CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   English Undergraduate Students

English as a foreign language among non-speakers has spread and it is used as the second and foreign language of various countries' populations. Si (2019) stated that English as a foreign language is intended for individuals who live in countries where English is not the first or formal language, such as China, Japan, Indonesia, etc. English is not used for everyday communication in those countries. Meanwhile, English second language is for individuals who migrated to English-speaking countries and for countries that colonized English-speaking countries in the past, such as Africa and some Southeast Asian countries.

English is the most widely used language internationally in many countries, including Indonesia. Since the 1980s, English has been acknowledged as the primary foreign language in Indonesia, and since the early 1990s, it has seen great growth (writes Alwasilah in Mappiasse & Bin Sihes, 2014). Hence, English has become part of the curriculum in Indonesia. The implementation of English lessons at various levels of education indicates that Indonesia has to teach English as a foreign language to reach the country's goals to make it a developed country and then use English as a global language in many aspects.

English is utilized as a study resource in practically all Indonesian institutions at various levels, particularly at the university level. Furthermore, Sunandar & Susanti (2020) stated that despite not being utilized as a language of teaching in schools or as a means of communication within a society, the English language is taught as a learning subject. Therefore, English undergraduate students who are studying English in the English department at a university should comprehend the use of English in various subjects at the university level, particularly for writing the thesis.

2.2   Academic Writing

Academic Writing refers to a broad type of writing set in an academic context (Turmudi, 2017). Academic writing plays a crucial role in identifying and responding to the discourse of many fields and topics in university education. It varies from fiction, which is the kind of writing narratives, and it also contrasts with personal writing, which is the type of letter writing or e-mails (Pineteh, 2013). Some academic writing is conducted to fulfill university or college requirements, such as submitting a Ph.D. thesis or dissertation, disseminating results or information, such as research papers, conference proceedings, and collaboration reports, or carrying out to attract funds, such as grant or fellowship applications (Aliotta, 2018).

One of the most important aspects of academic writing is the ability to investigate, discover, and evaluate information using cognitive processes such as interpretation and reconstruction (Akkaya & Aydın, 2018). Bailey (2015) stated that the objective of academic writing is to report on research conducted by the writer, answer a question given or selected by the writer, discuss a topic of common interest and convey the writer's perspective, and develop research done by others on a topic.

According to Langan (2010), students must follow the academic writing process in four steps:

1. Prewriting

    In this step, the writer is required to determine and plan what the writer wants to write.

2. Drafting

    In the drafting step, the students write sentence after sentence, and the earliest draft does not focus on spelling, grammar, or punctuation.

3. Revising

    During the revision step, put the phrases correctly. The students focus on grammar. Students can add, remove, or rearrange sentences by sentence. Focus on sentence coherence between the main concept and supporting idea while revising.

4. Editing and Proofreading

In the editing and proofreading, the writer is required to choose and determine whether sentences are more relevant and engaging to the issue.

2.3 Undergraduate Thesis Writing

A thesis is an individual writing project that gives information about a specific topic written by undergraduate students that becomes a graduation requirement at a university. Diasti & Mbato (2020) stated that in connection with the context of education in Indonesia, writing a thesis is a mandatory thing that students must do to graduate from a university. On the other hand, writing a thesis is a complex task since it involves hard work and effort. It also consumes time and requires good knowledge (Alsied & Ibrahim, 2018). Therefore, in writing a thesis, students should recognize the elements or structure of thesis writing.

Students must comprehend the format or technique for writing and the points or structure in developing a thesis in academic writing, particularly in completing a thesis. Diyana Binti Maznun et al. (2017) mention that the structure of an undergraduate thesis includes an abstract and the following five sections: an introduction, a literature review, a methodology, results and discussion, and a conclusion. In the five structures of this research, the researcher describes the topic in outline on the background of the study or introduction. Secondly, in the literature review, the researcher explains the theories relevant to the research topic (Snyder, 2019). The third is the method that helps researchers collect samples and data to find a solution to a problem (Sam, 2012). The next stage is the results and the discussion, which state the results and suggestions for the topic. The last is conclusions to conclude the research that has been done.

