

ANANALYSIS OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY OF SMA PGRI 1 PADANG TO WRITE APPLICATION LETTERS

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ABSTRACT

This research was aimed to describe students' ability to write application letters. The design of this research was descriptive research. The number of population members was 270 students. To take the sample the researcher used stratified random sampling technique. The data were collected through writing application letter. To make the test reliable, the writer used inter-rater method. The result of analysis demonstrated that the test was reliable. Then the test was valid in terms of content validity. To analyze the data, the researcher presented the raw score, calculated, mean and standard deviation, clasified the students into those who high, moderate, or low ability, and counted the percentage of students who got high, moderate, and low ability in writing application letter. The result of this study showed that in general the ability of second year students of SMA PGRI 1 Padang to write an application letter was moderate. It was proved that (68.5 %) students had moderate ability. Based on the research finding the researcher a suggest to the teacher to give the students more exercises related to writing application letter. For the students, they should do more exercises to write an application letter in order to improve their skill.

Key words: Writing ability, Application Letter.

INTRODUCTION

English is widely used as an international language. As a *lingua franca* of the past century and the new millenium. English is one of the most important means for acquiring access to the world's intellectual and technical resources (Reza and Aliakbari, 2001:2)

. Therefore, people in all over the world try to learn and use English as a means of communication either orally or in written. We learn English in order to be able to communicate with other people around the world.

One of the language basic skills in English is writing. Pincas (1982:5) states that writing is an instrument of both communication and self-expression. Author states that, writing letter is one of ways to communicate our ideas to other people. One of the learning materials dealing with writing taught at the second year is writing an application letter. Riyanto (2011:5) states that an application letter is one of the business letters that is primarily aimed to get a job. In general, an application letter has 5 essential parts: (1) the head, (2) the inside address, (3) the salutation or greeting, (4) the body or Message of the Letter, (5) the complimentary, name and signature.

Based on the researcher's informal interview with some students of SMA

PGRI 1 Padang, she found that many students were unable to write an application letter. First, they made mistakes in the use of the formal language and don't really understand to make good sentences in writing application letter. Second, they got difficulties to have the point why they were writing and how to express their interest in the job. At last, the students had no knowledge about the right steps in writing an application letter.

Based on the fact above, the researcher was interested in conducting a research to analyze the second year students' ability of SMA PGRI 1 Padang in writing an application letter

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive research. It describes students' ability in writing application letter. The population of this research was the second year students of SMA PGRI 1 Padang. The total number of the population was 270 students.

In this research, the researcher used 3 techniques used for selecting sample of this research. Firstly, the researcher used stratified sampling technique because the members of population were in two different strata; exact science and social science. Secondly, the researcher used cluster sampling,

because the population was distributed in groups or classes. Thirdly, she also used random sampling technique because the members of population in each strata were homogenous; they have the same teaching material, same syllabus, same teacher, and all of population have the same capability in English.

To select members, the researcher wrote the names of classes on small pieces of paper, and then she put them into two boxes; one for exact science and one for social science. After shaking, she took out one piece of paper from the box of exact science and social science.

The instrument used to collect data of this research was writing test. The students were asked to write an application letter that focused on parts of application letter. The researcher asked the students to write an application letter in 60 minutes.

Before giving a real test, the researcher tried out the test to the students out of the sample. This try out was aimed to find out whether the students understood the direction and whether the allocated time was enough.

The researcher used content validity to see the validity of the test. Gay (1987:130) says that content validity is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area and it is one of important things for the achievement test.

The content of the test is constructed based on the syllabus and teaching material to write application letter. To see the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique. It also well. To minimize the subjectivity in scoring. Besides that to calculate the coefficient correlation between two scores given by the two scorers, the writer used Person Product Moment Formula by Arikunto (2010:72). It was found that the coefficient correlation of the two sets of scorers was (.94).

The researcher collected the data by asking the students to write application letter, the researcher presented raw score then calculated the students' score, the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), classified the students who got high, moderate, or low ability, and counted the percentage of students' ability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After the researcher analyzed the data, she found that the highest score was 99 and the lowest score was 59.5. She also found that mean of students' scores in writing application letter was 80.6 and standard deviation was 9.8. The result of data showed that the students' ability in writing application letter was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 9 students (16.7%) had high ability, 42 students (77.8%) had moderate ability and 3

students (5.5%) had low ability. To make sure, see the Table 4.1 below.

