



**STUDENTS' STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEIR
DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING THESIS
(A Study at English Teaching Department Registered in
2023/2024 Academic Year)**

THESIS

*Submitted to English Teaching Department Faculty of Tarbiyah
and Teacher Training of UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar as
a Requirement to Getting Bachelor Degree*

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**STRATEGI MAHASISWA UNTUK MENGATASI KESULITAN
DALAM MENULIS SKRIPSI
(Studi pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Terdaftar
pada Tahun Ajaran 2023/2024)**

SKRIPSI

*Diajukan Kepada Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris Fakultas
Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar untuk
Memenuhi Salah Satu Syarat Guna Memperoleh Gelar Sarjana Strata
Satu (S1) dalam Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*

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**PROGRAM STUDI BAHASA INGGRIS
FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN ILMU KEGURUAN
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استراتيجيات الطلاب للتغلب على صعوباتهم في كتابة الأطروحة
(دراسة في قسم تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية مسجلة في العام الدراسي 2024/2023)

أُطْرُوحَة

مقدمة إلى قسم تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلية التربية وعلوم التعليم
جامعة محمود يونس الإسلامية الحكومية باتوسنكر
شرطا للحصول على درجة الإجازة الجامعية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية

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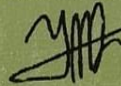

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ABSTRACT

MIFTAHUL JANNAH, Reg No. 2030104038, entitled: “Students’ Strategies to Overcome Their Difficulties in Writing Thesis (A Study at English Teaching Department Registered in 2023/2024 Academic Year)”. English Teaching Department Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training State Islamic University Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar.

The problem addressed in this study was that students' strategies to overcome their difficulties in writing a thesis had not yet been revealed. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to describe the strategies students used to overcome these difficulties.

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. The informants were students from the English Teaching Department of UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar in the 2023/2024 academic year. A total of eight students were selected through purposive sampling with a convenience sampling technique. These students were chosen based on specific criteria: they had successfully passed their thesis proposal seminar and had firsthand experience with the challenges and strategies involved in writing a thesis. The researcher served as the key instrument, with an interview guide as a supporting instrument. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the selected informants. To carry out data analysis, the three stages were followed: data reduction, data display, and data verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, prolonged engagement was employed to enhance credibility by clarifying and confirming any ambiguous information from the initial interviews.

The results of the study indicate that students in the English Teaching Department of UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar in the 2023/2024 academic year employed five key strategies to overcome difficulties in writing their thesis: 1) Using various applications; 2) Recording and noting feedback from advisors; 3) Asking help from friends; 4) Searching for references (journals or books); and 5) Managing Time.

ABSTRAK

MIFTAHUL JANNAH, Reg No. 2030104038, berjudul: **“Students’ Strategies to Overcome Their Difficulties in Writing Thesis (A Study at English Teaching Department Registered in 2023/2024 Academic Year)”**. Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar.

Masalah yang dibahas dalam penelitian ini adalah bahwa strategi mahasiswa dalam mengatasi kesulitan mereka dalam menulis skripsi belum terungkap. Oleh karena itu, tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan strategi yang digunakan mahasiswa untuk mengatasi kesulitan tersebut.

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain deskriptif. Informan dalam penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa Jurusan Tadris Bahasa Inggris di UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar pada tahun akademik 2023/2024. Sebanyak delapan mahasiswa dipilih melalui purposive sampling dengan teknik convenience sampling. Mahasiswa tersebut dipilih berdasarkan kriteria tertentu: mereka telah berhasil melewati seminar proposal skripsi dan memiliki pengalaman langsung dengan tantangan serta strategi dalam menulis skripsi. Peneliti berperan sebagai instrumen utama, dengan panduan wawancara sebagai instrumen pendukung. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan informan yang telah dipilih. Untuk menganalisis data, tiga tahap digunakan: reduksi data, penyajian data, dan verifikasi data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Untuk memastikan keabsahan data, keterlibatan yang lebih lama diterapkan guna meningkatkan kredibilitas dengan mengklarifikasi dan mengkonfirmasi informasi yang masih ambigu dari wawancara awal.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa Jurusan Tadris Bahasa Inggris di UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar pada tahun akademik 2023/2024 menerapkan lima strategi utama untuk mengatasi kesulitan dalam menulis skripsi, yaitu: 1) Menggunakan berbagai aplikasi; 2) Merekam dan mencatat umpan balik dari dosen pembimbing; 3) Meminta bantuan dari teman; 4) Mencari referensi (jurnal atau buku); dan 5) Manajemen waktu.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

English has gained popularity as a foreign language among students in Indonesia and has also become widely recognized in the field of education globally. As English Education students, they develop four language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the four fundamental language skills and plays a crucial role in the teaching and learning of English. There are three main forms of writing; it consists of personal writing, work related writing and academic writing (Thahirah et al., 2023). Academic writing plays a crucial role in higher education as a major source of scientific knowledge (Al-Farrosi et al., 2023). Every student in higher education is required to complete it as part of their academic contribution, demonstrating their dedication and the quality of their work.

Academic writing is formal, so the writer should not use slang or contractions (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). The writer should take care to write complete sentences and to organize them in a certain way. Academic writing comes in many forms, from brief articles, essays, and reports to more complex works like thesis and dissertations. For undergraduate students, a thesis is especially significant, serving as the final requirements to complete their degree and offering a way to contribute their knowledge and dedication to the advancement of science and scholarship. A thesis is an academic piece of writing that presents research on a specific topic and serves as a partial requirement for university graduation (Puspita, 2019).

Writing a thesis in the English Education Department of UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar is one of the main requirements for completing studies at the undergraduate level. A thesis allows students to put into practice the theories they have studied by conducting scientific research. It also serves as proof of their ability to think critically, perform thorough analyses, and organize arguments logical skills that are essential for future educators or

academics in the field of English. Students' research often plays a vital role in improving teaching methods, refining learning strategies, and developing innovative solutions to challenges in English language education. As a result, a thesis benefits not only the students but also the institution and the academic community in general.

At UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, writing a thesis plays a crucial role in shaping students' character as beginner researchers. It not only helps them develop theoretical knowledge and practical skills but also instills essential academic values, such as integrity in scholarly work, independence in problem-solving, and perseverance in tackling challenging tasks. At UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, students in English Education department follow a set process for thesis writing. This begins with submitting a thesis proposal, including a research problem and consultation with lecturers. After approval, they are assigned an advisor who guides them through the proposal drafting and seminar stages. Students must attend at least ten proposal seminars to gain insight into academic standards before proceeding with their research. This process ensures students produce high-quality, scholarly work.

However, writing a thesis appears to be a challenging task for university students, as it demands both a strong grasp of the subject matter and effective writing skills. Key issues in academic writing include improper vocabulary usage, grammatical mistakes, incorrect verb forms, as well as errors in punctuation and spelling (Ali Al-Khairi, 2013). Students frequently face challenges when asked to express thoughts in English, as English is not their first language (Swarni, 2016). Problems like incorrect vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation can affect communication. Since English is not their first language, students often find it difficult to express their ideas clearly. Students often faced difficulties and delays in the process of writing their theses. The main challenges included limited access to references and resources relevant to their thesis topics, inadequate skills in research methodology, and insufficient knowledge of the guidelines for writing scientific papers. Additionally, these challenges were categorized into two influencing factors:

internal and external. The internal factors comprised students' academic abilities in research methodology and adherence to scientific writing guidelines, as well as their self-confidence. Meanwhile, the external factors involved the availability of research references, the support from supervisors, and access to respondents (Safitri et al., 2021). They struggled with self-esteem, which included choosing a thesis topic and locating an appropriate literature study. Additionally, the undergraduate students' faced challenges related to the culture within the language classroom and understanding the university's thesis writing format standards. Finally, they struggled with domain-specific error analysis and paraphrasing lines from sources while writing their theses (Puspita, 2019).

To face the challenges, there are many strategies that students did. First, students usually talk to other students to exchange knowledge. Second, before writing, students typically create a rough draft or outline to gather and organize their ideas. Third, since most students lack the time to edit their writing particularly for coherence, grammar, spelling, and punctuation they often ask their friends to review their work as part of organizational revision and writing coherence exercises (Keumala et al., 2019). Students mostly spent their time reading a lot of literature from various sources, talking with fellow students, and consulting with their advisors (Sa'diah et al., 2022). The strategies most engaged by students were self-introspection through positive activities, making schedule notes, utilizing technological help such as language apps, consulting with advisors, and receiving help from family and friends (Hutabarat, 2022).

