ENGLISH STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN THE THESIS WRITING PROCESS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT WIDYAGAMA MAHAKAM SAMARINDA

THESIS

BY:

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM

FACULTY OF TEACHERS TRAINING AND EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF WIDYA GAMA MAHAKAM SAMARINDA

2025

ENGLISH STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN THE THESIS

WRITING PROCESS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

AT WIDYA GAMA MAHAKAM SAMARINDA

THESIS

Submitted in fulfilment of requirements for the Bachelor's degree
of English Language Education Department
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
University of Widya Gama Mahakam

BY:

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PAGE OF APPROVAL

THESIS

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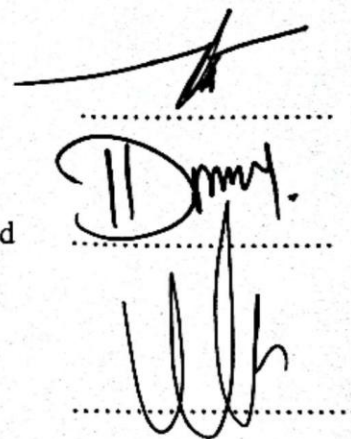on April 14th, 2025

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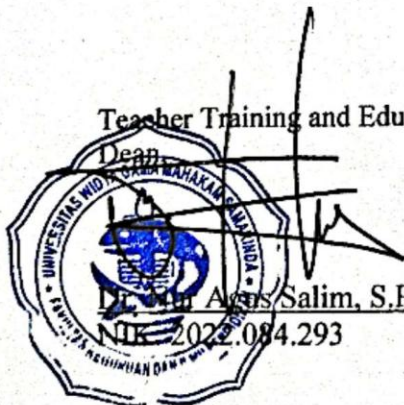
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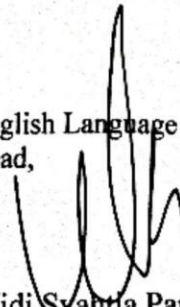Dean,

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Petronela Vanersi Prada Sina, who is familiarly called Vaner, Nersi or Cha, by her family and friends, was born on March 17th, 2000, in Kolimasang Village, Adonara District, Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara. She is the first of five children of her beloved parents, Mr. Protus Tena Beda and Mrs. Sesilia Barek Hada.

Vaner completed her basic education at SDK Kolimasang in 2012. Then continued her education at SMP Panca Marga and graduated in 2015. In 2018, she graduated from SMAN 1 Larantuka. After graduating from high school, Vaner continued her higher education at Widya Gama Mahakam University Samarinda (UWGMS), where she enrolled in the English Study Program to obtain her Bachelor's degree.

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Declare that:

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ABSTRACT

Sina, Petronela Vanersi Prada, 2025. English Students' Difficulties in the Thesis Writing Process in the English Departement at Widyagama Mahakam Samarinda. Bachelor Thesis of Department of English Education, Faculty of Education, Widya Gama Mahakam University. This research was guided by Godefridus Bali Geroda, M.Pd as the first supervisor and Widi Syahtia Pane, MP.d as the second supervisor.

This study explored students' challenges in thesis writing process and focusing on 10th semester students in English departemenet at Widya Gama Mahakam University, Samarinda, East Kalimantan. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews from eight students and two lecturers, selected via purposive sampling. The findings of this study highlight the various challenges students at Widya Gama Mahakam encounter in the thesis writing process, particularly in selecting a topic, developing a research focus, acquiring knowledge of sources, conducting data analysis, and managing time effectively. These difficulties are consistent with previous studies, which emphasize the impact of inadequate research training, limited access to academic resources, and difficulties in structuring research objectives. Without sufficient guidance and academic support, students are likely to encounter delays and obstacles that hinder their research progress. Overcoming these challenges requires persistence and adaptability as students navigate the complexities of academic writing and research.

Keywords: English Student, Difficulties, Thesis Writing.

ACKNOWLEGMNET

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to God Almighty, whose grace and mercy have enabled me to complete this thesis proposal titled "**English Students' Difficulties in the Thesis Writing Process in the English Departement at Widyagama Mahakam Samarinda**". This proposal is a key requirement for completing my undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, English Language Education Study Program at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda University.

I am sincerely grateful to those who have supported and motivated me throughout this journey. Therefore, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to:

1. Prof. Dr. Husaini Usman, M. Pd., M.T., Rector of Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda University, for his leadership and support.

2. Dr. Nur Agus Salim, M. Pd., Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, for his guidance and encouragement.

3. Godefridus Bali Geroda, M.Pd., my first supervisor, for his invaluable time, guidance, corrections, and suggestions throughout the development of this proposal.

4. Widi Syahtia Pane, M.Pd., my second supervisor, for her dedicated time, guidance, corrections, and insightful suggestions.

5. Dr. Drs. Abdul Rohman, M.Pd., my examiner, for his critical evaluation and valuable feedback.

6. All the lecturers and staff of the English Education Department at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda University, for their support and assistance.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

A thesis, as the culmination of undergraduate studies, serves as a significant indicator of a student's research skills, critical thinking, and command of the English language. Undergraduate thesis writing is a challenging process that requires students to demonstrate their research skills and original thinking (Dzamukashvili, 2021). Research emphasizes the crucial role of research in higher education across Indonesia. Completing a research project is not merely an option, but a mandatory requirement for students pursuing bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees at various universities. This underscores the importance placed on research skills and their contribution to academic success at all levels of higher education (Yusanto, 2019)

Writing an undergraduate thesis is a daunting task, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. This process demands more than just research and writing skills; it necessitates strong self-regulation to manage time and stay on track, consistent motivation to overcome obstacles, and access to adequate support systems. As Mbato (2019) highlights, these factors play a crucial role in the success of EFL students navigating the complexities of thesis writing. Academic writing presents a significant challenge for university students, especially those who are not native English speakers. This complexity stems from the formal style, specific vocabulary, and rigorous research requirements inherent in academic assignments. As Sulaiman (2022) notes, this difficulty is particularly pronounced

for non-native English speakers who must navigate these academic conventions in a language that is not their first.

Thesis writing poses significant challenges for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, encompassing both internal and external factors. Internal difficulties include selecting appropriate titles, managing emotions like boredom and self-doubt, and struggling with English grammar and vocabulary (Fitria, 2022). Students particularly struggle with writing the results and discussion sections and the literature review. External challenges involve communication issues with supervisors, limited access to resources, and technical problems (Fitria, 2022). Notably, socio-cultural factors, such as lack of family support and insufficient academic preparation, also significantly impact thesis writing.

Therefore, academic writing proficiency is crucial for university students, particularly those who are non-native English speakers. The challenges these students face in academic writing relate not only to language proficiency but also to understanding academic conventions and developing critical thinking skills. It was anticipated that this study wouldthi contribute to the development of more effective and inclusive academic writing instruction for all students.

In conclusion, undergraduate thesis writing is a critical academic endeavour that requires strong research skills, critical thinking, and mastery of academic writing conventions. For EFL students, this process presents unique challenges, including linguistic difficulties, self-regulation issues, and limited access to academic resources. The complexity of academic writing, particularly in sections such as literature review and discussion, further compounds these difficulties.

Additionally, external factors such as ineffective communication with supervisors and socio-cultural influences can hinder students' progress. Despite these obstacles, developing strong academic writing skills is essential for university students, especially those who are non-native English speakers, as it directly impacts their academic success and research capabilities. Therefore, based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting the research.

B. Identification Problem

This research identifies various challenges that EFL encounters in writing a thesis. Internal difficulties include choosing the right title, lack of confidence, boredom, and constraints in English grammar and vocabulary. In addition, students often have difficulties in writing certain sections such as literature review, results, and discussion. Meanwhile, external difficulties include communication barriers with supervisors, limited access to academic resources, and technical problems. Social and cultural factors, such as lack of family support and inadequate academic preparation, also influence the thesis writing process.

C. Limitation Problem

In order to make the study more focused, the scope is limited to undergraduate EFL students in the 10th semester English department at Widyagama Mahakam University in Samarinda. This study highlights internal and external challenges in the thesis writing process. In addition, the study focused on difficulties in academic writing in English without making comparisons with native English-speaking students.

D. Research Questions

Based on the background of the problem, the researcher question in this research as follows: What are the difficulties encountered by English students in the thesis writing process?

E. Research Objectives

To describe difficulties encountered by English students during the thesis writing process.

F. Theoretical and Practical Significance

Theoretically, it contributes to the existing body of knowledge on academic writing challenges, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. By identifying common difficulties faced by students in thesis writing, this research provides insights that can be used to refine pedagogical approaches and curriculum development. Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for students, lecturers, and academic institutions in improving thesis writing support. It offers valuable recommendations for educators to design more effective instructional strategies and for students to develop better writing skills, ultimately enhancing the quality of academic writing at Widya Gama Mahakam.