Tabel 4.1
Students' Ability in Writing An
Application Letter

No	Category	Frequency	percentage
1	High	9	16.7%
2	Moderate	42	77.8%
3	Low	3	5.5%%
		54	100%

4.1.2 Students' Ability in Writing Heading of Application Letters

After the researcher analyzed the data, she found that the highest score achieved was 20 and the lowest score was 7. She also found that mean of students' scores in writing heading of application letter was 17.4 and standard deviation was 4.2. The result of data analysis also showed that the students' ability in writing heading of application letter was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 0 students (0%) had high ability, 47 students (87%) had moderate ability and 7 students (13%) had low ability. To make sure, see the Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2
Category of Students' Ability in Writing
Heading of Application Letter

No	Category	Frequency	percentage
1	High	0	0%
2	Moderate	47	87%

3	Low	7	8.6%
		54	100%

4.1.3 Students' Ability in Writing Inside Address of ApplicationLetter

After the researcher analyzed the data, she found that the highest score achieved was 25 and the lowest score was 7.5. She also found that mean of students' scores in writing Inside address of application letter was 19.2 and standard deviation was 4.2. The result of data analysis also showed that the students' ability in writing Inside address of application letter was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 10 students (18%) had high ability, 35 students (65%) had moderate ability and 9 students (17%) had low ability . To make sure, see the Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3
Category of Students' Ability in
Writing Inside Adress of Application
Letter

No	Category	Frequency	percentage
1	High	10	18%
2	Moderate	35	65%
3	Low	9	17%
		54	100%

4.1.4 Students' Ability in Writing Salutation of Application Letter

After the researcher analyzed the data, she found that the highest score achieved was 5 and the lowest score was 3. The researcher also found that mean of students' scores in writing salutation of application letter was 4.4 and standard deviation was 0.4. The result of data analysis also showed that the students' ability in writing salutation of application letter was high. It was proved by the fact that 48 students (89%) had high ability, 6 students (11%) had moderate ability and 0 students (0%) had low ability. To make sure, see the Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4

Category of Students' Ability in Writing Salutation of Application Letter

No	Category	Frequency	percentage
1	High	48	18%
2	Moderate	6	65%
3	Low	0	17%
		54	100%

4.1.5 Students' Ability in Writing the Body of application letter

After the researcher analyzed the data, she found that the highest score achieved was 28.5 and the lowest score was 13. The researcher also found that mean of students' scores in writing body of application letter was 23.7 and standard

deviation was 4.03. The result of data analysis also showed that the students' ability in writing the body of application letter was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 3 students (5.6%) had high ability, 45 students (83.4%) had moderate ability and 6 students (11%) had low ability. To make sure, see the Table 4.5 below:

Table 4.5

Category of Students' Ability in Writing the Body of Application Letter

No	Category	Frequency	percentage
1	High	3	5.6%
2	Moderate	45	83.4%
3	Low	11	11%
		54	100%

4.1.6 Students' Ability in Writing Complimentary, Name, and Signature of Application Letter

After the researcher analyzed the data, she found that the highest score achieved was 20 and the lowest score was 0. The researcher also found that mean of students' scores in writing complimentary, name and signature of application letter was 15.10 and standard deviation was 3.31. The result of data analysis also showed that the students' ability in writing complimentary, name and signature of application letter was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 11 students (20.46%) had high ability, 54 students

(76%) had moderate ability and 2 students (3.8%) had low ability. To make sure, see the Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6

Category of Students' Ability in Writing Complimentary, Name and Signature of Application Letter

No	Category	Frequency	percentage
1	High	11	20.4%
2	Moderate	41	76%
3	Low	2	3.6%
		54	100%

Based on the conclusions of the research, the researcher would like to propose some suggestions :

1. For the teachers

It is suggested to the English teachers to give more explanation and more exercises on writing each components of application letter.

2. For the students

The students are suggested to pay more attention to the teachers' explanation about application letter. The students have to be smart and dilligent to find new formal letter on the book about the application letter and the students must diligent to searching in media internet about application letter, because application letter is

important to learn, espesially to get a job.

3. For the next researchers

The researcher suggests the next researchers to study other relevant aspects in writing application letter; for example, the problems faced by the second year students of SMA PGRI 1 Padang to write application letter or the factors that influence the students' ability in writing application letter.

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