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**Title: The Proficiency Level of Bahasa Melayu Writing Skills
in Malaysian Primary Schools**

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Summary of Report:

The purpose of this study was to determine the proficiency level of Bahasa Melayu writing skills among primary school pupils who have completed six years of schooling through the Primary School Integrated Curriculum (or KBSR). Two writing skills components, i.e., the basic writing skills and functional writing skills that were emphasized in Level I and Level II of primary school were examined. Within the basic writing skills, pupills were expected to write letters, join letters to form words, phrases, and sentences. Hence, these basic skills will then be used to develop ideas and expression in order to fulfil the communication function through the use of written symbols. Notably, writing skills are critical in our daily lives. Thus, in acquiring knowledge and in the education process, writing skills are basic skills that should be acquired by every pupil right from the start of his or her primary education.

The aim of this study was to determine the benchmark level of Year Two to Year Six primary school pupils' writing skills. An assessment instrument and a matrix schedule will be developed to assess these pupils' writing skills. These tools can be utilized by Bahasa Melayu teachers in order to determine their pupils' achievement level in school-based achievement assessments. The study design includes research and development, focused towards developing an instrument to collect data pertaining to basic writing and functional writing skills. Data obtained will be analyzed to determine writing skills

acquisition benchmark in the development of a writing skills matrix. In order to obtain a valid and reliable instrument, the development of the instrument should be based upon a strong theoretical model in the area of writing and assessment. Year Two to Year Six primary school pupils from Peninsular Malaysia schools participated in this study. The projected main findings will be the Peninsular Malaysia primary school pupils writing acquisition matrix skills schedule.

According to UNESCO, writing skills are a part of literacy skills. Since literacy skills are regarded as basic human rights, therefore it is a government's responsibility to provide its citizens with the skills. Literature review has revealed that writing skills are the highest language skills paralleled to the development of the brain and language experiences. In language skills, its function primarily is to communicate and resolve daily affairs in the area of education, social, and job related tasks. In the light of its function as a communicative tool, this study has utilized writing skills ideas from communicative models (Hymes, 1972; Canale, 1983; Allen et al., 1983; Bachman, 1990; Hutchinson, 1990; Hashim, 2003 & 2005) to develop its instrument. In addition, the main literature refered to includes the Primary School Syllabus that prescribes and explains various writing skills requirements for pupils during the course of their primary school education.

Literature reviews and analyzed essay samples from Levels I and II of primary school pupils were verified by experts to validate its contents. Levels I and II that have different emphasis have been categorized into three3 sections according to its writing skills lists: (a) Basic Writing, (b) Discourse, and (c) Grammar for Level I, and (a) Sociolinguistic, (b) Discourse, and (c) Grammar for Level II.

Level I, basic writing skills component, consists of mechanical and pre-writing proficiencies, i.e., reproduction, writing, and developing-completing. In the discourse skills component, there are coherent and cohesive skills. The term coherent means proficiency in managing ideas and meanings, while the term cohesive means managing sentences in a concise and integrated manner in order to develop a text. The grammar proficiency component consists of mechanics, morphology, and syntax which are

necessary knowledge for the selection of language structures in order to construct a certain type, in this case the written form, of communication. As for Level II, which emphasizes the enhancement of writing skills and its usage in communication functions, the basic writing proficiency is substituted by the sociolinguistic skills. Sociolinguistic skills include the intent aspect and readers (audience) ability to understand the intent aspect of a writing that will be potentially generated.

For instrument validation purposes, two sets of the questions were first verified by experts in this field. To examine pupils' proficiency level, participants of this study, i.e. Year Two through Year Six pupils from four zones in Peninsular Malaysia wrote two essays for each level based on the two sets of previously verified questions. Question papers for Level I and Level II require one and one half hours to complete respectively. Level I question paper consists of questions that require pupils to rearrange pictures according to a story sequence; complete sentences based on a given picture; reproduce and rearrange paragraphs to complete an essay; and write an essayof at lease60 words based on a given topic. While Level II questions, require pupils to produce two essays, i.e., descriptive and imaginative types respectively and each essay must be at least 100 words.