From the interviews conducted with several English students in State Islamic University Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar who have graduated in 2024, various views and challenges they faced while writing their thesis were revealed. However, the students experienced difficulties in finding relevant theories and collecting data from hard-to-contact samples, so had to ask classmates for help. This shows that high interest can be hampered by practical challenges in research. Many students identified major difficulties in

finding the right theory and obtaining data. Some students struggled to relate the theory to the content of the thesis, and experienced challenges in structuring questionnaires and constructing sentences. Challenges also arose in writing English. There were those who recognized difficulties in the application of grammar, especially in the proper use of time. The revision process after the proposal seminar added to the complexity, with confusion over standardized word choice and differences between written and spoken language. This shows that while writing in English provides opportunities for students to improve their language skills, it also requires extra effort in understanding and applying grammar and academic style.

To overcome these difficulties, students apply various strategies. Some students utilize guidance from their advisors, seek additional references from journals or previous theses, and work on their theses in small increments daily. In dealing with obstacles in finding relevant theories, they optimize keyword searches in various sources, including Google Scholar and other databases. Meanwhile, to overcome difficulties in obtaining data, some students take the initiative to seek assistance from friends who are part of the research sample.

However, these strategies are not always effective. Dependence on advisors may be challenging if students struggle to understand the feedback given or if advisors have limited availability. Searching for references may also be difficult when students lack the skills to evaluate credible sources or when access to relevant materials is restricted. Additionally, working in small increments may not be efficient if students struggle with time management or difficulty in managing time effectively. Overall, while students implement various strategies to address the challenges in writing their theses, these approaches may have limitations that require further improvement and support. Although students employ various strategies to address these difficulties, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on factors such as students' research skills, access to resources, and time management abilities.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the researcher intended to find out and describe the students' strategies to overcome their difficulties in

writing thesis by interviewing students during the thesis writing process in the 2023/2024 academic year. This research is entitled “Students’ Strategies to Overcome Their Difficulties in Writing Thesis (A study at English Teaching Department Registered in 2023/2024 Academic Year)”.

B. Research Focus and Question

Based on the explanation of the research background mentioned above, the researcher found that students have difficulties in writing their thesis. This research aims to explore the various strategies to overcome challenges and facilitating factors students encounter while writing their theses. Key areas of interest include the influence of supervisor guidance, the impact of the student motivation and interest in the topic, difficulties in identifying relevant theories and collecting data, language barriers, and challenges in constructing research instruments and structuring content. Based on the research focus, the question of this research is: “What are students’ strategies to overcome the difficulties in writing thesis?”

C. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity about this research, key terms are defined as follows:

1. Students’ Strategies

In this study, students’ strategies are the methods they use to overcome challenges in writing their thesis, such as managing time, recording and noting feedback from advisor, using resources, collaborating with peers, and staying self-disciplined.

2. Students’ Difficulties

Students' difficulties in writing a thesis refer to the various challenges that students encounter during the process of completing their thesis as the main requirement for completing studies in UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar.

3. Academic Writing

Academic writing is a formal style used in education and research, emphasizing structure, critical thinking, evidence, and proper referencing. This study highlights its role in writing a thesis in the English Education Department.

4. Thesis

A thesis is an extended academic research paper required for graduation in higher education. In this context, it involves identifying a research topic, formulating questions or hypotheses, gathering and analyzing data, and presenting findings in a structured format under academic standards.

D. Purpose of the Research

This research aims to describe students' strategies to overcome the difficulties in writing thesis.

E. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretically/Technically

The information about students' difficulties in writing thesis and their strategies to overcome the difficulties can serve as a basis for theoretical development.

2. Practically

- a. For students; it provides valuable information on writing a thesis, equips them with strategies to overcome challenges, enhances their knowledge, and motivates them in academic writing.
- b. For lecturers; the findings offer insights into the difficulties students encounter, enabling them to deliver more meaningful feedback and recommend improved methods and resources for effective thesis writing.
- c. For other researcher; the researcher hopes that this research can be used as references and gives further information for similar researchers associated with this research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Review of Related Theories

1. Nature of Writing

a. Definition of Writing

Writing is one of the four basic skills in learning English as a second language/foreign language. Writing is an activity to express what is in their mind on the paper. Writing can be described as the process of putting thoughts, ideas, concepts, and emotions into written words to communicate indirectly with others and also any ideas that you advance must be supported with specific reasons or details (Puspita, 2019). Writing is a problem-solving activity that includes generating ideas, finding an inauthentic writing voice, planning, setting goals, and continuously reviewing and assessing both what is intended to be written and what has already been written (White & Arndt, 1992). In writing, the writer aims to convey their thoughts through grammatically correct sentences to facilitate communication (Swarni, 2016).

Writing is a powerful tool for expressing thoughts, ideas, and emotions, allowing individuals to communicate effectively with others. It also involves selecting precise language to convey the intended meaning. To improve writing skills, one must engage in consistent practice to learn how to write effectively. This process requires the writer to focus on several aspects of creating the written text, including content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

In summary, writing is a form of expression that involves a lengthy process. It is essential that ideas presented in writing are supported by clear reasons and details to ensure the message is convincing and well-understood. Achieving proficiency in writing skills takes time, as it requires mastery of various linguistic elements.

b. Purpose of Writing

The main purpose of writing is to express ideas and communicate a message to the reader, so it's fair to say that the ideas themselves should be seen as the most important part of the writing (Ur, 1996). A writer may have multiple purposes in an assignment, such as conveying information, entertaining, satirizing, or persuading. When the main goal is to inform, the focus is on presenting information clearly. If the intention is to amuse, the writer should use humor carefully to entertain the audience. Satire, which is often humorous, serves a more serious purpose by highlighting issues that require reform. Meanwhile, persuasive writing aims to influence the reader's thoughts or actions by presenting arguments effectively (Cox 1962).

Writing is an activity frequently practiced alongside speaking, as it is essential for everyone to communicate their messages effectively. As mentioned by Coffin et al., in Irawati (2015), teachers should be aware of four key purposes of writing when assigning tasks to students. Writing serves as a means of assessment and helps enhance critical thinking, understanding, and memory. Additionally, it allows students to extend their learning beyond classroom lectures and formal discussions. Writing also plays a crucial role in improving students' communication skills, which are essential for academic and professional success. Furthermore, it serves as training for students to develop the necessary skills required in their future professions within their specific fields.

Writing serves multiple purposes, from informing and entertaining to persuading and fostering critical thinking. It is a vital skill for effective communication, enabling individuals to convey ideas, influence others, and reflect on knowledge. For students, writing is not just an academic requirement but a tool for developing critical thinking, enhancing communication skills, and preparing for

professional roles. Thus, writing is a powerful medium for both personal expression and intellectual growth.

In summary, writing is a powerful tool for sharing ideas, conveying messages, and serving purposes like informing, entertaining, persuading, and satirizing. In education, it also fosters critical thinking, strengthens learning, enhances communication skills, and prepares students for professional life.

c. Process of Writing

There are several stages in the writing process. There are five distinct in the writing process (Gezmi, 2020):

1) The first stage Pre-writing

The pre-writing stage readies students for writing by helping them decide what to write about, how to approach it, and why it matters. This phase encourages students to think critically, brainstorm, and organize their ideas systematically, allowing them to shift from confronting a blank page to developing initial ideas and collecting information for their writing.

2) The second stage Drafting

Once students complete all the pre-writing tasks, they move on the second stage: drafting. In this stage, the focus is on putting their ideas into words in papers. After beginning with an introduction, students develop their thoughts on the topic in a continuous flow. They are encouraged to write their essays in one sitting, one sitting, concentrating solely on expressing their ideas. Guided by their outlines, students organize and communicate their thoughts clearly. They also have the chance to modify their ideas during the revision stage and correct errors in the editing stage. At this point, students should focus primarily on effectively conveying their knowledge and ideas.

3) The third stage Revising

In this stage, revising, students are encouraged not simply to correct errors but to re-evaluate their draft, focusing on organization and content. They are prompted to assess their writing for unity, coherence, and cohesion, making adjustments by adding, removing, or replacing ideas to improve their work.

4) The fourth stage Editing

This stage involves correcting grammatical, lexical, spelling, punctuation, and other types of errors. Students should take a break from their writing before reviewing it to catch and fix any grammatical and mechanical mistakes.

Additionally, the writing process consists of four distinct stages (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). The first stage, prewriting, involves generating ideas by selecting a topic and gathering thoughts to develop it further. Once ideas are collected, they need to be arranged into a clear and logical outline, which is the organizing stage. After organizing, the writer moves on to drafting, where a rough version is written quickly without focusing on grammar, spelling, or punctuation, as the primary goal is to get ideas down. Mistakes at this stage are expected and will be addressed later. The final stage, polishing, consists of revising and editing. Revising focuses on refining content and organization, while editing deals with correcting grammar, punctuation, and mechanics to ensure clarity and accuracy.

