



EVALUATION OF NARRATIVE WRITING INSTRUCTION IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Husnul Khotimah¹, Endry Boeriswati², Samsi Setiadi³

Universitas Negeri Jakarta^{1,2,3}

Email: husnul.khotimah1@mhs.unj.ac.id¹, endry.boeriswati@unj.ac.id²,
syamsi.setiadi@unj.ac.id³

ABSTRACT

The evaluation of narrative writing instruction in Junior High Schools plays a crucial role in developing students' critical thinking and idea-expression skills. This article employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to analyze various studies related to the evaluation of narrative writing instruction at the junior secondary level. The purpose of this review is to identify the evaluation methods used, the factors influencing successful evaluation, and the impact of evaluation on students' writing abilities. The main findings reveal that students often struggle to organize ideas and develop a coherent storyline, even though they understand the basic structure of narrative texts. Additionally, the use of analytical rubrics in assessment has proven effective in improving students' writing quality. This study also emphasizes the importance of incorporating local wisdom-based approaches in narrative writing instruction, which can enhance students' engagement and the relevance of learning materials. These findings offer insights for educators and researchers in developing more effective evaluation methods for narrative writing instruction in junior high schools.

Keywords: learning evaluation, narrative writing, analytical rubric

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are one of the essential aspects of language proficiency, especially in the context of lower secondary education. Among the various types of texts studied in Junior High School, narrative texts hold a strategic position as they train students to organize ideas coherently, construct plotlines, and express thoughts creatively. Beyond being a mere curricular requirement, learning to write narrative texts also provides space for students to develop empathy, self-reflection, and an understanding of various life experiences conveyed through stories (Hyland, 2003). Therefore, mastery of narrative writing not only supports academic achievement but also fosters 21st-century life skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration.

Nevertheless, the teaching of narrative writing in junior high schools still faces a number of challenges. Many students struggle to construct a well-structured narrative, particularly in organizing the complication and resolution sections in a logical and engaging manner. Quite a few are also unable to develop ideas in depth or use cohesive and coherent language. Research conducted by Emilia (2011) indicates that Indonesian students' narrative writing often lacks depth in idea development and tends to be weak in structure and language conventions. These obstacles reflect not only students' abilities but

also point to the effectiveness of the instructional strategies and assessment practices employed by teachers in the classroom.

In the context of modern education, evaluation is inseparable from the learning process. Evaluation serves as a tool to understand students' competence development, identify their strengths and weaknesses, and form the basis for future instructional improvements. However, assessment practices in narrative writing instruction often remain focused solely on the final product, neglecting the processes students go through in writing, such as planning, drafting, and revising. Assessments are also frequently conducted subjectively and tend to lack meaningful feedback that could help students improve their writing skills (Brown, 2004).

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth study of how the evaluation of narrative writing instruction is actually implemented in junior high schools. This evaluation should be reviewed from various dimensions: the approaches used by teachers, the types of assessment instruments chosen, students' involvement in the evaluation process, and its impact on improving writing skills. In this regard, the main question that needs to be addressed is: how is the evaluation of narrative writing instruction conducted in junior high schools? This question is significant because by understanding how evaluation is implemented, we can assess whether the teaching and learning process reflects effective, fair, and constructive educational principles.

To support this analysis, learning theories can be used as a conceptual framework. One such theory is Piaget's (1970) constructivist theory, which emphasizes that students construct knowledge through experience and active engagement. In writing instruction, this approach requires teachers to create a learning environment that enables students to draw ideas from their own experiences, rather than merely imitating provided models. Writing should be a medium of exploration and meaning-making, not just text reproduction.

Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) social learning theory highlights the importance of social interaction in shaping cognitive skills. In the context of narrative writing, student interaction with teachers and peers, for example, through discussions, peer feedback, or group work can enrich their understanding of narrative structure and writing strategies. Effective evaluation should take into account these social processes, such as observing student contributions in discussions or during collaborative revisions. On the other hand, project-based learning (Thomas, 2000) and authentic learning (Gulikers, Bastiaens, & Kirschner, 2004) also offer relevant approaches in the context of narrative writing assessment. By engaging students in story-writing projects based on real-life themes or personal experiences, the learning process becomes more meaningful. Evaluation in this context not only measures the final product but also assesses student engagement, their ability to plan and revise, and the quality of interaction throughout the writing process. Such authentic assessment is expected to reflect students' competencies more holistically and realistically.

