



## EVALUATING HIKAYAT WRITING ASSESSMENT USING GENRE-BASED APPROACH IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

This research focuses on evaluating how well the writing assessment for hikayat texts is designed in Indonesian language learning at the senior high school level, especially by using the Genre-Based Approach under the Merdeka Curriculum. The study uses a qualitative descriptive method, with data collected through class observations, teacher interviews, and assessment documents. The results show that even though some teachers understand genre-based principles, many of the assessment tasks still do not fully follow the features of the hikayat genre. For example, the assignments often miss key parts such as the typical structure, use of classical or formal language, and moral values. Instead, students are asked to write general stories without clear guidance about the genre. This makes it hard to know if students have really mastered writing hikayat texts. The study suggests that teachers need more support in designing tasks and rubrics that follow the genre rules. This research helps improve the quality of Indonesian Language and Literature Education by encouraging more accurate and culturally relevant assessments.

Keywords: Genre-Based Approach; hikayat; writing assessment; senior high school; Indonesian education

### INTRODUCTION

Writing instruction in the Indonesian language subject plays a crucial role in developing students' critical and creative thinking skills, as well as in strengthening their cultural identity. One of the text types taught at the senior high school level is *hikayat*, a classical literary work rich in moral values, life philosophies, and the cultural identity of the Malay people. However, amid modernization and shifts in educational paradigms, the role of *hikayat* in writing instruction has become increasingly marginalized. In fact, *hikayat* not only serves as a cultural heritage but also as a valuable learning medium that can enrich students' historical and cultural literacy.

In line with the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Independent Curriculum) in Indonesia, the Genre-Based Approach has been recommended as a strategy in the teaching of writing. This approach emphasizes understanding text structures and their communicative purposes, while also encouraging students to develop their writing based on specific social conventions (Emilia, 2017). In the context of *hikayat* writing, this approach is highly relevant as it can guide students in understanding narrative structure, the use of classical language, and the values embedded within the text. Unfortunately, various studies have shown that the implementation of the genre-based

approach in teaching still faces challenges, particularly in the design of assessment (Yulia, 2019; Rahmawati & Susanti, 2022).

The main issue in assessing *hikayat* writing lies in the lack of alignment between writing tasks and the characteristics of the *hikayat* genre itself. Many teachers still assign general story-writing tasks without equipping students with a deep understanding of the structure, language style, and content specific to *hikayat*. This leads to ambiguity in assessing whether students have truly mastered the competencies required for writing *hikayat* (Fitriani & Suryana, 2023). Such weaknesses may reduce the effectiveness of writing instruction as a means to strengthen students' literacy competencies within a cultural context.

In modern pedagogical perspectives, writing assessment functions not only as a measurement tool but also as a means of learning (*assessment as learning*). Therefore, effective assessment should be formative in nature, encourage reflection, and guide students in improving their writing through feedback (Anderson, 2020). In this regard, an assessment rubric aligned with the *hikayat* genre is essential so that teachers have an objective reference, and students can clearly understand the expectations they need to meet. Additionally, the use of model texts, structural analysis, and step-by-step practice (*scaffolding*) are key components of the genre-based approach that should also be reflected in the assessment process (Hyland, 2019).

The *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which has been gradually implemented since 2022, allows teachers to design contextual, inclusive, and student-centered learning experiences. One of the core principles of this curriculum is the strengthening of the *Profil Pelajar Pancasila* (Pancasila Student Profile) through meaningful learning activities, including literary instruction. In this context, *hikayat* can serve as a medium to instill values such as mutual cooperation, independence, and noble character. Therefore, a well-designed assessment is crucial to ensure that *hikayat* writing instruction not only focuses on linguistic aspects but also emphasizes the moral values embedded in the texts (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

However, in actual classroom practice, teachers still face several challenges, such as limited understanding of the genre-based approach, lack of professional training in assessment design, and administrative pressures that restrict pedagogical innovation. A study by Astuti and Widiatmoko (2020) found that many teachers still rely on conventional assessments without specific rubrics, resulting in evaluation outcomes that do not fully reflect students' competency achievements. This highlights a gap between the theoretical foundation of the genre-based approach and its practical implementation.

Moreover, it is important to note that many students still lack sufficient literary literacy to write *hikayat* effectively. They are generally unfamiliar with classical language styles or traditional narrative structures, making *hikayat* writing a particular challenge. In this context, it is essential for teachers to provide model texts, conduct joint explorations with students, and offer constructive feedback during the writing process. Assessment that only focuses on the final product without considering the process will lose its educational value (Widodo, 2021).