The writing process is a structured approach that help students develop clear and effective writing. It begins with pre-writing, where ideas are brainstormed and organized, followed by drafting to put thoughts into words. Revising ensures the content is coherent and well-organized, while editing focuses on correcting grammar and mechanics. This systematic process emphasizes the importance of both content development and technical accuracy, guiding writers to produce polished, high quality work.

In summary, the writing process consists of several stages. Initially, the pre-writing stage involves brainstorming, organizing ideas, and gathering information to prepare for writing. Next, in the drafting stage, writers focus on translating their ideas into a continuous flow without worrying about perfection. The revising stage emphasizes evaluating content, organization, and coherence, making necessary adjustments. The editing stage concentrates on correcting grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Finally, the polishing stage refines the work by addressing content and organizational issues first, followed by grammatical and mechanical corrections.

d. Genres of Writing

Genre writing offers a fresh approach to teaching writing by embracing varied perspectives. A key takeaway from genre analysis is that writing is deeply tied to its social context, meaning each piece of writing serves a specific purpose shaped by a unique situation (Dirgeyasa, 2016). There are three genres of writing (Brown, 2010):

1) Academic Writing

Academic writing plays an essential role in higher education, serving as a primary source of scientific information. Every student in higher education is expected to produce work that reflects their academic commitment and quality of research (Al-Farrosi et al., 2023). Academic writing is essential to university studies, as it allows students and educators across all fields to communicate their ideas clearly (Swarni, 2016). There are some types of academic writing. According to Brown (2010) some academic writing includes papers, general subject reports, essays, competitions, academically focused journals, short-answer test responses, technical reports (e.g., lab reports), theses, and also dissertations.

In summary, academic writing is crucial in higher education, providing a main source of scientific information. It requires a formal tone, clear organization, and complete sentences to effectively communicate ideas.

2) Job-relating Writing

The job-relating writing includes such as message (e.g., phone message), letters/e-mails, memos (e.g., interoffice), reports (e.g., job evaluations, project reports), schedules, labels, signs, advertisements, announcements, and manuals.

3) Personal Writing

Personal writing forms such as letters, e-mails, greeting cards, invitations, messages, notes, calendar entries, shopping lists, reminders, financial documents (e.g., checks, tax forms, loan applications), forms, questionnaires, medical reports, immigration documents, diaries, personal journals, and fiction (e.g., short stories, poetry).

Based on the experts' perspective, writing can be classified into academic, job related, and personal genres, each serving distinct purposes and contexts. Understanding these genres helps writers adapt their style and content to suit specific audiences and objectives, emphasizing the importance of context in effective communication.

From the theory explanation above, it can be concluded that genre writing introduces three main genres: academic writing, which emphasizes formal tone and clear organization, crucial for scientific communication in higher education; job-related writing, encompassing practical documents like emails, reports, and manuals; and personal writing, including personal letters, diaries, and creative works. The various purposes of written communication are reflected in the distinct needs and settings that each genre serves.

2. Academic Writing

a. Definition of Academic Writing

According to Wilson (2022), Academic writing is fundamentally analytical. Even academic writing that argues for the virtue of a certain public policy or individual action only does so because it makes a claim to clear-sighted understanding of an issue. Academic writing takes various forms and genres, typically presented in a formal and objective tone. It is aimed at a knowledgeable and critical audience, grounded in thoroughly researched information, and designed to support or question existing ideas and arguments (Ahmed, 2022). Academic writing needs a formal tone, meaning writers should use complete sentences and organize them in a specific way (Oshima & Hogue, 2007).

Academic writing, as described by experts, is an analytical and formal process aimed at presenting well-researched ideas and arguments to a knowledgeable audience. It focuses on clear, objective communication and supports or challenges existing views. Academic writing goes beyond just presenting information it requires critical thinking and precision, ensuring that the writer's ideas are expressed in a coherent and structured way. The ability to argue thoughtfully and back up claims with solid evidence is what makes academic writing a vital tool in the scholarly community.

In summary, academic writing is a structured and analytical process that involves presenting well-researched ideas and arguments in a clear, objective manner. It requires critical thinking and precision to communicate effectively with a knowledgeable audience, supporting or challenging existing viewpoints. Through thoughtful argumentation and solid evidence, academic writing plays a crucial role in advancing scholarly discussions and fostering intellectual growth.

b. Purpose of Academic Writing

The purpose of academic writing is to provide new insights or knowledge about the world that were not previously understood (Wilson, 2022). The goal of academic writing is not to display all knowledge about a topic, but to demonstrate an understanding and the ability to think critically about it, which leads to earning a good grade (Whitaker, 2009). Developing academic writing skills is essential for academic and professional success, as it allows students to organize their thoughts, communicate ideas clearly, and showcase their understanding of a topic. Providing proper training, support, and guidance in critical thinking and evidence-based writing is key to helping students refine these skills (Alek, 2019).

In addition to the views of experts, academic writing is a powerful tool for students to engage with complex ideas and develop their own perspectives. It goes beyond just conveying information such as presenting ideas in a structured and coherent way. By refining academic writing skills, students not only improve their ability to communicate effectively but also enhance their critical thinking, which is essential for both academic success and professional growth. With the right guidance, students can build confidence in their writing abilities and contribute meaningfully to their field of study.

In conclusion, academic writing serves as a crucial tool for students to develop critical thinking, communicate ideas clearly, and engage with complex topics. It is not about presenting all knowledge on a subject, but rather demonstrating understanding and the ability to analyze and argue effectively.

c. Kinds of Academic Writing

According to Brown (2010) some academic writing include papers, general subject reports, essays, competitions, academically focused journals, short-answer test responses, technical reports (e.g., lab reports), theses and also dissertations. Beily (2011) stated that the

common types of academic writing are notes, reports, projects, essays, dissertations/theses, and papers. Students engage in various types of academic writing. Notes are personal summaries of key points from texts or lectures, while reports explain activities like surveys. Projects involve individual or group research on chosen topics. Essays, typically 1,000-5,000 words, are assigned by teachers, whereas dissertations or theses, often exceeding 20,000 words, are in-depth research for advanced degrees. Papers serve as a broad term encompassing essays, reports, presentations, and academic articles (Juliani, 2023).

Based on the experts' views, academic writing encompasses a wide range of formats, each with specific purposes and structures. These include shorter forms like notes and essays for summarizing or analyzing information, and more extensive works like theses and dissertations that involve in-depth research. Academic writing helps students develop critical thinking and communication skills while adhering to scholarly conventions. It also varies in complexity, allowing learners to progressively build their expertise in articulating ideas and conducting research.

In summary, academic writing includes various formats, ranging from brief notes and essays to detailed theses and dissertations, each serving specific purposes and requiring distinct structures. It fosters critical thinking, communication skills, and adherence to academic standards, supporting students in articulating ideas and conducting research effectively. Through progressively complex tasks, academic writing helps learners develop expertise in presenting and analyzing information.

3. Thesis Writing

a. Definition of Thesis

A thesis is a form of academic writing and is distinctly different from other types of writing (Lestari, 2020). Thesis is a research report crafted by university students seeking to obtain their bachelor's (sarjana) degree (Sariyanto et al., 2015). A thesis has distinct characteristics that set it apart from other types of writing. This is because a thesis follows a neat structure, uses formal language, and is objective. Unlike casual or creative writing, which allows room for personal expression, a thesis must adhere to specific rules. This includes the use of precise language, a serious tone, and arguments supported by evidence, all aimed at contributing knowledge to a specific field of study. A thesis not only presents ideas but also supports them with thorough research, strong logic, and reliable sources.

This process not only demonstrates the student's mastery of the chosen field of study but also showcases their ability to conduct independent research, analyze relevant data, and present findings in a structured and scientific manner. A thesis typically reflects the culmination of a student's academic journey, combining theoretical knowledge with practical investigation to make a meaningful contribution to broader knowledge within the discipline. The thesis writing process involves careful planning, meticulous analysis, and repeated revisions. In it, the writer also develops clear research questions or hypotheses, collects and interprets data, and draws conclusions that contribute to new knowledge.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that a thesis is a unique form of academic writing, distinct from other types, as it serves as a research report created by university students to fulfill the requirements for a bachelor's degree. This is because a thesis requires the use of a well-organized structure, formal language, and objectivity

in its presentation. Writing a thesis demonstrates mastery of the field of study and the ability to conduct independent research. It involves combining theory with practical investigation through a process that includes planning, analysis, and revision, as well as developing hypotheses or research questions, collecting and interpreting data, and drawing conclusions that contribute to new knowledge.

b. Purpose of Writing Thesis

Thesis is a type of research that college students utilize to finish their coursework. Referring to Chasan-taber (2014) who discusses how to write a good dissertation, the opportunities for writing research are as follows: The research project is supervised by lecturers to guide students in developing their skills in identifying problems, analyzing data, and interpreting findings. Through this process, students enhance their methodological and technical abilities, allowing them to apply appropriate theories and research methodologies to analyze various research problems effectively. Additionally, they gain experience in establishing professional working relationships with the members of the dissertation committee, which contributes to their academic and professional growth.