Prior to the data collection activities, a pilot study was conducted to test the Level I and Level II instruments. Fifty Year Three (Level I) and fifty Year Six (Level II) pupils from a primary school in the District of Kuala Muda, Kedah participated in this pilot study. Results of this pilot study indicated that Level I and Level II instruments have high reliability with the alpha values of .99 and .99 respectively. There were several contributing reasons for the high alpha values. Specifically, the correlations between the items components were high. In addition, the correlations between the instrument in general and the components were also found to be high. Messicks (1993; 1994) described that this is an example of a concurrent validity and thus the instruments have achieved the construct unitary validity.

Data collection activities were conducted from April 4, 2004 through May 8, 2004. These exercises managed to collect 2020 essay samples from Level I, and 3024 essay samples from Level II.

Next, several trained examiners assessed essay samples in order to obtain data regarding pupils' writing proficiency levels. Essay samples from each zone for Level I and Level II were assessed. This exercise requires training and coordination among examiners in order to maintain reliability of the data. Two teams of examiners were selected, consisting of several raters, to assess the essays. Team one consists of four raters (two raters for Year Two and two raters for Year Three) and team two consists of six raters (two raters for Year Four, two raters for Year Five and two raters for Year Six). The inter-rater reliability for Level 1 as well as Level II was then computed. We found high inter-rater reliability among them (above .90). All these examiners (raters) were primary school teachers with a minimum of five years experience in teaching Bahasa Melayu and had served as raters for the Ministry of Education Malaysia.

Data from the essay samples that have been assessed were analyzed to determine the writing proficiency level of primary school pupils. The pupils' final grades were determined by averaging the mean scores from the two raters in the respective pupils' schooling year levels.

In terms of our study work schedule--research conceptualization, literature review, and development of instrument; pilot test; and data collection weree carried out according to schedule (August 2003 to April 2004). However, data collection activities, which consist of the essay samples from four zones of Peninsular Malaysia and the assessment of the sample essays by specially trained examiners, took a longer time to complete than expected (April 2004 to June 2005). The delay was primarily due to the essay examiners consisting of school teachers and USM students, who were also ex-teachers, were not able to complete their tasks on time due to their involvements in various end of the year administrative responsibilities. For instance, these examiners have to attend courses and grade examination papers. Apparently, report writing may also take a longer time

because this study involves two teams of researchers, and these researchers will have to coordinate the report writing process through two sessions of workshops. These shortcomings therefore require analysis of data and report writing to be extended beyond the suggested time frame. Nevertheless, permission to extend the time frame and changes in the research activity schedule has been approved.

The first part of the result section summarizes the proficiency level of Bahasa Melayu writing skills among primary school pupils in terms of their schooling year level, location, region, gender and the item components that were tested. The second part summarizes the effect sizes in terms of pupils' schooling year level, location, and gender.

Pupils were graded by means of a scale in which 1 = Very Weak; and 5 = Very Good. The overall mean score of pupils in Level I was 2.51. Evidently, pupils in Level I were somewhat average in terms of their writing skills proficiency level. Apparently, females (m = 2.63) performed a little better than males (m = 2.42) in all aspects of the writing skills proficiency items that were tested. It was also apparent that urban pupils (m = 2.76) and Year Three pupils (m = 2.85) performed better than rural (m = 2.23) and Year Two pupils (m = 2.21) respectively. In terms of regions, apparently northern states schools lead the other regions with the average mean score of 2.64, followed by southern states, central states and eastern states with the average mean scores of 2.57, 2.46 and 2.34 respectively.