Considering the issues outlined above, this study aims to evaluate the extent to which *hikayat* writing assessments at the senior high school level have been designed and implemented in accordance with the principles of the genre-based approach. This research is expected to contribute to improving the quality of Indonesian language instruction, particularly in developing assessments that are fair, transparent, and relevant to



Indonesia's cultural context. This study is also important as part of the effort to support the *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which promotes holistic and character-based learning.

## METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of the assessment practices in *hikayat* writing in Grade X-2 of SMA Strada Bhakti Wiyata, particularly in relation to the application of the genre-based approach. This approach enabled the researcher to explore processes, perceptions, and actual classroom conditions through direct interaction with the research subjects (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### 1. Research Procedure

The research was conducted over the course of one month, starting from the pre-observation stage to data analysis. The stages included:

1. Pre-observation, to identify the context of *hikayat* writing instruction and the readiness of both teachers and students.
2. Classroom observation in Grade X-2 during the ongoing learning process.
3. In-depth interviews with the Indonesian language teacher responsible for the class.
4. Document collection, including writing assignments, assessment rubrics, and students' written works.
5. Data analysis, carried out in a gradual and systematic manner.

### 2. Instruments and Research Tools

This study used several main instruments:

- **Observation guide**, to record the teacher's teaching strategies, student activities, and classroom interactions. The format used was an open-ended observation sheet.
- **Semi-structured interview guide**, designed to explore the teacher's understanding and implementation of genre-based assessment. The questions covered planning, implementation, and evaluation of the assessment.
- **Document analysis format**, used to assess the alignment of tasks, rubrics, and students' texts with the conventions of *hikayat* according to the genre-based approach.

Supporting media included classroom activity photographs as additional documentation. All instruments and documentation were used in accordance with research ethics and with participants' consent.

### 3. Teaching Materials

The main learning material used in instruction was the Grade X Indonesian language textbook based on the *Kurikulum Merdeka*. Additionally, the teacher provided a classic *hikayat* text titled *Hikayat Bayan Budiman*, which was used both as a teaching material and a reference for students during their writing tasks.

### 4. Instrument Structure (Appendix Example)

As an example, the following is the structure of the interview guide used:

**Interview Guide for the Indonesian Language Teacher:**

1. How do you understand the genre-based approach?
2. Do you use this approach when teaching *hikayat* texts?
3. How do you design *hikayat* writing tasks for students?
4. What kind of rubric do you use to assess students' writing?
5. What challenges do you face in implementing the assessment?
6. Have you received any training related to genre-based text assessment?  
(A complete appendix is provided separately if needed by readers.)

**5. Data Analysis Techniques**

Data were analyzed using the interactive model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes:

- **Data reduction**, sorting out key information from observations, interviews, and documents.
- **Data display**, presented in narrative and tabular forms.
- **Conclusion drawing**, to interpret meanings and relationships among findings.

The analysis was conducted reflectively and continued throughout the entire research process.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the findings from classroom observations, interviews with the teacher, and analysis of hikayat writing assessment documents in Grade X-2 of SMA Strada Bhakti Wiyata. These findings are then discussed with reference to the principles of the genre-based approach and relevant previous studies.

**1. Observation Results of the Hikayat Writing Instruction Process**

Observations were conducted over three class meetings during Indonesian language lessons focused on hikayat writing. Based on the findings, the teacher applied the genre-based approach partially. The lesson began with an introduction to the definition and origin of hikayat, followed by a reading of a sample text. However, the exploration of the text's structure and linguistic features was not carried out in depth.

Students appeared enthusiastic during the reading and discussion of the text, but when asked to write their own hikayat, many still used a modern narrative style. Most of the students' texts did not reflect typical hikayat structures, such as magical openings, characters with extraordinary powers, or strong moral messages. This indicates that students' understanding of the hikayat genre was not well-developed, mainly due to the lack of explicit genre exploration by the teacher.

These findings support Hyland's (2019) argument that in a genre-based approach, teachers must explicitly and systematically teach the structure and language of the target genre so that students can first imitate and then innovate. Without sufficient modeling and guided exploration, students will struggle to align their writing style with the conventions of the intended genre.

**2. Findings from the Interview with the Indonesian Language Teacher**

The interview with the Indonesian language teacher of Grade X-2 revealed that the teacher possessed a basic understanding of the genre-based approach.



The teacher explained that hikayat is part of the Grade X curriculum as outlined in the Learning Objectives Flow (Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran, ATP) of the Kurikulum Merdeka, and is used to instill character values such as perseverance, responsibility, and loyalty.

