

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Rationale

English is an International language used for communication all over the world. It must be learned by all people in order to face the global competence without neglecting their own heritage languages and cultures.

For some students, English is a challenging subject. This is proven by students who still face difficulties in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. Writing involves putting together a combination of letters in a particular order to form words, phrases, clauses, and sentences to create a coherent text.

People write for many different reasons-to pass on information and opinion, to ask questions to, request or offering something, to entertain, to keep records, and so on. Sometimes, people write to communicate and this can be quite interactive and relatively immediate. For example, when people are texting or emailing someone, texts are often quite short and simple.¹

Teaching writing as an integrated process will, like the teaching of reading, normally be deferred until rather advanced courses in English as a Second Language.² It seems that while Allah swt. taught writing to Isa a.s for the first time to prove his matters pertaining to prophet to Bani Israil on the Al-Quran surah Al-Imran verse 48. It said:

¹ Cora Lindsay with Paul Knight, *Learning and Teaching English. A Course for Teachers*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 65

² David P. Harris, *Testing English as a Second Language*, (USA: McGraw-Hill, 1969), p. 68

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

The word “الْكِتَابَ” here, means writing subject. This verse explained that

Allah will teach writing to Isa and writing it also is of course very important to be learned not only for Isa but also for other people in the world.

People write a variety of texts, including e-mail, letters, memos, diaries, notes, postcards, and so on. These texts have different of tone (formal or informal) and language features. Language features are consisting of varieties of verbs, timeless tense, and connective associated with reasoning.³

E-mail is a method of exchanging digital messages. E-mail is always transmitted directly from one user’s device to another; nowadays this is rarely the case.⁴ Almost all of the people from different circle know e-mail and can write, send, and reply it.

Ashleigh Sayer is an English Language Fellow in IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin for academic year 2009/2010. She came from America and teaches in the English Department right now. In her teaching and learning process at IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin, she encourages her students to send an SMS (Short Message Service) or e-mail to ask permission or to explain assignments if they experience confusion.

³ Beverly Derewianka, *Exploring How Text work*, (Newtown NSW, Australia: Primary English Teaching Association, 1990), p. 91

⁴ Wikipedia, <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-mail?wasRedirected=true./20/01/2010>

This is very uncommon permission style in Indonesian education. In Indonesian culture, if the students want to ask permission not to attend the class, the students will write permission letter for the teacher. Furthermore, if the students want to better understand of the assignment or subject, they will come and ask their friend to explain it or they will do the assignment together in a group, rather than asking the teacher directly.

In Ashleigh Sayer's International Seminar on 9th December 2009, she said that e-mails are a fun text type to write and read because it is like writing and reading a diary.⁵ She concluded that all people can write e-mails and send them to anyone with an e-mail address.

Although in sending SMS (Short Message Service) or e-mail to Ashleigh has the same purpose as a permission letter, which uses tone (formal or informal language), language features and letter structure (opening, purpose and closing). In fact, many students still have difficulties in writing an e-mail to their English teacher. This problem is usually caused by various factors, among others: lack of understanding about formal and informal tone, language features of the genre, and social implications of language.

Based on the reasons above, to investigate how the students in the English Department send e-mails to their English teacher, the writer is interested in conducting an analysis entitled **“The Content of Students’ E-mails to Ashleigh Sayer as Native English Teacher as a Way to Understand Genre”**.

⁵ Ashleigh Sayer sentence in her International Seminar on 9th December 2009

Thus, the title indicates an analysis that intends to better understand and to mention the use of students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer as a native English teacher in the English Department of IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

B. Statement of Problem

Concerning the topic, the problem of this research can be formulated as follows:

1. What are the various functions of students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer as an English teacher?
2. What are the tones, language features, and letter structures that students use to e-mail the teacher?
3. What are the implications of students' e-mails for teaching writing and genre?

C. Reason for Choosing The Title

There are certain reasons that make the writer conducts this research, including:

1. The English way of writing may seem clumsy, repetitive, and even impolite to the reader.
2. E-mail allows students to communicate with the teacher and other students and to improve students writing skills with immediate feedback.

3. Sending an e-mail to a native English teacher is a great way to practice English and meet other learners of English around the world.⁶
4. The writer knows that this matter has never been discussed in this location; therefore, this research will be beneficial to future students interested in studying genre.

D. Purpose of Study

Related to the statement of the problem above, the writer has 3 analysis objectives:

1. To better understand the purpose of student e-mails to the teacher.
2. To investigate the language tones, language features and letter structure that students use to e-mail the teacher.
3. To know the implications of sending e-mail for teaching writing and genre.