Table 1: Overall Level 1 Mean Scores for Various Writing Skills

Item	Overall	Year		Location		Region				Gender	
		2	3	Urban	Rural	North	Central	South	East	Male	Female
Basic Writing – Copying	2.87	2.45	3.29	3.06	2.70	3.06	2.86	2.83	2.75	2.77	2.97
Basic Writing – Writing	2.81	2.49	3.13	3.00	2.64	3.03	2.89	2.70	2.64	2.68	2.93
Basic Writing – Building and Completing	NA	NA	2.78	NA	2.26	2.59	2.34	NA	2.47	NA	2.53
Discourse – Relationship and Coherent	2.57	2.23	2.91	2.82	2.35	2.58	2.46	2.66	2.58	2.47	2.66
Discourse – Connection and Cohesion	2.12	1.67	2.57	2.32	1.94	2.22	1.98	2.01	2.27	2.02	2.21
Grammar – Mechanics	2.68	2.40	2.96	2.91	2.47	2.85	2.63	2.75	2.50	2.54	2.81
Grammar – Morphology	2.56	2.33	2.78	2.82	2.32	2.63	2.52	2.65	2.44	2.42	2.69
Grammar – Syntax	2.20	1.93	2.48	2.43	2.00	2.25	2.08	2.82	2.20	2.09	2.32
Writing – Build/Complete	2.16	NA	3.07	NA	2.53	2.89	2.70	NA	2.62	NA	2.81
Discourse – Relationship and Connection	2.35	1.95	2.74	2.57	2.15	2.41	2.22	2.34	2.43	2.26	2.43
Grammar – Mechanics, Morphology and Syntax	2.48	2.22	2.74	2.72	2.27	2.58	2.41	2.56	2.38	2.35	2.60
Basic Writing – Copying (Repeat)	2.92	2.59	3.24	3.13	2.73	3.12	2.84	2.85	2.89	2.82	3.01
Basic Writing – Writing (Repeat)	2.82	2.60	3.03	3.03	2.62	2.99	2.86	2.72	2.72	2.69	2.93
Basic Writing – Building and Completing (Repeat)	2.52	2.18	2.83	2.77	2.29	2.68	2.37	2.48	2.55	2.43	2.60
Discourse – Relationship and Coherent (Repeat)	2.61	2.29	2.94	2.90	2.36	2.64	2.47	2.71	2.63	2.54	2.68
Discourse – Connection and Cohesion (Repeat)	2.10	1.60	2.59	2.31	1.90	2.16	1.97	2.04	2.22	2.02	2.17
Grammar – Mechanics (Repeat)	2.69	2.46	2.93	2.95	2.47	2.84	2.65	2.80	2.51	2.55	2.83
Grammar – Morphology (Repeat)	2.56	2.33	2.78	2.82	2.32	2.62	2.52	2.65	2.44	2.42	2.67
Grammar – Syntax (Repeat)	2.19	1.86	2.51	2.41	1.99	2.17	2.10	2.30	2.16	2.08	2.29
Basic Writing (Repeat)	2.75	2.46	3.04	2.98	2.55	2.93	2.69	2.68	2.73	2.65	2.85
Discourse (Repeat)	2.36	1.95	2.77	2.61	2.14	2.40	2.22	2.37	2.43	2.28	2.43
Grammar (Repeat)	2.48	2.22	2.74	2.73	2.26	2.54	2.42	2.58	2.37	2.35	2.60
Mean (Average)	2.51	2.21	2.85	2.76	2.23	2.64	2.46	2.57	2.34	2.42	2.63

The overall mean score of pupils in Level II was 3.08. Evidently, pupils in Level II were in the average category of the scale in terms of their writing skills proficiency level. Similar to Level 1 trends, it appears that females (m = 3.40) tend to perform better than males (m = 3.02) in all aspects of the writing skills proficiency items that were tested. A Similar trend was also found in terms of location. Urban pupils (m = 3.34) tend to perform better than rural pupils (m = 2.87). As expected, Year Six pupils (m = 3.58) tend to perform better than Year Five (m = 2.94) and Year Four pupils (m = 2.71). In terms of regions, apparently northern states led the other regions with the average mean score of

3.13, followed by southern states, eastern states and central states with the average mean scores of 3.06, 3.00 and 2.93 respectively.

