

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING
PUNCTUATION MARKS IN WRITING ACADEMIC ESSAY**

THESIS

**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain Bachelor
of Education (B.Ed.) in English Language Education**



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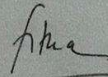
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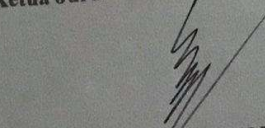


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
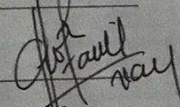
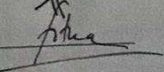
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ABSTRACT

Alsikra, Tiara Ri (2022). *An Analysis of Students' Ability in Using Punctuation Mark in Writing Academic Essay. Thesis. Padang. English Department. Faculty of Language and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang*

Creating a good writing is difficult because there are still errors encountered in the application of punctuation marks such as mistakes in using capital letters, period or full stop, commas, semi-colons, colons, hyphens, dash, apostrophes, brackets, quotation marks, question mark, and exclamation mark. The aim of this research is to analyze the ability of students to use punctuation in writing an academic essay and which punctuation that is mostly misplaced by the students in writing an academic essay. This research used quantitative descriptive methods to analyze the students' ability in using punctuation. The sample was taken by using stratified random sampling of 136 students. Data was obtained from writing test done by students in in 2020 academic year at English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang. The data is analyzed by using scoring rubric adopted from Brown (2007). The result of this research concluded that the students' ability in using punctuation mark in writing academic essay was at average category with a mean score of 56,87. Meanwhile, the punctuation that mostly misplaced by students is in using quotation mark. Then, from the seven kinds of punctuation, the most rarely used punctuation mark is colon. In line with the findings above, it is suggested to the teacher to teach with various strategies in using punctuation in writing and using various media for teaching. Then, the suggestion for students is more practice in using punctuation.

Keywords: Students' Ability, Punctuation marks, Writing essay.

ABSTRAK

Alsikra, Tiara Ri (2022). Analisis Kemampuan Siswa dalam Menggunakan Tanda Baca dalam Menulis Esai Akademik. Tesis. Padang. Departemen Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang

Membuat tulisan yang baik itu sulit karena masih terdapat kesalahan yang ditemui dalam penerapan tanda baca seperti kesalahan penggunaan huruf kapital, titik atau titik, koma, titik koma, titik dua, tanda hubung, tanda hubung, tanda hubung, tanda kurung, tanda petik, tanda tanya, dan tanda seru. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan tanda baca dalam menulis esai akademik dan tanda baca mana yang paling sering disalahartikan oleh siswa dalam menulis esai akademik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif untuk menganalisis kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan tanda baca. Sampel diambil dengan menggunakan stratified random sampling sebanyak 136 siswa. Data diperoleh dari tes menulis yang dilakukan oleh mahasiswa tahun ajaran 2020 di Jurusan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Negeri Padang. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan rubrik penilaian yang diadopsi dari Brown (2007). Hasil penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan tanda baca dalam menulis esai akademik berada pada kategori sedang dengan nilai rata-rata 56,87. Sementara itu, tanda baca yang paling banyak salah tempat oleh siswa adalah penggunaan tanda kutip. Kemudian, dari ketujuh macam tanda baca tersebut, tanda baca yang paling jarang digunakan adalah tanda titik dua. Sejalan dengan temuan di atas, disarankan kepada guru untuk mengajar dengan berbagai strategi dalam menggunakan tanda baca dalam menulis dan menggunakan berbagai media untuk mengajar. Kemudian, saran bagi siswa adalah lebih banyak berlatih dalam menggunakan tanda baca.

Kata kunci: Kemampuan Siswa, Tanda Baca, Menulis esai.

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In the Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

All praise and gratitude belongs to Allah, who has given the writer his everlasting mercies and blessings throughout her life and provided the writer knowledge which supports her to finish the research. Peace and blessings of Allah may always be upon the prophet Muhammad, who has brought Islam to us as the light that changes us to be better humankind.

With the strength and blessing from Allah, the writer can complete her research as one of the requirements for gaining bachelor degree. The writer also admits that the research would have been possible without the support and assistance of some individuals. Therefore, the writer wholly acknowledges all the supports of these wonderful people who dedicated their help for the success of this research.

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Last but not least, the writer acknowledges the limitations and deficiencies on her study. Therefore, constructive feedback and suggestions are kindly welcomed for the better writing. The writer hopes her research can be useful for its readers and further research.

Padang, November 2022

Tiara Ri Alsikra

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the problem

Writing is a skill that is not easy for every student to master. Writing skill is the most complicated skill among other skills. Writing is a very complex cognitive activity because the writer must be able to convey his ideas through his writing, so the reader understands what the writer means. Wirantaka (2016) states writing is not a simple matter, especially for second-language students. In addition, Widiastuti et al., (2016) writing is the highest language skill than the other skills (listening, speaking, and reading).

Writing skill is a difficult skill because writers should be able to create good writing. To create good writing, the writer must pay attention to the mechanics of writing. It makes the writing precise and grammatically correct. It is the rules that must be followed while preparing the writing, so the strategies and the format become systematic and consistent in all academic sectors. Sandrawati & Jurianto (2021) stated, mechanics in writing are one of the important components for producing an effective piece of writing.

