

***A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF
ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM OF UNIVERSITAS RIAU IN
SUPPLYING CORRECT PUNCTUATIONS***

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Abstract: *This study is aimed at investigating the level of the students' ability at English Study Program of Universitas Riau in supplying correct punctuations. The research design is a descriptive quantitative. There were 45 students chosen as the samples of this research. The instruments of the research were 30 multiple choice questions assessed by using Heaton's formula that were analyzed by using Harris' measurement. It was found that the average score of the students ability in supplying correct punctuations was 47,9. To be more specific the result finding shows that there were 3 (6,6%) students in excellent ability level. Then, there were 9 (20%) students who were in good ability level. Moreover, there were 12 (26,7%) students who were in mediocre ability level and there were 17 (37,8%) students who were in poor level. Last, there were 4 (8,9%) students who were in very poor level.*

Key Words: *Student, Ability, Supply, Correct, Punctuayions*

PENELITIAN TERHADAP KEMAMPUAN MAHASISWA FKIP BAHASA INGGRIS TAHUN KEDUA DALAM MENGGUNAKAN TANDA BACA YANG BENAR DI RIAU UNIVERSITY

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menginvestigasi level kemampuan mahasiswa tahun kedua FKIP Universitas Riau dalam menggunakan tanda baca yang benar. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif. Terdapat 45 mahasiswa sebagai sampel penelitian. Instrumen penelitian ini adalah tes *writing* (menulis) yang tersusun atas 30 soal pilihan berganda dan di nilai dengan rumus Heaton. Lalu, dianalisa dengan menggunakan cara penilaian Harris. Dari hasil penilaian dapat dilihat bahwa terdapat 3 siswa berada pada level unggul, kemudian 9 siswa berada pada level baik. Lebih lanjut, terdapat 12 siswa berada pada medium level dan terdapat 17 siswa berada pada level rendah. Terakhir, terdapat 4 siswa berada pada level sangat rendah.

Kata Kunci: Mahasiswa, Kemampuan, Memberikan, Benar, Tanda Baca

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There are four language skills that must be learned by foreign language learners. The four language skills are speaking, listening, reading and writing. Writing is considered as the most difficult one compared to the other language skills. In relation to the students' difficulties in writing, Ngunyen (2008) further stated three reasons behind the phenomena. First, every good writing needs a good understanding of the grammatical knowledge from the writer. Second, it refers to the phenomena where people are not really accustomed to writing activities. They tend to spend most of their time speaking and listening rather than writing. Third, it refers to the writer's confidence. They have a big problem with their confidence. They don't believe in their ability.

According to Scrivener (1994) there are some problems faced by students in writing. First is the orthography, poor formation of letters. Second is punctuation, where the students are wrong in placing or inserting any punctuation. Third is spelling. The fourth is layout. The last is language, where the students do not have enough control of basic vocabulary and the grammar.

Despite this challenge, EFL students still have to learn how to write well. When the students learn about writing, definitely they will learn about how to write good sentences and develop paragraphs. It is very important for the students to learn about sentences when studying English, because a good writing should consist of the good sentences

English department students in Universitas Riau are taught how to make good sentences during their first semester. These students are taught how to create word by word by using correct structure in making sentences. Generally speaking, it can be said that most students understand almost all of the important generic structures of sentences. But, there are cases which appear when the students have to develop from the words, then become sentences up to make a paragraph. They tend to forget one important thing which is called punctuations. This can be seen, for example, from the writer's experience during my writing 2 class. Many students seemed to understand the generic structure of the sentence and paragraph. However, when the lecturer asked them to write the sentences, they got difficulties. For example, they are confused about the way to use quotation mark.

Based on the syllabus of English Study Program (Eliwarti, 2016) a lesson about writing rules especially punctuations, in English study program is given in the first semester. In this semester the students are expected to learn all things about the rules. Based on the writer's experience, one semester is not enough. Because, many mistakes about the rules still appear even at higher semester.

Punctuations are important linguistic features that must be used when students develop paragraphs. Correct use of punctuations can help the readers understand texts easily (Doran, 1998). This is possible because they link two phrases or clauses so that the reader is able to understand the comparisons and contrasts made in paragraphs. It also ensures readability of a sentence as the punctuation indicates when a sentence ends. The proper use of punctuations is also essential in a sense that it can shorten the sentence without losing the meaning.

Although punctuations are essential, some problems still emerge in the field. The students may have a very good and complete structural paragraph, but they put punctuations as the marginal one. The university students do not know all the

punctuations used in developing a paragraph. It is not lecturers' fault that they never teach punctuations, but it may be the students' habit in which they are not used to using all the punctuations properly. Most of them frequently just tend to use the most common punctuations like, full stop (.), question mark (?), and comma (,). The students rarely use other punctuations like, colon (:), semi colon (;), hyphen (-), apostrophe ('), quotation mark (" "), exclamation mark (!), ellipsis (...), dashes (-), and parentheses ().

