



SNAP TO READ

STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE ON PREREQUISITE SUBJECTS TOWARD THEIR THESIS WRITING

Ana Ahsana El-Sulukiyyah, Diah Anita Pusparini
Universitas PGRI Wiranegara
aahsana3@gmail.com, diahanitapusparini@gmail.com

First received: August 30, 2022

Final proof received: November 8, 2022

Abstract:

This study investigates the students' perspective on the prerequisite subjects toward their thesis writing. Some problems occurred when students doing their thesis. Those problems could be from their preparation and their comprehension of the prerequisite subjects. It is a descriptive qualitative study with open-ended questionnaire as the primary instruments to get the data. The subjects of this study were 31 students who were finishing their thesis. Results show that students are aware that prerequisite subjects are important to write their thesis, moreover the subject namely Thesis Writing Methodology. According to students' opinion it was the prominent subject to know how to prepare and compose their thesis writing. The conclusion of this study is the prerequisite subject is important to prepare and help students finishing their thesis without any writing block.

Keywords: Prerequisite subjects, students' perspective, thesis writing

INTRODUCTION

Skripsi or thesis is a paper assignment to fulfil the requirement as the final project of a Sarjana degree. As stated in Zain et al. (2021) that writing a thesis is a writing paper consists of background, theory of review literature, method, research findings and discussion then

conclusion. This thesis writing starts in the eighth semester or the fourth year of study period as the final program given by the institution as the requirement of the degree (Pasaribu et al., 2016). There is a rule in writing a thesis, it is based on the writing style set by each institution (Etika & Hasibuan, 2016). Beside it is bordered by some rules, to write a thesis has to meet some prerequisite subjects to give students prior knowledge about what thesis is and can help students strengthen their writing performance.

English Education is one of study program in Faculty of Pedagogy and Psychology in Universitas PGRI Wiranegara that oblige the students to write a thesis as the final project to get a Sarjana Pendidikan degree. To write a thesis students are given some prerequisite subjects such as Academic Writing, Introduction to Research Method in ELT, Thesis Writing Method, and Seminar on ELT (Penyusun, 2018). Those prerequisite subjects are taught in semester 5, 6 and 7 to face and prepare students in doing their thesis. Comprehending the prerequisite subjects can help students compose good thesis (Andani & Oktaviani, 2018). Prerequisite subjects are designed to help students, first of all, in semester 5 students are given Academic Writing subject. This subject provides the understanding to develop a writing performance that explore and inform in detail the item or the variable of the research from some related literature (Bak, 2014). Further Bailey (2018) explained the academic writing means the process of answering the research problems, analysing the data, discussing and synthesizing the conducted research and reporting the research in their clear writing.

To write a good research, students must know the design of the research by learning Research Methodology. This subject explains the methods of the research, the design terminology and the theoretical principles of the research (Team, 2017). After understanding the kinds of research methods, the next prerequisite subject trains students to be

able to write the thesis based on the rule or writing style (Team, 2017). Thesis Writing Methodology provides students to know what they write on their thesis. Traditionally, thesis is divided into five chapters those are introduction, review of related literature, method, results and discussion and conclusion, beside that there is one abstract paper (Kothari, 2016). The last prerequisite subject as the preparation for the students to write the thesis is Seminar on ELT. This subject helps students to present their thesis proposal they have written. According to Ho (2015) the seminar activity can be effective to the preparation of presenting and explaining their thesis. By presenting their thesis proposal, students may get some knowledge shared by the advisors to conduct their thesis (Ho, 2015).

During COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020 up to March 2022 Universitas PGRI Wiranegara held online learning. Those prerequisite subjects were taught online too. Lecturers used virtual meeting application like google meeting and zoom, beside that they use LMS or learning management system to upload the materials and submit the assignments. Some studies show the impacts of online learning for the students' process of comprehending the materials and their attention maintaining. Irza (2021) stated that during the online learning students were easily get distracted and had more stress due to many assignments given, further, students lost their motivation to study when their internet connection was poor.