E. Significance of Study

The results of this research are expected to:

1. Help non-native English speaker to improve their writing skills especially in sending e-mail to a teacher.
2. The study will enrich the writer's knowledge about writing e-mail from the students to the teacher.
3. The study will enrich IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin library collection.

⁶ Curtis Kelly, *Significant Scribbles. Writing for Fluency*, (Hong Kong: Longman Asia ELT, 2005), p. 18

4. The results of this study can be as a comparison for the next researcher.

F. Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is all objects are written in all students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer, those are function, tones, language features, and letter structure. So, to make it more precise, the object of the study is limited on writing that can be taken to better understand of writing genre for students.

G. Research Method

1. Research Design

The researcher uses descriptive design. Descriptive design is used to obtain information related the current status of phenomena. They are directed toward determining the nature of a situation as it exists at the time of the study. There is no administration or control of a treatment is found in experimental research. The aim is to describe "what exists" with respect the variable or conditions in a situation.

Moreover, in this research the researcher emphasized to the qualitative approaches. The researcher analyzed the data of students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer without counting and otherwise quantifying the data. Qualitative data can be used to analyze the data consist of written records of observed behavior that are analyzed qualitatively.⁷

⁷ Kenneth Bordens & Bruce B. Abbotts, *Research Design and Method: A Process Approach*, (New York: McGrawHill, 2002), p. 23

These are several types of studies that may be classified as descriptive research. Those are case studies surveys, developmental studies, follow up studies, documentary analysis, trend analysis, and correlation studies.

Based on the statement of the problem, the researcher applied a descriptive qualitative research, especially a documentary analysis. The reason was that the researcher described naturally the writing on students' e-mails content without any attempt to control or manipulate variable and there is no counting to analyze the data.

2. Subject

The subjects for this analysis are 30 students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer.

3. Object

As stated on scope and limitation before, we know that the objects for this analysis are the functions of students' e-mails, tones, language features and letter structures of the e-mails, and their implication for teaching writing.

4. Data, Data Source, and Data Collection

a. Data

The data about the functions of students' e-mails and the use of tones, language features, and letter structure on students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer.

b. Source of Data

- 1) Informant: the native English teacher (Ashleigh Sayer).
- 2) Document: all e-mails from students to Ashleigh Sayer.

c. Data Collection

The data of this study were documented materials, they were functions, tones, language features, and letter structures used in students' e-mails.

For data collection, the researcher did some steps as stated below:

- 1) Collected all of the English Department student e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer by asking permission to Ashleigh and then she forward the e-mails that she received to writer's e-mail.
- 2) Evaluated each e-mail that can improve students' skills especially in writing.

5. Technique of Data Processing and Data Collecting

After the data from students' e-mails were collected, they were analyzed on the basis of following criteria:

- 1) Reviewed the data that were collected.
- 2) Analyze and evaluate each e-mail that uses the language features in e-mailing Ashleigh Sayer verbally.
- 3) Classified the kinds of writing e-mails provided in each 30 students' e-mails to Ashleigh Sayer.
- 4) Drew conclusion based on the data.

6. Research Procedure

Steps that must be completed in this research include:

1. Preliminary Steps
 - a. To hold a prior observation in the research object.
 - b. To discuss the result of the previous observation with the writer's advisor.
2. Preparatory Steps
 - a. To hold a seminar on this search proposal.
 - b. To create the data instruments.
3. Research Step
 - a. To collect all information this is needed to obtain the data.
 - b. To collect the data.
 - c. To process the data in the procedural way, then analyze it properly.
4. Organization Steps

After all the obtained data are completed, the writer will organize it in the form of this study based on the continual guidance and consultation with the writer's advisor. After that, this study is approved and ready to examine in an open forum.

H. Organization of Study

The study is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I : Introduction, which consists of rationale, statement of the problems, reasons for choosing the title, purpose of study,

significance of study, organizations of the contents and research method, which consists of research design, subject and object of the study, instrument of data collection, techniques of data collecting, techniques of data processing and data analysis, and research procedure.

Chapter II : Theoretical review, which consists of writing and genre, kinds of genre, types of text, tone languages and language features of the text.

Chapter III: Results and discussion, which consists of a brief description of students' e-mails, the function of students' e-mails, the use of tones, language features, and letter structures on students' e-mails.

Chapter IV: Closure, which consists of conclusions and suggestions for the writer and reader to better understand of the analysis.