However, the teacher also acknowledged several challenges. First, there is no specific rubric available for assessing hikayat texts. Second, limited instructional time led the teacher to focus more on the final writing product than on the development of structure and linguistic features. Third, the teacher has not received specialized training on the implementation of the genre-based approach in assessing classical literary writing.

These findings align with Yulia's (2019) research, which indicates that one of the main obstacles in applying the genre-based approach at the secondary school level is the lack of teacher training in designing rubrics and tasks appropriate to the target genre. In addition, Fitriani and Suryana (2023) emphasize the need for developing genre-specific rubrics so that writing assessment goes beyond general or narrative evaluation and takes into account the unique characteristics of each text type.

### **3. Analysis of Assessment Documents (Assignments, Rubrics, and Students' Texts)**

The documents analyzed in this study include the hikayat writing assignment sheet, the assessment rubric used by the teacher, and the written works of Grade X-2 students. The analysis revealed that the assignment given to students was general in nature and did not explicitly mention genre-specific criteria. The task instructions simply asked students to write a story that contained moral values, without referring to the typical hikayat structure such as the introduction of a noble character, a past-time setting, elements of wonder, or the symbolic and implicit delivery of messages.

The assessment rubric used by the teacher also did not fully reflect the principles of the genre-based approach. The assessed aspects were limited to general narrative structure (beginning–middle–end), the use of standard language, and neatness. There were no indicators assessing the use of classical elements, hikayat-specific language style, or the depth of moral values key features of the genre.

From the students' writing samples, most did not demonstrate an understanding of the hikayat genre conventions. Their texts tended to resemble modern short stories. For instance, in several works, the characters were not portrayed as extraordinary figures, there were no magical elements, and the story resolutions were logical and lacked strong moral messages. These findings reinforce the observation results, which suggest that without explicit guidance, students struggle to differentiate between hikayat and general narrative texts.

This finding is consistent with Emilia's (2017) view that within the genre-based approach, it is essential for teachers to provide model texts, guide students in analyzing structure, and design appropriate rubrics so that students can understand and produce genre-appropriate texts. Similarly, research by Rahmawati and Susanti (2022) states that vague or overly general rubrics can lead to a mismatch between learning objectives and students' performance outcomes.

### **4. Discussion and Comparison with Previous Studies**

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the implementation of hikayat writing assessment at SMA Strada Bhakti Wiyata has not yet fully reflected the principles of the genre-based approach, although the teacher shows an awareness of the importance of genre in literary instruction.

The gap between the teacher's conceptual understanding and classroom implementation is an issue that has been discussed in several previous studies. Astuti and Widiatmoko (2020) pointed out that while teachers may generally understand the concept of genre, they often lack the competence to develop detailed instructional and assessment tools. A similar issue was noted by Widodo (2021), who emphasized the importance of explicitly integrating cultural values and textual structure in teaching classical narrative texts such as hikayat.

Moreover, the Kurikulum Merdeka actually provides broad opportunities for teachers to develop character- and culture-based assessments. However, the absence of specific assessment guidelines from the government and limited professional training have led teachers to rely on generic rubrics that fail to accurately measure genre-specific competencies (Kemdikbudristek, 2022).

This study highlights that assessment is not merely a tool for evaluation, but an essential part of the learning process itself. When rubrics are designed according to the characteristics of a genre, students are not only assessed fairly but also guided to write in alignment with expected conventions. In the context of hikayat, this means writing with a distinctive narrative structure, classical language, symbolic characters, and profound moral messages.

Therefore, adjusting assignments, rubrics, and teaching strategies is a critical step in improving the quality of genre-based writing assessment, especially for classical literary texts such as hikayat.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study indicates that the implementation of hikayat writing assessment in Grade X-2 at SMA Strada Bhakti Wiyata has not yet fully reflected the principles of the genre-based approach. Although the teacher possesses a basic understanding of the hikayat genre, the teaching and assessment practices remain general. Writing assignments do not provide explicit guidance regarding the structure and distinctive features of hikayat, and the assessment rubric does not comprehensively incorporate genre-specific indicators. Students tend to produce narratives with modern structures that lack the typical characteristics of hikayat in terms of characters, language style, and moral values. This can be attributed to the limited exploration of model texts and insufficient scaffolding during the writing process. These findings align with previous studies that emphasize the importance of explicit instruction and scaffolding in the genre-based approach.

Based on these results, it is recommended that teachers receive further training on the genre-based approach, particularly in the context of classical literary texts such as hikayat. In addition, it is necessary to develop more structured and genre-oriented teaching materials and assessment rubrics, so that writing instruction not only evaluates the final product but also fosters students' comprehensive writing competencies.

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