

ENGLISH AND INDONESIAN LETTER-WRITING

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Abstract

This research is aimed at figuring out the similarities, dissimilarities, and its contribution to TEFL. The qualitative research method was used. To collect the data, the researchers used documentation technique. There were 18 students of English Department of Universitas PGRI Palembang as the subject of this research. To analyze the data, the researchers used qualitative analysis. The findings revealed 4 similarities in heading, salutation, complementary close and signature and 2 dissimilarities in salutation and body of the letter based on the theoretical analysis. Also 5 similarities in heading, salutation, body of the letter, complementary close and signature and 2 dissimilarities in heading and body of the letter based on students' writing exercises of English and Indonesian letter-writing in Job application letter. In brief, these findings can be utilized to develop teaching materials and supplemental resources in teaching writing.

Keywords: *english letter-writing, indonesian letter-writing, job application letter*

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Introduction

Language is a tool for communication, as stated by Khair (2018, p. 85) language is a need for every human being. It is also an element of culture and a symbol for humans to communicate with all their needs. Through language, humans can convey or receive various messages, both for themselves and for others. Humans as social beings need a means to interact with other humans in society. For the sake of social interaction, a communication vehicle called language is needed. Every society has a language. This statement can be interpreted that language is a tool for communicating and interacting in society, and every society has its own language to use to interact with each other. Richards, Schmidt, Kendricks & Kim (2002, p. 283) define language as the system of human communication which consists of the structural arrangement of sounds (their written representation) into large units, e.g. morphemes, words, sentences, utterances, etc.” It means that language is a means or instruments of communication, which consists of spoken

and written forms, and they are arranged structurally into parts mentioned before.

Richards, Schmidt, Kendricks & Kim (2002, p. 283) define language as the system of human communication which consists of the structural arrangement of sounds (their written representation) into large units, e.g. morphemes, words, sentences, utterances, etc.” It means that language is a means or instruments of communication, which consists of spoken and written forms, and they are arranged structurally into parts mentioned before. Therefore it is also very important for us to learn a foreign language such as English.

Learning English means learning four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Ferretti & Graham (2019, p. 1347) writing is a semiotic tool that supports communication and social relationships, is learned and practiced in social situations, and is used to accomplish inherently social goals. From this statement, it can be concluded that writing can also be considered as a means of communication in written form. In

writing students are needed to master the writing procedure and format especially in letter-writing.

Letter-writing is one of the language activities carried out in written communication. Letters are also a tool to convey written information to a second party, the things conveyed can be in the form of statements, requests, reports, and so on. Correspondence can no longer be separated from institutions Mileh (2019, p. 1). Therefore, the correct rules are needed so that the message to be conveyed by letter can be in accordance with what is understood by the recipient of the letter. This shows that writing a good and correct letter is very important to know. The parts of the letters used must also be correct, whether it is writing Indonesian or English letters. It should be noted that writing-letter in English and in Indonesian is different. People often find mistakes in writing letters, especially writing letters in English, for example; People who will write letters in English usually only rely on one platform, namely online translation, by copying all sentences in letters that have been made in Indonesian by directly translating everything on the online translate platform, and producing English sentences to put in mail instantly regardless of the difference in the structure of the letter. This is common among people who will write letters in English.

From the explanation stated, it can be concluded that letters in Indonesian and in English are very important to be known and studied by everyone, including teachers and students at school, in order to create good and correct letters. Because there are some similarities and dissimilarities in the structure that must be considered. That is why the researchers conducted a research under the title "***English and Indonesian Letter-Writing***". This research is also expected to help the community, especially

students, in developing writing skills. This research limited or focus on the contrastive analysis between English and Indonesian letter-writing in term of job application letter.

Contrastive Analysis

According to Kridalaksana (2008, p. 135) contrastive analysis is an analysis which is conducted to find out the dissimilarities and the similarities of sounds in two different languages. Moreover, Sulaiman (2018, p. 83) states that contrastive analysis (CA) is the systematic comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and dissimilarities. CA has often been done for *practical/pedagogical* purposes to provide better descriptions and better teaching materials for language learners. Like other experts, Kazemian & Hashemi (2014, p. 593) further state that contrastive analysis has been an essential and systematic branch of applied linguistic description of the structure of two or more different languages. Additionally, Sulaiman & Yuliani (2017, p.127) suggests that the following guiding principles for contrastive study are to analyse the mother tongue and the target language independently and completely, compare the two languages item-wise-item at all levels of their structure and arrive at the principles of text preparation, test framing and target language teaching in general.