G. Scopes and Limitations

This study focuses on identifying the difficulties encountered by English students at Widya Gama Mahakam in the thesis writing process through interviews with selected undergraduate students. The scope includes challenges related to

academic writing, research skills, language proficiency, and time management. The study is limited to students who are in the process of writing their thesis, which are the students in 10th semester. The findings are specific to this university and may not be generalized to other institutions.

H. Operational Definition of Key Terms

1. English Students: people who are either learning English as a second language or studying English literature and language at a higher level.

2. Difficulties: Challenges or obstacles encountered by students during the thesis writing process.

3. Thesis: a substantial piece of original research and writing on a specific topic, typically required for graduation in a bachelor's degree program.

4. Thesis Writing: process of creating a formal research paper that presents your original research and findings on a specific topic

5. Process: a series of steps or actions taken to achieve a specific goal.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Nature of Thesis

A thesis is a crucial component of academic research, serving as the foundation for a study and demonstrating a student's expertise in their field (Connie et al., 2024). It represents a significant undertaking, requiring original research or analysis and culminating in a substantial written document. Through the thesis process, students showcase their ability to formulate research questions, conduct literature reviews, develop arguments, and present their findings in a clear and compelling manner. Ultimately, a successful thesis contributes to the existing body of knowledge and marks a significant milestone in a student's academic journey. A thesis is scientific work prepared by students or faculty members on a specific subject and defended before an examination board (Akaslan & Badur, 2021). This document represents the culmination of research and analysis, demonstrating the author's understanding of the chosen topic. The defense process provides an opportunity for the author to present their findings and engage in scholarly discussion with experts in the field, ultimately validating the rigor and contribution of the thesis.

1. Significance of Thesis Writing

Thesis writing is an important and challenging process for both master's and undergraduate students, helping them grow academically and develop better study habits (Andhikari, 2023). It requires critical thinking, research skills, and effective time management. Through this process, students improve their ability to analyze

information, organize ideas, and communicate their findings clearly. Despite the difficulties, completing a thesis prepares students for future academic and professional challenges. The thesis writing experience, while undeniably rigorous, offers students a crucial platform for significant learning and development. As Pandey (2024) suggests, this demanding process not only tests students' research and writing abilities but also cultivates essential skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and time management. These honed competencies, gained through the challenges of thesis preparation, ultimately lay a strong foundation for future academic endeavors and professional success.

2. Critical Stages of Thesis Writing for College Students

Thesis writing presents significant challenges for college students, encompassing various critical stages. Setyawan et al. (2020) highlights the importance of a process approach in writing, which includes several key stages: prewriting, drafting, editing, revising, and publishing. This approach helps students develop their ideas systematically, ensuring clarity and coherence in their writing. By following these steps, students can refine their work, improve their writing quality, and reduce common challenges such as writer's block and disorganized thoughts. Implementing a structured writing process allows for continuous improvement and enhances overall academic writing skills.

According to Fitria (2022), internal factors that affect students in thesis writing include difficulties in selecting a title, feelings of boredom, pessimism, self-doubt, and struggles with grammar and vocabulary. These challenges can hinder students' motivation and confidence throughout the writing process. Additionally,

external factors such as communication problems with supervisors, limited access to resources, and technical issues further contribute to their difficulties. Both internal and external factors play a significant role in shaping students' thesis writing experiences, impacting their progress and overall academic performance.

B. Challenges Faced by Students

Research indicates that students face many challenges when writing their theses. Based on Hashmi's (2022) research, students often struggle with selecting a suitable research topic, maintaining focus on their study, and acquiring knowledge of information sources. Additionally, they face difficulties in developing online searching skills, analyzing data, and managing their time effectively. These challenges can make the thesis writing process overwhelming and stressful. However, with proper guidance, practice, and time management strategies, students can improve their research skills and successfully complete their theses.

1. Selecting Topic

Selecting a thesis topic is a critical step in academic research, as it determines the study's scope, depth, and overall direction. Choosing the right thesis topic is essential for academic success, as it should have academic value, align with personal interests, and match the researcher's skills. As stated in Fadhly (2018), there are several approaches to choosing a research topic, including following institutional research roadmaps, conducting literature reviews, and exploring current research trends. A well-chosen topic ensures relevance, feasibility, and contribution to the field. However, many students struggle with this step due to uncertainty and a lack of experience in narrowing down their interests. Proper

guidance and thorough exploration of existing studies can help students select a strong and meaningful research topic.

According to Saini et al. (2022), this process can be particularly challenging for postgraduate students, who must balance these factors while ensuring their research contributes to their field. Many students struggle with narrowing down their options and refining their ideas into a feasible study. Faculty guidance plays a crucial role in helping them navigate this process, providing direction, feedback, and support to select a topic that is both meaningful and achievable.

2. Developing Focus

Developing a focused research thesis requires careful planning and the development of essential research skills. A well-structured approach helps students refine their ideas, set clear objectives, and stay on track throughout the research process. Without proper planning, students may struggle with narrowing their focus, leading to challenges in organizing their study and managing their time effectively. Adeoye & Adong (2023) explained, applying the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) criteria is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of research. A SMART research focus ensures clarity in objectives, feasibility in execution, and relevance to the academic field. By adopting this approach, students can conduct more structured and goal-oriented research, ultimately improving the quality and impact of their thesis.

3. Acquiring Knowledge of Information Source

Research on information source utilization in thesis writing highlights

various challenges and strategies that students employ to navigate the process. According to Husein et al. (2023), final-year students often use Ellis' information-seeking behavior model to retrieve relevant academic sources. This model helps them systematically search for information, evaluate sources, and integrate findings into their research. However, many students still face difficulties in locating high-quality sources, organizing their research, and managing references effectively.

To overcome these challenges, students can benefit from training in key research skills. Hashmi (2022) emphasizes the importance of learning data analysis and interpretation techniques, using SPSS software, developing effective questionnaires, and managing citations properly. Additionally, improving literature searching skills can help students find relevant and credible academic sources more efficiently. Providing such training and resources can enhance students' research capabilities and support them in successfully completing their theses.

4. Developing Data Analysis

Data analysis is a vital component in developing effective research into theses across various disciplines. In the field of big data analytics, the primary objective is to process vast amounts of data to generate meaningful insights and support informed decision-making (Guliyev, 2024). For undergraduate theses, particularly those involving literature reviews, a systematic approach to data analysis is crucial to ensure accuracy and reliability in research findings (Popenoe et al., 2021). Proper data analysis techniques help students organize information, identify key themes, and draw well-supported conclusions.

Additionally, the development of data processing systems plays a

significant role in simplifying the research process. Systems designed for managing thesis reports and assignments can enhance efficiency and reduce common challenges faced by students (Khairunnisa et al., 2020). These advancements highlight the need for strong data analysis methods across various research approaches, including literature reviews, transdisciplinary studies, and big data analytics. By integrating effective data analysis tools and techniques, researchers can improve the quality and impact of their studies.

5. Time Management Skills

Time management skills are essential for the successful completion of research theses and assignments. According to Nguyen & Truong (2019), effective time management techniques help students stay organized and complete assignments in research methodology courses. Without proper time management, students may struggle to meet deadlines, leading to increased stress and lower productivity. Additionally, research by Sari & Prasetyo (2021) has shown a significant relationship between time management skills and academic procrastination among thesis students. Poor time management often results in delays, last-minute work, and difficulty maintaining research quality. Developing strong time management strategies can help students stay focused, reduce procrastination, and enhance their overall academic performance.

C. Review of Previous Studies

Challenges Faced by Research Students in Writing Thesis: A Qualitative Study (Hashmi, 2022). This study adopted a qualitative research methodology,

utilizing an interview guide as the primary research tool. The researchers employed a purposive sampling technique to select 40 research students from Library and Information Science/Information Management Departments in public and private sector universities of Punjab province. The interview data was analyzed using a thematic approach. The findings revealed several challenges faced by students during thesis writing. These included difficulties in selecting a research topic and developing focus, acquiring knowledge of information sources, developing online searching skills, data analysis, and time management. Students also encountered problems with data collection, using inferential statistics, and interpreting data. The study highlighted the need for training in various areas, including data analysis and interpretation, SPSS software use, questionnaire/interview guide development, citation management, and literature searching skills.

Challenges facing students in writing theses at the Jordanian universities (El-Freihat, 2021). This research employed a survey descriptive design, using a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The study randomly sampled 438 master's degree students from Jordanian universities. Statistical analysis was performed to identify significant differences based on demographic factors. The study found that the overall level of challenges faced by students was moderate, with material challenges being the most prevalent in Jordanian universities. Interestingly, the research revealed statistically significant differences in the level of challenges based on various demographic factors. Female students, science students, married students, and employed students all faced more challenges compared to their counterparts. However, no significant differences were found

based on the type of university attended.

      Thesis Writing Challenges Facing Palestinian EFL Master's Students: A Qualitative Case Study (Alyan, 2022). This research adopted a qualitative case study approach, utilizing in-depth semi-structured interviews for data collection. The study focused on the English department at the Islamic University of Gaza, with a sample of 18 MA students and 10 supervisors. The findings identified several key challenges faced by Palestinian EFL master's students in thesis writing. These included difficulties in selecting an appropriate research topic, limited research and methodology training, linguistic and academic writing inadequacies, insufficient feedback from supervisors and course instructors, and limited access to resources and online digital materials. The study concluded by offering recommendations to minimize these challenges and empower MA students, although specific details of these recommendations were not provided in the abstract.