In addition it was difficult to maintain students' attention during the class period in the process of online learning (Barbu et al., 2022). Students were joining the meeting but they turned off their camera and teachers did not know whether they were paying attention or leaving the meeting somewhere (Bahasoan et al., 2020). From those studies we can conclude that the online learning during this pandemic of COVID-19 impacts the way and development of learning. This happens to students the prerequisite subjects informed above and it is

affected their writing.

Problems occur in the process of thesis writing recently. Students are confused to set and propose their thesis. In the preliminary interview engaged by the researchers before doing the research, some students said it was due to their lack knowledge of thesis, they were confused about how to write in the chapters. Some students answered that they never read the thesis so they felt blank of how to present their ideas. Based on Fadilah et al (2022) in his study about the students' difficulties to finish their thesis is mostly about the lack of motivation. Students got culture shock after having online learning then they have to fight for their thesis writing.

Furthermore, Rusitayanti et al (2021) explained that the factors of thesis writing difficulties divided into two main reasons, first of all is internal factor which are students' health, motivation, and ability to write thesis. The second is external factors, they are about students' family, school fees and advising method with the advisors. Still in Rusitayanti et al., (2021) the dominant factor is from internal factor which is students' ability in writing thesis. It is in line with Putri & Savira (2014) that the preparation of thesis writing is important, how the lecturers can help them and provide them a good preparation can give them motivation to finish their thesis.

These reasons and problems interest the researcher to gain research on the students' perspective on the prerequisite subjects toward their thesis writing. The researchers would like to prove some problems and solutions shown in some studies to the students in English Education Study Program, whether they have the same problems or they need good preparation by having the appropriate subject's preparation to finish their thesis.

METHOD

This research conducted qualitative descriptive method. It is

hoped to give precise summary about the research terms, the data and summary were comprehensively analysed and presented (Lambert & Lambert, 2013).

Respondents

This research focused on the students of English Education Study Program in their thesis period. There are 31 students who were in the eighth semester and finishing their thesis. There are 3 male and 29 female students from 2018 class year.

Instruments

Questionnaire was chosen as the instrument in this research. This research focused on the open-ended questionnaire where it can pose the problems and ask respondents to answer in detail based on their experience (Saunders & Tait, 2018). The questionnaire was written in google form and shared by WhatsApp group in <https://bit.ly/AngketThesisWriting22>.

Procedures

To get the data, the researcher shared the questionnaire to the students, the sampling technique used is purposive sampling. The criteria of the sample are the students of English Education Study Program, in semester 8, and finishing their thesis as the final project to get Sarjana degree.

Data analysis

In analyzing the data, the researchers gathered the questionnaire filled by the students then inferred the answers qualitatively. The quantitative data was already analyzed and transferred into pie chart and graph via the spreadsheet of GoogleForm Application. After getting the data from the spreadsheet, researchers explained in detail in the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As the result of data collection, the researcher gathered the findings from analysing the questionnaire then followed by the discussion below.

Students' knowledge on "What to write" in thesis

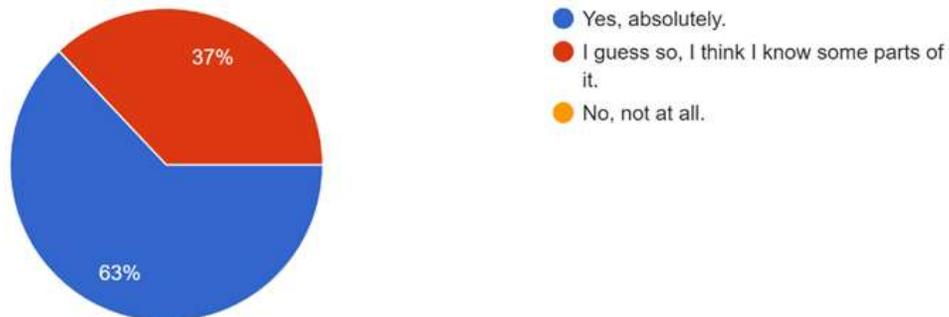


Figure 1. Students' knowledge on "What to write" in thesis

The first question of the questionnaire was asking about the students' understanding on "What to write" in their thesis writing. All students are able to figure out the composition they should write, though they are divided into two categories. Among 63% of the students are convinced with the composition that they should write in their thesis writing. While 37% others are partly understood on the content of a thesis writing.