Furthermore, Reynolds & Thompson (2011) stated that writing a thesis engages students to think critically and scientifically. The researcher should find the specific questions, collect literature suitable to the topic, select suitable methods, evaluate data, and interpret the research results. Additionally, Budiharso in Sa'diah et al. (2022) conducting a research analysis and practicing writing a research result are the goals of writing a thesis. To put it simply, writing a thesis involves conducting research and summarizing the results.

Writing a thesis is a valuable learning experience that helps students develop critical thinking, research, and technical skills. It teaches students how to identify and analyze problems, apply

appropriate methods, and interpret data effectively. Additionally, the process fosters professional relationships and prepares students for scientific work by emphasizing critical and systematic thinking. Ultimately, writing a thesis is not just about completing a degree but about mastering the skills needed for academic and professional growth.

In summary, writing a thesis is the key research activity for college students and also helps students develop essential skills, helping them develop problem-solving, analytical, and methodological skills. Beyond fulfilling degree requirements, the thesis process equips students with the tools needed for academic and professional success.

c. Organization Structure of Thesis

According to Halifudin in Sa'diah et al. (2022) in writing a thesis, there are major elements that must be considered. The thesis summary is first described in an abstract. Second, by identifying the research topic and study purpose, the introduction explains why the study should be carried out. Third, the theory relevant to the study's topic is presented through a review of related literature. Fourth, the study's design, location, participants, and methods for gathering and analyzing data are all included in the research technique. Fifth, the findings and discussion section explains the study's outcome as well as how it was elaborated and contrasted with earlier research. The findings' clear implications are finally presented in the conclusion.

Dakhi & Hutabarat (2018) also added the introduction, literature, review, research methods, research findings and discussion, conclusion, and recommendation make up the five chapters that make up the entire undergraduate thesis. In conclusion, the thesis will contain five elements: Introduction, Literature Review, Research Methodology, Result and Discussion, and Conclusion and Suggestions.

Based on the experts' views, a thesis is systematically structured into five key elements: introduction, literature review, research methodology, result and discussion, and conclusion with suggestions. Each section serves a specific purpose, from introducing the research topic and theoretical framework to detailing methods, presenting findings, and offering insights or implications. This clear organization ensures that a thesis is comprehensive, logical, and contributes meaningfully to academic knowledge.

Overall, a thesis generally consists of several key components and typically structured in five chapters: introduction, literature review, research methodology, result and discussion, and conclusion and suggestions.

d. Difficulties in Writing Thesis

The final stage for final-year students is a very challenging process. At this stage, students need strong mental resilience and good financial support. In this final stage, students are required to write a thesis as a form of completing the studies they have been working on. Writing a thesis in English can be challenging, as it requires a wide vocabulary and a good grasp of grammar (Fitria, 2022). The difficulties in writing a thesis are usually caused by several underlying factors. These factors can be seen as follows (Puspita, 2019):

1) Personally factors

Factors related to a writer's internal aspects are also known as personality factors. These personality factors can influence students' choices in defining research objectives, collecting research data, drawing conclusions, and conducting the entire research process based on logical evidence.

a) Self-esteem

Self-esteem is essential for almost everything we do, influencing our confidence, self-awareness, and belief in our

ability to succeed. It's how people see and value themselves, feeling capable, important, successful, and worthy. This self-view is expressed in words and actions and affects how we approach tasks. Students with low self-belief may see failure as proof of their lack of ability, which can make them feel defeated before they start. To succeed—especially in challenging areas like learning a new language—students need to believe in themselves to stay motivated.

b) Inhibition

As people grow, they develop ways to protect their sense of self. They see themselves as separate from others and create emotional traits based on their experiences, values, and beliefs. Over time, physical, emotional, and mental changes can lead to defenses that block ideas or feelings that might threaten their self-esteem.

c) Risk taking

Taking risks is important in learning a second language. Learners need to try out guesses and accept making mistakes. How much a learner is willing to take risks affects their language learning progress. Self-confidence plays a role too; learners with high self-esteem are not discouraged by mistakes, while those with low self-esteem may be less willing to take risks.

d) Anxiety

Anxiety is a common emotion in learning a second language, and it can be described as feeling nervous, worried, or uneasy. It is often caused by stress and can make people feel uncomfortable or doubtful. Some people experience general anxiety, while others feel anxious in specific situations. Studies show that language anxiety is linked to low self-esteem, lack of confidence, and beliefs about one's

intelligence. Confidence in one's abilities plays an important role in reducing anxiety and other emotional challenges in learning.

e) Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share another person's feelings by imagining yourself in their situation. To develop empathy, you need to first understand your own emotions and then relate to what others are going through.

f) Extroversion

Extroversion and introversion can impact second language learning. Extroverts are often social and seek validation from others to feel good, while introverts tend to be more reserved and feel complete without needing others' approval. These terms are sometimes misunderstood due to stereotypes.

g) Motivation

Motivation to complete a task can be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation comes from doing something for the enjoyment or satisfaction it brings, without expecting rewards. It's driven by the desire to feel capable and independent. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is based on the expectation of external rewards or benefits.

2) Sociocultural factors

Culture influences how we think, feel, and interact with others. It includes shared ideas, customs, skills, and tools that define a group of people at a certain time. Culture is made up of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors, and though each person experiences it differently, it is passed down through generations and can change over time. Culture provides a framework for understanding the world, but our perception is often limited by our cultural perspective. Language is closely tied to culture and

affects how we approach tasks like writing a thesis such as how sociocultural factors, such as social distance, relationships between students and tutors, classroom atmosphere, and communication abilities, impact thesis writing.

3) Linguistic factors

This section will first discuss the differences between a person's native language and the target language, and how the first language affects learning a second language. It will then explain how the focus shifted from contrastive analysis to error analysis, including the idea of "interlanguage" (learner language). Topics like how input, interaction, feedback, awareness, and error correction impact language learning will also be covered. Additionally, the section will explore how vocabulary and grammar from the native language can influence the new language. Brown identified four types of errors learners make when speaking or writing in a second language.

Other factors are also provided, which can be seen as follow by (Dwiandini et al., 2013):

1) Psychological factor

The psychological factors that affect students in writing a thesis, as explained by Brown (2007), include: (1) Self-Esteem, (2) Attribution Theory and Self-Efficacy, (3) Willingness to Communicate, (4) Inhibition, (5) Risk Taking, (6) Anxiety, (7) Empathy, (8) Extroversion, and (9) Motivation. These factors influence how students approach their research, from setting objectives to collecting data and analyzing results.

2) Sociocultural factor

Language is closely connected to culture, so it's important to consider sociocultural factors when discussing thesis writing challenges. According to Brown (2007), culture affects learning a second language. This study will focus on three main factors

influencing thesis writing difficulties: (1) the social distance between students and tutors, (2) the classroom culture, and (3) the level of communication skills between students and tutors.

3) Linguistic factors

Brown (2007) identifies four ways to categorize errors in second language learners' speech. The first focuses on four types of errors: addition, omission, substitution, and ordering. The second looks at errors in different language areas like phonology, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse. The third distinguishes between global errors (affecting meaning) and local errors (affecting form).

Not only that, the difficulties in writing a thesis are also influenced by several reasons, as stated by (Lestari, 2020) was follows:

1) Lack of vocabulary

Having a limited vocabulary can make it hard to express ideas clearly and precisely. When writing a thesis, it's important to use the right words to convey your thoughts effectively, and not having enough words at your disposal can slow down the writing process and make your arguments less convincing.

2) Hard to grasp the theories

Understanding theories, especially in academic contexts, requires careful reading and critical thinking. Some theories are complex and use specialized language, which can make them hard to comprehend. This often leads to struggles in applying these theories to the thesis.

3) Challenging to come up with initial ideas for writing

Many students find it hard to decide on a starting point for their writing. The initial ideas often set the foundation for the whole thesis, so without a clear idea, it's challenging to develop a strong and organized paper.

4) Difficult to start the first chapter

The beginning of students' thesis sets the tone for the entire project. Starting the first chapter can be intimidating because it needs to introduce the topic, present the research questions, and outline the objectives clearly. Without a strong start, it can be hard for students to maintain momentum in the subsequent chapters.

