

A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS OF SMAN 1 PANGKALAN KURAS IN WRITING APPLICATION LETTER

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Abstract: *This research aims to find out the writing ability of the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. The population of this research is all the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. The number of sample is 60 students selected by using cluster random sampling technique. The instrument to collect the data was writing test and scored by three raters. The data were analyzed by classifying them into five levels of ability, such as very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent. Based on the findings of this research, it was found that the students' writing ability was in good level with the average score 74.12. In conclusion the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras have a good ability in writing application letter.*

Key Words: *Writing' Ability, Application Letter*

PENELITIAN TENTANG KEMAMPUAN PEMAHAMAN SISWA TAHUN KETIGA SMAN 1 PANGKALAN KURAS DALAM MENULIS SURAT LAMARAN KERJA

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencari tentang kemampuan pemahaman mendengar siswa tahun ketiga SMAN 1 Pangkalan. Populasi penelitian ini adalah siswa tahun ketiga SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. Jumlah sampel adalah 60 siswa yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik pemilihan secara acak. Instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data adalah tes menulis yang dinilai oleh 3 penilai. Data dianalisa dengan mengklasifikasi mereka menjadi lima level; yaitu sangat jelek, jelek, cukup, bagus, dan sangat bagus. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, kemampuan pemahaman menulis berada di level bagus dengan nilai tengahnya 74.12. Ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa di tahun ketiga SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras mempunyai kemampuan yang bagus dalam menulis surat lamaran pekerjaan.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Menulis, Surat Lamaran Pekerjaan

INTRODUCTION

English is considered as an important language for the people around the world. According to UNESCO English becomes the first language used by an estimated 400 million people worldwide, with an additional 1 billion people speaking it as a second language. It is an official language in around 60 countries worldwide, including the United Kingdom and The United States. In addition, this language is also an official language of the United Nations and the European Union. That is why people need to learn English, because English is an international language.

There are four skills in English, there are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the skills in learning English. According to Kirzner and Mandell (2014) writing can be defined as activities of sharing ideas, opinions and arguments to other people that can be found in a paragraph, an essay, or a journal. According to Brown (2001) writing is the written product of thinking, drafting, and revising that require specialized skills on how to deliver ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use a good words and become coherently into written text, how to revise the text, how to edit clearly to be a good grammar and produce a final products.

Writing skill is also needed to support the literacy program developed by the goverment. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia (2015) established literacy program at Indonesian schools, namely Gerakan Literasi Sekolah (GLS). As quoted in the Ministerial Decree of Education of The Republic Indonesia number 23 in 2015, the program aims to building the students characters. Literacy means the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts (UNESCO, 2004). It involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and winder society.

Based on the 2013 curriculum in SMA N 1 Pangkalan Kuras particularly for the third year students, they have to learn some texts, for example recount text, letter, etc. Letter is a written, typed, or printed communication, especially one sent in an envelope by mail or messenger (Merriam Webster 1828). Letter is text and can be written as a media for communication. In this context the letter has focus on appliation letter. Application letter is the official business letter includes with a job and/or resume and sent to prospective employer Lemoyne (2019). Application letter is media for apply a job in some companies.

Here the writer interviewed the teachers and asked some students about what they will do after they graduated from the school. Based on the interview result between the writer and the teachers, almost all students wanted to apply for a job after they graduated from the school. And some others wanted to continue their study to the university. It means that they have to know what they need to do in order to apply for a job. One of the needs is application letter. They need to be able in writing a good application letter. Furthermore, by conducting this research, the writer wanted to know about their ability in writing application letter because it will be useful for students when they want to apply for a job.

Based on the interview result between the writer and the teachers, Here the writer has interviewed English teachers in SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras and the interview revealed there was problem face by the students in learning English. The writer also did the small survey in this school, by asking the students about what they do after they graduated. Almost students want apply for a job after they graduate from the school.

And some others want to continue their study to the university. It means that most students in SMA N 1 Pangkalan Kuras want to apply for a job after they graduate. Actually according to the answer from the students, the writer want to know about their ability in writing an application letter because it will be useful for students when they want to apply for a job.

The importance of learning application letter is to make students understand more about how to write a good application letter. So students can have a good application letter. There are a lot of functions of learning application letter. Students will be able to know about application letter. The more students understand about how to write a good application letter, there will be more possibility for them to get a job.

From these reasons, the writer was interested to study about "A Study on the Ability of the Third Year Students at SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in Writing an Application Letter". This research was conducted because the writer want to know how good the students' ability of the third year students at SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in writing an application letter based on certain job vacancy.

METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive research. According to Noor (2012), descriptive research is a research that describes an event, a phenomenon happening now. It means that descriptive research is related with the condition occurs at that time, uses one variable or more and then investigates in fact. Noor (2012) also adds that there are some ways to do this type of research such as: formulating problem, collecting information, selecting the data collection.

Data collection technique was obtained by a researcher, managing data and giving conclusion. According to Williams (2007), descriptive research is a research design used to examine the situation involving identification of attributes of a particular phenomenon based the researcher so, this type of research is used to describe and interpret the data being studied based on fact that is support by accurate theories. Therefore, the aim of this research is to describe the students' ability of the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in writing application letter.

The instrument in collecting data in this research was writing test. The test was scored by three raters. students need to write application letter according to job vacancy provided. The duration times for doing the test was 80 minutes. The reason of choosing this instrument because it is suitable to who had learn letter in the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. The result of the test took the data of this research.

Furthermore, the population of this research was the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. There are 8 classes of the third year students 3IPA1, 3IPA2, 3IPA3, 3IPS1, 3IPS2, and 3IPS. Each class consist of 30 students. The total number of the population are 240 students.

According to Gay and Peter (2000), cluster sampling means that the sampling in which groups, not individuals, is randomly selected. Since the population is quite large and time that the writer has limit, the researcher chose to take cluster random sampling. Moreover, he states that cluster random sampling is most useful when the population is very large. It randomly selects group, not individuals. The researcher takes one class as try out class and one class as sample class. The procedure in taking the try out and the sample class are the following.

To get the sample, the researcher prepared some pieces of paper. One paper was written the word “sample”, one paper was “try out” and one paper was blank paper. Then, the researcher asked the chairman of each class to choose one paper. The one who got the paper with word “sample” became the sample of the research. Class (3IPS3) was chosen as the sample which the total number is 30 students. Class (3IPA1) was chosen as the try out which the total number is 30 students.

Then, the researcher used classification of students’ score by Harris (1974). The level of the student’s score in listening can be classified into four levels of mastery. The classification can be seen in this following table:

Table 1. The classification of the Test Score

No	Test score	The Classification
1	81-100	Excellent
2	61-80	Good
3	41-60	Average
4	21-40	Poor
5	0-20	Very poor

(Adapted from Harris 2006)

RESULTS AND DISSCUSION

To find out the real score for each student, the total score was divided by twenty five; twenty five is the number of all aspect of writing multiplied by the score range ($15:25=0.6$), the multiplied by 100 ($0,6 \times 100= 60$), so the real score of students is 60. After scoring the students writing ability, the score were put into classification table, table of 1. The percentage of students ability in writing application letter can be seen on the following table:

Table 2 The Percentage of Students Ability Level in General

Classification		Frequency	Percentage
Test Score	Level of Ability		
81-100	Excellent	12	20%
61-80	Good	43	71,66%
41-60	Average	5	8,33%
21-40	Poor	-	-
0-20	Very Poor	-	-

It was found out that most of students are in good level with score range of 61-80. In detail, from 60 students, 12 students are in the range score of 81-100. 43 students are in the range score of 61-80. 5 students are in the range score of 41-60. In addition no

student are in the range score of 0-20 and 21-40. The students 'ability can be seen from the average score for each writing aspect as in the following table :

Table 3. The Students Average Score and Real Score for Each Aspect of Writing

Aspect of Writing	Average Score	Real Score	Level of Ability
Grammar	3,68	73,60	Good
Vocabulary	3,75	75	Good
Mechanics	3,74	74,80	Good
Fluency	3,70	74	Good
Organization	3,66	73,20	Good
Average	3,70	74,12	Good

Table 3 shows that the students real score in terms of each writing aspects are in good level or in the range of 61-80. The students score in terms of every aspects of writing is not very slight different. Those five aspects of the ability were spread out in good level. Table 3 shows that the highest score of students are in the aspect of Vocabulary with the score 75. And the lowest score of the students are in the aspect of Organization with the score of 73,20. Hence it can be inferred that the ability of the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in writing application letter is good.

