



**INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' CHALLENGES IN WRITING
ACADEMIC PAPERS**

SKRIPSI

BY

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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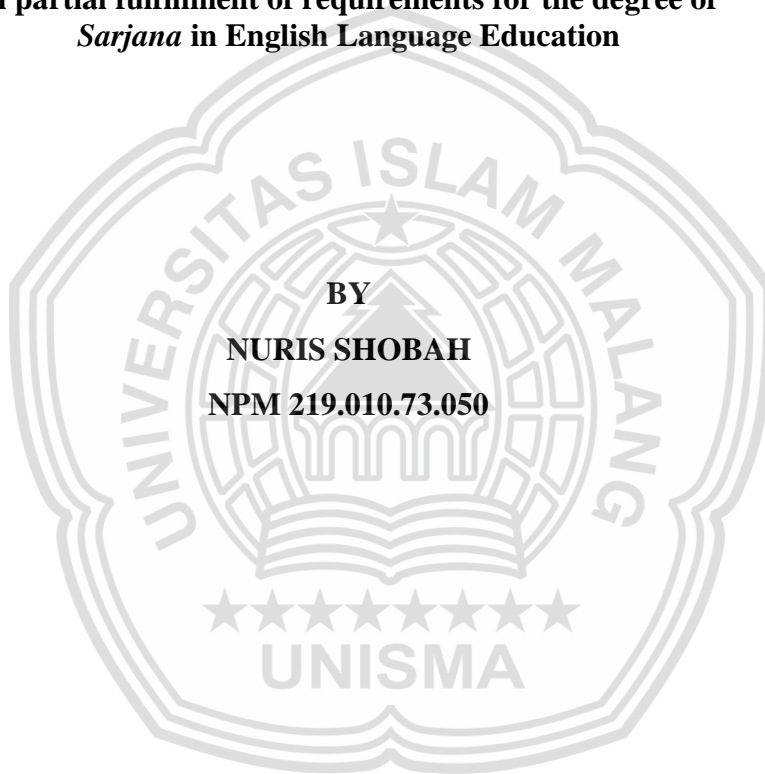
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Sarjana in English Language Education**

BY

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ABSTRAK

Shobah, Nuris. 2023. Menyelidiki Tantangan Mahasiswa dalam Menulis Karya Tulis Akademik. Skripsi, Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Islam Malang. Pembimbing I: Dr. Kurniasih, S.Pd., M.A; Penasehat II; Henny Rahmawati, S.Pd., S.S., M.Pd.

Kata kunci: siswa EFL, makalah akademik, tantangan menulis, strategi

Sebagai bagian dari proyek tesis sarjana, penelitian ini melihat tantangan penulisan makalah akademik yang dialami oleh mahasiswa EFL yang menulis tesis. Studi ini juga bertujuan untuk menyelidiki strategi mereka untuk menghadapi tantangan tersebut. Temuan dari beberapa proyek penelitian sebelumnya, semuanya meningkatkan kebutuhan untuk mempelajari lebih lanjut tentang tantangan menulis makalah akademik dan strateginya. Namun, sangat sedikit yang diketahui tentang strategi yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa EFL di Indonesia, selain tantangan yang mereka hadapi dalam menulis makalah akademik.

Untuk mengisi kekosongan tersebut, penelitian ini dilakukan di sebuah universitas swasta di Malang yang melibatkan 100 mahasiswa jurusan pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang telah memiliki pengalaman menulis makalah penelitian di semester 7 dan sedang mengerjakan tesis. Selain itu, metode campuran digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Peneliti memulai penelitian ini dengan mengumpulkan data kuantitatif tentang kesulitan siswa menggunakan kuesioner close ended berisi 30 item pertanyaan tentang faktor kepribadian dan faktor keterampilan akademik (lihat lampiran). Kuesioner open ended juga digunakan dengan pertanyaan tentang strategi apa yang mereka gunakan untuk menghadapi tantangan (lihat lampiran). Kuesioner yang diadaptasi dari Lin & Morrison (2021) dan Puspita (2019) menggunakan skala likert mulai dari 1-5. Kuesioner disebar melalui Google form. Setelah data terkumpul, peneliti menghitung persentase setiap item pertanyaan dari skala likert dan mengurutkannya dari yang tertinggi hingga yang terendah.

Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa mengalami beberapa kesulitan, antara lain mengontrol emosi (gelisah), menentukan topik dan judul skripsi, dan kurangnya kesadaran akan isu-isu terkini tentang topik mereka. Selain itu, mereka juga mengalami kesulitan dalam menggunakan tata bahasa Inggris yang benar, merencanakan teks tertulis yang panjang, membuat kalimat yang koheren, dan mengungkapkan ide secara logis. Tanggapan kualitatif menginformasikan beberapa strategi yang digunakan oleh siswa, seperti membaca lebih banyak artikel tentang topik yang mereka minati dan mencari dukungan dari teman sebaya dengan berdiskusi. Disarankan kepada siswa untuk menjadi sadar diri dan mandiri dalam penulisan akademik dengan berlatih dan belajar, mencari penjelasan dari guru, dan berbagi tantangan. Juga disarankan bagi para guru untuk mengembangkan strategi pembelajaran yang efektif, memotivasi siswa, dan tetap mengikuti perkembangan terkini. Akhirnya, peneliti selanjutnya disarankan untuk



menggunakan wawancara, penyelidikan mandiri, dan observasi kelas untuk memahami tantangan siswa dan memberikan hasil yang lebih komprehensif.



