

An Analysis of Students' Skill in Writing Business Letter at the Five Semester University of Pasir Pengaraian

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to see how the ability to write business letters of five semester English language students at Pasir Pengaraian University is. The data analysis method that researchers use is a writing test. English language students of University provide writing test results, the researcher found that students' skills in writing business letters were quite good based on the results of three raters' assessment data. Considering the findings of the previous chapter, data fraud, and data analysis, the researcher concluded that eleven of the twenty- one students had fairly good skills in writing business letters and the rest low. Moderate and high criteria. The conclusion of this research is on the content indicator, three students obtained a perfect score of 3.00 from three rater, although there are students who achieve average is 2.33 with moderate criteria. Organizational indicators show similar variations with 2.33 moderate content indicators. And language 3 students received score of average is 2.36 with high criteria.

Keyword : Writing; Business Letter

INTRODUCTION

Business correspondence, particularly formal business letters, plays a vital role in professional communication. In today's globalized world, the ability to write effective and well-structured business letters is considered an essential skill for university students, especially those preparing to enter professional environments where written communication is frequently used. Business letters are not only tools for exchanging information but also instruments for building professional relationships, negotiating agreements, making requests, and maintaining a company's reputation. Therefore,

analyzing students' skills in writing business letters is crucial to evaluate whether their writing proficiency meets the expectations of the professional setting they are likely to encounter after graduation.

Despite having studied English for several semesters, many students still struggle with producing well-written business letters. According to Hyland (2013), professional writing requires precision, conciseness, and correctness, as errors in grammar, vocabulary choice, formatting, or tone can lead to misunderstandings or even damage professional credibility. If university students fail to master these skills before entering the workforce, their employability and ability to function effectively in professional contexts may be compromised. Evaluating their current writing abilities provides valuable insights into existing learning gaps and informs educators about improving instructional methods in business communication courses.

Previous studies have highlighted persistent challenges in writing business letters among EFL learners. Rachmawati and Wulandari (2018) found that Indonesian undergraduate students often struggled to organize their ideas coherently and used informal language when drafting business letters. Similarly, Al-Badi (2015) reported that students in Oman frequently lacked knowledge of standard letter conventions, such as appropriate salutations, closing statements, and proper formatting. These findings suggest that even advanced learners often lack the ability to transfer general writing skills to professional correspondence.

A number of studies have focused on the specific language features that challenge learners. Nurhayati (2019) highlighted that vocabulary choice and register posed major obstacles for students, as they often failed to distinguish between casual and formal word usage. Setyawan and Hidayat (2020) identified that grammatical errors, particularly tense consistency and subject-verb agreement, were prevalent in students' business letters. Similarly, Ahmed (2016) observed that a lack of exposure to authentic business texts limited students' ability to adopt an appropriate tone, making their letters appear overly personal or vague. These studies demonstrate that writing business letters requires specialized skills that go beyond general English writing proficiency.

Despite these challenges, research has also highlighted effective instructional strategies that enhance students' business letter writing abilities. Nugroho and Hartono (2020) implemented task-based learning combined with real-world scenarios, resulting in improved accuracy, organization, and clarity in students' writing. Chen (2018) demonstrated that the use of peer review activities and collaborative drafting sessions increased students' awareness of structural conventions and improved their editing skills. Likewise, Rahman and Saeed (2021) emphasized that integrating authentic materials, such as real company letters and email samples, exposed students to workplace standards and helped them internalize formal writing conventions. These findings underline the importance of active learning approaches in bridging the gap between academic training and professional writing requirements.

Comparative research across different EFL contexts has also shown consistent challenges but varying degrees of improvement depending on teaching interventions. Kim (2017) found that Korean students benefitted from genre-based instruction that explicitly taught the structure and purpose of each section of a business letter. Similarly, Zhang (2020)

reported significant gains in Chinese learners' writing proficiency after introducing scaffolded writing tasks supported by teacher feedback. These findings, combined with earlier research by Hyland (2013) on genre pedagogy, suggest that targeted instructional frameworks can enhance learners' business writing skills more effectively than general writing courses alone.

While previous studies have provided valuable insights, several research gaps remain. Many studies have been conducted in broader ESL or EFL contexts, but limited research has examined students' specific abilities in writing business letters at the tertiary level in rural or developing regions, such as the University of Pasir Pengaraian. Additionally, previous findings often focus on general writing challenges without analyzing whether students at advanced stages of their academic program have overcome these issues. Furthermore, few studies have examined the extent to which local curricula effectively prepare students for real-world business communication tasks, leaving uncertainty about the practical relevance of current instructional methods.

