

The Factors Affecting Students' Difficulties in Conducting Thesis at English Language Educational the University of Batanghari Jambi

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ABSTRACT

This research was included in quantitative research which aims to find out the problems and factors experienced by students so that it affects their difficulties in completing the thesis. The subjects of this study were 19 students of the 2018 English Department of Batanghari Jambi University who had completed their thesis. This research collected data through questionnaires distributed online using Google form. In this research, three main factors are identified that affecting undergraduate thesis writing. First, psychological factors which include self-esteem, anxiety, and motivation. Furthermore, the second factor is socio-cultural factors which include the social distance among each student and the social distance between students and supervisors. Lastly, linguistic factors which include domain error analysis and extent of error analysis. The results showed that psychology factors got a percentage of 40.36%, socio-cultural factors got a percentage of 29.66%, and linguistic factors got a percentage of 29.96%. Thus, it can be concluded that the most influencing factor in the difficulty of students completing the thesis is the psychological factor.

Keywords: *Students' Difficulties, Psychological Factors, Socio-cultural Factors, Linguistic Factors*

INTRODUCTION

Education is an important and mandatory need in human life as a conscious effort made to gain a process of experience. According to Rousseau (2003) defines education as a conscious effort to provide individuals with knowledge and skills that can be used later when they are adults, namely a condition in which individuals must be responsible for their own behavior.

In Indonesia, education consists of various levels. Higher education the last education and is the highest level which includes diploma, bachelor, master, doctoral, and specialist education programs organized by universities. To complete in their education, students are faced with a final project or what is commonly called a thesis.

A thesis is a requirement to obtain undergraduate status (S1) in every State University (PTN) and Private University (PTS). Oliver (2013) thesis is a piece of structured scholarly writing that reports on a thesis sample. Students who can write a thesis are considered to be able to combine their knowledge and skills in understanding, analyzing, describing, and

explaining problems related to the scientific field of the major.

In fact, students who are writing a thesis often have facing some difficulties. There are various difficulties faced by students, such as difficulty in pouring ideas into scientific writing, lack of understanding of the problems being studied, limited references, or problems faced by supervisors.

Brown (2007) classifies into three factors that will influence students in writing a thesis, namely psychological factors which can also be referred to as internal factors and are related to mental and spiritual aspects. Second, socio-cultural factors related to social and cultural factors. In this case, socio-cultural factors play an important role in individual development and function. Finally, linguistic factors related to language. The linguistic features of writing include language rules that are accepted in academic writing standards. Linguistic features refer to dealing with the maturity of sentences that the writer uses based on good and proper conventional grammar.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Difficulty of Students Conducting Thesis

In higher education, especially in the academic field of English, students are not only required to master listening, speaking and reading but are also required to be able to write, especially in this case writing a thesis. However, in reality, many students do not often write and think that writing a thesis is a scary thing that inevitably has to be done.

In the research of Wang and Yang (2012) revealed that the problems faced by students revolve around the lack of theoretical knowledge and logical organization that students have, then students lack the ability to synthesize literary works, and finally the problem faced by students is the lack of critical thinking during the writing process.

In line with Payne and Turner (1999) and Strickland, et.al (2002) explain in Josephine (2012) that students who experience problems in writing are related to the difficulty of communicating their ideas. They may have difficulty constructing sentences, using punctuation in sentences and using grammatically accepted vocabulary and paragraph organization.

According to Blumner, Eliason, & Fritz (2001) say that one of the problems lies in language. This language problem consists of the suitability of the content, the relevance of the content, the effectiveness of the content, the use of punctuation marks, and the selection of the right words. Thus, in this research the factors that was be underlined are the factors proposed

Psychological Factors

Psychological factors can also be referred to as internal factors. Psychological factors are factors related to aspects mental or spiritual. Brown (2007) considers that the psychological factors of students can be recognized from the emotional factors of students. Brown explained that psychological factors will affect the undergraduate students in creating good thesis writing. These factors are (1) Self-Esteem; (2) attribution theory and self-efficacy; (3) Willingness to communicate; (4) Inhibition; (5) Risk-Taking; (6) Anxiety; (7)

Empathy; (8) Extroversion and Introversion; (9) Motivation.