However, once undergraduate students write their thesis, they face various challenges. Starfield & Paltridge (2019) wrote in their book that four concerns can directly impact a second-language and foreign-language speaker writing an English thesis: emotional, behavioral, rhetorical, and social issues.

1. Emotional issues

These concerns can be classified into two categories that directly impact an undergraduate's ability to write a thesis. Feelings lack of confidence, fear of failure, rejection, and extreme perfectionism are emotional concerns that can contribute to

'writer's block or the inability to write. Writing anxiety has been linked to fear of failure and procrastination (Russell-Pinson & Harris, 2019). Students who tend to perfectionism may struggle with writing in English. These emotional concerns result from the imposter phenomenon, as students are not fully prepared to share their drafts with supervisors. Fear of the supervisor's feedback or the supervisor himself can impair the student's writing ability because the student perceives the supervisor as a punishing and judgemental figure. Besides, Odena & Burgess (2017) argued that supervisor feedback demonstrated an essential influence on students' academic writing progress. The supervisor's comments were a helpful resource for improving the content and ideas, language use, and rhetorical structure of the student's writing progress.

2. Behavioral issues

There are behavioral concerns that can interfere with a student's ability to write a thesis. In this case, the primary considerations are the demands on students' time and their writing progress. Many students struggle with writing because they mistakenly believe it is a creative and spontaneous process. However, as Zerubavel (1999) argued in his research, writing must become a habit. Writing early and regularly is critical since regular writing boosts productivity. The more time you spend writing, redrafting, and editing, the better your writing will develop. Rowena Murray (2013) suggests students should focus on making time rather than finding time. The researcher recommended brief daily sessions to write. It entails writing regularly at a specific time, place, and for a period. Writing is a process that includes prewriting or planning, drafting, receiving criticism, revising, and editing before submitting. These methods aided in shifting the understanding of writing from merely an idea, planning, and sitting down to write without seeking feedback and revising the comment. Biggs et al. (1999) argue that writers may be spending too much effort on the mechanics of writing (sentence, grammar, and word-level elements) rather than developing content and structuring it into appropriate sentences. Therefore, postponing writing can become an obstacle in the writing process, whereas writing regularly can raise understanding of a topic.

3. Rhetorical issues

In this area, the use of academic language and the writer's responsibility to convince the reader of the validity of a statement burdened the thesis writer. Moreover, due to limited linguistic resources, students might discover the challenge of creating an appropriate academic 'voice' when writing a thesis in English. This is in line with Flowerdew (1999) sought to publish in English and needed help in several areas, including the time it took to produce in English, the ease with English expression, the scope and richness of their vocabulary, and establishing claims for their research. However, limited linguistic resources can be frustrating for English thesis writers. Generally, research indicates that 'finding your voice' is a significant aspect of academic writing development. Shaw (1991) discovered that many students had formed a technique of extensive reading in their subject area followed by note-taking of significant terms for application to their writing. Besides the academic language rule, the writer needs to be responsible for the statements or claims in their thesis. Dahl (2004) argued that meta-discourse is one of the methods that writers accept their responsibility as the author's overt acknowledgment to the reader. Meta-discourse primarily organizes the text for the reader and is used by the writer to converse with the reader about the text's topic. Meta-discourse indicates the presence of a text-organizing and content-evaluating writer. It assists in connecting a text to its context through the voice of language to consider readers' expectations, understandings, and knowledge (Hyland, 2017). Hence, the writer's responsibility is to convince the reader through proper writing to enhance comprehension of the topic.

4. Social issues

In the last area, the writer discovers that students frequently feel isolated yet refuse to take advice and criticism from their peers and supervisors. Shaw (1991) discovered that the thesis writers he examined did not use 'peer feedback as a resource in the writing process,' whether for revision or editing. However, the supervisor's relationship is critical to successfully completing the thesis. Research shows that peer support groups and group feedback can help battle potential isolation and assist in writing growth. Collaborative peer support and thesis writing groups are the most valuable strategies for writer progression, and it is increasingly

popular as students discover the benefits of giving and receiving peer feedback. Caffarella & Barnett (2000) found that preparing critiques for their peers and receiving comments from professors and peers were the most significant factors in helping them comprehend academic writing processes and improve their academic writing. Thus, the relationship between supervisors and discussions with friends to receive and provide suggestions or criticism is significant for the progress of thesis writing.

