

Enhancing E-mail Writing Skills Among ESL Learners: A Comprehensive Analysis of Malaysian Secondary Students in the Context of Industrial Revolution 4.0

Natasha Nuralanis binti Zulkipli

UNITAR International University Malaysia, Malaysia

Abstract

Effective e-mail communication has become a vital skill, particularly with the rise of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, which emphasizes digital fluency and efficient communication in a technological era. However, ESL learners often face challenges in mastering e-mail writing, which is crucial both academically and professionally. Despite research on ESL writing and digital literacy, limited studies have synthesized how e-mail writing skills specifically impact ESL learners, especially in cross-cultural contexts. This paper aims to fill that gap by examining the factors that affect e-mail writing competence, including linguistic proficiency, organizational strategies and communicative effectiveness. This study focuses on 80 Form 5 Malaysian secondary school students, whom are preparing to sit for the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) examination. Their e-mails are assessed according to four key criteria: content, communicative achievement, organization, and language. By synthesizing existing research, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of how these students navigate the challenges of e-mail writing within the framework of Industrial Revolution 4.0's demands. It highlights the need to integrate digital communication skills in the ESL curriculum and suggests methodologies for enhancing e-mail writing pedagogy. The contribution of this review is in proposing a practical framework for educators, offering targeted recommendations that can support ESL learners in improving their e-mail writing skills. This review underscores the importance of digital writing fluency as part of a broader skill set necessary for success in today's globalized, technology-driven environment. The findings of this study will help inform teaching practices and curriculum reforms, ensuring that students are well-equipped to tackle the communication challenges of the modern world.

Keywords: ESL learners; e-mail writing; language proficiency; educational assessment; Industrial Revolution 4.0