5) Struggle with reviewing theories

Reviewing existing theories and literature involves critical reading, understanding, and summarizing. This step requires not only comprehending the content but also selecting relevant sources and connecting them to one's own research, which can be overwhelming.

6) Uncertain about choosing the right methodology

Selecting a research method involves deciding how to collect and analyze data, which can be confusing. Each research method has strengths and weaknesses, and picking the right one can feel daunting without a strong understanding of their differences.

7) Difficulty analyzing the data

Once data is collected, analyzing it accurately is essential to draw meaningful conclusions. Many students find data analysis challenging due to a lack of statistical knowledge or experience with the tools needed to interpret the data correctly.

8) Difficult to give the appropriate suggestions

In the final part of the thesis, students are usually expected to make suggestions based on their research findings. If students struggle to analyze the data thoroughly, it can be difficult to come up with relevant insightful recommendations.

Based on the difficulties above, it can be concluded that the challenges in writing a thesis involve personality factors, sociocultural factors, and linguistic factors. Other reasons for the difficulties

experienced by students in writing a thesis include lack of vocabulary, difficulty in grasping theories, challenges in coming up with initial ideas for writing, difficulty in starting the first chapter, struggles with reviewing theories, uncertainty in choosing the right methodology, difficulty in analyzing data, and, lastly, challenges in providing appropriate suggestions.

4. Writing Strategies

a. Strategies in Writing

According to Torrance et al. (2000), writing strategy is defined as “the sequence in which a writer engages in planning, composing, revising and other writing-related activities”. Ibraimi (2016) explains that writing strategy is a tool or plan of action the learner develop to achieve his or her goals and objectives in a writing class. Writing strategies are tools employed to assist learners in improving their writing skills and achieving better outcomes while helping them meet their writing objectives (Syahriani & Madya, 2019). Sasaki (2000) classifies writing strategies into eight main categories namely: strategies on planning, retrieving, generating ideas, verbalizing, translating, rereading, evaluating and others.

Based on the experts’ perspective, writing strategies can be understood as deliberate approaches or actions that writers use to plan, create, and refine their work. These strategies help writers achieve their goals, improve their skills, and produce effective writing. They involve various processes, such as generating ideas, organizing thoughts, revising, and evaluating the content. Writing strategies are essential tools for learners to overcome challenges and enhance their writing outcomes.

In conclusion, writing strategies are purposeful actions and techniques used by writers to plan, create, and improve their work. These strategies support goal achievement, skill development, and

effective writing by involving processes such as idea generation, organization, revision, and evaluation. They are essential for overcoming challenges and producing high-quality writing outcomes.

b. Strategies in Writing Thesis

Writing a thesis can provide a variety of difficulties for college students. College students must, however, complete the last assignment. Furthermore, they lack the proper methods to go through the obstacles. Students who successfully completed their theses on time employed various strategies to enhance their writing process. Finding solutions to challenges if academic writing habit was the main goal of a study by (Singh, 2017) . In the findings of the research, identified five strategies:

1) Doing a lot of practice in writing

Writing frequently can help produce better academic writing. Students can improve their abilities to follow academic writing guidelines, produce grammatically sound sentences, and choose the right terms.

2) Utilizing tools to assist in their writing

When writing academically, students can choose the right language by using offline or online dictionaries. Additionally, students can use Google to locate e-books, journals, articles, and other materials to back up their writing concepts.

3) Asking advisors' guidance and feedback

Students can enhance their writing skills with the guidance and criticism provided by the instructor or advisor. Similarly, the wording employed in the adapted sentences is more specific, as noted by (Jiang & Yan, 2020). There are fewer frequent mistakes, like the lack of articles and subjects, and the grammatical structure is more acceptable. The revised papers are more organized, employ more complex language, and have a more logical framework, sufficient demonstration, and appropriate logic. Thus,

seeking advice and comments from advisers is advantageous since it can enhance the value of the work.

4) Asking friends' guidance and feedback

Moreover, it helps to get advice from friends who have degrees in graduate programs. They can fix errors in word choice, punctuation, grammar, and more. Similarly, even while critical friends may be writing experts, their main function as critical friends is to help others learn how to write (Higgs et al., 2009). They point out areas that need work, such as weak points in an argument's progression, disinterested concepts, and needless repetition. People who are not proficient writers can nonetheless assist others in becoming better writers. Supporting writers in changing and improving their skills is the main responsibility of critical friends. Thus, it can be said that this approach improves students' performance in terms of their ability to comprehend information when writing their theses.

5) Improving English language proficiency

Writing skills can be enhanced by enrolling in a course or university's English proficiency program. Additionally, reading many online discussion transcripts and watching YouTube videos that feature spoken English can be alternate methods of enhancing English skill.

A study by Apriyani (2022), also pointed out students' strategies to overcome the difficulties in writing thesis such as:

- 1) Some students prefer to utilize tools to assist in the writing. The tools assist users in paraphrasing sentences, correcting grammatical errors, offering a variety of synonyms, ensuring proper writing based on language structure.
- 2) Students often seek guidance and feedback from friends, as it helps them improve their writing and comprehension.

- 3) Students also rely on their advisors for guidance and feedback to address challenge in writing their thesis, while engaging in extensive writing practice to enhance their skills.

Furthermore, students employed various strategies to overcome challenges in writing research proposals (Reza et al., 2023):

- 1) To overcome the challenge of lacking confidence, which stems from the fear of making mistakes and feeling of doubt when writing research proposals, students sought out quality references and used them as guides.
- 2) To reduce doubts in writing research proposals, students also used tools.
- 3) To address the challenge of lacking knowledge, students employed a strategy for generating ideas. When they came across new ideas, they would write them down and later revise their writing if they felt it was not appropriate.

Additionally, students also used some strategies in generating writing background thesis (Hermansyah, 2022):

- 1) Students search for journals and books related to their theses and conduct observations to identify phenomena, helping them develop ideas for the background of their theses.
- 2) Students gather various theories to determine whether they align with the topic they plan to research. In other words, students review theories to check their relevance to the research topic, generate ideas, and search for additional related theories.
- 3) Students will initially develop ideas related to their research and refine them with their advisor. After feedback, they will update the ideas as needed.

Additionally, a study by Lisafida (2022), found that one of the strategies students used to overcome difficulties in writing their thesis is time management. Time management is a crucial factor to consider when working on thesis writing. With proper time management, time

is never wasted, allowing for the completion of thesis writing according to the set target. Despite facing these challenges, the students made efforts to adopt better time management strategies and sought guidance from mentors to overcome obstacles, aiming to achieve a healthier balance between work and studies (Fadhila et al., 2023).

Writing a thesis is undoubtedly challenging for college students, but effective strategies can make the process manageable. The strategies identified by experts reflect how students actively engage with various resources and support systems to overcome challenges in thesis writing. Regular writing practice helps students refine their academic writing skills. Utilizing tools for paraphrasing and grammar check, seeking feedback from peers and advisors, time management and gathering relevant theories and references are effective methods for improving writing quality and addressing gaps in knowledge.

These strategies highlight the importance of a collaborative approach, practical tools, and continuous feedback in enhancing the students' thesis writing process. Additionally, improving English proficiency through courses or self-study boosts overall writing quality. By applying these strategies, students can overcome obstacles and produce well-crafted theses that meet academic standards.

To wrap up, writing a thesis presents various challenges for college students, but overcoming these difficulties is essential. Several strategies can help students improve their academic writing: practice writing regularly, use tools, seek guidance from advisors, ask for feedback from peers, and improve English proficiency. Students encounter various internal and external challenges when writing thesis, and as a result, they adopt different strategies to overcome these difficulties,

To gain a clear understanding of the strategies students use to overcome difficulties in writing their thesis, the following table can be referred to.

Table 1.1
Strategies to Overcome Difficulties in Writing Thesis

Expert's	Singh (2017)	Apriyani (2022)	Reza et al. (2023)	Hermansyah (2022)	Lisafida (2022)	Conclusion
Strategies to Overcome Difficulties in Writing Thesis	Utilizing tools to assist in writing	Utilizing tools to assist in writing	Using tools to reduce doubts in writing	-		Utilizing Tools for Writing Assistance
	Asking advisors' and friends guidance and feedback	Seeking guidance and feedback from advisor and friends	-	-		Asking Guidance and Feedback
	Doing a lot of practice in writing	-	-	-		Enhancing Writing Skills Through Practice
	-	-	Seeking quality references for writing	Searching for journals and books related to their thesis		Searching For References (Journals or

						books)
	-	-	Generating ideas and revising them	Developing and refining ideas with advisor Gathering and reviewing related theories		Developing and Refining Ideas
					Make a schedule	Managing Time

The experts agree that students commonly use strategies such as seeking guidance and feedback (from both advisors and friends), utilizing tools (for paraphrasing, grammar correction, etc.), and engaging in writing practice to improve their writing. Additionally, some studies emphasize the importance of improving language proficiency, generating ideas, managing time and searching for references as crucial steps in overcoming difficulties in writing thesis or research proposals. However, each study adds unique elements, such as reviewing theories or seeking quality references, which enhance students' ability to tackle specific writing challenges.