According to Yuliah et al., (2020), the writing mechanisms refer to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Furthermore, Widiastuti et al., (2016) stated the term mechanics of writing refers to punctuation, spelling,

and grammar. Then, Abbas & Asy'ari (2021) stated, the mechanics of writing are spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Based on these statements the mechanics of writing are spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Spelling is correctly combining a word from letters, so it's appropriate with good and choice arrangement letters that form a word. Spelling is the basic foundation of learning English. According to Fitria (2020) spelling have an important role and impacts listening, reading, and writing. In writing spelling is an important aspect. Students who want to master writing should be able to spell English well.

Capitalization is the first letter of a word that is capitalized while the other letters of the word are in lowercase Yuliah et al., (2020). According to Blanchard & Root (1997), there are eight main rules of capitalization which capitalize the first letter of a sentence, names and the title preceding the name, names of racial and ethnic groups, names of specific places, days of the week, months, and holidays, names of religions, nationalities, and languages, and all words in titles excluding prepositions, articles, and conjunctions, unless they are the first word.

Punctuation is a set of signs that are used in writing and each sign have a different function in a sentence. According to Hamadi (2020), punctuation is a tool to support the writers and the readers to avoid disambiguating the sentence's meaning. According to Harmer (2004), capital letter punctuation has twelve characters, they are capital letters,

period or full stops, commas, semi-colons, colons, hyphens, dash, apostrophes, brackets, quotation marks, question marks, and exclamation marks. All kinds of punctuation marks have different functions in completing every sentence.

Awad (2012) explains that Punctuation marks have three (phonetic, grammatical, and semantic) important functions in writing. Phonetic function means punctuation shows the sentences the rhythm, pause, and tone. Grammatical function means punctuation is used in a direct style and to be the structure of the sentences, complex sentences paragraphs, documents, etc. Semantic function means punctuation helps the learners understand the meaning of particular words/phrase by differentiate them into italic, bold, underlining, capital, etc. Punctuation marks are used to differentiate elements, embedded, dependent, and parenthetical of the sentences, and also to identify the emphasis, intonation, and pauses in a sentence. Therefore, the reader uses punctuation marks for the guide to read like a traffic sign on road.

Punctuation marks in writing are important. Awad (2012) added the effect of using punctuation correctly determines whether the writing is good or bad. It helps each sentence appropriately and meaningfully. Yun Ginting (2018) stated that the most important aspect but is considered the most lightly of written English is punctuation. Therefore, the use of punctuation in writing is a component that must be considered by the author.

Basically, there are some similar studies that have been done such as Etinurwati (2017). Her study is related to the students' ability in using punctuation in descriptive paragraphs at SMPN 2 Pardasuka. Also, the other study which done by Nasrudin (2015) discussed students' error in using punctuation marks in narrative writing. The last, Huda (2020) conducted a research about the analysis of students' errors in using punctuation marks in writing descriptive paragraph at SMPN 1 Bangkinang. Therefore, to fill the gap the researcher decided to research the students' ability in using punctuation mark in another subject especially academic writing. It is considered because academic writing is one of the courses that train the students to have good writing skills, especially in using the punctuation correctly.

Hence, it can be seen that this research is different from previous research. Therefore, the researcher wants to conduct the study entitled "An Analysis of Students' Ability in Using Punctuation Marks in Academic Writing" to find out how the student's ability in using punctuation marks in academic writing of students in English education at Universitas Negeri Padang.

B. Identification of the Research Problem

Based on the background of the study explained above, there are five criteria of assessing writing which are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. However, the researcher need to be concerned about how to be correct in the mechanics of writing. The

mechanics of writing are referred to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. According to this, the problem of this research is identified as the mechanics of writing.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This research limits on analyzing the students' ability in using punctuation marks. According to Harmer (2004), punctuation has twelve characters, they are capital letters, period or full stops, commas, semi-colons, colons, hyphens, dash, apostrophes, brackets, quotation marks, question marks, and exclamation marks. This research focuses on the seven kind's punctuation which is commas, full stops, colons, semi-colons, apostrophes, hyphens, and quotation marks are often used in academic essay writing by education students in the 2020 academic year at the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem is formulated as "How is the students' ability in using punctuation in writing an academic essay?"

E. Research Questions

The research questions in this research are:

1. How is the students' ability in using seven types of punctuation in writing academic essays?
2. Which punctuation is mostly misplaced by the students in writing an academic essay?

F. Purpose of the Research

The purposes of this research are:

1. To find out the ability of the students in using punctuation in writing an academic essay.
2. To find out punctuation that is mostly misplaced by the students in writing an academic essay.

G. Significance of the Research

The result of this research is expected to give some important contributions to the related study both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it provides an explanation of punctuation marks used in academic writing made by education students in the 2020 academic year at the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang. Practically, the result of the study will be useful for the students and lecturers to find out the students' ability in using punctuation marks in academic writing. This research is also intended to be beneficial as useful information for the next researcher who is going to conduct research who is going to research a similar topic.

H. Definition of the Key Terms

Some important terms needed to define to avoid misunderstanding. The definition of the key terms to be used in this study is presented as the following:

1. Students' ability : A level of skill or intelligence in the students in constructing a short essay and using punctuation correctly.
2. Punctuation marks : Some symbols that are used to aid the clarity and comprehension of written language.
3. Writing : A process of organizing ideas, opinions, and feelings into written form.
4. Academic writing : Academic writing is a formal style of writing used for academic purposes.