Table 2: Overall Level II Mean Scores for Various Writing Skills

Item	Overall	Year			Location		Region				Gender	
		4	5	6	Urban	Rural	North	Central	South	East	Male	Female
Sociolinguistic – Intent	3.21	2.80	3.06	3.75	3.44	3.01	3.27	2.98	3.09	3.23	2.99	3.37
Sociolinguistic – Reading	2.98	2.71	2.89	3.32	3.22	2.77	3.04	2.77	2.87	2.89	2.76	3.14
Discourse – Relationship (coherent)	3.12	2.66	2.98	3.71	3.53	2.93	3.17	2.91	2.97	3.12	2.92	3.27
Discourse – Connection (Cohesion)	2.95	2.64	2.76	3.43	3.19	2.74	2.97	2.76	2.74	2.94	2.75	3.09
Grammar - Mechanics	3.09	2.53	2.87	3.84	3.33	2.88	3.19	2.83	2.93	3.06	2.87	3.25
Grammar – Morphology	3.04	2.69	2.88	3.55	3.27	2.85	3.08	2.86	2.89	2.94	2.85	3.19
Grammar – Syntax	2.80	2.47	2.63	3.26	3.03	2.59	2.80	2.55	2.75	2.76	2.61	2.93
Sociolinguistic – Intent (Repeat)	3.30	2.94	3.21	3.73	3.56	3.08	3.30	3.14	3.23	3.28	3.08	3.45
Sociolinguistic – Reading (Repeat)	3.02	2.90	2.79	3.38	3.29	2.80	3.03	2.82	2.94	2.92	2.80	3.19
Discourse – Relationship (Coherent Repeat)	3.25	2.86	3.18	3.70	3.51	3.03	3.22	3.11	3.15	3.20	3.04	3.40
Discourse– Connection (Cohesion Repeat)	3.05	2.76	2.91	3.49	3.31	2.84	3.00	2.88	3.06	2.99	2.84	3.22
Grammar – Mechanics (Repeat)	3.22	2.60	3.02	4.00	3.50	2.98	3.21	3.02	3.08	3.14	3.01	3.37
Grammar – Morphology (Repeat)	3.16	2.85	3.05	3.56	3.42	2.94	3.15	2.98	3.11	3.05	2.94	3.32
Grammar – Syntax (Repeat)	3.00	2.56	2.89	3.53	3.27	2.77	3.03	2.78	3.00	2.83	2.79	3.15
Sociolinguistic – Initial Test	3.09	2.76	2.97	3.53	3.33	2.89	3.15	2.88	2.98	3.06	2.88	3.25
Discourse – Initial Test	3.03	2.65	2.87	3.57	3.27	2.83	3.07	2.84	2.85	3.03	2.83	3.18
Grammar – Initial Test	2.97	2.56	2.97	3.55	3.21	2.77	3.03	2.75	2.85	2.92	2.78	3.12
Sociolinguistic – Repeated Test	3.16	2.92	3.00	3.55	3.43	2.94	3.16	2.98	3.09	3.10	2.94	3.33
Discourse – Repeated Test	3.15	2.81	3.04	3.59	3.41	2.93	3.11	2.99	3.11	3.10	2.94	3.31
Grammar – Repeated Test	3.12	2.67	2.99	3.70	3.39	2.90	3.13	2.93	3.06	3.00	2.92	3.28
Mean (Average)	3.08	2.71	2.94	3.58	3.34	2.87	3.10	2.88	2.98	3.02	3.02	3.40

We also examined pupils' performance according to the respective categories that were tested. For example, for Level I Basic Writing, the average mean score was 2.69. The average mean score for Discourse was 2.48. The average mean score for Grammar was 2.48. For Level II, the average mean score for Sociolinguistic was 3.12. The average mean score for Discourse was 3.08. The average mean score for Grammar was 3.05.