      Students' Conceptions of Challenges in Writing Thesis: A Case of Postgraduate Context (Yunus et al., 2023). This research employed mixed method research (MMR) with three research instruments for data collection, namely questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. There were 165 students who participated in answering the questionnaire, and 24 students and 16 lecturers from 7 study programs were involved in the interviews. Thirty proposals for master's thesis were analyzed by using a document analysis method. The research participants were purposefully selected using purposive sampling. The research findings showed that the aspects that were considered the easiest in writing the thesis are the literature review section and the conclusions and suggestions

section. While the most difficult parts of the thesis were the introduction and discussion sections. The research also found that students were still very constrained in terms of good and correct written Indonesian language skills.

Students' Difficulties in Writing Thesis During Covid-19 Pandemic (Dewi, 2022). The approach used is qualitative research with in-depth interview techniques in data collection. The data were then analyzed descriptively from the results of the interviews. The results showed that the difficulties faced by students were the difficulty of access and permission to enter schools during the pandemic, the passive participation of research subjects, and the unequal distribution of information. From the result, it can be concluded that those three factors are the difficulties faced by students in writing a thesis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Previous research has examined various challenges in thesis writing, but most have focused on graduate students or specific academic fields. However, this research specifically addresses the difficulties faced by undergraduate English students at Widya Gama Mahakam. This research fills that gap by focusing on research at Widya Gama university semester 10. Focusing on the challenges of the research topic, maintaining focus on their studies, and gaining knowledge about information sources and time management. Using semi-structured interviews with small sampling subject collection.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore and understand the meanings individuals or groups assigned to social and human experiences. Creswell (2018) identifies qualitative research designs such as narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies, each offering distinct methodologies for data collection and analysis. By adopting a qualitative approach, this study aims to gain in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of lecturers who supervise college students. Specifically, it drew on common qualitative approaches, including case study, ethnography, narrative, and phenomenology, to examine various aspects of human experiences and social interactions. These approaches provide a rigorous framework for designing qualitative studies and selecting appropriate research methods (Tomaszewski et al., 2020).

This study used a case study research design, which is a flexible approach in social sciences that helps explore complex issues and understand cause-and-effect relationships (Sátyro & D'Albuquerque, 2020). A case study involves closely examining a single case to gain insights that can apply to similar cases (Campbell, 2015). By focusing on one specific example, this approach allows for a deeper understanding of the topic, including patterns, influencing factors, and important details. With careful data collection and analysis, the case study method provides a thorough way to study real-world problems, making it a useful choice for this

research.

B. Research Setting

A research setting refers to the specific location or environment where the research is conducted, this typically involves collecting data in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study (Creswell, 2018). This study was conducted at Widya Gama Mahakam, focusing on English students who are in the process of writing their theses. The research setting includes the university environment, where students engage in academic writing under the guidance of their supervisors. The study explored the challenges faced by these students, such as selecting a suitable research topic, maintaining focus on their study, and acquiring knowledge of information sources. Additionally, they face difficulties in developing online searching skills, analyzing data, and managing their time effectively. By conducting the study within this academic setting, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the difficulties encountered by English students in completing their theses and to identify possible solutions to support their academic success

C. Research Subject

In qualitative research, the research subject typically refers to the individuals, groups, organizations, or communities that are being studied to understand their experiences, behaviors, or social phenomena (Campbell et al., 2020). The research subjects are the English students at Widya Gama Mahakam who are in the process of writing their theses. This research used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a qualitative research technique used to choose

participants who are most relevant to the study's goals, thereby improving the study's rigor and credibility (Campbell et al., 2020). For this study, the following criteria were used to select participants through purposive sampling:

1. Participants must be officially enrolled in the English Education Department at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda.

2. Participants must be actively engaged in the thesis writing process, including proposal development, data collection, or final writing stages.

3. Participants must have an assigned thesis supervisor and have attended at least one supervision session.

4. Participants must voluntarily agree to take part in the study and provide informed consent for data collection.

The insights gained from these participants contributed to a deeper understanding of the obstacles in the thesis writing and helped develop strategies to improve academic support. Through this research, it is hoped that meaningful recommendations can be made to assist students in overcoming their challenges and successfully completing their theses.

D. Research Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the key instrument for data collection and analysis, ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings (Sukmawati et al., 2023). As the primary instrument, the researcher actively engaged in data gathering, interpretation, and analysis to maintain the depth and accuracy of the study. In this study, the researcher employed an interview guide, a recording device, and stationery as essential tools for collecting and documenting

data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the difficulties faced by English Education students in the thesis writing process. An interview guide with open-ended questions was utilized to facilitate discussions, allowing participants to share their experiences and challenges in depth. Through this approach, the researcher, as the key instrument, ensured a comprehensive and insightful understanding of the participants' perspectives.

The following interviews questions are adopted from Indah (2020):

1. Do you find writing a thesis challenging? Why or why not?

2. Do you understand the structure and process of writing a proper thesis?

3. Have you made significant progress in your thesis? Why or why not?

4. What are the main difficulties that prevent you from completing your thesis?

5. What factors influence your progress in writing a thesis?

6. What do you think causes delays in your thesis writing process?

7. In your opinion, why do many students struggle to complete their theses on time? What specific problems hinder their progress?

8. How do peer interactions or friendships impact your thesis writing process?

9. Do you experience difficulties in communicating or collaborating with others during your thesis writing? If so, how does it affect your progress?

10. What suggestions do you have to help students overcome difficulties in writing a thesis?

These questions aim to explore students' experiences, difficulties, and the

factors that influence their progress, providing valuable insights into the obstacles they encounter and potential solutions to support their academic journey.

E. Data Collection Technique

Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, focus group discussions (FGDs), and document analysis. Interviews allow researchers to gather detailed insights from participants and can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. Observations involve studying participants in their natural environment, either by watching from a distance or actively engaging. Focus group discussions (FGDs) bring small groups together to share perspectives on a specific topic. Document analysis involves reviewing reports, journals, or records to extract relevant information. These methods provide rich, descriptive data for understanding social behaviors and experiences.

The data collection technique for this study focuses on using semi-structured interviews to explore the challenges faced by English Education students during the thesis writing process, as follows:

1. Identifying Key Themes: The researcher will focus on specific challenges in the thesis writing process, including selecting a topic, developing a research focus, acquiring knowledge of information sources, developing data analysis, and time management skills.

2. Participant Selection: A purposive sampling method will be applied to select English Education Department students who are actively engaged in thesis writing.

3. Preparing the Interview Guide: An interview guide will be developed

based on Indah (2020) to structure the discussions while allowing
flexibility for deeper exploration of participants' experiences.

4. Conducting the Interviews: The interviews will be conducted in a
    conversational style, encouraging students to share their experiences and
    challenges in depth. While focusing on predefined themes, the researcher
    will remain open to exploring new insights that may emerge.

5. Recording and Transcription: With participants' consent, interviews will
    be recorded to ensure accuracy and later transcribed for further analysis.

6. Data Analysis: The transcribed interviews will be systematically analyzed
    to identify common themes, patterns, and unique perspectives related to
    the challenges faced by students during the thesis writing process.

By systematically analyzing the transcribed interviews, the study aims to
identify key themes and provide a deeper understanding of the difficulties students
encounter in completing their theses.

F. Data Analysis Techniques

This study used (Miles et al., 2014) qualitative data analysis technique,
which consists of three main components: data condensation, data display, and
conclusion drawing and verification.

1. Data condensation

In this study, data condensation is a crucial step in refining and managing
the collected information regarding the challenges faced by English Education
students in the thesis writing process. This process involves selecting, simplifying,
and categorizing students' responses to emphasize key difficulties such as topic

selection, research focus, access to information sources, data analysis, and time management. By eliminating redundant or irrelevant information, the researcher can concentrate on the most significant findings. Since data condensation is an ongoing process, continuous analysis and new insights will contribute to a deeper understanding of students' experiences and obstacles in thesis writing.

2. Data display

Data display is essential for presenting the condensed data in a structured and visually organized manner. In this study, tools such as matrices and charts used to systematically arrange findings, enabling the identification of patterns and relationships among the difficulties encountered by students. By presenting data in a clear visual format, the researcher can better analyze connections between different challenges, leading to more precise interpretations and recommendations for improving thesis writing support.

3. Interpretation

The final stage, interpreting the data to generate meaningful insights and ensuring the accuracy of the findings. In this study, conclusions were derived from recurring themes and patterns identified in students' responses, providing a clearer understanding of the underlying causes of their thesis writing difficulties. To enhance the validity and reliability of the findings, verification techniques such as triangulation will be employed, comparing students' perspectives with those of their supervisors. Additionally, member checking were conducted to confirm that the interpretations accurately reflect participants' experiences. This rigorous verification process ensures that the study's conclusions are well-supported and

contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by English Education students in completing their theses.