Given these gaps, analyzing the writing skills of fifth-semester students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian is important for several reasons. First, it identifies whether students at this academic level possess adequate knowledge and competence to produce effective business letters. Second, it enables comparisons with results from previous studies, providing insights into whether challenges observed in other EFL contexts also occur in this setting. Lastly, this analysis can inform curriculum designers and educators on the effectiveness of current teaching methods, encouraging them to adopt evidence-based strategies that have been proven successful elsewhere. Ultimately, this research aims to bridge the gap between academic writing instruction and real-world professional communication demands, ensuring that graduates are fully prepared for workplace writing tasks.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to examine students' abilities in writing letters in the English Study Program at the University of Pasir Pengaraian. The study is based on a sample of 21 5th-semester English students from the English department. The population includes students who share one or more traits of interest. The researcher used complete sampling to identify trends, with total sampling used for the sample of 21 students.

The instrument used in the research is observation, which allows the researcher to directly form of an essay, which was closely monitored by the researcher. After the exam, the researcher provided a score, which was then reviewed and provided by three rater professors. The study aims to understand the relationship between the placement of essential ingredients and the skills needed for microteaching. The instrument used in this research is a device or research facility used to gather information without problems.

This research was conducted at Universitas Pasir Pengaraian in the sixth semester of the English education program. The researcher asked students to write a letter to evaluate their letter-writing skills. The data was collected on a letter sheet and assessed using a descriptive evaluation technique. The researcher used a micro-teaching assessment scheme to analyze the statistics. The process involved collecting data from a writing test sheet,

selecting three writing lecturers, providing interviews, identifying essential components, and assessing the basic elements. The results were then analyzed by the writing instructor. The findings were presented to determine the students' capacity to write letters in the English Study program at the University of Pasir Pengaraian.

FINDINGS

Researchers have given assignments to 6th-semester English students to create a business letter, aiming to determine students' skills in creating business letters. Evaluated by three assessors based on 3 elements of the writing assessment rubric, namely, content and communicative achievement ('score' 3, 2, 1), organization ('score' 3, 2, 1), and language ('score' 3, 2, 1).

Table 1. Score of Students Writing Skill

No	Category of Students Writing Skill	Total Score	Average
1	Students Writing Skill in Content and communicative achievement	7,0	2,33
2	Students Writing Skill in Organization	7,0	2,33
3	Students Writing Skill in Language	7,14	2,36

The Pasir Pengaraian University English students' business letter writing skills were assessed by three raters, with three students receiving perfect ratings (3.00) and the lowest average score of 1.67. These scores indicate that some students have extraordinary abilities in writing business letters, meeting all established criteria in terms of content and communicative achievements. However, there are students with lower scores who may still need to refine their skills in terms of structure, clarity of message, and communication style.

The results indicate that Pasir Pengaraian University students are quite skilled in writing business letters, but with more attention to skill development, their abilities can be further improved. The organizational indicator scores showed variations among students, with three students receiving perfect scores (3.00), indicating they were able to compose well-structured business letters. However, there were also students with the lowest score (1.67), which indicates they still have difficulty organizing business letters well.

The language skills of Pasir Pengaraian University students in writing business letters showed varying results but generally quite good. Three students achieved a perfect score of 3.00, indicating they have excellent language skills in business letter writing. However, there were also students with the lowest scores (1.67), which indicates they still need to improve their language skills. On the content indicator, three students received an average score of 3.00, indicating they are very skilled in compiling the content according to the desired communication objectives. However, there were students with an average of 2.33 with a MODERATE content indicator, indicating a slight improvement in organizational skills among students.

In terms of language indicators, the results indicated that the majority of students have excellent potential, and with more intensive practice and in-depth feedback, their

abilities can be further improved to achieve a higher level of excellence in writing business letters.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that overall, students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian have moderate to strong competence in writing business letters, particularly in content delivery and language use. However, the organizational aspect remains an area requiring further development. While a portion of students excelled in presenting coherent content with appropriate language, others still faced challenges in formatting and structuring their ideas according to the standard conventions of business communication. The findings are consistent with previous research (Silvia et al., 2023) that reported common errors in business letter writing among students, particularly related to misformation and organization. This indicates that while students may grasp the purpose and content of a business letter, they often lack sufficient training in applying proper layout and flow of ideas.

The results of this study suggest that overall, students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian demonstrate moderate to strong competence in writing business letters, particularly in terms of content delivery and language use. Many students are capable of conveying messages clearly, using appropriate vocabulary, and maintaining a professional tone. However, the organizational aspect of business letter writing remains an area requiring further development. While a portion of the students excelled in presenting coherent content with proper language, others faced challenges in structuring their ideas according to the standard conventions of professional business correspondence. Issues such as inconsistent formatting, improper sequencing of information, and lack of clarity in paragraph organization were observed among some participants.