How do students overcome all of the challenges of writing a thesis? However, there are various strategies for students to overcome these challenges. Belleville (2019) provides some suggestions to make writing a thesis easier:

1. Block Dedicated Periods to Writing

Blocking time is one of the most remarkable techniques for writing a thesis because it requires concentration and quality time. Commit to writing every day (5 days a week, with weekends off) for the lowest possible time, for example, 2 hours. Write at the best time, whether an early bird or a night owl, by removing all distractions and focusing on keeping a journal and composing a thesis.

2. Develop SMART Objectives

There are at least 4 types of objectives to think about when writing a thesis: First, set objectives for a semester or a particular period of several weeks (for example, before going on vacation, I want to have done….). Second, each long-term goal must be divided into smaller, more specific targets. For example, the time required to accomplish an objective would be exactly 2 hours per day for writing. The third objective type is related to scheduling: setting the schedule for writing sessions. The last type is the objectives for the project. Begin a project by outlining its objectives, even if they might change. Spend some time defining and clarifying the goal of any sentence, chapter, or topic.

3. Plan, Write, Edit, and Repeat

In the process of writing a thesis, there are three steps to do: planning, writing (actually inputting the words), and editing. Each step is essential to the beginning of the next step and will have to give equal importance to each step.

2.4   Study of the Relevant Research

Before conducting research, several researchers carried out similar research. Lestari (2020) discovered various problems experienced by students in completing their thesis. This research employed a quantitative descriptive technique with 74 English Education Research Program seventh-semester students. The findings of this research were students' difficulties in writing theses are divided into two categories: First, aspects of students' English proficiency, and second managing student time. Difficulties determining the topic and methods appropriate for the research topic and paraphrasing sentences are examples of difficulties in students' English proficiency. Meanwhile, difficulties in managing students' time with themselves include dealing with feedback or comments from supervisors to revise the thesis correctly, dealing with laziness, and a lack of students' motivation to keep writing the thesis.

Tiwari (2019) has analyzed writing a thesis in English Education: challenges faced by students. This study used a qualitative technique by selecting three universities as the area of study and interviewing five participants from each university using purposive sampling. The data was examined using narrative inquiry. The researcher discovered several challenges faced by participants while writing the thesis, including unsupportive supervisors who did not sympathize with the students' research and responded severely when discussing the difficulties of the thesis, students also stated that supervisors implicitly demanded money from them. Insufficient resources for the thesis references, such as books, are not available in the library, and lack of up to current resources required for research. Determining topics using appropriate methods, some students mentioned that the campus never held workshops or seminars related to methodology in research that is essential for writing a thesis, and the last challenges in terms of finances and time, some students mentioned that the primary problem when writing a thesis in English education is financial resources.

In another study, Kurniawati & Atmojo (2022) wrote their article titled EFL thesis Writing Anxiety: Causes, effects, and Coping Strategies. This research used narrative inquiry as the research method and semi-structured interviews were used

to collect data in this research. The participant was a former student of the English education graduate program at a state university in Central Java. The researchers discovered that family and financial problems caused thesis writing anxiety, full-time working duties, poor time management, and unpleasant administrative staff services. Despite this, the researchers discovered three general strategies used by the subject to deal with thesis writing anxiety: recognizing challenges and seeking solutions, developing mutual relationships with thesis supervisors and workplace stakeholders, and sustaining self-motivation through environmental organizing, goal-oriented self-talk, and self-handicapping.

Previous researchers analyzed some studies that highlighted the challenges without indicating how to overcome them, while others examined thesis writing strategies that focus on anxiety. Thus, this study focuses on the challenges of writing a thesis and the strategy utilized by English undergraduate students in writing their thesis using descriptive case studies.