G. Triangulation

Triangulation, as described by Creswell (2018), is a method used in qualitative research to enhance the validity and credibility of findings by cross-checking data from multiple sources, methods, or perspectives. This approach helps to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, reduces bias, and ensures consistency in findings. Creswell identifies several types of triangulations. First is data source triangulation, where different data sources are used to validate the findings. Second is investigator triangulation, which involves multiple researchers in data collection and analysis to minimize individual biases. Next is methodological triangulation, where different research methods are applied to study the same phenomenon. The last is triangulation, which uses various theoretical perspectives to interpret the findings.

In this study, data source triangulation was applied, as the researcher interviewed both the students and the lecturers supervising their thesis work. Since the focus is on the challenges students face during the thesis writing process, lecturers served as the validators of the students' experiences. By comparing the perspectives of both the students and the lecturers, the researcher can cross-check and validate the findings, ensuring a more accurate representation of the difficulties students encounter in the thesis writing process. This approach helps to reduce potential bias and enhances the reliability and trustworthiness of the study's results.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the research on English students' difficulties in the thesis writing process at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda. The data were collected through semi-structure interviews with students currently working on their theses, also with lecturers serving as validators. The findings are categorized into five key challenges faced by students, including selecting a topic, developing a research focus, acquiring knowledge of information sources, developing data analysis, and managing time effectively.

The frequency table below presents the occurrence of each difficulty encountered by students during the thesis writing process:

Indicators	Frequency	Speakers
Selecting a Topic	6	S1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7
Developing Research Focus	4	S1, S3, S5, S6
Acquiring Knowledge of Sources	7	S1, S2, S3, S5, S6, S7, S8
Developing Data Analysis	5	S1, S3, S4, S6, S7
Time Management Skills	8	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8

1. Selecting a Topic

This finding indicates that selecting a topic is one of the challenges students encounter in the thesis writing process. The data from the interviews highlights several challenges students face when selecting a thesis topic. S1 mentioned the difficulty of balancing personal interest with data availability, as an engaging topic may lack sufficient references. Similarly, S4 and S7 expressed concerns about the complexity of researching broad topics and the lack of depth in narrow ones, making it difficult to find relevant sources. S3 also emphasized the challenge of ensuring a topic is interesting, relevant, and feasible while avoiding extremes of being too broad or too narrow. Additionally, S5 struggled to find a topic that aligned with their major while maintaining an appropriate scope, highlighting the importance of topic suitability in the research process.

Moreover, students' research experience plays a crucial role in topic selection. S6 admitted that limited experience made it difficult to refine a suitable topic, leading to challenges in narrowing down their research focus. Some students, such as S2 and S8, preferred to choose simpler topics to make the research process easier. This suggests that students often consider feasibility and manageability when selecting a topic.

It is supported by lecturers as the validators, with L1 stating, *"They haven't been able to find a title with novelty or a gap,"* indicating that students struggle to identify unique and original topics. L2 further stressed the importance of academic preparation, stating, *"Students must be active in research methodology courses,"* suggesting that a lack of research knowledge makes it even harder for students to

refine their research focus. Overall, the findings indicate that topic selection is a critical yet challenging step in thesis writing, influenced by interest, availability of references, experience, and the need for an appropriate scope.

2. Developing Research Focus

Developing a clear research focus is an essential step in the thesis writing process, as it determines the direction and scope of the study. However, students often face challenges in narrowing down their focus and ensuring their research is well-structured. The data from the interviews reveals that students face varying levels of difficulty in developing their research focus. S1 found it challenging to determine whether their research should be general or specific, indicating struggles in defining the scope. Similarly, S3 mentioned that initial topics tend to be broad, requiring careful decision-making to narrow the focus effectively. S5 highlighted the difficulty of understanding the topic and relevant theories before establishing a clear research focus, suggesting that a strong theoretical foundation is necessary. Meanwhile, S6 emphasized the importance of structuring the analysis properly, especially when research is based on observation, as a well-organized analytical framework is essential for clarity and coherence.

On the other hand, some students found the process more manageable. S2 stated that determining the research focus was not too difficult as long as sources were properly reorganized, implying that effective structuring can simplify the process. S4 pointed out that having a clear interest and sufficient references made it easier to develop the research focus. Additionally, S7 believed that defining the research focus was straightforward once the thesis title was established, as the title

itself provides direction.

It is supported by lecturers as validators, with L1 stating, *"Once they understand their title, they usually have no difficulties"* indicating that clarity on the topic helps students stay focused. L2 added, *"Students often don't know where to start. They should focus on subjects they like"* highlighting that uncertainty about their interests affects their ability to refine their research focus. These responses highlight that while some students struggle with narrowing their research focus and structuring their analysis, others find it easier when they have a clear plan, sufficient resources, and a well-defined topic.

3. Acquiring Knowledge of Sources

Accessing and selecting reliable sources is a crucial part of the thesis writing process, but students often face challenges in finding relevant and up to date materials. Difficulties such as paywalls, limited availability, and niche research topics make the process even more complex. The data from the interviews highlights that students face significant challenges in acquiring knowledge of sources for their thesis. S1 mentioned that accessing journals can be difficult due to paywalls or availability issues, making it hard to obtain reliable references. Similarly, S5 also encountered difficulties in accessing certain references, while S6 found Google Scholar useful but struggled to identify the most relevant sources. S7 further emphasized the challenge of noting that many available journals were outdated, with most dating back to 2003-2006. For S2, the challenge was different, as their topic was relatively new, requiring extra effort to locate relevant sources. Likewise, S3, who used Elicit, found it difficult to find materials when the topic

was rarely discussed, indicating that niche research areas pose additional hurdles in accessing sufficient literature.

However, some students found the process easier when they had the right strategies. S4 stated that knowing where to look, such as using Elicit, Libgen, and Google Scholar, made acquiring sources less challenging. However, even with these tools, difficulties persisted. S8 noted that theoretical sources were difficult to find and mainly relied on internet platforms like Google Scholar and ResearchGate. This suggests that while digital resources are valuable for research, students still struggle with accessibility, the relevance of materials, and the availability of recent studies.

It is supported by lecturers as validators, with L1 stating, *"They struggle to find updated references,"* reinforcing the issue of accessing recent studies. However, L2 pointed out, *"Finding references is not a problem now. With Google Scholar and other tools,"* suggesting that the real challenge lies not in finding sources but in using them effectively. These findings indicate that acquiring knowledge of sources remains a critical challenge in the thesis writing process, particularly when research topics are new, niche, or difficult to access through traditional academic databases.

4. Developing Data Analysis

Conducting effective data analysis is a critical aspect of the thesis writing process, as it determines the accuracy and reliability of research findings. However, many students face difficulties in applying the appropriate analysis techniques, interpreting data objectively, and managing methodological complexities. The data

reveals that students encounter various difficulties in developing their data analysis. S1 expressed that understanding and interpreting data objectively posed a challenge, making it difficult to derive accurate conclusions. S3 similarly highlighted the complexity of analysing data correctly, emphasizing that applying the proper methodology is crucial for ensuring credible results. S4, who worked with film transcripts, noted that qualitative analysis required detailed attention, particularly when examining idiom contexts. On the other hand, S5 found data analysis relatively easy since it involved watching and analysing; however, they acknowledged that maintaining strong focus was essential for accuracy.

In addition to interpretation challenges, some students struggled with data quality and complexity. S6 reported facing issues with inaccurate or duplicated data, which complicated the analysis process. S7, who worked with quantitative methods, found the process particularly difficult due to the extensive formulas required in previous research. They stressed that even a minor mistake in calculations could significantly affect the final results, making quantitative analysis a meticulous and demanding task.

It is supported by lecturers as validator, with L1 stating, *"Chapter 4 deals with data collection and analysis. It's tricky, but if students know what to do, it's fine"* indicating that challenges arise from uncertainty rather than the process itself. Meanwhile, L2 emphasized, *"Chapter 4 is difficult because this is where real research happens—collecting and analysing data"* reinforcing that students often struggle with this stage but can manage it well with proper understanding. These findings indicate that students' challenges in data analysis stem not only from

methodological concerns but also from issues related to data accuracy, interpretation, and concentration.

5. Time Management Skills

Effective time management is essential for completing a thesis, yet many students struggle to allocate their time efficiently. The table shows that time management can be crucial challenge for students during the thesis writing process, as they struggle to balance academic responsibilities with other commitments. S1 admitted to lacking a fixed schedule and often struggling with motivation, which made it difficult to maintain consistency in their work. Similarly, S6 mentioned that their progress depended on their priorities at the moment, indicating a lack of structured time management. Distractions also played a significant role in slowing down the writing process. S2 stated that household tasks and work responsibilities made it hard to focus, while S4 admitted that boredom often led them to use their phone instead of working on their thesis. These external and internal distractions made it difficult for students to maintain steady progress.

