initial English proficiency reflected in their scores. The current test is IELTS-Like, a standardized test that resembles the actual test from the form of the question to how it is done.

IELTS (International English Language Testing System) is the world's most popular international English language testing system for study, work, and immigration. An international team of experts has developed the standard IELTS test content. It is an extensive study to ensure that all participants, regardless of nationality, background, gender, lifestyle, or location, keep the test fair and impartial. However, in the research team's observation, the existing IELTS-Like test has not supported students' English skills, especially new students. In 2021, students' IELTS scores in the Writing Test show a score range of 60, which means that students' writing skills are still low, but when in class and lecturers assign them to write simple paragraphs, out of 30 students, 80 percent of new students can write well. The IELTS test results do not significantly affect students' writing skills. Seeing the importance of writing skills tests for new students and seeing good interactions in this pandemic period online, the research team will design a digital-based writing skills test.

According to Sukirman (2020), this digital competency test application program is used to obtain a competency map of students' abilities for specific criteria. This mapping helps improve education and to ensure the quality of the learning process and graduates. The results of the evaluation of the learning process using standardized tests.

2. Literature Review

Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim changed the 2013 curriculum into the MBKM (Independent Learning Independent Campus) curriculum in 2019. The MBKM concept consists of "Independent Learning" and "Independent Campus." Freedom to learn is freedom of thought and innovation (Ainia, 2020). Meanwhile, the independent campus is a continuation of the independent learning program for higher education. The transformation of education through the policy of independent learning is one of the steps to realizing Indonesia's Superior Human Resources, which has the *Pancasila* Student Profile (Kemdikbud, 2021).

In line with the World Economic Forum (2016), students must have 16 skills in the 21st century. These 16 skills are divided into literacy, competence, and character quality. In addition, to face changes in society and culture, the world of work, business, and rapid technological advances, students must be prepared to follow these changes. Therefore, every educational institution must prepare new literacy and guided orientation in the field of education (Lase, 2019). Higher education preparation can be done by designing and implementing innovative learning processes so that students can achieve learning outcomes covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects

optimally and consistently relevant through the MBKM curriculum. The Independent Learning Policy-Independent Campus, abbreviated as MBKM - is based on the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 3 of 2020 concerning National Higher Education Standards on Learning Process Standards, especially in articles 15 to 18. MBKM aims to encourage students to gain learning experiences with additional competencies outside the study program and/or off-campus. Various types of learning activities that students can carry out outside of their study program, such as student exchanges, internships/work practices, teaching assistant in an academic unit, research/research in an agency/institution, conducting humanitarian projects, entrepreneurial activities, independent studies/projects, or build a thematic real work village/college. One of the keys to implementing the MBKM Policy is to make the learning process in higher education more autonomous and flexible (Baharudin, 2021). In everyday life, language skills are needed to obtain and convey information. This language skill consists of four skills, namely, listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, and writing skills. Writing skills are the skills to express an idea or ideas through written language. Writing skill is one of the highest level language skills. Abbas (2006: 125) defines writing skills as the ability to express ideas, opinions, and feelings to other parties through written language. The accuracy of expressing this idea must be supported by the accuracy of the language, vocabulary and grammar, and spelling.

Experts classify approaches to language tests in different ways. Heaton (1988), for example, distinguishes them according to (1) the essay-translation approach, (2) the structuralist approach, and (3) the integrative and communicative approach. The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is an internationally recognized and specially designed English language proficiency test with a fair rating to test a person's ability to speak English. This test provides an opportunity to demonstrate listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. It is managed by the University of Cambridge ESOL Examination, British Council, and IELTS Australia. Hundreds of academic institutions use IELTS as a requirement to follow the program, especially in the UK, USA, Australia, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Singapore. In IELTS, the writing ability test is divided into two parts. The first part is a short essay describing the visual data, such as line graphs, bar charts, pie charts, process diagrams, maps, and tables. The second part is an essay containing a minimum of 250 words to provide opinions, arguments, or other responses to a particular fact.

To support the implementation of the MBKM Policy by making the learning process in higher education more autonomous and flexible, a digital test system was developed in this study. Several types of digital applications can be used as writing test instruments, namely Quizziz and Quia Web. Quizziz application is a digital application that has a colorful display with animation on its interface. This application is one application that can be used to do online tests without making students feel bored. In this application, you can also add music as a background and provide a question bank that can be used directly. The other benefits of the Quizziz application include online tests that can be used in real-time, mobile friendly, and have various types of questions, ranging from an essay and multiple questions to true and false questions. Quia Web has a simple user interface and is one of the most accessible online exam applications. New users can use Quia Web for free online exams for 30 days. Some of the excellent features that Quia Web has are 16 types of learning activities and 10 types of quiz types.