All psychological factors mentioned by Brown influence the student's decision to set research objectives, data for research, research findings, and overall research based on proven ratios. However, this study only took three psychological factors such as self-esteem, anxiety, and motivation.

a) Self-Esteem

In psychology, self-esteem is termed to describe subjective feelings in a person as a whole, whether related to personal worth or value. In other words, self Esteem is one form of self-assessment that is usually associated with self-appreciation. According to Branden (2005) states that Self-esteem is a confidence in our right to be happy, a feeling of dignity, worth, affirming our desires and values, and enjoying the outcomes of our jobs.

b) Anxiety

Anxiety is a feeling of restlessness or worries that are usually expressed with an excessive reaction, and may not focus on the situation that exists as a threat to it as a response to a situation or a real-life experience. Brown (2000) states that anxiety is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self -doubt, apprehension, and worry. While, Ormrod (2011), who says that anxiety is the same as having feelings of discomfort and fear that a person experiences about a situation with uncertain results.

c) Motivation

Motivation is a simple word to say but it is hard to define. Motivation is considered as important aspect to do certain activities in order to be success. According to Brown (2007) states that motivation is the extent to which you make choices about (a) goals to pursue and (b) the effort you will devote to that pursuit. On other hand, Woolfolk (1998) considers motivation as an integral part to achieve a goal. That is, it is associated with providing a positive influence in every process.

Socio-cultural Factors

Socio-cultural means related to social and cultural factors. In this case, socio-cultural factors play an important role in the development and functioning of individuals. It is said that socio-cultural factors are larger-scale forces in culture and society that will influence thoughts, feelings, and behavior. According to Brown (2007), culture is important for second language learners. Therefore, the focus on socio-cultural factors that will be arisen in this study of the difficulties in writing a thesis is bold in two aspects, such as (1) The social distance among each student, and; (2) the social distance between students and supervisors.

a) The Social Distance Among Each Student

Humans are social creatures who always interact with other humans. Clearly, humans need other humans to run their lives or to fulfill their needs. Human nature as social beings will form a law, establish a code of behavior and cooperation between larger groups. Rahmat (2017) states that the relationship is another form of interaction between certain individuals that prioritizes feelings and the use of individual words as a mirror of the individual's nature and feelings.

b) The Social Distance between Students and Supervisors

In writing the thesis, students will have one or two supervisors who are lecturers at the college where the student is studying. During the guidance process, the interaction between the supervisor and students becomes crucial. Usually, when doing guidance, some students will have difficulty in establishing contact with the supervisor for various reasons. Like feeling awkward to ask questions when having difficulties, or for lecturers who are difficult to find, thus preventing students from completing their thesis.

Linguistics Factors

Linguistic factors are factors related to language. The linguistic features of writing include language rules that are accepted in academic writing standards. Linguistic features

refer to dealing with the maturity of sentences that the writer uses based on good and proper conventional grammar.

Lennon in 1991 quoted by Brown (2007) suggests identifying errors by considering the two related dimensions of error, such as domain and extent. Brown have been ever explained domain is the rank of linguistic unit (from phoneme to discourse) that must be taken as the context for the error to become apparent. Meanwhile, extent is the rank of a linguistic unit that would have to be deleted, replaced, supplied, or reordered to repair the sentence.

In the context of the analysis of the factors of student difficulties in thesis writing, Lennons' overview about two related dimensions of error will be used to research the linguistics factors affecting undergraduate students in writing their thesis.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, this research used quantitative methods with type of research is included in survey research. According to Creswell (2014) quantitative research is an approach to examine objective theories with the relationship between variables. In turn, these variables can be measured and usually on the instrument, so numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures.

According to Lawrence (2003), survey research is quantitative research to ask several people (respondents) related to beliefs, opinions, or characteristics of an object and behavior. In short, the survey research method is concerned with questions about one's own beliefs and behavior.

The population in this research are students of English Education batch of 2018 at Batanghari University Jambi. Thus, the sample is a subgroup of the population that this research has targeted to study and generalize. The sampling technique in the research is to use a purposive sampling technique. The sample in this research is 19 students with the criteria follows: 1) Active students taking thesis course and 2) Students who have completed the thesis.

The research instrument was the questionnaire. This research used the closed

questionnaire, it has been equipped with alternative answers so that respondents can directly choose one of the answers provided. This questionnaire contains 40 statements which are divided into 3 factors, namely psychological factors, socio-cultural factors, and linguistic factors.

Besides, this research collected the data by distributing online questionnaires using one of the platforms, namely Google form. After the data was collected, this research conducted data analysis. In this research, the data were analyzed based on the results of a questionnaire that had been distributed using a Likert scale. In this scale, this research was provided four answer choices consisting of four responses, namely Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

The data from the questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively to analyzed the highest percentage determines as the most of problems faced by the students in conducting their thesis. Each respondent's answer is associated with a point value that has a score, which is finally determined by adding up the point scores for each statement.