B. Review of Relevant Studies

There are some previous studies which are related to the present study. First, The article with the title "Exploring Students' Difficulties In Writing Undergraduate Thesis And The Factors Of The Difficulties" by Al-Farrosi et al. (2023) discuss about Students' difficulties in the writing of undergraduate thesis and the factors causing the difficulties. The researcher intends to concentrate on investigating the challenges faced in writing undergraduate

theses and the factors contributing to these difficulties, using a descriptive qualitative research design. The study involves five students who are currently in the process of completing their undergraduate thesis as participants. The study implemented using interview guide adapted from Cheung (2013) consisting of six questions. The participants were selected from late-semester students in the English Department at the University of Islam Malang who are currently working on their thesis. The researcher chose five participants, each with different supervisors, to obtain more diverse data regarding the supervision process. The data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis as outlined by Creswell (2009), which involves selecting, categorizing, and organizing the data, followed by creating a description, discussing the findings, and drawing conclusions. The study reveals that students face various challenges, such as difficulties in qualitative data analysis due to limited information and courses on the subject, challenges in finding relevant literature caused by the scarcity of related resources, and a lack of motivation stemming from repeated revisions and differing viewpoints between advisors. Additionally, students encounter difficulties in certain chapters. Regarding non-linguistic challenges, students primarily struggle with organizing content, while linguistic issues, such as problems with vocabulary and structure, arise during the writing process but are found to be less significant. The similarity of previous study and present study both of the study focus on students difficulties in writing thesis. The differences of previous study and present study are; the previous research centered on students who were completing their final assignment, writing an undergraduate thesis in English meanwhile the present study focusing on students who have graduated and their strategy to overcome the thesis.

Second, The article with the title by Thahirah et al. (2023) “Students’ Difficulties in Writing Thesis Background”. The objective of this study is to identify the challenges encountered by students, determine the most frequent difficulties they face, and explore how students address these challenges when writing the background of their theses. The research involved eight students

from the English education program at UNM during the 2018 academic year. The study utilized a descriptive qualitative design, employing interviews and documents as the data collection instruments. The findings of this research revealed three key points: 1) The challenges faced by students in the English Education study program at Universitas Negeri Makassar include: a) writing and organizing ideas, b) originality, c) relevance, d) insufficient vocabulary, and e) grammar issues. 2) The most prevalent challenge among students is writing and organizing ideas. This issue arises from their limited ability to write and understand what should be included in the background section. 3) To address the difficulties they encountered while writing their thesis background, students employed three strategies: a) working independently, b) developing or joining a community of practice, and c) collaborating with their supervisor. The similarity of previous study and present study both of the study focus on students difficulties in writing thesis. The difference of previous study and present study are; the previous research just focused on difficulties in writing thesis background while the present study focus on the entire thesis from background to results.

Third, The thesis with the title “Student’s Problem in Writing Thesis: Case Study at English Department Mataram University.” by Swarni (2016) discuss about Student’s Problem in Writing Thesis: Case Study at English Department Mataram University. This research is aimed at finding out: (1) To investigate problems those are faced by the students in writing their thesis. (2) To investigate the causes of problems which are faced by the students in writing their thesis. This study utilized a descriptive quantitative approach, as the data were collected systematically and clearly through research instruments. In any research, defining the population and sample is crucial. The population for this study consisted of students from the English Department at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Mataram University, specifically those enrolled in the noon class during the 2011/2012 academic year. Data were gathered using two instruments: a questionnaire and interviews. The results identify five major challenges students face while writing their thesis, ranked

by prevalence. First, many struggle to find relevant references for the literature review. Second, students lack ideas for the research background in the introduction. Third, presenting research results effectively poses difficulties. Fourth, selecting appropriate methodologies is a challenge. Lastly, summarizing research in the conclusion is problematic. The causes include confusion over thesis problems, limited vocabulary and grammar skills, inadequate resources in libraries, high book prices, and insufficient guidance from lecturers. Overall, these challenges stem from a lack of understanding and support in various aspects of thesis writing. The similarity of previous study and present study both of the study focus on students difficulties and problem in writing thesis. The difference of previous study and present study are; the previous research focused on the problem and the causes of the problem in writing thesis while the present study focus on the difficulties or problem and also their strategy to overcome the problem.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research was qualitative approach with descriptive as the design of the study. The design is in line with the research purpose which is to find out and analyze students' difficulties in writing thesis and their strategies to overcome these difficulties. According to (Creswell, 2012), qualitative research is "interpretative" research, where the researcher makes a personal assessment as to a description that fits the situation or themes that capture the major categories of information. As Lambert (2012) stated the purpose of qualitative descriptive studies is to provide a clear and straightforward summary of specific events as they are experienced by individuals or groups. Furthermore, Kim et al. (2017) also pointed qualitative descriptive is a well-regarded research approach, especially useful for questions aimed at uncovering the who, what, and where of events or experience. It helps researchers gain insights from participants about phenomena that are not yet well understood.

Based on the explanation in the paragraph above, this research adopted qualitative descriptive to find out and describe students' difficulties and their strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis.

B. Research Setting

Research requires a research setting such as at school, in a company, government institution, street, home, and other events (Sugiyono, 2012). The data collection process took place within the university environment, ensuring that participants were comfortable and able to share their experiences openly and honestly. This research was conducted at the English Teaching Department of UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar during the 2023/2024 academic year. This setting allows the researcher to explore the strategies students use to overcome difficulties in writing their thesis. The research was conducted from January 9 to January 17, 2025.

C. Research Informant

The informant of this research were students from the English education department at UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar in the academic year 2023/2024 who were working on their theses and had successfully completed their seminar proposal. According to Gay et al. (2012), informant are select based on consideration who will contribute to the research's understanding of given phenomenon. This meant that the informants had information, views, and experience related to the research topic. Informants were individuals who could understand a topic related to research, so they can provide information about the conditions and background of the research. Furthermore, the research informants had certain criteria. There are:

1. The informants must be active students in the English education department for the academic year 2023/2024.
2. The informants must have started the thesis-writing process, including conducting research or drafting their thesis chapters.
3. The informants must have completed their proposal seminars, indicating approval to proceed with their research.
4. The informants must be willing to participate in interviews and provide information related to the challenges they face and strategies they employ during the thesis-writing process.

The informants of the study were chosen by employing purposive sampling with a convenient technique. According to Patton (2007), purposive sampling is the process of identifying and selecting information in qualitative research as the most effective use of limited source. Thus, purposive sampling enabled the researcher to select informants deemed most appropriate for the objectives of this study. Similarly, a convenient technique is chosen, considering that it offers greater efficiency and better suitability for the researcher in carrying out the study (Hutabarat, 2022). The informants were also selected because they were easily accessible or available at the time.

Therefore, the researcher chose informants who were relevant and easily accessible.

D. Research Instrument

The researcher was the key instrument in conducting this research. According to Sugiono in Susanti (2022), the researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research. Furthermore, according to Gay et al. (2012), researchers use themselves as the primary data collecting instrument. This means the researcher joins the context to collect information, making his own observations, collecting documents, conducting interviews, and doing his own data interpretation. In this research, researcher conducts interviews.

According to Kvale (1996), interview is “a conversation, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interview”. However, conducting an interview provides advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of the interview is that participants can provide precise replies to the questions, and the interviewer can ask them to elaborate on their responses. Additionally, they noted that the purpose of the interviewer was to confirm the participants’ had to say based on observation. The disadvantages of employing interviews include the lengthy data gathering process and the possibility that the researcher may intimidate the participants into giving an incorrect response (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Researcher collects data through interviews with instruments such as interview guides and study guides for documents, camera phones, and voice recorders. At the same time, the research topic is to find the students’ strategies in overcoming the difficulties in writing thesis. Additionally, the research questions allow participants to express their thoughts in their own words while recording their viewpoints.

E. Technique of Data Collection

The data was collected through interviews. The researcher carried out several procedures during the interview, such as preparing interview guidelines, asking questions to the informant according to the guidelines, and documenting the interview. Qualitative research typically entailed gathering

data through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and review of documents. Researcher often immerse themselves in the environment being studied, directly observe it, conduct extensive interviews with participants, and examine relevant documents to obtain comprehensive and insightful information (Sugiyono, 2009).

