

# **An Analysis of Writing Tasks in English Textbook for Office Administration Students Entitled *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI***

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## **ABSTRACT**

Vocational High School students majoring in Office Administration will be required to do writing tasks when they work in companies after graduating from school. This study aimed at finding out the appropriateness of writing tasks in English textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI* for Office Administration students at Eleventh Grade. Content analysis method was employed in this study and the analysis was based on Nunan's (2004) theory of task components (goal, input, procedure) and Hyland's (2003) theory of writing procedures (graphology, scaffolding, composing). The results indicated that the textbook is inappropriate for Office Administration students. Among the three components of writing task, writing goals and texts (input) in the analyzed textbook do not correspond to the ones required by Office Administration students. The goals and input in the textbook are related to daily life situations, while the students are supposed to write business documents. In terms of procedure, the textbook leaves out graphology tasks and only provides the tasks for scaffolding and composing. Scaffolding has four categories: language familiarization (found in Chapter 1, 2, 5, 6), model analysis and manipulation (not found in any chapters), controlled composition based on model (found in Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8), guided composition (found in Chapter 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8). Then, composing has two categories: composition heuristics (found in Chapter 4 and 8) and extended writing (found in Chapter 3 and 5). These findings imply that the needs arise to select more relevant writing tasks for Office Administration students or design new writing materials for the students.

**Keywords:** Writing, Task Analysis, Office Administration

## **INTRODUCTION**

Office Administration is one of the study programs at Vocational High School (VHS) that prepare its students to be knowledgeable and skillful in planning, organizing, directing, monitoring, controlling, and implementing office or administration jobs. Due to its work-oriented goal, VHS allows Office Administration students to have work experience before they graduate from school, and the opportunity is given at Eleventh Grade (XI) through on-the-job training. It means students should be given plenty of work-like practices to avoid a shock to the system. Among the skills needed by Office Administration students, English becomes the most required ability to do administrative works (Purwanto et al., 2020). This includes writing corporate documents in English. It is in line with

Indonesian National Working Competency Standards (*Standar Kompetensi Kerja Nasional Indonesia*, hereinafter referred to as SKKNI), Office Administration students are required to have English writing skill at a basic operational level. Because students will encounter real writing tasks during on-the-job training, it is crucial to provide students with learning materials that support students to practice doing the tasks.

The learning materials should give students the opportunities to acquire language related to their study program and the opportunities to do a variety of tasks which involve the use of language that students have learned (Widodo, 2016). In this case, Office Administration students should be provided with learning materials that engage them in writing tasks which are closely similar to writing tasks in the workplace. The reason for providing appropriate writing tasks for the students is because learning materials are the main resource for learning and determine the success of achieving learning outcomes. As stated by Richards (2001), materials become the main source of language input exposed to learners and of learning activities to be carried out in the classroom. For this reason, it has to be ensured that the materials used by Office Administration students at Eleventh Grade contain writing tasks that help students to practice work-related writing. It can be done through task analysis by matching the actual writing tasks in the workplace with writing tasks existed in the materials used by students.

There have been few studies aimed at the analysis of writing task in the existing materials used by particular groups of learners. Na and Lee (2019) conducted writing task analysis to figure out if the writing tasks in the used English textbooks help to build students' process, genre, and context knowledge. The results showed that the tasks encourage students to do writing process (brainstorming, pre-writing, writing, editing, etc.), but the tasks do not provide enough genres and the audience are not specified in the writing prompts. Subsequently, Ayu and Indrawati (2018) analyzed an English textbook and found that the writing tasks are interesting and enable students to write texts both individually and collaboratively. In terms of task distribution, the researchers found that the tasks were distributed in a fair way, that is, the tasks move from simple to complex. In addition, Fansuriyah (2019) carried out writing task analysis in an English textbook in terms of authenticity. The findings showed that the textbook contains authentic genres and the context in which students perform the writing tasks is also authentic i.e. students are involved in using real life language to do the tasks.

As it can be seen from the previous studies, the way of analyzing writing task is varied. Exploring writing tasks in terms of knowledge building, attractiveness, task distribution, and authenticity is extremely important to figure out if the tasks are appropriate for the target students. However, research on task analysis in terms of task component is hard to find and the mentioned previous studies did not explore this area. Nunan (2004) assert that task should have three components at a minimum, namely goal, input, and procedure. In writing task, goal refers to what students are expected to do to produce their own writing text(s). In the case of Office Administration students, the writing goal should be set based on writing competency stated in SKKNI as a national standard for working competency. As explained earlier, the competency include writing in English at a basic operational level. The documents to write include letters, emails, brochures, short reports, and announcement in business context because the those belong to corporate documents. Thus, the main goal of writing task for Office Administration students are supposed to be writing business documents.

