

# **A STUDY ON THE ABILITY OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU IN WRITING AN E-MAIL**

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**Abstract:** Nowadays, e-mail is one of general ways to communicate or to send messages between students and lecturer in academic purposes. This study aims to find out the ability of the English Department students of FKIP Universitas Riau in writing an e-mail to the lecturer. This study used the second semester students in academic year 2018/2019 as the population. Simple random sampling used to take the sample. The sample of this study was 37 students. Writing test used for the instrument. Data collected by received 37 e-mails written by the students. The data included descriptive quantitative method. From the data analysis, it was found that the ability of second semester students of the English Department FKIP Universitas Riau was in good level. The score of each aspects of e-mail writing was be analyzed of this study. The high score are content/idea and vocabulary. The low score are subject line, mechanics and grammar. Therefore, the students are expected to study and practice more how to write an e-mail to the lecturer with concerning some e-mail format, subject line, format and structure, mechanics, content/idea, grammar and vocabulary.

**Key Words:** Ability, Writing, E-Mail.

# **PENELITIAN TENTANG KEMAMPUAN MAHASISWA PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU DALAM MENULIS EMAIL**

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**Abstrak:** Dewasa ini, e-mail merupakan satu bentuk media komunikasi yang sering digunakan untuk berkomunikasi antara mahasiswa dan dosen dalam civitas akademika. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggali informasi tentang tingkat kemampuan mahasiswa bahasa Inggris dalam menulis e-mail kepada dosen. Penelitian ini melibatkan mahasiswa semester dua tahun ajaran 2018/2019 sebagai populasi. Menggunakan teknik simple random sampling dalam penentuan sampel. Jumlah sampel dalam penelitian ini 37 orang mahasiswa. Instrument yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah tes menulis dalam bentuk online. Data dikumpulkan dengan cara mengumpulkan e-mail dari setiap sampel langsung kepada e-mail peneliti. Penelitian ini merupakan bagian dari penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif. Dari data yang telah di analisa, ditemukan bahwa kemampuan mahasiswa bahasa inggris dalam menulis e-mail berada pada level baik. Aspek- aspek menulis e-mail juga di analsisa oleh peneliti. Nilai yang tergolong tinggi adalah aspek dari konten/ide dan kesesuaian bahasa. Nilai yang tergolong rendah adalah aspek dalam menulis subjek, mekanik, dan tata bahasa. Oleh karena itu, mahasiswa diharapkan untuk terus belajar dan banyak praktek dalam menulis e-mail kepada dosen serta memperhatikan aspek-aspek dan format yang benar dalam menulis e-mail, seperti subjek, format dan aturan, mekanik, konten/ide, tata bahasa dan kesesuaian bahasa.

**Kata Kunci:** Kemampuan, Menulis, e-mail.

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the four aspects of language skills. It is one of the four fundamental language skills in the language learning process, Alkhair (2017). Generally, it is not easy to produce a good writing even though the students have good ability other skills of language learning. Therefore, writing skill is included in the curriculum of English subject, start from students at junior level until the university level.

As time goes by along with increasingly sophisticated technological advances, writing skills can not only be practiced in the form of offline, but it can be done by online. In this era, writing skills can be applied in various ways, for example students can write online way such as writing an e-mail. In accordance with what was mentioned by Barron (1998) he suggested that e-mail is the most useful telecommunication device is electronic mail (e-mail). Students are often faced with the situation of having to send e-mails with certain subject to the lecturers. In this case, for example, students must send assignments to lecturers, students want to ask certain tasks to lecturers, or students want to ask permission because certain things cannot attend lectures. Of course this takes an important role in writing skills for students especially in writing e-mail skills.

There are some references that can be referenced on the topic of writing e-mails for students. First, the ability to write e-mails for students is an important thing and must be known to all students. As cited by Barron (2000) a number of studies that the e-mail becomes a crucial element in various settings (e.g. business, international, educational) and academic settings are one of them. Technological advances divert interaction between students and lecturers, one of which is by changing the guidance model by sending e-mails. As cited by Biesenbach-Lucas (2006) interaction between students and their lecturers in academia has changed from consultation to sending e-mails. Third, e-mail can be used as a means of communicating formally between students and lecturers without taking a long time. For example in several things; ask permission from lecturers in licensing lectures, ask about an assignment given by a lecturer, ask an opinion, and interact when sending certain assignments, Bloch (2002). In conclusion, some of the things above reveal how important the ability of students to write e-mail within the scope of the university.

## METHODOLOGY

This research including the quantitative research because the data presented by number and used some mathematics formula to calculate the data. The research was conducted at English study program FKIP Universitas Riau from April until September 2019. To determine the sample, simple random sampling used in this research, since the population of the data has similar characteristics. 37 students decided to the sample. The data collected by the written test to the sample. The data analyzed by followed some criteria of e-mail scoring rubric. To calculate the real score of writing ability, the formula as cited by Sudijono (2011) used in this research.

$$RS = \frac{TS}{MS} \times 100$$

Where:

RS = Real Score of each individual

TS = Total of average score for each aspect of writing

MS = Maximum score

Then, in classify the students' level ability of writing e-mail the classification by Harris (1974). The level start from excellent, good, average and poor.