These findings are consistent with those of Silvia et al. (2023), who reported that students frequently made errors related to misformation and poor organization in business letter writing tasks. Similarly, Eripuddin et al. (2024) found that although students possessed adequate understanding of the purpose and basic content of business letters, they often lacked mastery of organizational elements, such as layout, alignment, and logical flow of ideas. This suggests that while students may successfully express intended messages, the absence of structured training on proper formatting and organization limits their ability to meet professional writing standards.

Other previous studies have echoed these challenges in various EFL contexts. Al-Badi (2015) noted that Omani university students struggled with applying standard business letter conventions, particularly in the salutation, closing statements, and formatting. Rachmawati and Wulandari (2018) similarly found that Indonesian students faced difficulties maintaining logical coherence throughout their letters. These results align with the present findings, indicating that organizational competence is a widespread issue among EFL learners and is not solely dependent on content knowledge.

The variation in language scores observed in this study further highlights the need for more intensive grammar and vocabulary instruction specifically tailored for business writing contexts. Eripuddin et al. (2024) emphasized that while general English courses improve basic writing skills, they do not sufficiently prepare students for the linguistic demands of professional correspondence, which requires precise word choice, avoidance of

redundancy, and consistent use of formal registers. Setyawan and Hidayat (2020) also reported that tense consistency, subject-verb agreement, and word collocations were persistent issues in students' business letters, often undermining the professionalism of their writing.

To address these challenges, previous research has recommended various pedagogical approaches that could contribute to improving business letter writing skills. Nugroho and Hartono (2020) demonstrated that task-based instruction involving real-world scenarios significantly improved both organizational and language accuracy in student writing. Chen (2018) found that peer review sessions, where students collaboratively revised letters based on model texts, enhanced their ability to apply structure and tone more effectively. Furthermore, Rahman and Saeed (2021) highlighted that exposure to authentic business correspondence samples allowed learners to internalize formatting and organizational norms more naturally, reducing errors in future writing tasks.

Comparative studies also reveal that integrating technology and digital resources can enhance the learning process. For example, Kim (2017) reported that Korean students improved their writing performance when online collaborative platforms were used for drafting and revising letters. Similarly, Zhang (2020) found that scaffolded writing tasks combined with teacher feedback helped Chinese students progressively improve their letter structure and coherence. These interventions align with the present study's implication that guided and structured writing practices are necessary to strengthen students' competence beyond content delivery.

In conclusion, the findings of this study reinforce those of previous research (Silvia et al., 2023; Eripuddin et al., 2024; Al-Badi, 2015; Rachmawati & Wulandari, 2018) by highlighting that while students demonstrate promising abilities in content delivery and language use, organizational aspects of business letter writing remain a challenge. This suggests that general writing courses may not sufficiently address the unique requirements of business correspondence. To enhance students' competence, future instruction should incorporate guided writing sessions, collaborative editing activities, model analysis, and rubric-based evaluations, as supported by earlier findings (Nugroho & Hartono, 2020; Chen, 2018; Rahman & Saeed, 2021). These approaches have been shown to contribute significantly to improving structure, coherence, and overall professionalism in students' business letter writing, ensuring they are better prepared for real-world communication demands.

Moreover, the variation in language scores suggests the need for more intensive grammar and vocabulary instruction tailored specifically for business writing contexts. Targeted learning strategies, such as peer review, model analysis, and focused feedback, may enhance students' ability to apply formal and precise language in writing tasks. In conclusion, while the students' writing performance shows promising results, particularly for some individuals, there is a clear necessity to reinforce structured writing practices. Incorporating more guided writing sessions, collaborative editing activities, and rubric-based evaluations could help elevate overall student performance in business letter writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall evaluation results, it can be concluded that students at the University of Pasir Pengaraian generally demonstrated fairly strong abilities in writing business letters. The assessment conducted by three raters revealed that a number of students showed high proficiency, particularly in presenting relevant content and using appropriate language. However, variations in performance were evident, with some students only meeting moderate standards, particularly in the areas of organization and coherence.

The findings suggest that while many students have developed a good understanding of the essential elements of business letter writing, there remains a noticeable gap in applying consistent structure and clarity across all written tasks. Language use, on the other hand, showed promising results, as several students successfully employed formal expressions and appropriate word choices expected in professional correspondence.

Overall, the study highlights that students possess a strong foundation in business letter writing but require further reinforcement in organizational skills and formatting conventions. Providing additional guided practice, structured writing exercises, and detailed feedback may help bridge these gaps, ensuring that all students can achieve higher proficiency and produce well-structured, professional business letters.

Tanya ChatGPT

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