After knowing the students ability in writing application letter in general, it is important to know the detail of student's ability in writing in terms of each aspects of writing. The researcher presents the students writing ability level for each aspect of writing as follows:

1. Students Ability in Terms of Grammar

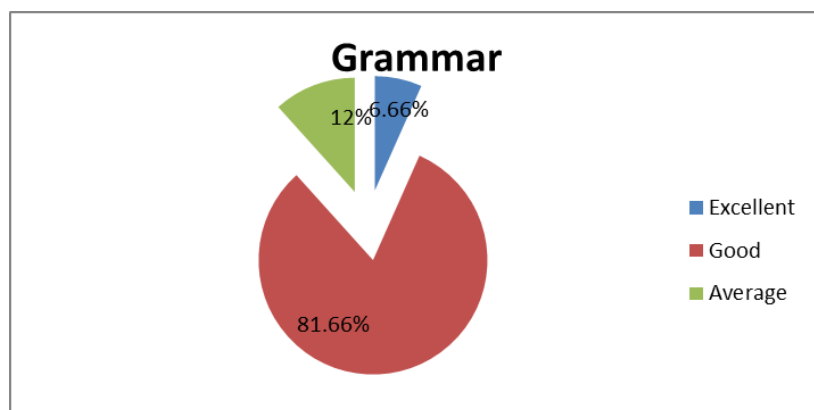


Figure 1. The Students' Ability in Terms of Grammar

Figure 1 presents the students 'ability in writing in terms of grammar. It can be seen that more than half of the total students are in average level. From 60 students, 4 students (6,66%) are in excellent level, 49 students (81,66%) are in good Level, 7 students (12%) are in Average level, and there is no students are in poor, and very poor level.

In addition, the students 'average score achieved by students in terms of grammar is 73,60 which is in the range of 61-80. It means that generally, the student's ability in grammar is good. It was also a lowest score after Organization among the other aspects. In short, the student's writing ability in Grammar aspect is in good level. The score list of each student in terms of grammar can be seen on appendix V.

2. Students' Ability in Terms of Vocabulary

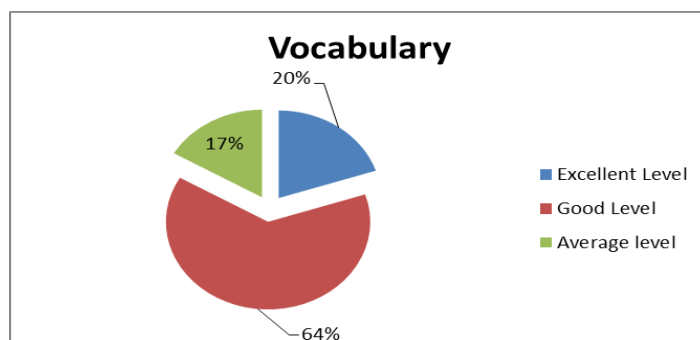


Figure 2. The students Writing Ability in Terms of Vocabulary

As can be seen from figure 2 half of the of students have average ability in Vocabulary. From 60 students, 12 students (20%) are in average level, 38 students (64%) are in Good level ability, 10 students (17%) are in Average level of ability, and there is no student in poor and very poor level of ability. The score list of each students in terms of Vocabulary can be seen on appendix VI.

The average score of Vocabulary aspect is higher than grammar aspect; it is 75 which is in the range of 61-80. From that score it can be inferred that the students 'ability in Vocabulary is in good level. It can be stated that generally the students have a lot of English vocabularies in writing application letter. Moreover, although generally the students have been good in this aspect, some students still got problems in expressing ideas because of limited vocabulary they have. Therefore students need to improve more vocabulary.

3. Students' Ability in Terms of Mechanics

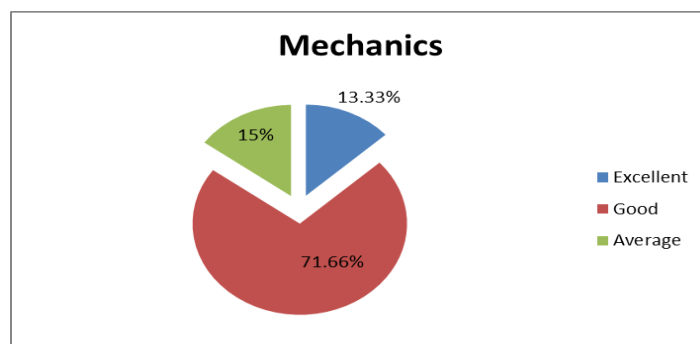


Figure 3 Students' Ability in Terms of Mechanics

Figure 3 shows the students ability in terms of Mechanics aspect. From 60 students, 8 students (13,33%) are in Excellent level, 43 students (71,66%) are in Good level, 9 students (15%) are in average level. And none of the students is in poor and very poor level. The score list of each students in terms of mechanics aspect can be seen in appendix VII.