The next task component is input. It is clear from writing competency standard that Office Administration should write business letters, emails, brochures, short reports, and announcement. Nevertheless, the documents that usually requires English language are letters, emails, and short reports (Setiawan, 2018). There are many sub-types of letters and emails, and those which are mostly written in English include job application letter, business invitation letter, order letter, inquiry email/letter, and complaint email/letter (Astuti, 2020; Gupta et al., 2013; Meilani, 2014; Setiawan, 2018). Meanwhile, for short reports, the existing studies have not revealed the typical reports that should be written in English in the workplace, so the short reports can be generally referred to as company reports. Based on this explanation, Office Administration students should be provided with tasks in which the writing input comprises of job application letter, business invitation letter, order letter, inquiry letter/email, and complaint letter/email, and company report.

The last component of task is procedure. Hyland (2003) elaborates the procedures for writing tasks. There are three stages of writing procedures i.e. graphology, scaffolding, and composing. Graphology includes the activity to promote mechanical skill of writing such as punctuation. Scaffolding refers to a range of activities to promote students' awareness of linguistic and rhetorical features of the given texts so that they can compose the texts afterward. Scaffolding has four categories with their typical activities: language familiarization (comparisons, gap-fill, feature identification), model analysis and manipulation (re-ordering, transforming, combining features), controlled composition based on models (text completion, parallel writing), and guided composition (data transfer, information transfer, medium transfer). Moreover, composing has two categories: composition heuristics (planning, pre-writing, multi-drafting, editing techniques) and extended writing (creation of particular audience – real or imagined).

With the combination of Nunan's (2004) task components and Hyland's (2003) categories of writing procedures, writing task analysis would be comprehensive. The study would not merely decide the appropriateness of tasks to target students but also whether the activities follow the procedures of writing properly. This study would explore the writing tasks provided in the existing materials used by Office Administration students at Eleventh Grade. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture has disseminated compulsory English textbooks to be used in upper secondary schools (including VHS). For the eleventh graders, the textbook is entitled *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI*. This textbook is widely used due to the relevant content with Curriculum 2013. Based on the explanation above, a study would be conducted to investigate the appropriateness of writing tasks in *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI* for Office Administration students.

## **METHOD**

The researcher employed content analysis method to conduct this study. Best and Kahn (2006) assert that content analysis is used when the researcher needs to discover useful information to evaluate pedagogical practices. The information can be retained from any documents provided for educational purpose. As stated by Lodico et al. (2006), documents generally include things like public records, personal writings, or instructional materials. In this study, the document to be analyzed was English textbook for Office Administration students at Eleventh Grade entitled *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI* published by *Kemdikbud* (the Indonesian Ministry of Education and

Culture) in 2017. The data were collected using purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is used when researcher selects sample based on the possession of characteristic being sought (Cohen et al., 2007).

Research instrument in this study was a checklist based on Nunan's (2004) theory about task components and Hyland's (2003) theory about writing procedures. The used data collection technique was review of document through the following steps: 1) reading all chapters in *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI*, 2) selecting writing tasks existed in the textbook, 3) storing the writing tasks in a table that has been prepared. Then, for data analysis technique, the researcher applied the so-called basic content analysis to determine if the content being researched is present or not in the data (Drisko & Maschi, 2016). The data analysis was done by deciding whether the analyzed textbook contain writing goal, input, and procedure that are appropriate for Office Administration students, specifically, whether the procedure follows Hyland's theory of writing procedure.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are eight chapters in *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI* in which the writing tasks were analyzed in this study. The titles of the chapters are: Offers & Suggestions (Chapter 1), Opinions & Thoughts (Chapter 2), Party Time (Chapter 3), National Disaster-An Exposition (Chapter 4), Letter Writing (Chapter 5), Cause & Effect (Chapter 6), Meaning Through Music (Chapter 7), and Explain This (Chapter 8). Overall, the results of analysis showed that *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI* does not provide Office Administration students with appropriate writing tasks, that is, workplace-related writing. The writing tasks have been examined in this study based on Nunan's (2004) theory of task components (goal, input, procedure) and Hyland's theory of writing procedures (graphology, scaffolding, composing). There are eight chapters that were analyzed and the detailed results of each component are presented as follows.

### Task Component 1: Goal

The results on writing goals indicated that the goals in the analyzed textbook fail to meet the goals required by Office Administration students. In the textbook, the writing goals include: writing a dialogue and a postcard/poster about giving suggestions and offers (Chapter 1); writing a dialogue about personal opinions about education privilege, money, or wildlife conservation (Chapter 2); writing formal invitation cards about wedding and school events (Chapter 3); writing analytical exposition texts about recent issue and animal conservation (Chapter 4); writing personal letters about trip adventure, birthday party and gratitude to parents (Chapter 5); writing a dialogue about causes and effects of flood, corruption and bully (Chapter 6); writing discussion notes about songs and poems (Chapter 7); and writing an explanation text about rainbow formation, tsunami, and animal life cycle (Chapter 8). Based on these data, then, the findings on writing goals are shown in the following table.