Another reason may relate to the teaching methodology of the lecturers. The method used might not really appropriate to teach punctuations. They tend to focus on the components of paragraph, such as how to write the main ideas, how to put the minor supporting details after the major supporting details and how to write the conclusion.

Considering all issues as mentioned above, the writer decides to conduct research on this topic. The title of this research is "A Study on the Ability of Second Year Students of English Study Program of Universitas Riau in Supplying Correct Punctuations."

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at the English Study Program, Universitas Riau, Pekanbaru from June up to September 2016. This research belongs to descriptive research. According to Gay (1987), the descriptive research involves collecting data to test hypothesis or to answer question concerning the status of the research

The population of this study was the second year students of English Department of FKIP Universitas Riau. Gay (1987) states that population is the group of interest to be researched. In this research, the population included all the second year students of English department of FKIP Universitas Riau in the academic year 2015-2016 that were 93 students. The students were divided into 3 classes, Class A, B, C. The writer used Cluster Random Sampling method in order to get the sample.

Gay (1987) states that if the population is homogenous enough, for population that is less than 100 persons, the sample taken is 50%, but if the population is more than 100 the sample taken is only 15 % of them.

The population of the second year semester of English Study Program of FKIP-UR is less than a hundred persons. To simplify it, the writer took the students who get number 1-45 randomly. So there were 45 samples in this research.

Quantitative data were used in this research. The sample was in form of multiple choice questions. Before the students did the test, they had been given a blue print in order to make them easier to do the test.

Before giving the test to the students, the test was tried out in order to know the validity and reliability of the test by using Heaton's (1975) way :

$$F.V = \frac{R}{N}$$

Where :

F.V = difficulty level

R = the number of correct answer

N = the number of student taking the test

The test item was accepted if F.V stays between 0.30-0.70 and will be rejected if F.V stays below 0.30 or over 0.70.

To achieve the validity and the reliability of the instrument, the try out data was carried out to second year students of English Study Program Universitas Riau who were not included in the sample. There were 25 students who did the test. Since the try out was conducted to see whether the question was accepted or not, then, the difficulty level was needed to be analyzed. The difficulty level of the item showed the level of difficulty of each question provided in the test. According to Heaton (1975), a test is accepted if the degree of difficulty (facility value) is between 0.30-0.70, and it is rejected if the degree is below 0.30 (too difficult) or over than 0.70 (too easy). After analyzing the test items, it was found that there were 13 questions that were rejected. Only one item was rejected because it was too difficult and there were 13 items were rejected because they were too easy. So, the rejected items were necessary to be revised to have reliable and valid items.

In order to find out the individual score of the students, the number of the correct answers of each students were divided by the number of the items and multiplied with 100 (a hundred) as can be seen in the following formula:

$$M = \frac{X}{N} \times 100$$

Heaton (1975)

Where :

M= individual score

X=correct answer

N=number of item

The scores of the students were classified into five levels of mastery. The classification of Harris's 1974:

Table 1. The Interpretation of the Students' Scores in Term of the Level of Ability

| No | Classification | Score |
|----|----------------|--------|
| 1 | Excellent | 81-100 |
| 2 | Good | 61-80 |
| 3 | Mediocre | 41-60 |
| 4 | Poor | 0-40 |

Referring to qualitative data, they were analyzed by using Gay (2000) suggestion on qualitative data analysis. He describes that the steps in analyzing qualitative data are as follows: data managing, reading or miming, describing, classifying and interpreting.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the writer presents the findings focusing on the students' ability in supplying correct punctuations. The result of the test was analyzed based on kinds of punctuations. However, in this study, the focus was only 8 punctuations they were comma, period, quotation marks, hyphen, exclamation, ellipsis, colon, and question mark.

The following table describes the results of the test on the second year students' ability in supplying correct punctuations.