The easiest Thesis Chapter that students can write well

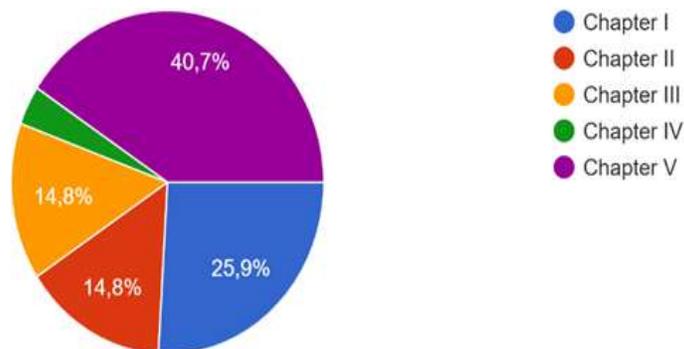


Figure 2. The easiest Thesis Chapter that students can write well

There are five (V) chapters in a thesis writing that students should complete in the composition. A number of 40.7% of students considered that writing Chapter V is the easiest part to do, since it is only consisting of Conclusion and Suggestions based on the previous chapters. Another 25.9% of students agreed that Chapter I is the easiest part, while two groups of 14.8% students stated that composing Chapter II and III are easier than the other chapters. The rest, very few students of 3.7% who thought that writing Chapter IV is the easiest part in thesis writing.

The most difficult Thesis Chapter that students cannot write well

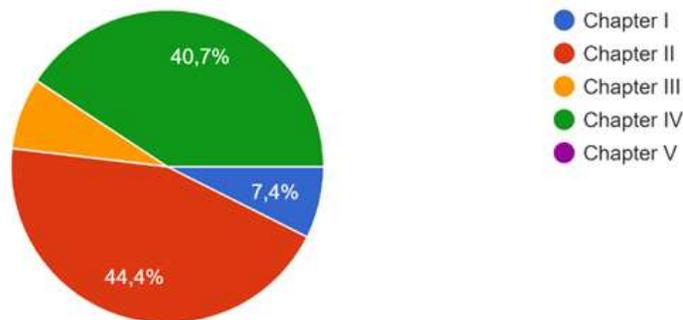


Figure 3. The most difficult Thesis Chapter that students cannot write well

On the other part of being easy in composing the thesis writing chapters, above is the data of students' perception toward the most difficult chapter to write. At most of 44.4% of students admit that writing Chapter II is the hardest thing to do because they have to figure out the appropriate literature based in their field of study as well as stating the update reference of a maximum 10 years old sources. Another part of 40.7% students commonly issued that Chapter IV is difficult to arrange since they have to be careful and meticulous in describing the findings and compared the discussion into the related

literature. Chapter I and III are stated as difficult only by 7.4% for each answer.

Prerequisite subjects for students before thesis writing

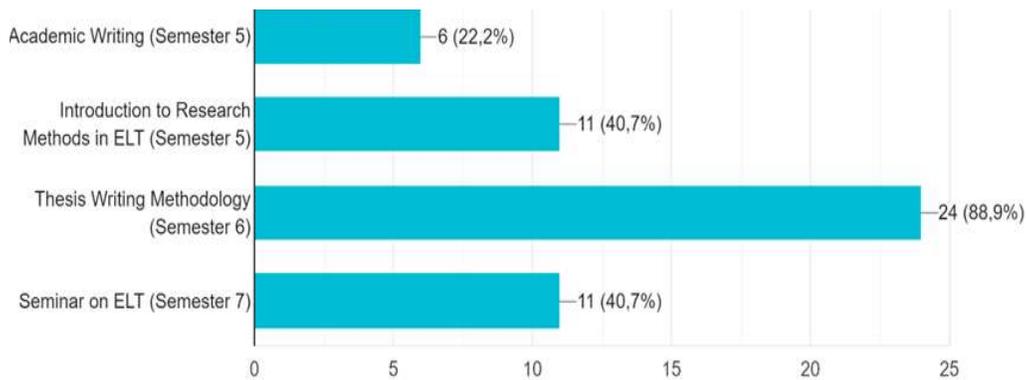


Figure 4. Prerequisite subjects for students before thesis writing

Prerequisite subjects are the subjects given to the students prior to the thesis writing program (semester 8). Those prerequisite subjects are: (1) Academic Writing (Semester 5); (2) Introduction to Research Methods in ELT (Semester 5); (3) Thesis Writing Methodology (Semester 6); and (4) Seminar on ELT (Semester 7). They are given as presupposition that students will be ready and aware of the knowledge in composing their thesis so as to avoid thesis writing block during the program.