**Table 1. Findings on Writing Goal**

Goal	Chapter							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Writing business documents	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

Note: P = Present in the materials; M = Missing from the materials

As it can be seen, the writing goals in all chapters do not correspond to students' actual goal for writing business documents in the workplace. Nunan (2004) states that goal is part of writing task that relates to learning objective in general. This implies the importance of task goal and to make it as closely as possible to students' actual purpose for writing. Based on writing competency stated in SKKNI, Office Administration are supposed to be able to write in English at a basic operational level. It is in line with a study conducted by Raharjo et al., 2019, the majority of respondents in the study (85.29%) chose secretarial tasks as the main goal in English learning.

### Task Component 2: Input

In the analyzed textbook, the input comprises of: dialogues about giving offers and suggestions (Chapter 1); dialogue about giving opinions (Chapter 2); formal invitations to charity dinner and wedding (Chapter 3); analytical exposition texts about global warming and motorbikes banning (Chapter 4); personal letter about trip adventure (Chapter 5); dialogue about explaining causes and effects (Chapter 6); lyrics of songs entitled *Stand by Me*, *We Shall Overcome*, *Hero* and poems entitled *Invictus*, *The Road Not Taken*, *Dreams* (Chapter 7); and explanation text about earthquakes (Chapter 8). Based on these data, the findings on writing input can be seen from the table below.

**Table 2. Findings on Writing Input**

Input	Chapter							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Job application letter	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Business invitation letter	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Order letter	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Complaint letter/email	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Inquiry letter/email	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Company report	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

Note: P = Present in the materials; M = Missing from the materials

The findings in the table above demonstrated that none of writing input existed in the analyzed textbook match to writing input required by Office Administration students. Although letters are taught in Chapter 5, the content is about non-business matters. In fact, writing input should be related to job application, business invitation, order letter, and so on. Hyland (2013) explains that writing tasks should provide meaningful input, that is, the input relates to students' interests and students gain benefit from learning the input (useful for future job). As found by Yolanda et al. (2018) in their study, the interviewees (Office Administration students) said that they need specific writing materials which can actually be used in the workplace after they graduate from school.

### Task Component 3: Procedure

In the analyzed textbook, some of writing procedures based on Hyland's theory are present and the other are missing. In terms of graphology, none of the chapters provide punctuation task where students are asked to punctuate text(s). In terms of scaffolding, tasks for language

familiarization appear in Chapter 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. The tasks are in the form of gap-filling, feature identification, and comparisons. There are none of the tasks for model analysis and manipulation appear in any chapters. Furthermore, tasks for controlled composition based on model exist in Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8. The tasks include text completion, rewriting and responding the model text, and parallel writing. For guided composition, the tasks are in the form of writing based on topics (appear in Chapter 2, 3, 6, 8), writing based on situations (appear in Chapter 5 and 6), writing based on discussion questions (appear in Chapter 7). In terms of composing, the tasks for composition heuristics include drafting, revising, publishing which are given in Chapter 4 and 8. Whereas, for extended writing, the tasks include writing to brother (Chapter 3) and writing to friend/family (Chapter 5). Based on these data, the findings on writing procedure are presented in the following table.

**Table 3. Findings on Writing Procedure**

Procedure		Chapter							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Graphology	Punctuation	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
	Language familiarization	P	P	M	M	P	P	M	M
	Model analysis and manipulation	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Scaffolding	Controlled composition based on model	P	P	P	P	P	P	M	P
	Guided composition	M	P	P	M	P	P	P	P
Composing	Composition heuristics	M	M	M	P	M	M	M	P
	Extended writing	M	M	P	M	P	M	M	M

Note: P = Present in the materials; M = Missing from the materials

The results in Table 3 above indicated that the application of Hyland's writing procedures vary in the chapters. Unfortunately, there is not punctuation task at all, whereas Hyland (2003) assert that students can benefit from punctuation task to develop their understanding about appropriate use of punctuation in the text they are writing. Yolanda et al. (2018) also discovered that respondents, who are Office Administration students, expect to have skill to put punctuation marks appropriately. Scaffolding is also very important to be included in writing tasks. Language familiarization helps students to understand the texts better by taking a closer look at language features used in particular types of texts, whether the text structure, rhetorical moves, or grammar and vocabulary items (Hyland, 2003). It is line with Yolanda et al. (2018) findings where the respondents would like to learn text structure and practice the linguistic features (grammar and vocabulary) of business-related texts. Nevertheless, language familiarization tasks were only found in Chapter 1, 2, 5, 6, and the rest of the chapters did not provide such kind of language tasks.