However, implementing these theories in classroom evaluation practices is not always easy. Teachers face challenges such as time constraints, administrative burdens, and the lack of valid and reliable assessment instruments. Additionally, there is often a limited understanding among teachers regarding alternative assessment models, such as formative assessment, performance-based assessment, and portfolio assessment, which emphasize the process rather than solely the outcome (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Therefore, it is important to examine to what extent the evaluation of narrative writing instruction in



junior high schools has accommodated these approaches and produced a tangible impact on improving the quality of students' writing.

Overall, this background highlights the need to conduct an evaluation of evaluation. That is a critical review of how the assessment of narrative writing instruction is currently implemented. The aim is to determine whether the approaches used are effective, whether the instruments employed align with learning objectives, and whether the assessments genuinely contribute to the enhancement of students' writing skills. By answering the question of how narrative writing evaluation is conducted in junior high schools, it is expected that a deeper understanding of current practices will be gained, providing a foundation for improving writing instruction in the future.

METHOD

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine various scholarly works related to the evaluation of narrative writing instruction in junior high schools. The SLR approach was selected because it enables researchers to synthesize research findings in a systematic, objective, and transparent manner (Kitchenham, 2004). Through this method, the researcher can gain a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of how narrative writing assessment practices have been developed and implemented in diverse educational contexts.

1. Formulation of the Research Question

The initial stage of the SLR process involves formulating the research question that guides the review. In this study, the main question is: "How is the evaluation of narrative writing instruction conducted in junior high schools?" This question serves as the foundation for guiding the search and analysis of relevant literature and ensures that the entire review process remains focused on the main objective of the study.

2. Identification of Relevant Studies

Relevant literature was identified by accessing various reputable national and international academic databases, including Google Scholar, ERIC, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SAGE, and Garuda. The keywords used included: "*narrative writing evaluation*," "*writing assessment in junior high school*," "*evaluasi pembelajaran menulis teks naratif*," and "*writing assessment*." The search was limited to articles published between 2010 and 2024, in both English and Indonesian, to ensure relevance and recency.

3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To filter the articles relevant to the research topic, the researcher established strict inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion criteria were as follows:

- a. studies discussing narrative writing evaluation at the junior high school level or equivalent,
- b. empirical studies employing quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches,
- c. articles published in accredited journals, and
- d. studies presenting explicit data on assessment practices.

Exclusion criteria included:

- a. articles not focused on assessment,
- b. studies conducted at elementary or senior high school levels,
- c. non-empirical articles such as opinion pieces or essays, and

d. duplicate articles.

4. Screening and Selection Process

An initial search yielded 128 articles. After screening based on titles and abstracts, 74 articles were retained. Further full-text screening resulted in 38 articles that met the methodological and content criteria. Upon detailed analysis, 26 articles were ultimately selected for inclusion as they were deemed the most relevant and met all established criteria.

5. Data Analysis and Synthesis

Once the articles were selected, the researcher conducted an analysis using a thematic coding approach. The key themes identified from the articles included:

- a. types of assessment approaches (e.g., formative, summative, authentic, portfolio-based),
 - b. assessment techniques (e.g., rubrics, self-assessment, peer feedback), and
 - c. challenges and the impact of assessment on students' writing outcomes.
- The results of the analysis were synthesized into a thematic narrative that connects findings across different contexts and studies.

6. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the researcher documented the procedures comprehensively and applied methodological transparency (Kitchenham et al., 2009). Validation was conducted through peer checking to ensure consistency in the assessment of studies and the coding of themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

As a result of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) process, 10 key articles were identified that represent various approaches and significant findings related to the evaluation of narrative writing instruction at the junior high school level. These articles were drawn from diverse scholarly sources and include both local and international studies, with a focus on students' writing abilities, instructional strategies, and the types of assessment implemented.