The most prominent subject that students think has the basis knowledge of thesis writing is Thesis Writing Methodology (88.9%). The second prominent subjects are Introduction to Research Methods in ELT (40.7%) and Seminar on ELT (40.7%). The last but not least is Academic Writing (22.2%).

The importance of prerequisite subjects

As stated previously, prerequisite subjects have their parts to support the students' comprehension on what to do during their thesis writing. Below are the reasons of importance among those subjects:

Academic Writing (Semester 5)

Students have the interpretation that prerequisite subjects are interconnected and academic writing is the basic course to thesis writing. In this subject, students are taught the steps for writing as well as practicing it. Students also learn article writing in this course. By having this course, the students are exposed to writing activities, starting from academic writing and article writing as a preparation and practice prior to thesis writing.

Introduction to Research Methods in ELT (Semester 5)

Another prerequisite subject that the students considered important is Introduction to Research Methods in ELT. Students stated that this course helps them understand clearly which research method will be used in their thesis writing. They also thought that Introduction to Research Methods in ELT is important because through this subject they can learn kinds of research methods they will use in order to gain the appropriate data. Students are needed to comprehend research method because it is a crucial part among them, which contains the method or the system on how to collect and analyse the data.

Thesis Writing Methodology (Semester 6)

The next important subject is Thesis Writing Methodology. Students experienced the introduction or training about how to write a thesis. After having this course, they are hoped to be able to write a good thesis. During the course, they were required to write a thesis script even though it was just a simulation. Some of them even made a script for their future thesis. Moreover, students are directed to write a thesis correctly, especially on what to write and the steps in writing a thesis. A couple of students were also got the idea of the thesis title during this course. As a prerequisite subject, Thesis Writing Methodology provides knowledge about how the research method is applied and the implementation of various methods needed.

Seminar on ELT (Semester 7)

The final prerequisite subject prior to thesis writing is Seminar on ELT. Students thought that this course facilitated them to revise their thesis proposal. In this course, the lecturer required the students to compose a thesis proposal then they have to present their proposal as well as giving appropriate explanation toward their writing. After that, they will have the time to learn and revise the needed parts so as they can continue the idea into their real thesis writing.

In accordance to those findings, students need and are required to fully understand the prerequisite subjects before they totally face the challenge of their writing. As supported by Andani & Oktaviani (2018) that comprehending the prerequisite subjects can help students compose good thesis. To make the delivery of subject materials more comprehensible, those required materials are supposed to be done face-to-face rather than online. It is agreed by Irza (2021) that during the online learning students were easily get distracted and had more stress due to many assignments given. Thus, it is not an easy job to start composing the thesis writing without having complete understanding and knowledge about it.

Putri & Savira (2014) had the idea that the preparation of thesis writing is important, how the lecturers can help them and provide them a good preparation can give them motivation to finish their thesis. This reflected the condition that lecturers have prominent role in guiding the students, mainly before their thesis writing. As described in the findings that students expected to get more intact knowledge about thesis writing during the prerequisite subjects so as to gain confidence later on during writing their thesis. Related to Rusitayanti et al., (2021) that the dominant factor is from internal factor which is students' ability in writing thesis. Through confidence, motivation will come easily because they already had the knowledge and ability to finish their thesis writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the described findings and discussion explained above, it can be concluded that students are aware that all prerequisite subjects are important because they will use the knowledge, they got during thesis writing. Thus, students will be able to write their thesis well when they already understood on what to write. Preparation before starting to write a thesis is important. That is why students have to know and comprehend the subjects provided as their thesis writing preparation. In addition, being fully confidence is also an essential aspect for students, hence they will be motivated to complete the thesis without any writing block.