Table 3: Overall Level 1 Mean Scores for Various Categories

Category	Average Mean Score
Basic Writing	2.69
Discourse	2.35
Grammar	2.48

Table 4: Overall Level II Mean Scores for Various Categories

Category	Average Mean Score
Sociolinguistic	3.12
Discourse	3.08
Grammar	3.05

As reflected in the objectives, we do not intend to examine nor report the circumstances that may lead to the proficiency writing skills levels of the pupils tested. Rather this study was merely to report the pupils' proficiency level with the intention to develop a national matrix schedule. As a more useful way of reporting the data, we will use the effect size as suggested by Cohen (1988) to indicate the pupills performance. Consequently, Cohen has suggested that the most common interpretation of effect size is as follows:

0.0 to 0.2 : trivial effect size

0.2 to 0.5 : small effect size

0.5 to 0.8 : moderate effect size

0.8 and above: strong effect size

With reference to Level I pupils, Table 5 indicated there were moderate to strong effect size changes in all the items tested among Year Three and Year Two pupils. Apparently, overall size change between Year Three and Year Two pupils was moderate (0.742). Evidently, there were effect changes from small to moderate between the urban and rural pupils. The overall size change between urban and rural pupils was small (0.453). In terms of gender, there were effect changes from trivial to small among female and male pupils. Overall effect size change between female and male pupils was small (0.230).

Table 5: Level I Effect Size for Various Writing Skills

Item	Effect Size Year 3 and Year 2	Effect Size Urban and Rural	Effect Size Female and Male
Basic Writing – Copying	0.843	0.333	0.198
Basic Writing – Writing	0.633	0.277	0.247
Basic Writing – Building and Completing	NA	NA	NA
Discourse – Relationship and Coherent	0.763	0.492	0.186
Discourse – Connection and Cohesion	1.188	0.414	0.216
Grammar – Mechanics	0.571	0.429	0.283
Grammar – Morphology	0.425	0.492	0.281
Grammar – Syntax	0.721	0.487	0.281
Writing – Build/Complete	0.723	NA	NA
Discourse – Relationship and Connection	1.018	0.468	0.210
Grammar – Mechanics, Morphology and Syntax	0.615	0.487	0.294
Basic Writing – Copying (Repeat)	0.402	0.382	0.202
Basic Writing – Writing (Repeat)	0.778	0.399	0.204
Basic Writing – Building and Completing (Repeat)	0.682	0.536	0.192
Discourse – Relationship and Coherent (Repeat)	1.467	0.566	0.154
Discourse – Connection and Cohesion (Repeat)	0.429	0.475	0.170
Grammar – Mechanics (Repeat)	0.425	0.474	0.276
Grammar – Morphology (Repeat)	0.929	0.346	0.281
Grammar – Syntax (Repeat)	0.602	0.500	0.251
Basic Writing (Repeat)	1.063	0.451	0.221
Discourse (Repeat)	0.559	0.540	0.168
Grammar (Repeat)	NA	0.502	0.279
Average	0.742	0.453	0.230

Table 6, reflected similar trends found in Level I. Upper year pupils, in this case year six pupils' effect size changes were from small, moderate to strong in comparison to year 4 and 5 pupils respectively. Overall size change between year 6 and year five was moderate (0.539), between year six and year 4 was strong (0.854) and year 5 and year 4 was small (0.233). Location and gender also indicated effect size changes from trivial to small. In

terms of location, between urban and rural the overall effect size change was small (0.233). Overall, there was a small effect size change (0.320) between female and male pupils.