The analysis was conducted by categorizing the articles based on the themes/sub-topics addressed, research objectives, key findings, and recommendations proposed by each author. Data from these articles reveal common patterns of students' difficulties in narrative writing, including mastery of text structure, idea development, and language features. In addition, the articles offer a range of evaluation approaches and strategies that can be applied to enhance the quality of narrative writing instruction.

Tabel 1. Summary of Selected Articles on the Evaluation of Narrative Writing Instruction in Junior High School

No	Article Title	Theme/Sub-topic	Research Objective	Key Findings	Recommendations
1	Learning Outcomes in Writing Narrative Texts Among Grade VII Students of SMP Negeri 1 Telaga (2020/2021 Academic Year)	Narrative Writing Skills	To describe students' writing outcomes based on structural and linguistic aspects	Students struggle to understand narrative structure and linguistic rules	Continuous writing guidance is necessary



2	Narrative Text Writing Ability of Grade VII Students at SMP Negeri 1 Dungaliyo (2020/2021 Academic Year)	Narrative Writing Skills	To assess students' ability in composing narrative texts	Students find it difficult to organize ideas and plot	Use interactive media to enhance comprehension
3	EFL Students' Difficulties in Writing Narrative Texts	EFL Students' Difficulties	To identify common difficulties faced by EFL learners in narrative writing	Problems in plot development, character creation, verb tenses, and vocabulary	Intensive exercises and structural support are needed
4	An Analysis of the Ability of Writing Narrative Texts	Narrative Writing Skills	To analyze students' narrative writing ability	Basic structure is understood, but plots lack creativity	Apply methods that foster student creativity
5	Exploring the Use of Narrative Texts in Teaching Writing for EFL Classrooms	Instructional Methods and Strategies	To investigate the use of narrative texts in teaching writing	Enhances idea expression and writing techniques	Employ varied text-based teaching techniques
6	How to Assess EFL Narrative Creative Writing	Creative Assessment	To provide guidelines for assessing creative narrative writing	Analytical rubrics are effective in evaluating creativity and structure	Use analytical rubrics in assessment
7	Subjective Test Analysis as a Form of Evaluating Narrative Writing of Inspirational Stories in Grade IX MTs Hidayatut Thalibin	Subjective Evaluation	To examine the effectiveness of assessing story structure	Narrative structure analysis improves writing quality	Structure-based assessment is recommended
8	English Learning Assessment: Models and Measurements	Assessment Models	To identify effective evaluation models	Structured and active evaluation improves writing quality	Apply rubrics and active learning-based assessment
9	Narrative Writing Skills of Grade VII Students at SMP Negeri 2 Seririt	Learning Outcomes Evaluation	To assess the impact of narrative learning	Narrative learning enhances structural and linguistic understanding	Implement text-based narrative instruction
10	Implementation of Learning to Understand Narrative Text Information Using Teaching Materials Based on Local Wisdom Assisted by AKM-Class Instrument	Cultural Approaches	To implement local wisdom-based learning	Increases engagement and content relevance in writing	Integrate local wisdom into instructional materials

The review of the ten articles summarized in the previous table reveals a consistent trend in the focus and approaches to evaluating narrative writing instruction at the junior high school level. Six of the articles explicitly address students' basic competencies in writing narrative texts, with particular emphasis on text structure, idea development, and grammatical accuracy. These findings indicate that many students still require intensive guidance in understanding the framework of narrative texts and in developing their ideas logically and cohesively in their writing.

Meanwhile, three articles place greater emphasis on the importance of teaching strategies and process-oriented assessment approaches, such as the use of systematic assessment rubrics and authentic evaluation methods to assess students' writing outcomes. Assessments that accommodate elements of process, creativity, and reflection have been shown to be more effective in improving both the quality of student writing and learner engagement, compared to conventional assessments that focus solely on the final product.

Interestingly, one article introduces a local culture-based approach as a contextual and relevant teaching strategy aligned with students' backgrounds. This approach has been proven to enhance motivation, foster a sense of ownership over students' writing, and strengthen the connection between students' personal experiences and the learning content.