Moreover, many students underestimated the time required for thesis writing. S5 initially believed they could complete Chapter 1 within a week but later realized that it took months, highlighting a common miscalculation among students. Balancing multiple responsibilities further complicated time management. S3 explained that their ability to work on their thesis depended on their mood, with a maximum of two hours of productivity at a time. Meanwhile, S7 and S8 expressed their struggles in balancing work and thesis writing, with S7 stating that prioritizing one often led to setbacks in the other. This challenge resulted in exhaustion and

decreased productivity, ultimately prolonging the thesis writing process.

It is supported by lecturers as validators, with L1 stating, *"They procrastinate and delay working on revisions,"* emphasizing that students' lack of urgency slows their progress. L2 added, *"Most students are not on time. They should communicate with their supervisors and update their progress regularly,"* suggesting that poor time management often results from procrastination and a lack of communication with supervisors. These findings indicate that ineffective time management, coupled with distractions and underestimated workloads, significantly hinders students' thesis progress.

B. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that students at Widya Gama Mahakam face significant difficulties in selecting a research topic, as many struggle to narrow broad ideas into specific, researchable topics. Several students reported uncertainty in choosing a topic that aligns with their interests while also meeting academic standards, often requiring extensive guidance from supervisors. These findings align with Hashmi (2022), who found that students frequently face confusion in the early stages of thesis writing due to a lack of clarity in defining a researchable topic. Similarly, Alyan (2022) highlighted that EFL students often struggle with formulating clear research objectives, which ultimately affects the overall structure of their thesis. These similarities suggest that difficulties in topic selection are a widespread issue, reinforcing the need for structured support and early-stage mentoring to help students refine their research topics effectively.

In addition to topic selection, developing a research focus is another major

challenge identified in this study. Many students expressed difficulty in constructing a well-defined research problem and setting clear research objectives. Some struggled to differentiate between general topics and specific research gaps, leading to frequent revisions throughout their thesis process. These challenges are supported by El-Freihat (2021), who found that students often lack the ability to distinguish between broad topics and well-defined research problems, making it difficult to maintain focus. Similarly, Alyan (2022) emphasized that students who lack formal research training frequently face difficulties in articulating their research questions, leading to disorganized and unfocused studies. These findings indicate that a lack of proper guidance in formulating research problems contributes to students' struggles, highlighting the importance of structured research training to strengthen their ability to define and develop a clear research focus.

Another key difficulty observed in this study is acquiring knowledge of information sources. Many students reported relying on non-scholarly internet sources due to limited familiarity with academic databases and difficulty in accessing relevant literature. Some also struggled with citation and referencing, leading to weak literature reviews. These findings are consistent with Hashmi (2022), who found that students often lack research literacy, making it difficult for them to identify and evaluate credible academic sources. El-Freihat (2021) also noted that many students are unfamiliar with proper citation practices, leading to unintentional plagiarism and poorly supported arguments. Similarly, Alyan (2022) emphasized that limited training in research methodologies and referencing skills further complicates students' ability to engage with existing literature. These

findings suggest that providing training on academic search techniques, referencing styles, and literature review strategies is crucial in helping students develop stronger research foundations.

The study also revealed that students face significant difficulties in developing data analysis, particularly in applying appropriate methods and interpreting their results. Many students reported struggling with coding qualitative data and using statistical tools such as SPSS, which hindered their ability to present clear and valid findings. These findings align with Yunus et al. (2023),who found that students often misinterpret statistical results and struggle to analyze qualitative interviews due to a lack of methodological understanding. Additionally, Alyan (2022) noted that inadequate feedback from supervisors contributes to these challenges, as students require additional support in refining their analytical techniques. This study confirms that students at Widya Gama Mahakam encounter similar difficulties, emphasizing the need for enhanced methodological training and continuous feedback to improve students' competence in data analysis.

Finally, time management was identified as a critical issue among students. Many reported difficulties in balancing coursework, part-time jobs, and thesis deadlines, leading to procrastination and delays in submission. Some students also mentioned struggling with structuring their writing schedules, which affected the overall quality of their research. These findings support El-Freihat (2021), who found that students often experience time constraints due to competing academic and personal responsibilities. Similarly, Hashmi (2022) noted that students who lack structured writing schedules tend to procrastinate, resulting in rushed and

lower-quality research work. This study confirms that students at Widya Gama Mahakam face similar struggles, suggesting that universities should implement structured research timelines and provide time management training to support students in completing their thesis effectively. Addressing these challenges through targeted interventions enhanced students' research capabilities and improved the overall thesis-writing process.

The findings of this study highlight the various challenges students at Widya Gama Mahakam face in the thesis writing process, particularly in selecting a topic, developing a research focus, acquiring knowledge of sources, conducting data analysis, and managing time effectively. These difficulties are consistent with previous studies, which emphasize the impact of inadequate research training, limited access to academic resources, and difficulties in structuring research objectives. Without sufficient guidance and academic support, students are likely to encounter delays and obstacles that hinder their research progress. Overcoming these challenges requires persistence and adaptability as students navigate the complexities of academic writing and research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examines the challenges encountered by English students at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda during the thesis writing process. The findings indicate that students face significant difficulties in five key areas. One of the primary challenges is selecting a topic, as students struggle to find a balance between their interests, the availability of data, and the relevance of their research. Similarly, developing a research focus proves difficult, as students must refine broad ideas into specific, manageable research questions. Acquiring knowledge of sources is another obstacle, as access to relevant and up-to-date literature is often limited due to paywalls or the scarcity of prior studies.

Furthermore, developing data analysis requires a strong understanding of research methodologies, with students facing difficulties in interpreting both qualitative and quantitative data. Lastly, time management skills remain a major concern, as students must balance their academic workload with personal responsibilities and external commitments, often leading to delays in the thesis completion. These findings underscore the need for improved research guidance, enhanced academic support, and structured time management strategies to assist students in overcoming these challenges. By addressing these difficulties, institutions can better support students in successfully completing their theses.

B. Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions are proposed to help students, lecturers, institutions, and future researchers improve the thesis writing process.

1. For Students

Students can enhance their research skills by participating in academic discussions, attending research workshops, and utilizing university resources such as libraries and online journals. Developing effective time management strategies, including structured study schedules and minimizing distractions, could help improve productivity and reduce delays. Seeking continuous feedback from lecturers and peers can provide valuable insights that refine their thesis writing process and strengthen their research clarity. Maintaining persistence and adaptability throughout the research journey could also help students overcome challenges and successfully complete their thesis.

2. For Lecturers

Lecturers can provide clearer research guidance and structured supervision to help students navigate challenges in thesis writing. Encouraging students to develop critical thinking skills through discussions and problem-solving activities could enhance their ability to construct strong research arguments. Offering more accessible consultation hours can allow students to seek timely feedback and clarification on complex research concepts. Integrating research-based assignments into coursework could also help students build a strong foundation before starting their thesis.

3. For Institutions

Institutions can strengthen research support by providing greater access to academic resources, such as journal subscriptions and research methodology training. Organizing thesis-writing workshops and mentorship programs could help students overcome research-related difficulties and develop essential research competencies. Ensuring that students receive adequate supervision by managing lecturer workloads can contribute to maintaining high-quality thesis guidance. Creating a research-oriented academic environment through seminars and interdisciplinary collaborations could further enrich students' learning experiences.

4. For Future Researchers

Future researchers can explore in-depth strategies that assist students in overcoming thesis-writing challenges, particularly in areas such as research topic selection, data analysis techniques, and time management. Expanding this study by incorporating different academic disciplines and research methodologies could provide a broader understanding of the difficulties students face. Investigating the role of digital tools and artificial intelligence in academic research can offer innovative solutions for improving research efficiency and accessibility. Examining the long-term impact of various academic support programs on students' research success could also provide valuable insights for enhancing thesis-writing support systems.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Students' Interview Sheets

The following interviews questions are adopted from Indah (2020):

1. Do you find writing a thesis challenging? Why or why not?

2. Do you understand the structure and process of writing a proper thesis?

3. Have you made significant progress in your thesis? Why or why not?

4. What are the main difficulties that prevent you from completing your thesis?

5. What factors influence your progress in writing a thesis?

6. What do you think causes delays in your thesis writing process?

7. In your opinion, why do many students struggle to complete their theses on time? What specific problems hinder their progress?

8. How do peer interactions or friendships impact your thesis writing process?

9. Do you experience difficulties in communicating or collaborating with others during your thesis writing? If so, how does it affect your progress?

10. What suggestions do you have to help students overcome difficulties in writing a thesis?

Lembar wawancara untuk mahasiswa

Pertanyaan-pertanyaan wawancara berikut ini diadopsi dari Indah (2020):

1. Apakah Anda merasa bahwa menulis skripsi merupakan hal yang menantang? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

2. Apakah Anda memahami struktur dan proses penulisan skripsi yang benar?

3. Apakah Anda telah membuat kemajuan yang signifikan dalam skripsi Anda? Mengapa atau mengapa tidak?

4. Apa kesulitan utama yang menghalangi Anda untuk menyelesaikan skripsi Anda?

5. Faktor-faktor apa yang mempengaruhi kemajuan Anda dalam menulis skripsi?

6. Menurut Anda, apa yang menyebabkan keterlambatan dalam proses penulisan skripsi Anda?

7. Menurut Anda, mengapa banyak mahasiswa yang kesulitan menyelesaikan skripsi mereka tepat waktu? Masalah spesifik apa yang menghambat kemajuan mereka?