F. Checking the Data Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness plays a crucial role, as it ensures the research's reliability and validity (Thomas, 2006). When analyzing the data, to get clear information of the data researcher in this research used prolonged engagement. According to Hardani et al. (2020), prolonged engagement means the researcher stays at the research site for an extended time to: (1) build the confidence of the subject being studied, (2) understand and experience the complexity of the situation, and (3) avoid distortions caused by the researcher's presence. The duration of qualitative researcher's stay at the varies depending on the scope of the research problem.

In order to check the data trustworthiness, the researcher used technique of prolonged engagement to check the data trustworthiness. After collecting the data from all informants by using interview, the researcher checked the data from some informants again using interview. This was done to confirm and probe the initial data from interview results.

G. Technique of Data Analysis

This research analyzed the data through three main activities: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions with verification. According to (Miles & Huberman, 1994), these are the three key steps in qualitative data analysis:

1. Reduction of the data

Data reduction meant selecting, focusing on, simplifying, summarizing, and organizing the data from written field notes. This process took place during the interview. In data reduction, the researcher performed several steps. First, the researcher recorded the interview and

transcribed it. Next, the researcher assigned codes to the transcriptions for each item related to the students' strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar.

2. Data Display

Data display comes after the data reduction stage and plays a crucial role in gathering information. This process helped the researcher organize data in a way that was clearer and easier to understand. In this step, the researcher presented the data using tables to highlight the students' strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis.

3. Conclusion and verification of the data

Drawing conclusions and verifying data were essential final steps, just as important the earlier stages of analysis. The conclusions were verified throughout the research process. This step focused on summarizing and identifying students' strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Research Findings

1. Data Description

This chapter explains the data of students' strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department Registered in 2023/2024 Academic Year. The data for this research were collected through interviews with eight informants. During the interviews, the researcher used an interview guide in the form of unstructured questions. Indonesian was used to establish rapport with the informants and to ensure effective and smooth communication.

Based on the research findings, there are five strategies that students used to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Teaching Department Registered in 2023/2024 Academic Year. They are: 1) Using Various Applications; 2) Recording and Noting Feedback from advisor; 3) Asking help from friends; 4) Searching for References (Journals or books); 5) Managing Time.

2. Data Analysis

Before conducting the analysis, the researcher gathered all the data related to the strategies students used to overcome difficulties in writing their theses. The researcher assigned codes to the informants as follows: I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, I-5, I-6, I-7, and I-8. Following this, the researcher conducted the analysis. It found five strategies that students used to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. The strategies are:

a. Using Various Applications

Using various applications is one of the strategies students employ to overcome difficulties in writing their theses. Some students prefer to utilize tools to assist in the writing. To reduce doubts in writing research proposals, students also used tools (Reza et al., 2023). The

tools assist users in paraphrasing sentences, correcting grammatical errors, offering a variety of synonyms, ensuring proper writing based on language structure (Apriyani, 2022).

The researcher asked the informants for their strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. Among eight informants, I-2, and I-8 answered that using applications is one of the strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. This shows that students utilise technology as part of the strategy to facilitate their thesis writing process. It was proven by the answer given by the informant as follow:

R : *“Apa saja strategi yang saudara gunakan dalam mengatasi kesulitan-kesulitan tersebut?”*
(What strategies do you use to overcome these difficulties?)

I-2 : *“Ee biasanya **pake aplikasi gitu sih kak, kayak pake grammarly, quillbot atau deepL gitu kak.**”*
(Usually, I use applications like Grammarly, Quillbot, or DeepL.)

I-8 : *“Ee biasanya saya em menggunakan AI seperti chatgpt untuk memudahkan dalam penelitian saya dan saya meminta revisi juga terhadap ke chatgpt dan kadang jika sudah selesai, ee dengan chatgpt saya baru memberikan kepada pembimbing saya untuk melakukan bimbingan dan konsultasi.”*
(Ee usually I use AI such as chatgpt to facilitate my research and I also ask for revisions to chatgpt and sometimes when it's finished, ee with chatgpt I just give it to my supervisor to do guidance and consultation.)

The result above highlights that one of the informants utilized AI tools and applications, such as Chatgpt, Grammarly, Quillbot, and DeepL as a strategy to overcome challenges in thesis writing. The informant used the tool to streamline their research process, seek revisions, and ensure their work was polished before submitting it to their supervisor for further guidance. This reflects a growing reliance on technology among students to enhance efficiency and accuracy in

academic writing. Previous research has also discussed who using tools can help students in process writing. However, it is essential to ensure that such tools are used ethically and complement, rather than replace, critical thinking and personal effort in the thesis writing process.

b. Recording and Noting Feedback from Advisor

Recording and noting feedback from advisor is one of the strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. Students can improve their writing skills through guidance and feedback from advisors. Revised papers become more structured and have a more logical framework (Singh, 2017). Students will initially develop ideas related to their research and refine them with their advisor (Hermansyah, 2022).

The researcher asked the informants for their strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. Among eight informants, I-4 answered that recording and noting feedback from advisor is one of the strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. It was proven by the answer given by the informants as follows:

R : *“Apa saja strategi yang saudara gunakan dalam mengatasi kesulitan-kesulitan tersebut?”*
(What strategies do you use to overcome these difficulties?)

I-4 : *“Jadi strategi yang X hadapi dalam mengatasi kesulitan tadi kak, pertama X **konsultasi dengan dosen pembimbing dulu mana yang harus di revisi**, terus strategi X ketika bimbingan selalu merekam audio gitu, jadi nanti didengarkan kembali, terus mencatat apa revisi-revisi.”*
(So the strategies that X faced in overcoming the difficulties, firstly consulted with the advisor which ones had to be revised, then strategy during guidance was always to record the audio so that later listened to it again, then noted down what revisions.)

Based on the responses from the informants, recording and noting feedback from advisor emerges as a new finding in overcoming difficulties in writing a thesis. Compared to previous studies, such as those by Singh (2017) and Apriyani (2022), the commonly mentioned strategy was seeking guidance and feedback from advisors. However, this study found that some students not only seek guidance but also develop a specific strategy by recording supervision sessions and taking notes on the revisions given. This allows them to review the advisor's feedback more effectively and avoid making the same mistakes in the future. Thus, this study expands the understanding of how students address challenges in thesis writing through a more systematic and technology-based approach.

c. Asking help from friends

Seeking helps from friends is one of the strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. Students often seek guidance and feedback from friends, as it helps them improve their writing and comprehension (Apriyani, 2022). Critical friends may be writing experts, their main function as critical friends is to help others learn how to write (Higgs et al., 2009).

The researcher asked the informants for their strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. Among eight informants, there were I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, I-6, I-7 answered that their asking guidance and feedback from friends to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. It was proven by the answers given by the informants as follows:

R : *“Apa saja strategi yang saudara gunakan dalam mengatasi kesulitan-kesulitan tersebut?”*
(What strategies do you use to overcome these difficulties?)

- I-1 : “*Ee mungkin untuk mengatasi masalah-masalah tersebut ee saya mencari jurnal atau ee sumber-sumber yang dapat saya gunakan ee sebagai pedoman untuk penelitian saya. **Dan menanyakan kepada teman yang paham dengan metode penelitian tersebut dan melakukan bimbingan dengan dosen pembimbing.***”
(Ee, perhaps to overcome those problems, I look for journals or sources that I can use as a guide for my research. I also **ask friends who understand the research method** and consult with my advisor.)
- I-3 : “*Biasanya kak ee **konsultasi dengan dosen pembimbing, terus atau gak berdiskusi gitu kak sama teman atau senior** gitu kak. Terus juga ee kadang **memanfaatkan referensi dari jurnal-jurnal terdahulu.***”
(Usually, I consult with my advisor, or **sometimes I have discussions with friends or seniors.** Additionally, I occasionally make use of references from previous journals.)
- I-7 : “*saya **banyak bertanya atau dibantu dijelaskan oleh teman-teman yang mengerti dan paham akan permasalahannya.***”
(I often **ask questions or seek explanations from friends who understand and are knowledgeable** about the issues.)

From the findings above, it can be concluded that seeking helps from friends is a common strategy employed by students to overcome difficulties in writing their theses. The informants highlighted that discussing with peers who have expertise or knowledge about research methods or specific challenges in thesis writing helps them clarify their understanding and improve their work. This approach not only provides practical solutions to their problems but also fosters a collaborative learning environment among students. This strategy reflects the importance of peer support in academic settings, as it enhances both the technical and emotional aspects of the thesis-writing process.

d. Searching for References (Journals or books)

Searching for references (journals or books) is one of the strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. Students explore journals and books relevant to their theses and carry out observations to identify phenomena, which aids them in formulating ideas for their thesis background (Hermansyah, 2022). To overcome the challenge of lacking confidence, which stems from the fear of making mistakes and feeling of doubt when writing research proposals, students sought out quality references and used them as guides (Reza et al., 2023).