Table 1. Scale Value

Responses	Scale Value
Strongly Agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

To get quantitative results, the data was be calculated and arranged in a table as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Which:

P : Percentage

F : Frequency

N : Number of sample

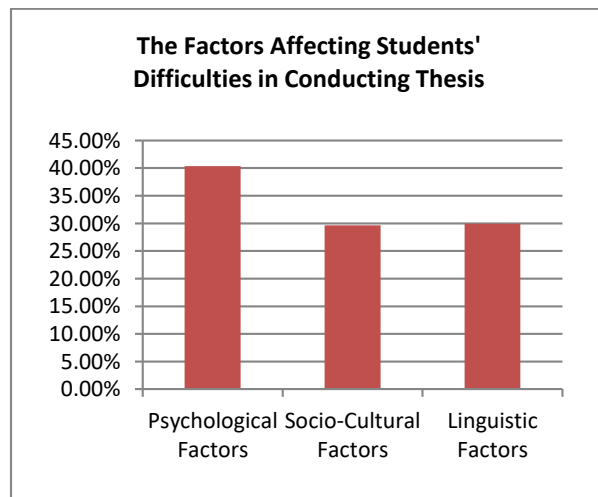
100% : Constant value

FINDINGS

This research was conducted on 2018 students who have completed their thesis at Batanghari University Jambi. The total sampling results consisted of 19 people, namely 15 females and 4 males. This research presented data from closed questionnaires distributed online.

The test in this study contained 40 questionnaires, which were divided into 3 factors, namely psychological factors, socio-cultural factors, and linguistic factors. Psychological factors consist of self-esteem, anxiety, and motivation. Socio-cultural factors consist of the social distance between each student and the social distance between students and supervisors. Lastly, linguistic factors, which consist of domain error analysis and extent error analysis. The results of this research can be seen in the table below:

Figure 1. The Factors Percentage



The figure above shows that the factors that influence students' difficulties in doing thesis include psychological factors which have the highest percentage of 40.36% with a total score of 656. Difficulty in determining an interesting thesis title for them and also the emergence of excessive anxiety becomes problems faced by students in doing their thesis. Then, the linguistic factor with a total score of 487 and a percentage of 29.96%. Finally, socio-cultural factors with the lowest percentage 29.66% with a total score of 482.

Based on the analysis of the findings above from the data found in this study, this research would like to discuss the formulation of the problem in this study and see what was found in the results of this study. This research focuses on the factors that influence the final student's difficulty in working on the thesis at the English Department, Batanghari University, Jambi.

The results showed that the factors that most influenced students' difficulties in doing thesis were psychological factors with the highest score and percentage of 40.36% compared to the other two factors, namely linguistic factors which had the second highest percentage of 29.96% and socio-cultural factors with a percentage of 29.66%.

Psychological factors are related to self-esteem, anxiety, and student motivation in doing thesis. In the questionnaire session given, most of the students said that the problem in writing a thesis was the difficulty in determining an interesting thesis title to be researched. Another problem faced by students refers to feelings of anxiety that arise when writing a thesis, such as difficulty sleeping peacefully and the fear of not being able to finish the thesis on time. This is due to a lack of confidence in their own abilities so that students have high or excessive anxiety.

In line with the research conducted by Dwihandini et al (2013) in the undergraduate program at the English Department, Mahasaraswati University. However, in Dwihandini's research, it was found that the psychological factor that most influenced students' difficulties in doing thesis was only self-esteem, while student anxiety was not proven to cause students difficulties in doing thesis.

Furthermore, the second factor is the linguistic factor related to the domain error analysis and extent error analysis, where from the results of the study it was found that the obstacle for students to work on theses was the difficulty in compiling the grammar of their thesis writing. So, that in this case the most influencing student difficulties in working on thesis in linguistic factors is the domain error analysis while the extent error analysis has no

significant evidence of influencing the difficulties of students working on the thesis.

Lastly, socio-cultural factors related to the social distance between each student and the supervisor. Where from the results of the study it was found that the thing that made it difficult for students to work on their thesis was the difficulty in meeting with the supervisor when they wanted to do thesis guidance. In this case, the most influential socio-cultural factor is the social distance between students and their supervisors, while the social distance between each student is not found to be significant if it affects students' difficulties in doing thesis.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data collected and analyzed from research conducted at the University of Batanghari Jambi, it can be concluded that the difficulties that affect students in completing the thesis are divided into 3 factors, each of which is found to a problem. First, on psychological factors, students experience difficulties in self-esteem such as finding it difficult to determine an interesting thesis title to study and also excessive anxiety related to not being able to complete the thesis on time or having difficulty sleeping peacefully. Furthermore, on socio-cultural factors related to the difficulty of meeting with supervisors when they wanted to do thesis guidance. Finally, on linguistic factors related to domain error analysis. Students have difficulty in arranging grammar in their thesis writing. Of all these causes, the most dominant cause of student difficulties is doing thesis which makes it difficult for them to sleep peacefully. Of all these problems, psychological factors occupy the most dominant factor influencing student difficulties in doing thesis with a percentage of 40.36% with a total score of 656.

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