8. Bagaimana interaksi teman sebaya atau pertemanan mempengaruhi proses penulisan skripsi Anda?

9. Apakah Anda mengalami kesulitan dalam berkomunikasi atau berkolaborasi dengan orang lain selama penulisan skripsi? Jika ya, bagaimana hal tersebut mempengaruhi kemajuan Anda?

10. Saran apa yang Anda miliki untuk membantu mahasiswa mengatasi kesulitan dalam menulis skripsi?

Appendix 2. Data Table

Students' interview data

1. **Selecting a Topic**

Indicators	Quotations	Explanations
Selecting Topic	*"A topic that is interesting but difficult to research or lacks data." (S1, Q2)*	Struggled to balance interest and data availability.
	"I wanted my title to be easy to develop." (S2, Q2)	Chose a topic that was simpler to analyses.
	"We have to find something interesting, relevant, and suitable. Sometimes, the topic is too broad or too narrow." (S3, Q2)	Balancing relevance, interest, and feasibility is challenging.
	"An interesting topic can be hard to research due to limited references. Too broad is complicated; too narrow lacks depth." (S4, Q2)	Limited sources make topic selection difficult.
	"Sometimes it's hard to find a topic that fits my major... if I follow my interest, it might be too broad." (S5, Q2)	Struggled to find a topic that aligned with the major while ensuring it wasn't too broad.
	"Lack of experience and the topic is too broad." (S6,	Limited research experience, making it

	Q1)	hard to narrow down suitable research
	"Sometimes when choosing a topic... we have to consider whether many studies have been done on it or not, because if there are only a few, it becomes difficult." (S7, Q2)	Finding a topic is challenging, especially when there is limited prior research, making it difficult to find references.
	"Because I think it's easier than other topics." (S8, Q2)	Chose the topic based on its perceived simplicity.

2. Developing Research Focus

Indicators	Quotations	Explanations
Developing Research Focus	*"The difficulty is ensuring whether the research is general or specific." (S1, Q3)*	Struggled to define the research scope.
	"Determining research focus is not too difficult, just need to reorganize sources." (S2, Q3)	Found it manageable with proper structuring.
	"Determining the research focus is tough since initial topics can be very broad." (S3, Q3)	Narrowing the focus requires careful decision-making.
	"It's easier if we already have an interest and	A clear interest and resources simplify the

	enough references." (S4, Q3)	process.
	"Hard because I need to understand the topic and theories first." (S5, Q3)	Challenges in understanding the theoretical framework.
	"The research is based on observation, so analysis must be well-structured." (S6, Q3)	Struggled with structuring the analysis, requires detailed observation and a clear analytical framework
	"Determining the research focus is easy; based on the title, we can already know the focus." (S7, Q3)	Defining the research focus is straightforward once the thesis title is established.

3. **Acquiring Knowledge of Sources**

Indicators	Quotations	Explanations
Acquiring Knowledge of Sources	*"Finding sources like journals is challenging due to paywalls or availability issues." (S1, Q5)*	Faced difficulty accessing reliable sources.
	"My topic is relatively new, so I have to put extra effort into finding sources." (S2, Q5)	It needs extra effort to find relevant materials.
	"I use Elicit, but it's hard when the topic is rarely discussed." (S3, Q5)	Finding sources is difficult for niche topics.
	"If you know where to look,	Familiarity with

	it's not too hard—Elicit, Libgen, Google Scholar." (S4, Q5)	research tools helps.
	"Some references are hard to access." (S5, Q7)	Encountered difficulties accessing certain references
	"Google Scholar is useful, but finding the right sources is difficult." (S6, Q5)	It is challenging to determine which sources were most relevant to the study.
	"Google Scholar is useful, but finding the right sources is difficult." (S6) "It's quite difficult... there are very few new journals, most are from 2006-2003." (S7, Q5)	Finding relevant and recent sources is challenging as many studies are outdated or inaccessible.
	"The theory is quite difficult... most of it is from the internet... Google Scholar and ResearchGate." (S8, Q5)	Finding relevant theoretical sources is challenging and relies on online platforms.

4. **Developing Data Analysis**

Indicators	Quotations	Explanations
Developing Data Analysis	"Understanding and interpreting data objectively is a challenge." (S1, Q6)	Students' had trouble in interpreting data.

	"Understanding how to analyse data correctly is challenging." (S3, Q6)	Proper methodology ensures credible results.
	"Analysing film transcripts requires checking idiom contexts in detail." (S4, Q6)	Qualitative analysis demands precision and focus.
	"It's fast since I just watch and analyse, but it requires focus." (S5, Q6)	Found data analysis is relatively easy, but it required strong focus to ensure accuracy.
	"Data is often inaccurate or duplicated." (S6, Q6)	Faced difficulties with inaccurate and duplicated data.
	"It's difficult... previous research used quantitative methods, and the formulas are very long... if there's one mistake, the final result will be wrong." (S7, Q6)	Quantitative data analysis is complex, and small errors can significantly affect the results.

5. **Time Management Skill**

Indicators	Quotations	Explanations
Time Management	*"I don't have a fixed schedule; sometimes, I lack motivation." (S1, Q4)*	Struggled with consistency and motivation.
	"Many distractions like work and household tasks make it hard to manage time." (S2, Q4)	Work and personal life affected research progress.
	"Managing time is hard	Time management is

	with many tasks. If I'm in a good mood, I work for hours, but two is my max." (S3, Q4)	difficult due to other responsibilities.
	"I don't schedule strictly. If I get bored, I use my phone, which slows me down." (S4, Q4)	Distractions affect progress without structure.
	"I thought I could finish Chapter 1 in a week, but it took months." (S5, Q4)	Underestimated the time, realizing that writing thesis takes much longer than anticipated.
	"I work on it when I feel like it, depends on priorities." (S6, Q4)	Lack of structured time management, done only when motivation struck.
	"Balancing work and thesis writing is hard... if I focus on my thesis, I lose sleep; if I focus on work, my thesis is never finished." (S7, Q4)	Managing time between work and thesis writing is exhausting and affects productivity.
	"I can't manage my time between work and my thesis." (S8, Q9)	Struggles to balance thesis writing with job responsibilities.

6. Table Frequently

Indicators	Frequency	Speakers
Selecting a Topic	6	S1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7
Developing Research Focus	4	S1, S3, S5, S6
Acquiring Knowledge of Sources	7	S1, S2, S3, S5, S6, S7, S8
Developing Data Analysis	5	S1, S3, S4, S6, S7
Time Management Skills	8	S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8

Lecturers' interview data

Indicators	Quotations	Explanations
Selecting Topic	*"They haven't been able to find a title with novelty or a gap." (L1, Q2, line 4)*	Students struggle to find unique and original topics.
	"Students must be active in research methodology courses" (L2, Q2, line2)	Students struggle to choose a topic due to a lack of research knowledge.
Developing Research Focus	*"Once they understand their title, they usually have no difficulties." (L1, Q3, line 2)*	Understanding the topic helps students stay focused.
	"Students often don't know where to start. They should focus on subjects they like" (L2, Q3, line 1)	Students' uncertainty about interests affects research focus.
Acquiring Knowledge of Sources	*"They struggle to find updated references." (L1, Q1 line 4)*	Finding reliable and recent sources is a challenge.
	"Finding references is not a problem now. With Google Scholar and other tools" (L2, Q5 line 2)	The challenge is using sources effectively, not finding them.
Developing Data Analysis	*"Chapter 4 deals with data collection and analysis. It's tricky, but if students know what to do, it's fine." (L1, Q7 line 7-8)*	Students often find data analysis difficult, but with proper understanding, they can manage it well.

	"Chapter 4 is difficult because this is where real research happens—collecting and analysing data" (L2, Q7, line 9-10)	Students struggle with collecting and analysing data.
Time Management	*"They procrastinate and delay working on revisions." (L1, Q4, line 3)*	Poor time management slows down their progress.
	"Most students are not on time. They should communicate with their supervisors and update their progress regularly." (L2, Q4, line 1-2)	Poor time management happens due to procrastination and lack of regular communication with supervisors

Appendix 3. Interview Transcript

Students' interview transcript

Students 1

Q: **Do you find writing a thesis challenging?**

A: *"In my opinion, it depends on the part of the thesis itself. That means some are difficult, some are easy. The easy part is more like an outline and then filling in the parts that are already understood. The difficult part is finding theories and making chapter 1."*

Q: **How did you choose this topic, and did you have any difficulties in deciding on this research topic?**

A: *"Actually, I chose a topic about movies because I happen to like watching movies. So, I discovered a new movie. Incidentally, it hasn't been researched much, the obstacle is about a topic that is interesting but difficult to research or lacks data or literature or maybe the topic we choose is too broad or too narrow or maybe it has been researched a lot."*

Q: **How do you manage your research focus in writing your thesis and did you have any difficulties?**

A: *"The difficulty is ensuring whether the research is general or specific so sometimes that makes the focus dissolve."*

Q: **What about time management for writing the thesis?**

A: *"I don't have a fixed schedule; sometimes, I lack motivation. I'm more like not always at a certain time, not unscheduled, and if I have the motivation to do it, I will do it. Time is difficult because it divides research, analysis, writing and maybe external factors, and maybe lack of motivation, emotional support from the closest people who are lacking. the solution may be to make a schedule, but it goes back to the*

person because it's useless to make a schedule if you don't discipline it, it's the same as lying. maybe it should be targeted in the form of daily targets or weekly targets."