3. Research Method

The digital writing skills test development at the English and Literature department UNIMED used a Research and Development design. This method is a research method used to produce products and test their effectiveness of these products (Sugiono, 2010). The study of developing digital writing skills test in the English Education Study Program at the English and Literature department has the preliminary, development, and evaluation stages. This research was conducted at the English Education Study Program, Department of English Language and Literature, Unimed *Jalan Willem Iskandar Pasar V* Medan. The population and sample in this study were second-semester students with a sample of 60 second-semester students in the 2021/2022 Academic Year for the Contextual Written Language Skills course, English and Literature Department.

4. Discussion

The needs analysis of this research was taken from 90 students of the Department of English Language and Literature in the English Education Study Program, Academic Year 2021/2022 Universitas Negeri Medan in the Contextual Written Language Skills course. The results of this analysis are used by researchers as a guide for developing teaching materials for writing descriptive texts. The results of the analysis are shown in the following table:

A. Students' Opinion toward Writing

As many as 71.1% of students stated that writing was very important, and 23.3% of students stated that writing was important. Then 5.6% of students stated that writing was considered sufficient but there were no students who stated that writing was not important. This means that students have realized the importance of writing.

Based on the questionnaire, the targets for writing attitudes were divided into three categories: writing challenges, importance of writing, and writing frequency. The following table contains a description of the student's point of view.

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
In my opinion, writing texts in English is an activity that...	Very easy to do	2.2
	Easy to do	51.1
	Hard to do	45.6
	Very hard to do	1.1
In my opinion, writing activities...in English lessons (choose one)	Very important	71.1
	Important	23.3
	Quite important	5.6
	Not important	0
I.....write the text in English	Always (every day)	2.2
	Often	43.3
	Sometimes	54.5
	Never	0

Table 4.1: Student Opinion against Writing

Table 4.1 shows that students' opinions about writing are divided into three categories. First, the difficulty of writing, 51.1% of students stated that writing was easy to do and another 45.6% stated that writing was difficult. from these percentages it can

be seen that the statements of half the students and the other half are very contradictory. then 2.2% of students stated that writing was very easy to do and another 1.1% stated that writing was very difficult to do.

Second, the importance of writing, as many as 71.1% of students stated that writing was very important, and 23.3% of students stated that writing was important. then 5.6% of students stated that writing was considered sufficient but there were no students who stated that writing was not important. This means that students have realized the importance of writing.

Third, the frequency of students writing, the analysis provides information that half of the students as much as 54.5% sometimes practice their writing activities. There are 43.3% of students who often practice writing, and 2.2% of students who always practice writing.

From the description above, it is clear that students majoring in English are aware of the importance of writing.

1) Target Needs

Hutchinson and Waters state that the target need is what the learner must do in the target state (1987). Target needs are divided into three categories:

a) Needs

Needs, according to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), are what the learner needs to know in order to function effectively in the target situation. The following table contains a description of student needs.

Questions	Opinions	(%)
The skills I need in writing English text are (may choose more than one)	Use appropriate sentence structure and word choice.	17.8
	Express ideas in writing into several different forms of sentences	15.6
	Arrange sentences correctly according to the function of each text	13.3
	Arrange the text with the correct text structure	10
	Use proper and appropriate grammar	33.3
	Others	10

Table 4.2: Student Needs

For needs, 17.8% of students choose the skills they need in writing texts by using the appropriate structure and word selection. The second skill was chosen by 33.3% of students, using proper and appropriate grammar. There are 15.6% of students who choose to pour their thoughts into different sentences. then 13.3% of students choose to arrange sentences correctly according to the function of each text, 10% of students choose to arrange texts with the correct text structure and the remaining 10% choose others.

b) Deficiency

Hutchinson and Waters (1987:55) state that students' problems with topics include less. It deals with the contrast between what learners already have and the situation in which they must succeed. The description of the students' problems is shown in the table below.

