

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing a thesis is one of the criteria for getting a bachelor's degree from a university. Thesis writing is essential for completing a bachelor's degree in English education. It is the stage at which an undergraduate student investigates the field's research (Kurniawati & Atmojo, 2022). This statement aligns with Puspita (2019) who states that a thesis is a sort of academic writing that fulfills some of the criteria for university students. Therefore, a thesis is a written document created by a student that demonstrates the student's research results.

Many undergraduate students, particularly students of English majors need help to write a thesis because it is challenging them. This phenomenon occurred to English students working on their thesis at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya, which began in the eighth or final semester. Some of the students faced a variety of challenges. Additionally, students must write their thesis following the format or rules established by each department, which is typically shared on the department's website to find out the standards for students in writing the thesis, which is one of the factors contributing to the challenges of writing a thesis for students majoring in English.

Starfield & Paltridge (2019) argued that students who write the thesis in English but their first language is not English will face more challenges. Sukandi & Yulmiati (2019) found in their research that there were three most difficult aspects of writing a thesis involving writing the research title, writing the thesis itself, and the last aspect is grammar. In this point, writing a thesis in the field of English Education must be written in academic form. Moreover, undergraduate students should pass many steps, beginning with establishing the title, choosing the subject, carrying out the proposal seminar examination, and collecting data until the final exam. Finally, undergraduate students have to present the findings of their study to the examiner (Fitria, 2022). Therefore, the differences in the length of time required

for their thesis work are due to the variety of challenges and difficulties faced by students.

There are related studies that have been conducted by other researchers. Lestari (2020) in her research used quantitative descriptive approaches with 74 English Education Research Program seventh-semester students to identify particular challenges encountered by students while finishing their thesis. She stated that the student's difficulties in writing their thesis included English proficiency, time management, knowledge of research methodology, co-advisor relationship, plagiarism, personalities, motivation, and advisor workload. Meanwhile, Sa et al. (2009) mentioned in their studies related to problems and strategies in developing and writing an undergraduate thesis, the researchers found that the students mostly have difficulty in starting the research. Whereas, the problem working with the advisor was in the lowest rate chosen by the students. Besides, the students had the solutions or strategies to solve them. They mostly used their time to read a lot of literature from many sources and consult with both their mates and advisors.

In the previous research, the researchers investigated various studies that highlighted the challenges without indicating how to overcome it, while others examined thesis writing strategies that focus on anxiety and mostly used quantitative method and narrative inquiry design. However, this study used a descriptive qualitative case study as a method to identify English undergraduate students' challenges in writing the thesis and strategies for overcoming those challenges. Therefore, this study aims to identify students' challenges in writing a thesis and their strategies for overcoming those challenges to make thesis writing easier. The researcher desires this research would be beneficial for students who are having difficulty writing or completing their thesis as a guide to determining what strategies they should use to deal with these difficulties in the English major and will eventually become a reflection for supervisors on critiques from students and suggestions provided by students in communicating and discussing writing a thesis.

1.2 Formulation of the Problems

This study focuses on answering the following questions:

1. What are the challenges that English Undergraduate students face when writing a thesis?
2. What strategies do they use to overcome those challenges?

1.3 Operational Definitions

- 1.3.1. English Undergraduate students** Students who are studying English in the English department at a university.
- 1.3.2. Academic Writing:** Academic writing is a type of formal writing form used by researchers and educators in scholarly publications. It emphasizes arguments based on evidence and logical thinking to assist the readers in comprehending a topic or phenomenon.
- 1.3.3. Challenges in Writing Undergraduate Thesis:** The challenges faced by undergraduate students while writing their thesis include emotional, behavioral, rhetorical, and social issues.
- 1.3.4. Strategy to Overcome the Challenges in Writing the Thesis:** Strategy to overcome challenges in writing the thesis includes communication with the supervisor, time management, preparation in writing the thesis, and peer feedback.

1.4 Aims of the Research

This study aims to identify English undergraduate students' challenges in writing the thesis and strategies for overcoming those challenges.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1. Theoretical use

This study is expected to be a reference for other researchers and readers who focus their research on thesis writing in the English context, focusing on the challenges and strategies experienced by English undergraduate students in writing their thesis.

1.5.2. Practical use

This study will be utilized as a resource by students who will compose a thesis to understand the strategies employed to complete the thesis.

1.5.3. Empirical use

This study will complement previous research that primarily focused on the challenges that undergraduate students face when writing a thesis and strategies to overcome those challenges.