Table 6: Level II Effect Size for Various Writing Skills

Item	Effect Size			Effect Size	
	Year 6 and Year 5	Year 6 and Year 4	Year 5 and Year 4	Urban and Rural	Female and Male
Sociolinguistic – Intent	0.603	1.043	0.284	0.391	0.357
Sociolinguistic – Reading	0.382	0.640	0.186	0.437	0.366
Discourse – Relationship (coherent)	0.652	1.187	0.360	0.391	0.338
Discourse – Connection (Cohesion)	0.609	0.894	0.135	0.451	0.344
Grammar – Mechanics	0.859	1.447	0.379	0.398	0.201
Grammar – Morphology	0.592	0.958	0.212	0.393	0.328
Grammar – Syntax	0.587	0.942	0.194	0.437	0.326
Sociolinguistic – Intent (Repeat)	0.444	0.754	0.255	0.428	0.348
Sociolinguistic – Reading (Repeat)	0.512	0.444	0.100	0.450	0.373
Discourse – Relationship (Coherent Repeat)	0.443	0.793	0.301	0.425	0.339
Discourse – Connection (Cohesion Repeat)	0.493	0.678	0.146	0.431	0.353
Grammar – Mechanics (Repeat)	0.788	1.237	0.737	0.406	0.289
Grammar – Morphology (Repeat)	0.428	0.669	0.193	0.428	0.348
Grammar – Syntax (Repeat)	0.537	0.907	0.311	0.421	0.324
Sociolinguistic – Initial Test	0.498	0.842	0.236	0.420	0.368
Discourse – Initial Test	0.636	1.051	0.250	0.424	0.344
Grammar – Initial Test	0.693	1.146	0.166	0.417	0.340
Sociolinguistic – Repeated Test	0.484	0.599	0.077	0.446	0.366
Discourse – Repeated Test	0.473	0.741	0.225	0.436	0.350
Grammar – Repeated Test	0.597	0.966	0.300	0.426	0.326
Average	0.539	0.854	0.233	0.403	0.320

It appears that in all the areas tested there were small, moderate to strong effect size changes. We also examined the effect size changes according to the respective categories that were tested. For example, for Level I Basic Writing, the average effect size changes were 0.641, 0.396 and 0.211 between Year Three and Year Two pupils, between urban and rural, and between males and females respectively. The average effect size changes for Discourse were 0.904, 0.493, and 0.184 between Year Three and Year Two pupils, between urban and rural, and between males and females respectively. The effect size

changes for Grammar were 0.612, 0.461 and 0.278 between Year Three and Year Two pupils, between urban and rural, and between males and females respectively.

For Level II, the average effect size changes for Sociolinguistic were 0.487, 0.701, 0.334, 0.429 and 0.424 between Year Six and Year Five, Year 6 and Year Four, and Year Five and Year Four pupils, between urban and rural, and between males and females respectively. The average effect size changes for Discourse were 0.551, 0.891, 0.236, 0.426 and 0.345 between Year Six and Year Five, Year Six and Year Four, and Year Five and Year Four pupils, between urban and rural, and between males and females respectively. The average effect size changes for Grammar were 0.635, 1.034, 0.312, 0.416 and 0.310 between Year Sis and Year Five, Year Six and Year Four, and Year Five and Year Four pupils, between urban and rural, and between males and females respectively.

As reflected in this study through the mean scores as well as the effect size changes, it was evident that female pupils tend to do better than male pupils in writing skills proficiency. It was also evident that urban school pupils tend to better than their rural counterparts. Finally, as expected, due to content coverage matter, it was apparent that higher schooling years pupils tend to do better than pupils in the lower schooling years.

As a result of this study, we have developed a simple matrix schedule indicating pupils' proficiency level. This matrix schedule may be able to provide some form of information pertaining to pupils' writing proficiency levels as a frame of reference. Specifically, Table 7 and Table 8 show the Peninsular Malaysia Level I and Level II pupils' proficiency levels respectively in terms of their writing skills based on a scale in which 1 = Very Weak, 2 = Weak, 3 = Average, 4 = Good, and 5 = Very Good.

