



## **DEVELOPMENT OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS FOR TEACHERS USED IN ASSESSING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' EXPOSITION WRITING: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL APPROACH**

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### **Abstract**

This research aims at developing a writing assessment rubric for a exposition text. This rubric is made in accordance with the assessment standard of the current Senior High School curriculum, *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)* to be used by the teachers. Based on observations made of two high school English teachers at SMA Negeri 19 Medan, it was found that the assessment of students' writing in class XI was done by simply giving points or grades without any clear criteria. Such assessments tend to be subjective, inaccurate, and are not helpful for students. One way to overcome this is to use an assessment rubric. The development of this rubric was done through 7 stages of development, namely research and information collection, planning, developing preliminary forms of the product, preliminary field testing, main product revision, main field testing, and operational product revision. The development of this rubric is based on 16 students' writing. Analysis of data in this study was conducted by analyzing and assessing students' writing in first and second drafts as well as the results of the first and second questionnaires and interviews. The results show a rubric that can be used by the teacher to score students' writing.

*Keywords: writing, genre, rubric, assessment*



## Introduction

Grammar as a framework for building a language, formally known as the study of sentence structure. In this study, several terms are known such as subject, object, verb, and phrase. However, this classification is difficult to use to reconstruct the meaning of a text. Until the theory of Systemic Functional Grammar (hereinafter abbreviated as SFG) emerged, which was pioneered by Halliday (1975; 1994; 2002). SFG is a development of Systemic Functional Linguistics or Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereinafter abbreviated as SFL) and is one of the streams in the discipline of linguistics that introduces a theory called systemic. This theory assumes that language is part of a social phenomenon that must be related to the social context of the language user. The application of SFG in various fields of science has been carried out by several researchers. The use of SFG can be applied in the field of translation and teaching.

The most prominent influence is in teaching writing (Christie, 2002; Gibbons, 2002). SFG is considered to have contributed greatly to the teaching of writing at the formal school level. Students' writing can be reconstructed through the realization of the language metafunctions contained in the text, so that the integrity and continuity of the text can be known in its social context. This reconstruction is carried out to assess whether or not the use of grammar in students' writing is good, so that the SFG can be used by teachers as one of the criteria in providing an assessment of students' writing results. Poerwanti (2011: 1) says that "assessment is a series of activities to obtain, analyze, and interpret data about student learning processes and outcomes that are carried out systematically and continuously, so that they become meaningful information in decision making." Based on limited observations made on an English teacher at SMAN 19 Medan, it is known that the assessment or assessment of the writing results of class XI students in writing lessons is carried out by only giving points or grades without using clear criteria. With an assessment system that tends to be



"perfunctory" or "perfunctory," efforts to improve students' writing skills are still far from expectations.

Based on the background described above, the question in this study is how to develop an assessment instrument for high school students' exposition writing based on functional systemic grammar? Based on the formulation of the problem above, the research questions that have been described is to develop an instrument for assessing writing for high school students based on functional systemic grammar.

### **Research methods**

Based on the consideration of suitability with the nature of the research conducted, namely to develop an instrument. This study uses the Research and Development method (Borg and Gall, 1989) which consists of ten stages, including: (1) Research and Initial Data Collection, (2) Planning, (3) Initial Product Making, (4) Initial Trial, (5) Initial Product Improvement, (6) Field Trial, (7) Operational Product Improvement, (8) Operational Trial, (9) Final Product Improvement, and (10) National Dissemination. However, the stages above will be adapted to the needs of developing high school students' writing instruments in this study.

The development of this instrument only covers stages 1 to 7, so the 8th Phase of Operational Trial, 9th stage of Final Product Improvement, and 10th stage of National Dissemination were not carried out. This is based on the fact that in the 7th stage of the development of this instrument, it can produce an output in the form of a writing assessment tool for high school students. The reasons for practicality and the objectives to be achieved in developing this instrument, which is to help teachers assess their students' writing and assist students in improving their writing within the scope of the school, also serve as benchmarks for development starting from stages 1 to 7.

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**



Based on the results obtained in the development of the rubric, an output in the form of an exposition writing assessment rubric was produced for high school students. The assessment rubric of this paper contains four categories of assessment, namely for the categories of ideas and content, organization, word choice, and conventions with a predetermined score range for each quality gradation. Score 4 for advanced level, 3 for the proficient level, 2 for the beginner level (basic), and 1 for the pre beginner level (below basic).