Table 1. The individual score of second year students in supplying correct punctuations

| Students | Number of items | Correct answer | Score | Level of Ability | Percentage |
|----------|-----------------|----------------|-------|------------------|------------|
| 1 | 30 | 29 | 96,7 | Excellent | 6,7 |
| 2 | 30 | 26 | 86,7 | | |
| 3 | 30 | 25 | 83,3 | | |
| 4 | 30 | 23 | 76,7 | Good | 20 |
| 5 | 30 | 22 | 73,3 | | |
| 6 | 30 | 22 | 73,3 | | |
| 7 | 30 | 21 | 70 | | |
| 8 | 30 | 21 | 70 | | |
| 9 | 30 | 21 | 70 | | |
| 10 | 30 | 19 | 63,3 | | |
| 11 | 30 | 19 | 63,3 | | |
| 12 | 30 | 19 | 63,3 | Mediocre | 26,7 |
| 13 | 30 | 18 | 60 | | |
| 14 | 30 | 17 | 56,7 | | |
| 15 | 30 | 17 | 56,7 | | |
| 16 | 30 | 17 | 56,7 | | |
| 17 | 30 | 16 | 53,3 | | |
| 18 | 30 | 16 | 53,3 | | |
| 19 | 30 | 15 | 50 | | |
| 20 | 30 | 15 | 50 | | |
| 21 | 30 | 14 | 46,7 | | |
| 22 | 30 | 13 | 43,3 | | |
| 23 | 30 | 13 | 43,3 | | |
| 24 | 30 | 13 | 43,3 | | |
| 25 | 30 | 12 | 40 | | |
| 26 | 30 | 12 | 40 | | |
| 27 | 30 | 12 | 40 | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------|----|------|--------|-----------|-----|
| 28 | 30 | 12 | 40 | | |
| 29 | 30 | 12 | 40 | | |
| 30 | 30 | 11 | 36,7 | | |
| 31 | 30 | 11 | 36,7 | | |
| 32 | 30 | 11 | 36,7 | | |
| 33 | 30 | 11 | 36,7 | | |
| 34 | 30 | 11 | 36,7 | | |
| 35 | 30 | 10 | 33,3 | | |
| 36 | 30 | 9 | 30,0 | | |
| 37 | 30 | 9 | 30,0 | | |
| 38 | 30 | 8 | 26,7 | | |
| 39 | 30 | 7 | 23,3 | | |
| 40 | 30 | 7 | 23,3 | | |
| 41 | 30 | 7 | 23,3 | | |
| 42 | 30 | 6 | 20 | | |
| 43 | 30 | 6 | 20 | | |
| 44 | 30 | 6 | 20 | Very Poor | 8,9 |
| 45 | 30 | 6 | 20 | | |
| TOTAL | | 647 | 2156,7 | | |
| AVERAGE | | 14,4 | 47,9 | Mediocre | |

Based on the test results as mentioned in Table 1 the ability of the second year students of English study program FKIP University of Riau in supplying correct punctuation can be classified into five categories as presented on Table 2 the categories are based on (Carrol and Hall 1945) as mention in previous section.

Table 2. The Second Year Students' Ability in Supplying Correct Punctuations

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|----|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 3 | 6,6 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 9 | 20 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 12 | 27,6 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 17 | 37,8 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 5 | 8,9 % |
| | Total | | 45 | 100 % |

Note : F=Frequency P=Percentage

The table 2 shows the second year students' ability in supplying correct punctuation. It can be seen that there are 3 students (6,6%) in *excellent* level in supplying correct punctuation. Then, there are 9 students (20%) who are in *good* level. Moreover, there are 12 students (26,7%) who are in *mediocre* level and 17 students

(37,8%) in *poor* level. Last but not least, there are only 4 students (8,9%) who are in *very poor* level.

The mean score of the second year students of English Study Program of Universitas Riau in supplying correct punctuations was **47,8**. From the score, it was founded that their ability in supplying correct punctutions is *mediocre*.

To be more specific, the following tables were tell the students ability in supplying punctuations based on the writer focus in this research.

Table 3. The Students' Ability in Supplying Comma

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 4 | 8,9 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 11 | 24,4 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 13 | 28,9 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 9 | 20 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 8 | 17,8 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 3 shows the students' ability in supplying comma. From the table, it can be seen that there are 4 students (8,9%) in excellent level. Then, there are 11 students (24,4%) who are in good level. Moreover, there are 13 students (28,9%) who are in mediocre level and 9 students (20%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 8 students (17,8%) who are in very poor level.

Table. 4 The Students' Ability in Supplying Period

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 4 | 8,9 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 9 | 20 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 15 | 33% |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 9 | 20 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 8 | 17,8 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 4shows the students' ability in supplying period. From the table, it can be seen that there are 4 students (8,9%) in excellent level. Then, there are 9 students (20%) who are in good level. Moreover, there are 15 students (33,3%) who are in mediocre level and 9 students (20%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 8 students (17,8%) who are in very poor level.

Table 5. The Students' Ability in Supplying Quotation Marks

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|----|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 8 | 17,8 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 9 | 20 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 9 | 20 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 12 | 20 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 7 | 26,7 % |

Table 5 shows the students' ability in supplying period. From the table, it can be seen that there are 8 students (17,8%) in excellent level. Then, there are 9 students (20%) who are in good level. Moreover, there are 9 students (20%) who are in mediocre level and 12 students (26,7%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 7 students (15,5%) who are in very poor level.