REFERENCES

- Andani, E. M., & Oktaviani. (2018). Analisis Kendala Mahasiswa dalam Proses Penulisan Skripsi (Studi Kasus: Mahasiswa Tahun Masuk 2010-2013 Program Studi Pendidikan Teknik Bangunan Jurusan Teknik Sipil FT UNP). *Journal of Civil Engineering and Vocational Education*, 5(4), 1–6. <http://ejournal.unp.ac.id/index.php/cived/article/view/102478>
- Bahasoan, A. N., Wulan Ayuandiani, Muhammad Mukhram, & Aswar Rahmat. (2020). Effectiveness of Online Learning In Pandemic Covid-19. *International Journal of Science, Technology & Management*, 1(2), 100–106. <https://doi.org/10.46729/ijstm.v1i2.30>
- Bailey, S. (2018). *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students* (Second Edi). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Bak, N. (2014). *Guide to Academic Writing* (Issue May). University of the Western Cape.
- Barbu, A., Popescu, M. A. M., & Moiceanu, G. (2022). Perspective of Teachers and Students towards the Education Process during COVID-19 in Romanian Universities. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19063409>
- Etika, N., & Hasibuan, W. F. (2016). Deskripsi Masalah Mahasiswa Yang Sedang Menyelesaikan Skripsi. *KOPASTA: Jurnal Program Studi Bimbingan Konseling*, 3(1), 40–45. <https://doi.org/10.33373/kop.v3i1.265>
- Fadilah, A. A., Hartantri, S. D., & Noviyanti, W. (2022). Analisis Kesulitan Mahasiswa Menyelesaikan Skripsi di Masa Pandemi Covid-19 Program Studi Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar Universitas Muhammadiyah Tangerang. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 6(2), 9476–9479.
- Ho, P. (2015). the Effectiveness of a Thesis Writing Seminar for Graduate Students at Ho Chi Minh City Open University. *International Journal of Tesol Education*, April, 46–55. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.1.1788.3686>
- Irza, Y. (2021). The Challenges of Online Learning During Pandemic: Students' Voice. *Wanastra: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 13(1), 8–13.

<https://doi.org/10.31294/w.v12i1><http://ejournal.bsi.ac.id/ejournal/index.php/wanastra/8>

- Kothari, C. . (2016). *Research Methodology Methods and Techniques*. New Age International Publishers.
- Lambert, V. a., & Lambert, C. E. (2013). *Qualitative Descriptive Research: An Acceptable Design*. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, 16(4), 255–256. <http://antispam.kmutt.ac.th/index.php/PRIJNR/article/download/5805/5064>
- Pasaribu, M. X. N., Harlin, & Syofii, I. (2016). Analisis Kesulitan Penyelesaian Tugas Akhir Skripsi pada Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Teknik Mesin Universitas Sriwijaya. *Jurnal Pendidikan Teknik Mesin*, 3(No 1), 24–28. <https://ejournal.unsri.ac.id/index.php/ptm/article/download/5346/3630>
- Penyusun, T. (2018). *Kurikulum Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris STKIP PGRI Pasuruan*.
- Putri, D., & Savira, S. (2014). Pengalaman Menyelesaikan Skripsi: Studi Fenomenologis Pada Mahasiswa Psikologi Universitas Negeri Surabaya. *Character: Jurnal Penelitian Psikologi.*, 2(2).
- Rusitayanti, N. W. ., Ariawati, N. W., Indrawathi, N. L. ., & Widiyanti, N. L. . (2021). Faktor-Faktor Kesulitan Mahasiswa Menyusun Skripsi Mahadewa Indonesia Di Era Adaptasi Kebiasaan Baru Tahun 2021. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan Indonesia*, 12(2), 138–148.
- Saunders, P. C., & Tait, P. (2018). *Questionnaire Design Key Elements of Research Objective Hypothesis / Question Methods Results*.
- Team, S. S. (2017). *Research and Thesis writing*. In University of Wollongong Learning Development.
- Zain, M. I., Radiusman, R., Syazali, M., Hasnawati, H., & Amrullah, L. W. Z. (2021). Identifikasi Kesulitan Mahasiswa Dalam Penyusunan Skripsi Prodi Pgsd Universitas Mataram. *Tunjuk Ajar: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(1), 73. <https://doi.org/10.31258/jta.v4i1.73-85>