To find out the mean score of students, the writer calculated the score by using formula (Sudijono, 2011):

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Notation:

X = the mean

$\sum X$  = the score summation

N = the number of students

Furthermore, the ability of the students' score in writing e-mail can be classified into four levels of mastery. The classification can be seen in this following table:

**Table 3. The Classification of Ability of Students**

No.	Scores	Ability Level
1.	80-100	Excellent
2.	60-79	Good
3.	50-59	Average
4.	0-49	Poor

(Adapted from Harris, 1974)

## FINDINGS

After the data were collected, the writer got the result of the ability of students in writing an e-mail in following table:

Table 1. The Score of Writing e-mail by the Students

Test score	Category score	Quality	The number of students	Percentage
80-100	Excellent	A	17	46%
60-79	Good	B	14	38%
50-59	Average	C	3	8%
0-49	Poor	D	3	8%
Total			37	100%

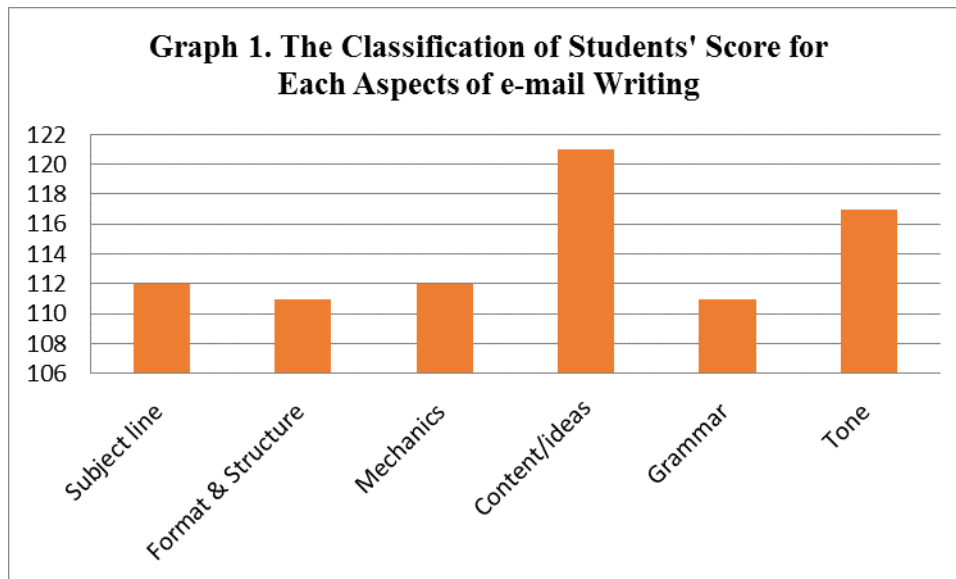
Table 1. presents the percentage of the students' scores according to the three raters. 46% of the student are in excellent level. 38% of the students are in good level. 8 % of the students are in average level. And 8% of the students are in poor level.

To clarify, the ability of the students in each aspects of e-mail writing, the results of the classification can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. The Classification For the Aspects of e-mail Writing

The aspects of e-mail writing	Rater 1		Rater 2		Rater 3		The mean scores of Three raters
	$\Sigma X$	N	$\Sigma X$	N	$\Sigma X$	N	
Subject Line	112	37	107	37	109	37	109,3
Format&Structure	111	37	113	37	113	37	112,3
Mechanics	112	37	112	37	110	37	111
Content/Idea	121	37	115	37	106	37	114
Grammar	111	37	116	37	103	37	110
Vocabulary	117	37	119	37	108	37	114

Table 2 above indicated the students's mean scores for each aspects of e-mail wrting. It can be seen that the highest mean scores is content/idea and vocabulary, while subject line, mechanics and grammar are the lowest score in each aspect of e-mail writing. To make clear, graphic 1 below indicated the ability of students in writing an e-mail for each aspets of e-mail writing.



It can be seen that the highest mean scores is content/idea and tone. It means that students are able to express their ideas in their e-mail writing, they are easy to write an e-mail to the lecturer based on the instructions that has been given. Then, they also have good ability in using the tone and diction that suitable for e-mail writing to the lecturer.

In the other side, there are three aspects of e-mail writing that earned low score. They are subject line, mechanics and grammar. Subject line is the most important aspects of e-mail writing, without subject e-mail is not effective. Roza (2017) stated that mechanics deals with the use of the graphic conventions of the language. In the writing activity, it concerns to punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. The use appropriate mechanics will avoid confusion and ambiguities of the readers in understanding the kind of writing. And grammar is related to rules of language in writing acitivity. To be a good writer, the writer should be concerned and be careful in grammar aspects. Grammar included some aspects such as tenses, the use of appropriate adverbs, pronoun and so on.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

From the data of this research, it can be concluded that: First, it can be conclude that most of students are able to write an e-mail correctly and appropriately based on the format and structure of e-mail. Second, only some students or small scope of students are not able to write an e-mail well. Third, the ability of writing e-mail to lecturer is one important skill that needed to learn by the students.

## Recommendations

It is recommended for the students to give more attention to writing skill. Especially for underclassmen at English Department of FKIP Universitas Riau. Prove to others faculty that we will give the best. There are some ways that can be done as the students to improve the language skills. The first way is we have to improve our reading habit. Reading is one important part of writing.

It is also recommended for the lecturer to guide the students about how to write an e-mail. So, the students will have education and knowledge for writing and sending e-mail. Give the students' knowledge about how to write e-mail effectively at the sidelines of the lecture. It will be very useful for them. Hopefully, by the guidance of the lecturer about writing e-mail, it will improve the writing e-mail ability of the English Department Students of FKIP of Universitas Riau in the future.

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