ABSTRACT

Shobah, Nuris. 2023. *Investigating Students' Challenges in Writing Academic Papers. Skripsi*, English Education Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Islamic University of Malang. Advisor I: Dr. Kurniasih, S.Pd., M.A; Advisor II; Henny Rahmawati, S.Pd., S.S., M.Pd

Key words: EFL students, academic paper, writing challenges, strategies

As a part of undergraduate thesis project, this study looked at the challenges of writing academic papers experienced by EFL students writing the thesis. This study also aimed at investigating their strategies for dealing with those challenges. The findings of several previous research projects, all enhance the need to learn more about the challenges of writing academic papers and the strategies. However, very little is known about the strategies used by EFL students in Indonesia, besides the challenges they encounter in writing academic papers.

To fill the gap, this study was conducted at a private university in Malang which involved 100 students majoring in the English education department who already have experience in writing a research paper in their 7th semester and currently working on their thesis. Besides, a mixed- method was used in this study. The researcher began this research by collecting quantitative data about students' difficulties employed a close-ended questionnaire contained 30 question items about personality factors and academic skills factors (see appendices). An open-ended question was also employed with a question about what strategies they used to deal with the challenges (see appendices). Questionnaire adapted from Lin & Morrison (2021) and Puspita (2019) employing likert scale ranging from 1-5. The questionnaire was distributed via Google form. After the data was collected, the researcher calculated the percentage of each question item from the likert scale and sorted them from the highest to the lowest.

The result of the data analysis showed that students experienced several difficulties, including control of their emotions (being anxious), deciding the thesis topic and the title, and lack of awareness of the current issues about their topic. Moreover, they also find difficulties in using correct English grammar, planning long written texts, creating coherent sentences, and expressing their ideas logically. The qualitative responses informed some strategies utilized by students, such as reading more articles about their topic of interest and finding support from peers by having discussions. It is suggested for the students to become self-aware and autonomous in academic writing by practicing and learning, seeking clarification from teachers, and sharing challenges. It is also suggested for the teachers to develop effective learning strategies, motivate students, and stay updated on current issues. Finally, future researchers were suggested to use interviews, self-inquiry, and classroom observations to understand students' challenges and provide more comprehensive result

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this first chapter, the researcher discusses several aspects related to the study. These include the background of the study, the research questions, the research objectives, the research significance, the scope and limitations of this study, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

Hyland (2013) mentioned that when it comes to admission and achievements in university life, academic writing in English becomes an important aspect and is used as a gateway to success for students all around the world. This statement is backed by further research by Toba (2019). In the field of writing, the most recent findings of difficulties faced by students in Indonesia, as well as Toba (2019) reported that students' struggles in writing academic papers are dominated by several reasons, such as limited knowledge about aspects of writing as well as personal reasons, including lack of writing practice, writing antipathy, the stress in writing, insufficient time allotted for writing tests, and insufficient teaching of the writing process. Hence, investigations into the challenges faced by EFL students must continue to be carried out. Meanwhile, the study of the strategies used is also expected to help the students in overcoming the difficulties they may face.

Following those urgencies, in the last five years, studies on this topic have continued. The previous researcher, Amawa (2022), conducted a study related to a strategy that affects students' academic writing and reported that the use of a metacognitive strategy by the students resulted in a positive outcome. While Kurniasih (2022) conducted a study related to affective factors that influence students' writing performance, she found that motivation was discovered to have a major effect on students' writing performance among the other affective factors, including anxiety and attitude.

Moreover, Lin & Morrison (2021) investigated the challenges and perspectives in academic writing and discovered that students were experiencing challenges in language features. This study also revealed that the perspectives of students and faculty on both challenges and strategies did not meet each other. Another study by Puspita (2019) reported that EFL students faced difficulties with personality factors, sociocultural factors, and linguistic factors, of which personality factors received the highest percentage. In the same year, Altınmakas & Bayyurt (2019) explored factors influencing undergraduate students' academic writing practices in Turkey. These were influenced by students' nature, experience, perceptions, and expectations. The other research also mentioned that anxiety could affect students' writing performance as mentioned by Sabti (2019) that the greater the anxiety level, the worse the writing achievement.

While several previous studies investigated the students' difficulties in writing academic papers, very little attention has been paid to exploring the strategies they used which were mostly participated by students from other

countries. As a result, to fill this gap, students from Indonesian universities will participate in this study, which aims to investigate not only what challenges students face when writing academic papers, but also their strategies for overcoming those challenges.