Findings

The results of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of ten selected articles highlight the need for greater attention to the teaching of narrative writing at the junior high school level, particularly in terms of students' foundational skills, instructional strategies, and assessment methods. Although narrative texts are commonly taught in this educational stage, many students still face considerable challenges in mastering text structure, developing coherent ideas, and applying appropriate linguistic conventions. One of the main findings from the six articles that focus on students' writing abilities is that most students are unable to compose complete and cohesive texts. For instance, the first and second articles reveal that students struggle to understand the key elements of narrative structure, including orientation, complication, and resolution. Linguistic issues—especially in verb tense usage, sentence construction, and vocabulary—are still frequently found in students' writing. These difficulties suggest the necessity for explicit instruction on narrative features, alongside sustained guidance throughout the writing process.

Further insight is provided by the third and fourth articles, which emphasize the challenges encountered by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. Limited language proficiency not only hampers students' understanding of narrative structure but also affects their ability to develop compelling plots and build believable characters. These studies recommend more intensive writing practice, contextual learning, and individualized support as effective measures to address these issues. Writing should not be viewed merely as a technical activity but as a process that requires a deep understanding of genre and the integration of creative thinking.

The fifth to seventh articles focus on strategic teaching and evaluation approaches. They highlight the benefits of using diverse teaching media, narrative-based learning, and structured assessment tools such as analytical rubrics. In particular, the article *How to Assess EFL Narrative Creative Writing* demonstrates how analytical rubrics allow



teachers to objectively and fairly assess elements such as structure, creativity, and language use. Similarly, narrative structure-based assessment, as discussed in the seventh article, reinforces students' understanding of key components through reflective practices that guide them in constructing more coherent texts.

The final two articles underscore the importance of contextual and culturally relevant evaluation. The eighth article shows that active and participatory assessment models such as project-based assessments enhance students' writing skills by positioning assessment as an integral part of learning rather than merely a measure of final performance. The tenth article, which explores the use of teaching materials grounded in local wisdom, illustrates how integrating cultural content fosters students' emotional engagement, motivation, and personal expression in writing. Such an approach allows learners to connect their narratives to personal experiences and social identities, making writing more meaningful.

Overall, the discussion affirms that the success of narrative writing instruction is not solely determined by students' technical skills, but also by how teachers design and evaluate the learning process. Product-focused assessments often neglect the reflective and creative dimensions of writing that can be developed during the process itself. Therefore, educators must adopt comprehensive evaluation strategies that include the use of rubrics, formative assessments, and project-based evaluations, all of which support active student engagement.

Effective evaluation of narrative writing instruction should embody the principles of differentiation, participation, and relevance. Differentiation involves tailoring assessments to meet the diverse needs and abilities of learners. Participation emphasizes students' active role in the evaluation process through reflection and peer assessment. Relevance is reflected in the use of culturally meaningful content that relates to students' lived experiences, allowing for deeper and more authentic writing. The findings of this review underscore the need for teacher training in developing authentic assessment tools that not only promote technically accurate writing but also foster students' ability to write consciously and contextually.

CONCLUSION

This study has critically examined the evaluation practices of narrative writing instruction in junior high schools through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of ten selected articles. The findings underscore a recurring concern: students continue to face significant difficulties in mastering the structural, linguistic, and creative aspects of narrative writing. These challenges stem not only from students' limited writing skills but also from the instructional and assessment strategies employed in the classroom. While traditional assessment methods tend to focus on the final product, more effective approaches emphasize the writing process, student engagement, and meaningful feedback. The review also highlights the potential of integrating constructivist, social, project-based, and culturally responsive learning theories into the assessment process. Such approaches encourage differentiated, participatory, and contextually relevant evaluation practices that align more closely with students' needs and real-life experiences. Ultimately, to enhance the quality of narrative writing instruction, there is a critical need for teachers to adopt more comprehensive and reflective assessment strategies. This includes the development and application of authentic, process-oriented evaluation tools that foster both technical accuracy and meaningful expression. The insights gained from

this review are expected to provide a foundation for future improvements in writing pedagogy and assessment in junior high schools.

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