Q: **Then if we move on to finding sources, how do you find sources for your theory and what is your process for finding sources?**

A: *"It's like I searched from several websites, finding sources like journals is challenging due to paywalls or availability issues, unreliable sources"*

Q: **How about your developing for your data analysis so far?**

A: *"Understanding and interpreting data objectively is a challenge, how we interpret the data objectively, qualitative or quantitative, it becomes our difficulty how we understand it."*

Q: **Do you understand the structure of thesis writing and what do you think about the process of writing a thesis?**

A: *"Yes, I understand. We have a thesis writing guidebook, for the process of making a thesis, I think there must be a title first. Then discuss it with the lecturer, then after discussing it with the lecturer, we continue according to what the lecturer has directed. Then make chapter 1, then until the final chapter."*

Q: **Is there any progress in your thesis so far?**

A: *"You could say yes, there is progress. Not too significant anyway. Progress so far is because managing the time is like not appropriate and constrained in the part of how to find some theories."*

Q: **What is the most difficulty you face during this thesis is what?**

A: *"For me, I think the main thing is in the background section and listing some things and explaining some."*

Q; **Then the next factor that influences writing a thesis, there are two factors, there must be internal and external factors, what influences you in writing a thesis?**

A: *"What influences it is like in writing a thesis is desire and lack of motivation; the external factors are more like the environment is not very supportive or conducive in doing a thesis or looking for theory. It depends, sometimes it's accessible, sometimes it's not."*

Q: **Then we know that there are many friends who have not completed their thesis. According to you, the reason for those friends who have not finished their thesis, what is the specific reason? Why haven't they finished?**

A: *"Maybe, in my opinion, why other friends haven't finished it is lack of self-motivation, or they don't communicate with the lecturer, that's all."*

Q: **Don't you think your social circle of friends is important in the thesis process?**

A: *"In my opinion, they play a very important role because other friends help, you could say they really help where we can discuss. Then they can also provide explanations if for example we ask them or we give explanations to them. Then give advice to each other."*

Q: **For communication and collaboration, have you ever done a thesis with other people and have you ever had difficulties communicating with other people to discuss your thesis?**

A: *"There are a few friends, and yes, sometimes it is constrained if for example there is an explanation."*

Q: **Is it easier to do the thesis alone or together?**

A: *"It depends again if, for example, you have got some content from the relevant thesis, it is better to do it alone."*

Q: **What advice do you have for friends who are having trouble with their thesis?**

A: *"For advice to students who are having difficulty with their thesis, what to do is to contact the lecturer, the supervisor or like working together with classmates or just asking them."*

Lecturers' interview transcript

Lecture 1

Q: **Do you consider writing a thesis to be a challenge for students?**

A: *"One, usually in my experience they face it is internal and external in my opinion. Internally, it is their own laziness. Then usually they don't feel confident with the title. Then usually they still can't understand what to do during research. While externally, they struggle to find updated references, they are still lacking in finding materials. Then there are still many students whose theory is still unclear. So, from several factors, in my opinion, this is how they have difficulty in compiling a thesis."*

Q: **Do students often experience difficulties in choosing a topic?**

A: *"As I said earlier, it is true, one of them is in choosing a title or topic, it is indeed a bit difficult for students. maybe because usually the title they choose is a title that already exists too much, well, the difficulty is that They haven't been able to find a title with novelty or a gap. Well, I think their difficulty is because they still don't dig up information and read more."*

Q: **Do students have difficulties in processing their research focus?**

A: *"Actually, it depends on whether there are difficulties or not. Once they understand their title, they usually have no difficulties. So, it depends."*

Q: **How is your view on student time management?**

A: *"As lecturers, we want students to graduate quickly. In my opinion, time efficiency is still lacking. Usually they are more complacent, they procrastinate and delay working on revisions. So, the minus is that the time*

management is still not good"

Q: **Do students have difficulty finding references?**

A: *"As I said in point one, there are some difficulties. But that depends on the supervisor, if you ask me. For me personally, I always look for good and correct reference lines where the source is and how to take it. So it depends on the supervisor."*

Q: ***Do you feel that students generally understand the structure and process of writing a proper thesis?***

A: *"Like following a friend's thesis. So they again don't read the thesis guide. They only look at last year's thesis or their friend's thesis. But they never analyze the thesis guidelines that have been issued by the university. So again this is a matter of reading literacy that is still lacking. So if I personally can see a friend's but also look at the guidelines from the university."*

Q: **Which part is most often an obstacle for students?**

A: *"In my opinion, it's like this. Chapter 1 chapter 2 is difficult. So chapter one actually has to include the theory of why we are researching it. Whereas in chapter two it is the supporting theories that will be reinforced in chapter 3. So in my opinion, the difficulty is in chapter one and chapter two. For chapter 3, the method is how the research will be, the difficulty depends on the type of research and the readiness of the students themselves. Chapter 4 deals with data collection and analysis. It's tricky, but if students know what to do, it's fine. Chapter 5 is the easiest.*

Q: **How do you assess students' progress in completing their thesis so far?**

A: *"This is another factor in the actual students. The point is that the lecturer never wants to slow down the students. Usually, it's the students who slow themselves down. If we personally choose to be quick, I for example personally have a week, have to come back. Sometimes students actually don't come back. So I think if students want to push themselves to be able to finish faster."*

Q: **Is there any strategy from you to help students who experience**

stagnation during the thesis writing process?

A: *"There is. Usually I haunt them or I do ghosting. That means I push. I press. I usually keep in touch, then I usually invite them to meet. Then after I invite you to meet, I usually open my laptop together, and then I direct you again. So there needs to be free time for that, I provide free time."*

Q: **According to you, the biggest difficulty of students in writing a thesis comes from what factors?**

A: *"Actually, the answer is the same. There is a symbiotic mutualism relationship where the student needs to have the will to improve faster. And the difficulty may be difficulty facing the lecturer, the lecturer's time is not synchronized with him. Then usually students do not dare to reveal what their own weaknesses are, they do not believe in themselves."*

Q: **So regarding the influence of the social environment on thesis work, according to you, discussions and group work help students in completing their thesis?**

A: *"I always suggest that there are several students I suggest. I once also asked students to let's gather in class, who is the supervisor we discuss. That's good. So several people will help this one person to provide insights or enlightenment."*

Q: **According to you, students are more productive working alone or tend to be more able to work in groups?**

A: *"Personally, yes, I can work better alone. But yes, again yes, the group can help friends who were stuck. So maybe the percentage is better in groups."*

Q: **How is the communication and collaboration between students and supervisors in the thesis writing process?**

A: *"One. The students don't dare to say whether they understand or not. Two, sometimes those who feel unsure of themselves with the title they bring. Because they don't understand the content. Well, usually it becomes more difficult during discussions with lecturers because they feel that this seems more difficult. Even though the lecturer who is the supervisor actually only has the task of guiding not pushing, you have to have this title, no. Usually*

we will make sure of that. Usually we will make sure of that. So usually the difficulty is again the student factor itself. It could also be the lecturer factor, but as long as the lecturer factor can be found, it can still be done."

Q:	**Do you think financial factors also affect the process of writing a thesis?**

A:	*"financially, yes, it is also one of the big factors, financially. Apart from the support of his friends, but actually if it is a financial problem, you have to report it to the study program so that it can still be recorded. We don't know this, the difficulty. Nowadays, the problem is that students don't open themselves either, so they are actually still imported. So indeed friends, students encourage themselves too.*"

Q:	**What suggestions do you have to help students overcome difficulties in writing their thesis?**

A:	*"My suggestions are to do it, don't sleep too much, don't drink too much coffee, it's not clear that you don't say that. So if my advice is to stay more confident, more enthusiastic. The point is if you want to graduate quickly.*"

Lecture 2

Q:	**Do you consider writing a thesis to be a challenge for students?**

A:	*"Their challenge is themself, whether they want to try or not. All information is already on the internet, coupled with artificial intelligence, so there are many examples, so it's back to the person concerned, do they want to finish or not? The challenge is that he has to finish with themselves*"

Q:	**Do students often experience difficulties in choosing research topics?**

A:	*"Let's go back a little, students have to be active in courses, for example Students must be active in research methodology courses where students have to ask a lot of questions related to the research they will do. If they are shy to ask the lecturer, of course they can be actively involved in, for example, AI. There are so many tools that can be used to search for*

literature or research topics, for example, there is publish or palace to map what topics students can look for to visualize it, there is a post-viewar, so it's just a matter of returning to the first statement, is the student willing or not? So intention is very important to be able to complete it, there are many examples, so it doesn't seem to be an obstacle, language and so on."