Furthermore, Sulaiman (2017, p. 103) illustrates contrastive analysis as an analysis which is conducted to find out the dissimilarities and the similarities of sounds in two different languages. It means that contrastive analysis is a linguistics analysis that is regarded on revealing the elements of dissimilarities and similarities two different languages. Additionally, Sulaiman (2020, p. 35) further delineates that contrastive analysis is legally practiced in the 1950s

as an application of structural linguistics in language teaching, and based on some assumptions, as follows:

1. There must be an interference of L1 in learning a new language (target language);
2. Some problems faced in learning a new language (target language) can be predicted by using a contrastive analysis;
3. A contrastive analysis can be used as guidance for a teacher, especially a teacher of English, in teaching pronunciation, in term of phonology. In this context, contrastive analysis (CA) is such a study that is carried out to compare two different language components or aspects, and also to predict students' difficulties in learning L2 as the recommendations for teacher is teaching materials.
4. Some problems faced in learning a new language (target language) can be predicted by using a contrastive analysis;
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Procedures for Comparing Languages

As explained stated, contrastive analysis is a linguistic analysis that searches for and writes down the dissimilarities and similarities in two languages. Therefore, contrastive analysis is defined as a linguistic activity that aims to produce a typology of two contrasting values. To do this contrastive analysis there are five steps that must be considered, as stated by Keshavarz (2012, p. 14) as follows:

1. Selection

In this case the selection process is to analyze something that must be selected and decided to be compared and contrasted in two different languages and must also look for similarities in several ways. (p. 14)

2. Description

After the selection stage, the linguist or language teacher must describe or explain the two languages in question. Scientific description is the core of contrastive analysis which always emphasizes parallel description of two languages. (p. 14)

3. Comparison

When the descriptions of the two languages are completed, next is the comparison. Comparison is concerned with comparing and contrasting two systems by juxtaposing the features of the two languages to find similarities and dissimilarities between them, through three levels: form, meaning, and distribution of forms. (p. 15)

4. Prediction

After describing and comparing certain features between the two languages, next is prediction. Predict what difficulties the learner may experience in acquiring a second language, and assess whether the similarities and dissimilarities found through the comparison of the two languages will be problematic for the learner. (p. 15)

5. Verification

The final step in contrastive analysis is verification. Verification has to do with finding a way out whether predictions made regarding errors and difficulties will actually come true or not and asking whether the second language is in fact committing the type of error that was predicted based on a contrastive analysis of the two

languages or subsystems of the language. (p. 16)

From the explanation stated, it can be concluded that the five steps or procedures for comparing language are very important for researchers who carry out contrastive analysis in order to find out similarities and dissimilarities and predict the types of errors that occur.

Letter-Writing

According to Meilinda (2016, p. 146) letter is a written communication to convey information, messages from other parties who have activities with certain parties. Furthermore, Mileh (2019, p. 1) states that, Correspondence is one of the language activities carried out in written communication. Letter is a tool to convey written information to a second party. The things submitted can be in the form of statements, requests, reports, and so on. As a written communication medium, letters have advantages compared to other communication tools. It is said so, because it is valid evidence on black and white and can convey something according to the author's wishes at an affordable cost. From these two definitions, it can be concluded that the letter is a written communication tool to convey information to other parties. Letter-writing is the exchange of written or printed messages. On the other side, letter-writing is also considered as one of the most useful forms to learn and use for various reasons. From the two definitions above, it can be said that letter-writing is an important written communication science to learn.

Kinds of Letter-Writing

Letters have several types, because letters must be made and used according to the purpose for which they are intended or the party who will receive them later. These different types of letters differ in their subject, occasion, and

purpose. They have various criteria like format, length, vocabulary, language and other important things that need to be followed. The most commonly known types of letters are formal letters and informal letters. As stated by Mulachela (2021) who groups letter into two, formal and informal letters. Formal letters in professional life to education are very important as tools or reminder documents, evidence in making a letter of agreement or seeing developments in certain companies or institutions. Formal letters must also follow the applicable rules, namely using standard language and writing structures (p. 1).

In addition to formal letters, there are also informal letters that are used by someone for personal matters. Letters do not have certain rules, writers can freely explore language and sentences to write something to the intended person as long as the recipient can understand the intent and purpose of the letter. Informal letters are written with various purposes, ranging from apologies, birthday wishes, notification of an incident, inviting friends to visit, and so on (p. 5).