Having difficulties writing an academic paper can have negative consequences. As mentioned in the previous study by Singh (2017) proved that facing difficulties in writing, especially in a grammar context, resulted poor writing outcomes. In connection with the findings in the previous studies which found that students encountered difficulties in academic writing, it was recommended for the future study to continue on a larger scale that covers various populations, and multiple education levels to get deeper knowledge of academic writing difficulties (Fadda, 2012).

By investigating the challenges and strategies developed by undergraduates in writing an academic paper, this research is expected to provide more information for undergraduates students to understand what challenges they may face in writing an academic paper and to help them deal with challenges in writing academic paper since it is an essential skill to be mastered in an undergraduate program. By knowing this, the lecturer can make learning innovations regarding this field.

1.2 Research Questions

In light of the foregoing discussion, Finally, the following questions were raised in this study.

1. What challenges do EFL students face in writing an academic paper?

2. How do EFL students deal with the challenges they face?

1.3 Research Objectives

The aim of this study are, firstly, to investigate the challenges that EFL students may face in writing academic papers, particularly writing an undergraduate thesis. Secondly, this study aims to find out the strategies of EFL students to face the challenges in writing their thesis.

1.4 Research Significance

Theoretically, the outcomes of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to teaching and learning to write a thesis in English at the undergraduate level, particularly in the final year of university, since teaching a thesis is very different from teaching other academic papers that are simpler; writing a thesis is an activity that requires careful and detailed writing. Furthermore, writing a thesis in a foreign language may allow students to present their challenges.

In practice, the writer hopes that the findings of this study are useful to both students and lecturers.

1. For the Students

By investigating the challenges and strategies developed by undergraduates in writing an academic paper, this research is expected to provide more information for undergraduates students to understand what challenges they may face in writing an academic paper and to help them deal with challenges in writing academic paper since it is an essential skill to be mastered in an undergraduate program.

2. For the Lecturers

By knowing this, the writer hoped that the lecturer can make learning Innovations regarding this field.

1. 5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study will be conducted to look at the challenges of writing academic papers experienced by EFL students writing the thesis. This study also aims at investigating their strategies for dealing with those challenges. This study will be limited to investigating the students at Universitas Islam Malang in their 7th semester, class of 2022, who have completed the course of writing named research on ELT in the fifth and sixth semesters. The participants are between the ages of 21- 23 years old. The participants will be contacted through WhatsApp group chat to get the link to the questionnaires.

1. 6 Definition of Key Terms

For a better understanding of this study, the following terms are defined in the context of this research.

Academic papers (undergraduate thesis) is a final project in the form of scientific work that is completed according to specific guidelines, containing commonly up to 40 pages consisting of 5 chapters. Each chapter is detailed, beginning with the introduction, followed by the literature review, the methodology, the findings and discussion, and the conclusion. This kind of project is done in the 8th semester and is eligible to achieve a bachelor's degree.

Challenges. Refers to difficulty, i.e. something that necessitates effort, especially with the internal factors that caused difficulties. In other words, something difficult to deal with.

Strategy. Is way a person approaches challenges determines what they do during the process of achieving goals.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents some points about conclusions and suggestions of the research related to what has been analyzed and discussed.

5. 1. Conclusion

After analyzing the data that has been discussed in chapter IV, this study concludes that nowadays EFL students at Universitas Islam Malang still encounter challenges in writing their academic papers, especially when they struggle with the challenges in personality factors. The students also reported that they encountered linguistic challenges during writing their thesis. These factors are classified as reaching high numbers. The challenges on personality factors reported get 70, 25%, and challenges on linguistics factors get 67, 16% as mean.

Furthermore, the result of the open-ended questionnaire section in this study concludes that students had implemented different strategies for dealing with those challenges. A strategy such as reading and browsing for more references is the one most used by them. Meanwhile, the second most used strategy is by discussing and sharing their experiences with their peers and lecturers. Other strategies employed by students are using educational material and online tools together, going for healing, and managing their time.

5. 2 Suggestions

There are some general points to recommend based on the explanation regarding students' challenges and strategies for writing academic papers. These are some suggestions that will be useful for students, English lecturers, and future researchers.

First, for the students, students can become self-aware and autonomous in academic writing by practicing and learning. Actively ask teachers for clarification on unclear material, and seek detailed explanations for thesis titles, grammar, organization, and sentence linking. Sharing challenges with others can reduce anxiety, stress, and boost self-efficacy in writing. Second, for the teachers, they can develop effective learning strategies to help students overcome challenges in thesis writing. They should provide clear examples, explanations, and examples on title selection, grammar, organization, and sentence linking. Teachers should also motivate students to learn more academic papers and stay updated on current issues. And finally, this study's limitations suggest future researchers should use multiple instruments to understand students' academic paper challenges, such as interviews, self-inquiry, and classroom observations. A larger sample size would provide more comprehensive results

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