The researcher asked the informants for their strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. Among eight informants, there were I-1, I-3, I-4, I-5 answered that their searching for references from journals or books to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. It was proven by the answers given by the informants as follows:

R : *“Apa saja strategi yang saudara gunakan dalam mengatasi kesulitan-kesulitan tersebut?”*
(What strategies do you use to overcome these difficulties?)

I-1 : *“Ee mungkin untuk mengatasi masalah-masalah tersebut ee saya mencari jurnal atau ee sumber-sumber yang dapat saya gunakan ee sebagai pedoman untuk penelitian saya”*
(Ee, perhaps to overcome those problems, **I look for journals or sources that I can use as a guide for my research.**)

I-3 : *“Biasanya kak ee konsultasi dengan dosen pembimbing, terus atau gak berdiskusi gitu kak sama teman atau senior gitu kak. Terus juga ee kadang **memanfaatkan referensi dari jurnal-jurnal terdahulu.**”*
(Usually, I consult with my advisor, or sometimes I have discussions with friends or seniors. Additionally, **I occasionally make use of references from previous journals.**)

I-4 : *“**membaca literatur terbaru tu kak banyak-banyak** karna banyak juga teori X yang kurang kan.. jadi membaca*

lagi. ah iya memahami penelitian X juga terus membaca buku panduan ee terus ah iya membuat jadwal harian. Dan membaca ya ke perpustakaan ee setiap hari kak liat tesis kak atau buku panduan.”

(Reading a lot of recent literature because there are many theories of X that are lacking, so I read more. Ah yes, understanding research on X as well, **then reading guidebooks**, and ah yes, creating a daily schedule. And reading, yes, **going to the library every day to look at theses or guidebooks.**)

From the findings above, searching for references, such as journals and books, is a common strategy employed by students to overcome difficulties in writing their theses. This strategy helps students formulate ideas, understand theoretical frameworks, and structure their research effectively. From the responses of the informants, it is evident that they utilize various resources, including journals, guidebooks, and previous theses, to enhance their understanding and confidence in writing. Additionally, they complement this strategy by consulting with advisors and engaging in discussions with peers or seniors. This highlights the importance of providing students with access to comprehensive academic resources and encouraging them to leverage such tools effectively in their thesis writing process.

e. Managing Time

Managing time is one of the strategies to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. Effective time management is essential when working on a thesis. By managing time properly, it ensures that no time is wasted, enabling the thesis to be completed within the set deadlines (Lisafida, 2022).

The researcher asked the informants for their strategies to overcome difficulties in writing thesis at English Education Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. Among eight informants, there were I-3, I-4, I-5, I-7 answered that their managing time or

making a schedule to overcome difficulties in writing a thesis. It was proven by the answers given by the informants as follows:

R : *“Apa saja strategi yang saudara gunakan dalam mengatasi kesulitan-kesulitan tersebut?”*
(What strategies do you use to overcome these difficulties?)

I-4 : *“Ah iya membuat jadwal harian. X ada buku kecil kak jadwal harian untuk misalnya bab satu ni harus selesai tanggal segini gitu kak.”*
(Oh yes, **creating a daily schedule**. There is small book for the daily schedule, for example, it says that chapter one should be completed by this date.)

I-5 : *“Ee kalau dulu karna ada PL juga kan kak, karna PL ni kan udah ada jadwalnya dari jam sekian sampai sekian ngajar terus KKN gitu kan. Nah, dulu biasanya **bikin jadwal khusus untuk membuat skripsi ini**, misalnya malam hari, atau 2 kali seminggu ee bikin malam-malam nya itu untuk skripsi gitu kak. Emang disediakan jadwal untuk itu sendiri”*
(Well, back then, because there was also PL (field practice), there was already a schedule from a certain time to teaching and then KKN (community service). So, I usually **made a specific schedule for writing my thesis**, for example, at night, or twice a week, I dedicated the nights for my thesis. I really set aside time specifically for that.)

From the findings above, managing time is a common strategy employed by students to overcome difficulties in writing their theses. The informants emphasized the importance of creating a schedule to allocate specific times for thesis work, ensuring that tasks are completed within set deadlines. These responses reflect the informants' awareness of the importance of time management in achieving their thesis goals. This highlights the crucial role of planning and organization in overcoming the challenges of thesis writing, as it allows students to balance their academic work with other responsibilities and ensures steady progress toward completion.

B. Discussions

Based on the result of data analysis, it was found that there were five strategies that students used to overcome their difficulties in writing thesis at English Teaching Department in 2023/2024 Academic Year. They are: 1) Using Various Applications; 2) Recording and Noting Feedback from Advisor; 3) Asking help from friends; 4) Searching for References (Journals or books); 5) Managing Time.

The first finding reveal that utilizing applications, particularly AI- based applications like Chatgpt, Grammarly, Quilbot, dan Deelp L, has become strategy for students to address challenges in thesis writing. This demonstrate how technology can streamline the research process by aiding in paraphrasing, refining grammatical structures, and even providing feedback for revisions before submitting work to advisors. The informant's use of Chatgpt highlights its role in enhancing efficiency and confidence during the tesis writing process. These findings align with previous studies that emphasize the benefits of using tools in academic writing (Apriyani, 2022; Reza et al., 2023). However, while these tools offer significant advantages in enhancing efficiency and accuracy, it is crucial for students to use them responsibly.

The second findings reveal that recording and noting feedback from Advisor is a critical strategy employed by students to overcome challenges in writing their theses. Previous research by Singh (2017) and Apriyani (2022) commonly identified seeking guidance and feedback from advisors as a strategy used by students. While consulting with advisors is a fundamental part of the thesis writing process, it is not necessarily a strategic approach, as every student is required to engage in supervision sessions. In contrast, this study discovered that students take a more proactive and structured approach by recording their supervision sessions and taking notes on the feedback provided. This strategy enables them to revisit their advisor's comments at any time, ensuring that they fully understand the necessary revisions and implement them accurately. Furthermore, it helps students avoid misinterpretation of feedback and track their progress more effectively.

The third findings reveal that asking help from friends is one of strategy among students to address difficulties in writing their theses. Informants emphasized the value of discussing with peers who possess knowledge or expertise in specific aspects of thesis writing, such as research method, to clarify their understanding and improve their work. These findings align with previous studies that feedback from friends can enhance writing and comprehension (Apriyani, 2022). By peer support, students not only gain practical insights into resolving their challenges but also benefit from collaborative learning, which fosters a supportive academic environment. This underscores the significance of peer interaction in overcoming technical and emotional barriers in thesis writing, further demonstrating the role of social networks in academic success.

The fourth findings reveal that searching for references, such as journals and books, is strategy for students to overcome difficulties in writing their theses. These findings align with previous studies emphasizes that exploring relevant literature and conducting observations aid students in developing ideas for their thesis background (Hermansyah, 2022). Accesing quality references can help students address issues of self-doubt and fear of making mistakes, providing them with guidance and confidence (Reza et al., 2023). The informants in this study also reported using various academic resources, including journals, guidebooks, and previous theses, to enhance their understanding of theories and research structures. Theses findings underscore the critical role of accessible academic resources and support system in facilitating students in academic writing.

The last findings from the informants reveal that managing time is a crucial strategy for overcoming the difficulties of writing a thesis. Informants highlighted the importance a creating daily schedule and allocating specific time for thesis work, which aligns with the concept of effective time management outlined by (Lisafida, 2022). This strategy not only helps in balancing academic responsibilities but also managing other commitments, such as teaching and community service, as seen in the responses of

informants like I-5. By maintaining discipline in sticking to a structured schedule and recognizing the importance of effective time management, students are better to handle the challenges of thesis writing, allowing them to make consistent progress toward finishing their work.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, there were several strategies that students used to overcome difficulties in writing their thesis at the English Teaching Department of UIN Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar in the 2023/2024 academic year. These strategies included five key strategies: using various applications, recording and noting feedback from advisors, asking help from friends, searching for references (journals or books), and managing time.

B. Suggestions

1. English Department

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher recommends that the English Department enhance the support and resources available to students during their thesis writing process. Additionally, fostering a more interactive and collaborative environment, such as peer review groups, may further help students overcome difficulties.

2. Students

The research emphasize the importance of using references like journals and books to overcome challenges in thesis writing. The researcher hopes that students actively engage with academic resources and seek guidance from advisors, peers, and previous study to boost confidence and improve writing skills. Additionally, time management and self-discipline are crucial for successfully overcoming difficulties in the thesis writing process.

3. Other Researcher

Building on the result of this study, the researcher suggest that further research be conducted to explore the specific tools and resources that students in other departments or universities use to overcome difficulties in thesis writing.

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