In addition, Lararenjana (2020, pp. 4-6) stated there are five types of letters, which depend on the content, content security, range of use and various other aspects, which are explained, namely: *Letters Based on Contents*, such a personal letter, official letter such a containing official or government administrative problems, and commercial letter such a trade letter. *Letters Based on Security Contents*, such a highly confidential letter containing documents, texts or very important questions related to state security secrets, confidential letter such a confidential letter such a a letter containing important documents that may only be known by the official entitled to receive it, limited letter such a letter must be discussed, considered carefully, and ordinary letter such a letter containing ordinary matters, not being confidential.

Letters Based on the Degree of Completion such a very immediate (quick) letter as a letter that must be immediately known by the recipient of the letter and must be completed or responded to as soon as possible, immediate letter as a letter that must be immediately known and responded to. *Letters Based on the Range of Us* such an internal letter as a letter that is only used to communicate within one office or agency concerned. an external letters as a letter used to communicate with parties outside the office or agencies concerned. *Letters Based on the Number of Recipients*, such as announcement as a letter shown to officials, employees, and the general public, and general letter as a letter specifically addressed to employees, officials, or certain agencies.

From the explanation given, it can be concluded that there are many types of letters that a writer must know if they are going to write a letter, so that the author can first know what letter they will write and to whom the letter will be sent.

Methodology

This research used a qualitative method to find out the similarities and dissimilarities as well as teaching implication of English and Indonesian letter-writing. According to Syahri, Sulaiman and Susanti (2017, p. 85) qualitative analysis techniques or also often referred to as non-statistical analysis usually in the form of literature studies, or empirical studies, and on data analysis techniques qualitative research, researchers must first understand the basic of analysis data.

On the other hand, Atmowardoyo (2018, p. 198) stated that qualitative descriptive research is defined as a research method used to describe the existing situation as accurately as possible. Furthermore, Sulaiman (2018, p. 87) presumes that the descriptive method in descriptive research is to

compare, differentiate, classify, analyze, the circumstances and events that constitute an investigation. This relates to existing conditions or relationships; applicable practice; beliefs, viewpoints, or attitudes held; ongoing processes; the effect being felt; or emerging trends. Descriptive research deals with what is related to events that have previously even influenced current conditions or events.

Based on the statement stated, this research is a qualitative research using descriptive method. The researchers used this method to analyze the similarities and dissimilarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing of job application letters. In addition, 18 students of English department who were all in the 6th semester at Universitas PGRI Palembang were chosen as the subjects of this research. The researchers used two kinds of data sources, (i.e. primary data and secondary data). In this context, primary data were related to articles and the results of 18 students' writing practice of job application letters both in English and Indonesian. While, secondary data were from other articles to find out the similarities and dissimilarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing of job application letters.

In collecting the data, the researchers used a documentation technique. According to Arikunto (2013, p. 274) documentation is to find a data about things or variables in the form of notes, transcripts, books, newspapers, magazines, inscriptions, agendas and so on. To collect the data, the researchers did four steps;

1. Looking for letters in English and Indonesian and reading them carefully to get deep understanding and detail.
2. Formulating the problem of the research.
3. Selecting and classifying the data.
4. Starting to conduct the analyzing which is related to this research.

In analyzing the data, the researchers used qualitative data analysis techniques. In qualitative research, analyzing data is an activity after collecting all data from a source. Flick (2013, p. 5) states that qualitative data analysis is the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material in order to make statements about the implicit and explicit dimensions and meaning-making structures of the material and what is represented in it.

The researchers analyzed the data obtained through describing the similarities and dissimilarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing and perform a contrastive analysis to find the similarities and dissimilarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing. Contrastive analysis is distinguished from comparative analysis based on its purpose. If it is intended to find similarities and dissimilarities between the two languages, it is called contrastive analysis. Contrastive analysis is a

procedure of comparing the source language and the target language to identify the dissimilarities between the two languages. The researchers tried to find out the similarities and dissimilarities English and Indonesian letter-writing by contrasting two languages through a point-by-point contrastive.

Results and Discussion

By analyzing the data that had been obtained, the researchers found out that job application letters in English and Indonesian had similarities, and dissimilarities. The similarity occurred in Heading. To be clear, Table 1 was illustrated.