From the percentage and mean score of the students writing ability, it can be said that the students ability in using Mechanics in writing application letter is good.

4. Students' Ability in Terms of Fluency

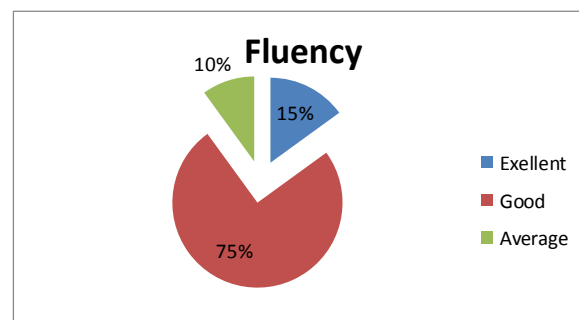


Figure 4. Students Ability in Terms of Fluency

Figure 4 it can be seen that in terms of Fluency, from 60 students. 9 students (15%) are in Excellent level, 45 students (75%) are in good level, 6 students (10%) are in average level, and none of student are in poor and very poor level. The students average score for apect fluency is 74.

From the percentage and mean score, it can be said that the students writing ability in terms of Fluency is good. The mean score of Fluency is lower than Vocabulary, but higher than the Grammar aspect. In other words, in this study it is also the lowest aspect after Grammar and Organization., because the average score for this aspect places the middle position, it is after Mechanics and Vocabulary aspect.

5. Students' Ability in Terms of Organization

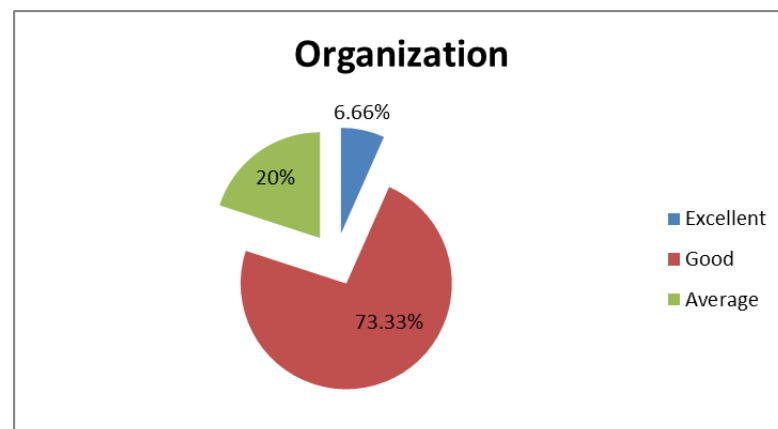


Figure 5 Students' Ability in Terms of Organization

Figure 5 shows the students' ability in aspect of organization. From 60 students, 4 students (6,66%) are in excellent level, 44 students (73,33%) are in good level, 12 students (20%) are in Average level. The score list of each students in terms of Organization can be seen in appendix IX.

From the percentage, it can be said that the students ability in level of Organization is in good level. The students average score in terms of this aspect is 73,20. It is the lowest score among the other aspects. Based on the mean score, it can be said that this aspect is quite difficult for the students. It can be stated that generally the students can organize the idea but there are some students who are still confused with the Organization of the application letter.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

The title of this research is "A Study on the Ability of the Third Year Students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in Writing Application Letter". The purpose of this research is to describe the students ability in writing application letter. After this study was conduct in SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras Particulary third year students and the results shown that the highest score of the students are from Vocabulary aspect. The student's average score 75. After the Vocabulary aspect the second highest score from Mechanics aspect. Students average score 74,8. And for Fluency aspect students got score 74. For the grammar aspect students got score 73.60, and for the lowest score for the students was the Organization aspect where the students got the score 73.20. Moreover, from the data of each students 'score, the researcher found that the ability of the students is Good that is 74,12. So, the ability of the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in writing application letter is Good.

Students ability in writing application letter was good even though they need to learn more about the organization of the letter, and also the grammar when they write letter.

Suggestions

From the conclusions above, it can be suggested that the third year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras need to improve their ability in writing application letter. Therefore, the writer would like to proper some suggestions:

1. The students should have a good motivation to improve their writing ability especially in application letter.
2. The students have to master particularly the Grammar aspect, the following by Organization, and Fluency aspect because those 3 aspect are quite difficult for students.
3. The students have to keep practicing in writing

4. The teachers need to motivate and encourage the students to learn English by giving more exercises and interesting learning materials.

Finally, the writer expects that all these findings, conclusions, and suggestions will be useful for the teachers and students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras, readers and the researcher as well

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