Based on peer evaluations, analysis results, and scoring conducted by researchers and teachers on student writing, it can be concluded that the use of this writing assessment rubric can certainly facilitate English teachers in assessing student writing results more accurately and objectively. The form of assessment that focuses on the generic structure of the text makes this assessment reliable and accurate for assessing exposition writing. This does not rule out the possibility of being used as a benchmark for making an assessment rubric for other types of writing. Thus, this rubric will really help teachers focus on assessing certain types of text. Meanwhile, students can better understand the generic structure of each writing and help them improve the writing on the next blur.

The average score increase in the ideas and content category was 1.875 points, in the introduction/issue category increased by 0.8125 points, the argument pros category increased by 1.375 points, the argument cons category increased 0.8125, the conclusion category was 0.8125, the word choice category increased 2.4375, and in the conventions category increased by 2.3125 points. These results indicate that the use of rubrics is reliable and can help students to improve their writing further. To find out whether the use of this rubric is considered effective by students, the results of questionnaires and interviews are used.

The results of the questionnaire and interview tests showed that the rubric format was good enough and students considered the use of practical assessment rubrics to be used in assessing their writing because it was more accurate and

objective and proved to be effective in helping students improve their writing on blurry 2. This is evidenced by the average results of the questionnaire test. the first which reached 3.15 and the second questionnaire test which reached the result of 3.24. The results of these two questionnaires prove that the use of rubrics in assessing students' writing results is considered effective, accurate, and objective.

In addition, the reliability and accuracy of this rubric is strengthened by the results of the combined assessment of student writing conducted by researchers, teachers of SMAN 19 Medan. The results of the combined assessment show that the correlation of this combined assessment is 0.991 with a significance of 0.00. This indicates that the assessment using rubrics is reliable, objective, and effective in helping students in improving their writing. Meanwhile, the significance of 0.00 indicates that the assessment using the rubric is valid.

## DISCUSSION

Functional Systemic Grammar is a theory about language as a social process and an analytical method that can describe a form of language systematically (Eggins, 1994, p. 20). This theory is centered on the notion of language functions that look at language from its social context. Functionally, discussing language means examining three interrelated domains, namely text, situation context, and cultural context, as summarized in the following figure (Butt et al., 2000).

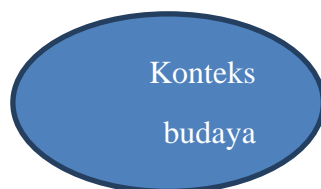


Figure 1. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Model Halliday.

The language study proposed by Halliday emphasizes that the principle of SFG is not studying words, but studying texts as the most important concept in negotiating



meaning (Halliday, 1994). Moving on from this principle, this research was conducted by relating the text as a whole, not decontextualized speech or sentences (Christie & Unsworth, 2000; Eggins, 1994).

Based on all the basic concepts and thoughts above, Halliday combined them into a form of linguistic theory known as systemic grammar. Grammar is contextualized as the realization of discourse related to the semantics of the text. Therefore, a set of linguistic choices is associated with a particular linguistic context, so that the text becomes a functional unit of language in its social context. Functional text gives meaning as an idea that can be understood by the language user. The relationship between the language system and the context of the situation is what determines the choice of form and meaning in the metafunction of language and at the same time determines the structure and grammatical system (Transitivity, Theme, and Mood) in a text. Through the genre approach in SFG, then the rubric is developed by passing the following stages:

### **1. Research and Preliminary Data Collection**

At this stage, observations were made on how teachers assess students' writing results in writing lessons and conduct research on the estimation of teacher and student needs in writing assessments.

### **2. Planning**

In the assessment, it is necessary to pay attention to several things such as: (1) the assessment is intended to measure the achievement of competence, (2) the assessment uses reference criteria, (3) the assessment is carried out as a whole and continuously, (4) the results of the assessment are used to determine follow-up, and (5) the assessment must be adjusted to the learning experience taken in the learning process.

### **3. Initial Product Manufacturing**

The manufacture of the initial product is carried out in several steps. The steps for making this initial product use the rubric formulation model proposed by Donna & Ellyn (1995) and are adapted to the development needs in this study, namely:



- a. Determination of Rubric Model
- b. Determination of Category/List
- c. Scoring Scale
- d. Determination of Quality Gradation
- e. Template Creation
- f. Description of Student Competency Achievement based on Value Intervals

#### **4. Assessment Rubric**

After performing the steps above, a written assessment rubric can then be generated. This rubric is expected to assist teachers in assessing students' writing in order to create a quality assessment of learning.

#### **5. First Trials**

In the initial trial stage, the finished rubric was then tested in assessing students' writing. In this section, two student writings that have been analyzed and assessed using this rubric will be displayed.

#### **6. Initial Product Repair**

The results of the initial analysis of student writing and peer evaluation obtained at the initial trial stage are used as input in the initial product improvement stage.