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Table 1. The Similarity in Heading.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
(Date)	(Tanggal)
(Hiring manager name)	Kepada Yth
(Company name)	(Manajer)
(Address)	(Nama Perusahaan)
(Address)	(Alamat)

Table 1 shows the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in heading. In this context, English and Indonesian have the same components such as date of the

letter, company's name, and recipient is address. Another similarity occurred in salutation. To be vivid, Table 2 was described.

Table 2. The Similarity in Salutation.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
Dear Ms... (Hiring manager name)	<i>Dengan Hormat</i>
Dear Sir... (Hiring manager name)	
Dear Sir/Madam	
Dear Sirs	

Table 2 shows the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in salutation. In this context, English and Indonesian job

application letters both have an opening. In this case, in English "Dear miss" use to if the hiring manager has been confirmed as a female, "Dear sir" use to if the hiring

manager has been confirmed as a male, “Dear sir/madam” use to if the hiring manager has not been able to ascertain the gender, and “Dear sirs” use to if the

company is led by more than one person. Another similarity also occurred in complimentary close and signature. To be obvious, Table 3 was presented.

Table 3. The Similarity in Complimentary Close and Signature.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
Sincerely Yours, Signature) (Sender’s name)	<i>Hormat saya</i> (TandaTangan) (Nama Pengirim)

Table 3 shows the similarities between English and Indonesian job application letters in term of complementary close and signature. In this context, English and Indonesian have the same component such as closing greetings, signature, and sender name. In general there were no such specific dissimilarities between English and Indonesian job application letters related to parts of the letters. Instead of having similarities, there was also such dissimilarity between English and Indonesian Job Application letter in term of salutation. In other words, Indonesian formal letter writing in job application letter can use such an Islamic salutation as in “*Assalamualaikum*” which can

represents good morning, good afternoon, etc. and it was not stated and found in English letter writing. In addition, body of the letter in English letter writing is commonly direct to the purposes of the sender writing the letter not in Indonesian letter-writing.

Additionally, the researchers also found out some similarities and dissimilarities between English and Indonesian job application letters based on students’ letter-writing exercises. In this study, the researchers asked 18 students of PGRI University in the English department. The similarities happened in heading. To be clear, Table 4 was delineated.

Table 4. The Similarity in Heading.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
Palembang, August 23th, 2022 Ms. Selfi Andriani Human Resources Manager PT Fliptech Lentera Inspirasi Pertiwi Blok CK, Jl. Pesona Khayangan No 49, Mekar Jaya, Kec. Sukmajaya, Kota Depok, Jawa Barat 16411	Palembang, 23 Agustus 2022 <i>Kepada Yth.</i> <i>Bapak/Ibu HRD</i> PT Fliptech LenteraInspirasi Pertiwi Jl. Pesona Khayangan No. 49, Mekar Jaya, Kec. Sukmajaya, Kota Depok, Jawa Barat 16411
Palembang, August 23th, 2022 Mr. Smith Human Resources Manager PT Jago Bahasa Inspira Jl. Langkat No. 99, Singgahan, Pelem, Kec. Pare, Kediri, Jawa Timur 64213	Palembang, 23 Agustus 2022 <i>Kepada Yth. Bapak/Ibu Pimpinan</i> HRD PT Jago Bahasa Inspira Jl. Langkat No. 99, Singgahan, Pelem, Kec. Pare, Kediri, Jawa Timur 64213

Table 4 shows the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in heading. In this context, 18 students had the same heading both in English and in Indonesian. In

other words, both English and Indonesian letters mentioned the name of the city, the date, the identity of the recipient like the name and address of the company. Another similarity happened in salutation.

To be clear, Table 5 deciphers the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in salutation.

Table 5. The Similarity in Salutation.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
Dear Ms. Selfi	<i>Selamat Pagi</i> <i>Dengan Hormat</i>
Dear Mr. Smith	<i>Salam Sejahtera</i> <i>Dengan Hormat</i>

Table 5 shows the instances of the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in salutation. In this context, 18 students wrote the same salutation both in English

and in Indonesian. In other word, all of them mentioned greetings. Another similarity happened in body of the letter. To be clear, Table 6 was elaborated.