Questions	Opinions	(%)
So far, the difficulties I have faced in writing English texts are (may choose more than one)	Difficulty in composing proper and appropriate sentence structures	10
	Difficulty in choosing appropriate and appropriate word choices for writing	13.3
	Difficulty in expressing story ideas	11.1
	Difficulty in arranging sentences correctly according to the function of each text	10
	Difficulty in arranging text with the correct text structure	6.7
	Difficulty in using proper and appropriate grammar	40
	Others	8.9

Table 4.3: Student Difficulties

The table shows the difficulties faced by 40% of students are difficulties in using proper and appropriate grammar. The second difficulty is that 13.3% of students have difficulty in choosing appropriate and appropriate word choices for writing. The third difficulty is expressing story ideas faced by 11.1% of students. Then there are 10% of students have difficulty in arranging sentences correctly according to the function of each text and in compiling the right and appropriate sentence structure. Difficulty in arranging the text with the correct text structure is difficult for 6.7% of students. And for 8.9% of students chose other difficulties. Due to the student deficiencies mentioned above, this material provides a variety of problem solving exercises, which will be of benefit to students.

c) **Desire**

The term “desire” refers to the desire of the student. The following table displays a description of the student's wishes.

Questions	Opinions	(%)
I hope that the material given in writing activities in English lessons can make me (may choose more than one)	Improve my ability to write in English	37.8
	Makes me master the learned English vocabulary	6.7
	Makes me able to write with correct grammar	12.2
	Makes me able to arrange sentences correctly according to the function of each text	4.4
	Makes me able to arrange the text with the correct text structure	7.8
	Makes me able to use proper and appropriate grammar	23.3
	Others	7.8

Table 4.4: Student Desire

The table shows 37.8% of students want to improve their English writing skills. There are 23.3% of students who want to be able to use proper and appropriate grammar. then 12.2% Students want to be able to write with correct grammar. 7.8% of students who want to be able to compose texts with the correct text structure, as well as students who want to master the English vocabulary that has been studied are 6.7%, 4.4% of students want to be able to arrange sentences correctly according to the function of each text and 7.8% of students chose other wishes. To fulfill students' wishes, they will be given several assignments that will improve their English writing skills.

d) Learning Needs

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state that learning needs are things that must be met by students to learn.

1. Input

According to Nunan (2004), input is verbal, written, or visual data used by students to complete assignments. The description of the inputs is shown in the table below.

Questions	Opinions	(%)
What learning input do I like in writing text activities (may choose more than one)	Picture	25.6
	Written Text	35.6
	Videos	24.4
	Audio	7.8
	Others	6.6

Table 4.5: Input Material

The table shows that 35.6% of students want material input in the form of written text, 25.6% of students want pictures, 24.4% of students choose video, 7.8% of students want audio, and the rest choose something else.

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
In my opinion, an understanding of grammar (grammar) is needed in writing English texts	Yes	100
	Not	0

Table 4.6: Importance of Grammar

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
In my opinion, the initial test in writing English...	Required	97.8
	Not required	2.2

Table 4.7: Importance of Initial Writing Test

97.8% of students stated that a preliminary test in English writing was required, and the rest stated that it was not required.

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
In the initial test of writing English, the input I need is in the form of...	Table	6.7
	Picture	51.1
	Videos	27.8
	Figure	11.1
	Others	3.3

Table 4.8: Input for the Initial Writing Test

The table shows that 51.1% of students need image input, 27.8% of students want video, 11% of students want figures, 6.7% want tables and 3.3% of students choose other inputs as a preliminary test of writing English.

2. Procedure

Procedures are what students will do with input that will be the starting point of learning activities (Nunan, 2004). A description of the procedure can be found in the table below.

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
In the process of learning writing, the activities I want to do are (may choose more than one)	Write text from pictures	5.6
	Write a text with a predetermined topic	30
	Write free text	53.3
	Make mind mapping before writing text	5.6
	Others	5.5

Table 4.9: Learning Procedure

The table above shows that 53.3% of students want free text writing activities and 30% choose to write with a predetermined topic.

3. Settings

Nunan (2004) states that the setting relates to the class organization described or concluded in the assignment. The description of the settings is shown in the table below.

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
I.....use the App in writing	Once	80
	Never	20

Table 4.10: Application Usage

The table above shows that 80% of students have used applications in writing, while the other 20% have never.

Questions	Opinions	Percentage (%)
I think the application makes it easier for me to write English	Quizizz	37.8
	Kahoot!	15.6
	Edmodo	5.6
	Quizlet	11.1
	Others	29.9

Table 4.11 Applications for Writing

The table above shows that 37.8% of students choose Quizizz as an application that makes it easier for them to write English.

5. Conclusion

The digital-based writing test at the English and Literature Department, Universitas Negeri Medan, was developed based on an analysis of student learning needs. Of the various variations of the writing test, 35.6% of students wanted material input in the form of written text, 25.6% wanted pictures, 24.4% chose video, and 7.8% wanted audio. The application selection also shows that students choose the Quizizz application to use. This test development is helpful for all English and Literature

Department students and will be developed as a pretest for mapping new students' writing competence.

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