It is regrettable that the researcher did not found any model analysis and manipulation tasks in the analyzed textbook. Hyland (2003) states that involving students in analyzing and manipulating the model texts can help students to be aware of how texts are constructed. Tasks for model analysis and manipulation are also suggested by students and lecturers at secretarial study program, specifically, most of them prefer the task such as re-arranging composition (Raharjo et al., 2019). Although model analysis and manipulation task is considered as a threat for those who rely on process

approach, it does not mean that students do not need to know what is expected from their writings (Hyland, 2003). Moreover, it can be seen from the findings in Table 3 that seven of the eight chapters provide the tasks for controlled composition based on model (Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8). Controlled composition tasks enable students to confidently write on their own based on the given text (Hyland, 2003). It can be a text frame to complete, a parallel text to write, a draft text to edit, or other activities that involve reworking or finishing a model. It is in line with Yolanda et al. (2018) who found that 94% of the respondents chose the activity of writing text with given template.

After students are considered being capable enough to write without model texts, students are asked to write texts with guidance, that is, topics or situations are given so that students can produce texts from them (Chapter 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8). Guided composition tasks with controlled input should be given when students' familiarity with genre and their knowledge about text structure, purpose, and language have increased (Hyland, 2003). The tasks serve as reinforcement where students use the skills they have learned and at the same time their writing fluency can improve. Providing guided composition tasks for writing is not only theoretical based, but also is proven by empirical study. Yolanda et al. (2018) found that 97% of 34 respondents prefer writing tasks with questions as guide and 85% of them prefer writing text with given topic.

As students have gained the fluency and building blocks for writing texts, finally they come to composing stage (composition heuristics and extended writing). As it can be seen in Table 3, composition heuristics tasks are only given in Chapter 4 and 8, while the rest of the chapters do not allow students to go through writing process such as brainstorming, planning, writing, editing, etc. Students need to learn that writing is not magic where they can make a perfect writing piece at one time. As stated by Hyland (2003), students should be provided with a variety of tasks where they can start to release writing ideas freely and then they gradually improve their writing by keep editing and polishing it until all ideas are written clearly and there are no grammatical mistakes. It is in line with a study conducted by Yolanda et al. (2018) who found that 97% of 34 respondents (Office Administration students) chose writing procedure to include drafting and editing. Another category in composing stage is extended writing. Table 3 shows that only two chapters providing extended writing tasks (Chapter 3 and 5), the rest of the chapters did not provide ones. Among the advantages of extended writing tasks, Hyland (2003) explains that these tasks give students the opportunity to develop and express ideas in response to real or imagined situations. This allows students to get used to creating texts as if they really send messages to real people.

## CONCLUSION

This study analyzed writing tasks existed in an English textbook for Office Administration students entitled *Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas XI* that consists of eight chapters. The analysis was based on Nunan's (2004) theory about task components (goal, input, procedure) and Hyland's theory about writing procedures: graphology (punctuation), scaffolding (language familiarization, model analysis and manipulation, controlled composition based on model, and guided composition exist in the textbook), and composing (composition heuristics and extended writing).

The findings of this study show that the textbook failed to provide appropriate writing goal and input that are required by Office Administration students. Both goals and texts (input) for writing provided in all chapters of the textbook do not relate to business, but they explore daily life situations

(e.g., reading and writing dialogues about suggestions and offers, personal letter for friend/family, song lyrics, poems, etc.). In terms of procedures, none of the chapters follow all procedures proposed by Hyland, from graphology to composing. Graphology tasks are totally omitted in the textbook. For scaffolding tasks, not all categories are included. Tasks in language familiarization were found in Chapter 1, 2, 5, 6, tasks in controlled composition based on model were found in Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and tasks in guided composition were found in Chapter 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8. It means the textbook do not provide tasks for model analysis and manipulation. Meanwhile, all categories in composing tasks were found to be given in the textbook. Tasks in composition heuristics were found in Chapter 4 and 8, and tasks in extended writing were found in Chapter 3 and 5.

Based on the findings reported in this study, recommendations are made for teachers and Education Ministry. For teachers, they should critically select English textbooks, or any materials provided on the internet which contain writing tasks that are appropriate for Office Administration students. This way is more reasonable rather than developing writing tasks on their own. Then, for the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, it should design English textbooks to fulfill the need of Office Administration students for doing job-related tasks (especially writing). The recommendation is also made for further researchers. Because this study did not examine the appropriateness of writing tasks from teachers' and students' perspectives, so further research needs to be conducted to evaluate writing tasks by involving teachers and students. Further research on the development of writing materials for Office Administration is also possible to conduct.

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