#### **7. Field Trial**

At this stage of the field trial, two trials were conducted, namely field trial 1. Field trial 1 was conducted to analyze and assess the results of students' first writing.



Table 1. Assessment Rubric

Adapted from the rubric created by Jacobs, Hamp-Lyons and Andrade,  
 and Rubrics used in the San Diego Unified School District

STUDENT : DATE : CLASS :						
1	CATEGORY	<b>4. Advanced A (20-16)</b>	<b>3. Proficient B (15-11)</b>	<b>2. Basic C (10-6)</b>	<b>1. Below Basic D (5-0)</b>	SCORE
I D E A S / C O N T E N T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>theme</b></li> <li>➤ <b>Cohesion</b></li> </ul>	States a compelling issue that appeals to the audience. Focus on topic is clear and definite. Effective and appropriate details create a vivid picture showing knowledge and insight.	States an effective issue that makes a clear and knowledgeable judgment. Focus on topic is clear. Sufficient details create a picture showing some knowledge and insight.	Issue is too narrow, too broad or not immediately clear to reader. Focus on topic is somewhat defined. Underdeveloped details show little knowledge	No clear issue. Focus on topic is not clearly defined. Limited or disconnected details show a lack of understanding.	
2	CATEGORY	<b>4. Advanced A (10-9)</b>	<b>3. Proficient B (8-6)</b>	<b>2. Basic C (5-3)</b>	<b>1. Below Basic D (2-0)</b>	SCORE



<b>O R G A N I Z A T I O N</b>	<b>➤ Thesis/ Issue</b>	Strong, engaging introduction. The introduction is inviting, states the main topic.	Engaging introduction, Adequate sequencing of ideas based on purpose and linked to issue, but it is not particularly inviting to the reader.	The introduction states the main topic, but does not adequately preview the structure of the writing nor is it particularly inviting to the reader. Introduction may need some revision.	There is no clear introduction of the main topic or structure of the writing. Introduction may not exist or may need major revision.	
	<b>➤ Argument</b>	Presents powerful Argument, effective sequencing of ideas enhances argument and links to issue. Well documented evidence provides a consistent and convincing perspective on issue.	Effectively supports issue with relevant argument(s) evidence. Adequately uses elaboration techniques to suit reader and purpose.	Supporting argument(s) evidence insufficient, irrelevant or unclear. Lacks explanation/ elaboration.	Little or no supporting reasons or credible evidence to support issue.	
	<b>➤ Reiteration ➤ Recommendation</b>	Powerful conclusion reinforces issue.	Conclusion reinforces thesis and gives closure, conclusion and issue are clearly linked.	Conclusion attempt to establish focus, conclusion may need some revision.	Conclusion lacks focus, conclusion may not exist or may need major revision.	
<b>3</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>4. Advanced A (20-16)</b>	<b>3. Proficient B (15-11)</b>	<b>2. Basic C (10-6)</b>	<b>1. Below Basic D (5-0)</b>	<b>SCORE</b>



<b>W O R D  C H O I C E</b>	➤ <b>Precision, Effectiveness,</b>	Words/phrases powerfully convey the intended message in a very interesting and precise way. Precise, vivid, natural language creates a clear and complete picture in the reader's mind.	Effective words/phrases get message across. Correct, adequate word choice creates a clear picture in the reader's mind.	More precise words/phrases are needed to create a clear message. Ordinary word choice attempts to create a picture in the reader's mind. Verbs, nouns, adjectives, and phrases are adequate.	Limited vocabulary; words may be used inappropriately. Language choice and phrasing is inappropriate, repetitive or lacks meaning.	
	<b>4</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>4. Advanced A (20-16)</b>	<b>3. Proficient B (15-11)</b>	<b>2. Basic C (10-6)</b>	<b>1. Below Basic D (5-0)</b>
<b>C O N V E N T I O N S</b>	➤ <b>spelling, punctuation, grammar</b>	A strong grasp of the standard writing conventions is apparent: capitalization is accurate, punctuation is smooth and enhances meaning, spelling is correct even on more difficult words, grammar is essentially correct, usage is correct.	A strong grasp of the standard writing conventions is apparent capitalization is correct, punctuation is smooth and enhances meaning, spelling of common words is correct; grammar is generally correct, usage is generally correct.	A basic grasp of the standard writing conventions is apparent. Errors in conventions may impair readability, errors occasionally obscure meaning.	A minimal grasp of the standard writing conventions is apparent. Numerous errors in conventions distract and/or confuse the reader. Limited understanding of appropriate conventions.	
	<b>TEACHER'S COMMENTS:</b>					<b>TOTAL SCORE:</b>



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