Table 6. The Similarity in Body of the Letter.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
Based on the advertisement posted on <i>disnaker.id</i> that PT <i>Fliptech Lentera Inspirasi Pertiw</i> is looking for <i>Operational Transaction</i> . I am interested in applying for this position.	<i>Sesuai dengan informasi lowongan kerja yang tertera di disnaker.id sebagai Transaksi Operasional, saya mengirim surat lamaran kerja ini untuk menunjukkan minat saya terhadap pekerjaan tersebut.</i>
I have graduated from <i>PGRI University of Palembang</i> , majoring in <i>English Education</i>	<i>Pendidikan Terakhir : SI Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas PGRI Palembang</i>
Please accept this letter as an expression of my interest in the <i>Online English Tutor</i> position	<i>Berdasarkan informasi lowongan pekerjaan dari Instagram, dengan ini saya bermaksud mengajukan lamaran pekerjaan sebagai Academic Online English Teacher di Jago Bahasa.</i>
I have graduated from <i>PGRI University of Palembang</i> , majoring in <i>English Education Study Program</i>	<i>Saya lulus pada tahun 2021 di Universitas PGRI Palembang</i>

Table 6 shows the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in body of the letter. In this context, most of them students had the same body of the letter both in English

and in Indonesian. In other words, most of them mentioned interested in applying for a job at the company, and mention the last education. Another similarity happened in complimentary close and signature. To be clear, Table 7 was deciphered.

Table 7. The Similarity in Complimentary Close and Signature

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
Sincerely, (Space for signature) Mona Kaforina	<i>Hormat saya,</i> <i>(Tempat kosong untuk tanda tangan)</i> Mona Kaforina
Sincerely, (Space for signature) Steviana Kristanti	<i>Hormat saya,</i> <i>(Tempat kosong untuk tanda tangan)</i> Steviana Kristanti

Table 7 shows the instances of the similarity between English and Indonesian job application letters in complimentary close and signature. In this case, all of them were the same in writing complimentary close and signature in English and Indonesian job application letters. All students mentioned the complimentary close, and then they also left a little empty space for signature, then

continued by mentioning the sender’s name.

In addition, there were two dissimilarities between English and Indonesian job applications letters based on student’s writing activity related to heading and body of the letter. In this case, Most of the students did not mention the identity of sender in heading, as stated in Table 8.

Table 8. The Dissimilarity in Heading and Body of the Letter.

English Job Application Letter	Indonesian Job Application Letter
<p style="text-align: center;">Heading</p> <p>In English job applications letters, heading relates to the address of the company more specifically by including the name of the recipient of the letter</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Heading</p> <p>In Indonesian job application letters, it is only written in general and not specific.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Body of the Letter</p> <p>In English job application letters, body of the letter tends to describe the strengths of the person, such as previous work experience, and the soft skills.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Body of the Letter</p> <p>In Indonesian job application letters, body of the letter is equipped with the identity of the sender, and mentions what documents the sender includes.</p>

Table 8 shows 2 dissimilarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing of job application letters in terms of heading and body of the letter.

Conclusion

Based on the theoretical analysis of English and Indonesian letter-writing in job application letter, there were 4 similarities and 2 dissimilarities found. The similarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing were as follows:

1. The similarity in heading which have such as date of the letter, company’s name, and recipient is address.
2. The similarity in salutation which have such an opening.
3. The similarity in complementary close which have such as closing greetings.
4. The similarity in signature which

have such as signature, and sender’s name. Meanwhile, the 2 dissimilarities were in line with Islamic salutation and body of the letter. Indonesian letter-writing often use such Islamic greeting “Assalamualaikum” not in English letter-writing and body of the letter in English letter-writing in job application letter was direct to the purpose of the sender writing the letter not in Indonesian letter-writing.

Furthermore, based on students’ writing activity, there were 5 similarities and 2 dissimilarities found. The dissimilarities between English and Indonesian letter-writing were as follows:

1. The similarity in heading that all students wrote the name of the city, with the date, the identity of the recipient’s name and address

of the company.

2. The similarity in salutation in All of students wrote such Islamic greetings as in “Assalamualaikum”.
3. The similarity in body of the letter in this context, most of students wrote interests in applying for a job.
4. The similarity in complimentary close. All students wrote such closing greetings.
5. The similarity in signature. All students left an empty space for giving signature, and then continued writing sender’s name.

Meanwhile, the 2 dissimilarities occurred in heading and body of the letter. In other words, some students wrote the identity of the sender in heading of English letter-writing, and not in Indonesian letter-writing.

In addition, some students wrote experiences and strengths of oneself which ends with the contact of the sender in body of the letter and not in Indonesian letter writing.

The researchers also found out teaching implications of this research to teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) from the dissimilarities got from English and Indonesian letter-writing analysis. The teaching implication or contribution is as the reference for English teachers to design writing teaching materials especially in teaching job application letter.

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