Table 6. The Students' Ability in Supplying Hyphen

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 7 | 15,5 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 8 | 17,8 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 15 | 33,4 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 9 | 20 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 6 | 13,3 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 6 shows the students' ability in supplying hyphen. From the table, it can be seen that are 7 students (15,5%) in excellent level. Then, there are 8 students (17,8%) who are in good level. Moreover, there are 15 students (33,4%) who are in mediocre level and 9 students (20%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 6 students (13,3%) who are in very poor level.

Table 7 The Students' Ability in Supplying Exclamation

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 11 | 24,4 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 12 | 26,7 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 0 | 0 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 13 | 28,9 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 9 | 20 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 7 shows the students' ability in supplying exclamation. From the table, it can be seen that there are 11 students (24,4%) in excellent level. Then, there are 12 students (26,7%) who are in good level. Moreover, no one in mediocre level and 13 students (28,9%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 9 students (20%) who are in very poor level.

Table 8 The Students' Ability in Supplying Ellipsis

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 9 | 20 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 9 | 20 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 0 | 0 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 14 | 31,2 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 13 | 28,9 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 8 shows the students' ability in supplying period. From the table, it can be seen that there are 9 students (20%) in excellent level. Then, there are 9 students (20%) who are in good level. Moreover, no one in mediocre level and 14 students (31,2%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 13 students (28,9%) who are in very poor level.

Table 9 The Students' Ability in Supplying Colon

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 2 | 4,4 % |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 11 | 24,4 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 13 | 28,9 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 16 | 35,5 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 3 | 6,7 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 9 shows the students' ability in supplying colon. From the table, it can be seen that there are 2 students (4,4%) in excellent level. Then, there are 11 students (24,5%) who are in good level. Moreover, there are 13 students (28,9) in mediocre level and 16 students (35,5%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 3 students (6,7%) who are in very poor level.

Table 10 The Students' Ability in Supplying Question Mark

| No | Score | Ability Level | F | P |
|-------|--------|---------------|----|--------|
| 1 | 81-100 | Excellent | 1 | 2,2% |
| 2 | 61-80 | Good | 9 | 20 % |
| 3 | 41-60 | Mediocre | 14 | 31,2 % |
| 4 | 21-40 | Poor | 15 | 33,3 % |
| 5 | 0-20 | Very Poor | 6 | 13,3 % |
| Total | | | 45 | 100 % |

Table 10 shows the students' ability in supplying question mark. From the table, it can be seen that there are 1 students (2,2%) in excellent level. Then, there are 9 students (20%) who are in good level. Moreover, there are 14 students (31,2%) in mediocre level and 15 students (33,3%) in poor level. Last but not least, there are 6 students (13,3%) who are in very poor level.

From the presentation of the data, it can be interpreted that the ability of the third year student of English Study Program of FKIP Riau University in supplying correct punctuations is *mediocre*. This *mediocre* level might happen due to the students' confusion with the use of punctuation.

From the data collected it is found out that the highest score the students got is in "exclamation" item with the average score is 51,9. Because it might be not sufficient yet for University students to be called as students who have good ability in supplying correct punctuations, the students should develop their ability optimally. This might be caused of familiarity and commonly used. However "question mark" is categorized as an item that most of the students find it difficult with the average score 41,1. This might be, the students tend to careless about this items and might be they think this item is too easy theoretically, but the writer found they can not pass test practically.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATION

Conclusions

Based on the result of the research, it can be concluded that the ability of the second year students of English Study Program of FKIP Riau University in supplying correct punctuation is in *mediocre* level. Even though their score in mediocre level, the students are still need some improvement to make their grade better. Moreover, from the result findings, it could be seen that the students' ability in supplying punctuation based on the classification of the punctuation types stated on the blue print of the instrument is also *mediocre*.

Recomendations

Concerning to the conclusion of this research, the writer would like to offer some suggestions. Firstly, the students have to learn more about how to supply correct punctuation. Then, the students have to do more exercises about punctuation. Because, punctuation is one of the important thing that should be supplied in sentences, because without punctuations the reader can't get the meaning of the sentences.

Secondly, the lecturers have to teach the students about punctuation comprehensively. It means that the students are not only taught about punctuation theoretically but also taught how to use it properly. Because, a good writing does not only consist of the generic structures of paragraph or sentence, but also the punctuation should be supplied in correct place in the correct supplied punctuations. To be more specific, the lecturer should add more writing materials which consist of punctuations in their writings.

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