Q: **Do students have difficulty in processing their research focus?**

A: *"Yes, because Students often don't know where to start. They should focus on subjects they like, if we are in the English education program, it should be in the research methodology course, there is quantitative, there is qualitative, well there students are active. There are certain courses that students like, for example reading or speaking that they are interested in or linguistics as well there, deepen it. So deepen it by discussing with the lecturer. If not, there is still another discussion partner, artificial intelligence, so there is a lot of information that we can get if we want to."*

Q: **How do you see the ability of students when managing time to write a thesis?**

A: *"The first, Most students are not on time. They should communicate with their supervisors and update their progress regularly. There is supervisor one, supervisor two, maybe who becomes a student discussion partner, back to the students must be brave enough to convey information, their obstacles. people can't do it normally. But if you are silent, we don't know what's wrong with this person. Often students are passive so if possible, be active. Because of the deadline, time management is what students have. Lecturers remind them of their progress, maybe they haven't heard for a month, just remind them."*

Q: **Do students have difficulty in obtaining appropriate references or research data?**

A: *"I think that's a statement that ten years ago, or twenty years ago, yes. Finding references is not a problem now. With Google Scholar and other tools. And other information that can be used as references, just paste what topic in Google will come out that topic. So if it is related to references, I*

don't think it is an obstacle. The problem is back to the intention earlier."

Q: **Do you feel that students generally understand the structure and process of writing a proper thesis?**

A: *"Well, the problem is that the first student is not reading enough. The abstract should only be one paragraph so 2-3 paragraphs. The content of the abstract is clear. For example, background, objectives, methodology, results, conclusions. That's all that is written. Don't write anything beyond that. Yes, the introduction is the same as the method and the results. So the writing of scientific papers already has a pattern. So don't go outside that pattern, just follow it. Now the problem may be that students don't read enough. Well, students always look for a process that is almost the same as their research topic. Even though there are other similarities, for example, whatever the method might be. So students are often trapped. Must be the same title. Even though there are many similar studies, for example in terms of methods, which in the end are the same too. It's just a different way"*

Q: **What are the main difficulties you observe that hinder students from completing their thesis?**

A: *"The hardest thing is to start. To start, of course in the background usually. In the background, to make it easier, just prepare the outline. My first paragraph tells about why I chose that title. Then there is the previous research like what. So the beginning is difficult to understand. Because it's the beginning. For chapter 2, it's just a patch. Where do you take it from, paste it there often. The pasting is wrong again, for example, taking references on the website, the book has never been read, like our friend. In chapter 3, the method is also the same, everything is the same, just read it, follow it, that's it. Maybe it's difficult in chapter 4 because the real research happens – collecting and analyzing data, it will go smoothly as long as students know what they have to do. Chapter 5 is easy"*

Q: **In your opinion, do students often show significant progress in their thesis writing?**

A: *"The process has come a long way. This means that they have read at least examples of previous research. They have consulted with their lecturers. Of course they have experienced the trials they have done. Their efforts are more persistent than maybe fellow students who have not made any progress and so on. That's what it means"*

Q: **What strategies can be used to help students who have progressed far during their difficulties?**

A: *"I gather them via zoom meetings reminding and so on, asked what the obstacles are if the difficulties we give help with what titles they might be able to do and are appropriate. Lecturers have research planners and so on, maybe that can help students instead of not finishing. So lecturers who give titles for example are much better than us leaving them confused. So we help to finish so yes"*

Q: **In your opinion, what causes delays in the thesis writing process for students?**

A: *"Yes, there are various kinds, the one I have asked is their busy work. secondly, maybe some feel that they cannot. And the third is just lazy students. some are already busy working. There are those who really want to avoid it. Various. If I do have a group of my mentors, I always remind them not to let go too far like that. Of course there are finances, of course there must be problems, yes, not everyone has the opportunity to go to college, so for this financially, not all, there must be certain people who may be a problem with finances, but as far as I understand it, yes"*

Q: **How do interactions or friendships among students affect their thesis writing process?**

A: *"So if the group is positive like that, of course it will also have an impact on the students and the discussions can certainly be very helpful for students to jointly struggle to complete their thesis. Yes. Yes, of course, there is a deadline that can be set by the student. So, it depends on the person. If the person I said earlier works alone, he can also work alone, for example only in front of a laptop now there is AI, discussing. If it is only*

to complete the thesis, it is not difficult to work in groups, of course it is also positive if it is only hanging out, telling stories that are not clear, even there the event may be bullying that is not finished, which has a bad impact too, so yes, there are two sides, yes, there must be positive and negative impacts. So if I judge it back to the person concerned. Everything is back to the person concerned"

Q: **How is communication and collaboration between you and your students so far?**

A: *"Yes, I communicate if I go through the groupchat, I always remind them at least once a month where the progress is. That is an example of what I can do, yes, I invite zoom, that is my effort because I cannot always ask, sometimes the students are also having difficulty so it goes back to the person concerned how important it is for him to capture this thesis, and how much intention he has to finish so if there is an intention, of course it will be easy to walk and the most important thing is self-confidence, yes, very often it is not confidence, yes, people can't do it normally but often students are not confidence to express their opinions even though they are wrong, it's okay, well that's our place to learn so.*

Q: **What has been your biggest challenge in guiding students during the thesis writing process?**

A: *"Students' motivation, their motivation is given a delayed deadline, for example, the motivation of the student concerned to complete this thesis is a challenge if he has, of course, there is an effort to complete it."*

Q: **What suggestions do you have to help students overcome difficulties in writing their thesis?**

A: *"There are several options from one consultation to the lecturer, two consultations to friends whose progress is much better, 3 consultations to ai, 4 consultations to God to 5 read books. So that's what I think can be done"*

Appendix 4. Documentation
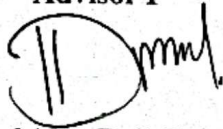
Students' Interview

Lecturers' Interview

THESIS PROPOSAL

ENGLISH STUDENT'S DIFFICULTIES

IN THE THESIS WRITING PROCESS

AT WIDYA GAMA MAHAKAM SAMARINDA

Written and Submitted by

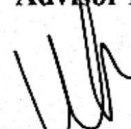PETRONELA VANERSI PRADA SINA

Has been approved on thesis proposal

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Advisor II

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PROGRAM STUDI   :   Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

JUDUL SKRIPSI   :   English Student's Difficulties in the Thesis Writing Process in the English Departement at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda

No	Nama Dosen dan Jabatan	Catatan Revisi	Tanda Tangan
1	Pembimbing I Godefridus Bali Geroda, M.Pd	• Data collection techniques • Research Instrument • Data analysis technique	
2	Pembimbing II Widi Syahtia Pane, M.Pd	• Pay attention to typing and grammatical	
3	Penguji I Dr. Drs. Abdul Rohman, M.Pd	• Add the population to be studied to the 10th semester • add more background sections • add identification and problem limitation • change the research objective from identify to describe the difficulties • add English department in the title section	

Mengetahui
Ketua Program Studi

Widi Syahtia Pane, M.Pd
NIK. 2019.092.264

NB:
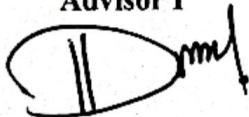**Lembar revisi tidak boleh menggunakan tulisan tangan kecuali tanda tangan Dosen Pembimbing dan Penguji.**

THESIS

ENGLISH STUDENT'S DIFFICULTIES IN THE THESIS

WRITING PROCESS IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTEMENT

AT WIDYA GAMA MAHAKAM SAMARINDA

Written and Submitted by

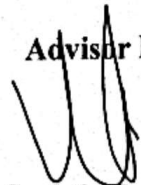PETRONELA VANERSI PRADA SINA

Has been approved on thesis

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PROGRAM STUDI	:	Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
JUDUL SKRIPSI	:	English Students' Difficulties in the Thesis Writing Process in the English Deepartement at Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda

No	Nama Dosen dan Jabatan	Catatan Revisi	Tanda Tangan
1	Pembimbing I Godefridus Bali Geroda, M.Pd	• Technical issue	
2	Pembimbing II Widi Syahtia Pane, M.Pd		
3	Penguji I Dr. Drs. Abdul Rohman, M.Pd	• Move the challenges table in findings to appendix • Input one student's interview transcript	

Mengetahui
Ketua Program Studi

Widi Syahtia Pane, M.Pd
NIK. 2019.092.264

NB:
Lembar revisi tidak boleh menggunakan tulisan tangan kecuali tanda tangan Dosen Pembimbing dan Penguji.