Table 7: Overall Level I Matrix Schedule for Various Writing Skills

Item	Overall
Basic Writing – Copying	2.87
Basic Writing – Writing	2.81
Basic Writing – Building and Completing	NA
Discourse – Relationship and Coherent	2.57
Discourse – Connection and Cohesion	2.12
Grammar – Mechanics	2.68
Grammar – Morphology	2.56
Grammar – Syntax	2.20
Writing – Build/Complete	2.16
Discourse – Relationship and Connection	2.35
Grammar – Mechanics, Morphology and Syntax	2.48
Basic Writing – Copying (Repeat)	2.92
Basic Writing – Writing (Repeat)	2.82
Basic Writing – Building and Completing (Repeat)	2.52
Discourse – Relationship and Coherent (Repeat)	2.61
Discourse – Connection and Cohesion (Repeat)	2.10
Grammar – Mechanics (Repeat)	2.69
Grammar – Morphology (Repeat)	2.56
Grammar – Syntax (Repeat)	2.19
Basic Writing (Repeat)	2.75
Discourse (Repeat)	2.36
Grammar (Repeat)	2.48
Mean (Average)	2.51

In our opinion, the overall results may not reflect the actual pupils' achievement due to some technicality issues. For example, in Level I, although the pupils that were tested consist of Year Two and Year Three but in actual fact they have just completed Year One and Year Two. This was due to the fact that these pupils were tested in the beginning of the year (just in time after they have completed the year prior to their present schooling year). This scenario was similar for pupils in Level II. Although the year levels were Four, Five, and Six, in actual fact, these pupils have just completed Years Three, Four, and Five.

Table 8: Overall Level II Matrix Schedule for Various Writing Skills

Item	Overall
Sociolinguistic – Intent	3.21
Sociolinguistic – Reading	2.98
Discourse – Relationship (coherent)	3.12
Discourse – Connection (Cohesion)	2.95
Grammar – Mechanics	3.09
Grammar – Morphology	3.04
Grammar – Syntax	2.80
Sociolinguistic – Intent (Repeat)	3.30
Sociolinguistic – Reading (Repeat)	3.02
Discourse – Relationship (Coherent Repeat)	3.25
Discourse– Connection (Cohesion Repeat)	3.05
Grammar – Mechanics (Repeat)	3.22
Grammar – Morphology (Repeat)	3.16
Grammar – Syntax (Repeat)	3.00
Sociolinguistic – Initial Test	3.09
Discourse – Initial Test	3.03
Grammar – Initial Test	2.97
Sociolinguistic – Repeated Test	3.16
Discourse – Repeated Test	3.15
Grammar – Repeated Test	3.12
Mean (Average)	3.08

Another issue that we believe needed attention was pertaining to the regional results. Apparently, northern region pupils performed better than the other regions. We strongly believe that some form of bias elements may have affected the results. The fact that the test instruments were developed by northern region teachers and piloted in a northern region school most likely may have affected the outcomes of the results. However, we were not totally surprised by the results that urban schools tend to perform better than rural schools and that girls tend to perform better than boys.

Regardless of the minor technicality issues detected, we believe that with the progress of this study and the data yielded, this study may be able to support future policy decisions particularly pertaining to pupils' writing proficiency skills. The findings of this study, as intended, may provide policy makers with a tangible form of reference particularly in terms of matrix schedules that may reflect the level of our nationwide pupils' writing proficiency skills. Apparently, since this sort of study has never been conducted before,

we anticipate that the data yielded and distilled in the form of matrix schedules might be able to provide a reasonable foundation for ongoing use by policy makers, curriculum planners, teachers and parents.

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Section 1:

For Arts Based Project

List all paper published under your FRGS grant in the ranked journals as in attachement

Section 2: List all OTHER papers published under the FRGS that you received

Hashim Othman. (2005). "Penilaian Tahap Penguasaan Kemahiran Menulis dalam Bahasa Melayu Murid Sekolah Kebangsaan: Kebolehpercayaan Instrumen" dlm. *Prosiding Persidangan Serantau Pendidikan Bahasa Melayu: Merekayasa Pendidikan Bahasa Melayu untuk Mendepani Cabaran Semasa* (16-18 September 2005). Pulau Pinang: Pusat Pengajian Ilmu Pendidikan.