

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The researcher provides six different themes that are relevant to this study in this chapter. The content includes the study's background, the formulation of research questions, the study's aims, its importance, its scope and limits, and the description of essential words.

A. Background of The Research

In order to graduate from their undergraduate studies, students in Indonesia are required to complete a thesis (Aryana et al., 2019). Because of this, each student must finish a thesis as their final project in order to be considered graduated and get their bachelor's degree. Most student theses in English study programs or English education are about English itself, both in terms of how it is used and how it is taught (Safitri et al., 2021).

In the process of writing the thesis, the students experienced several difficulties. These difficulties are found in the use of grammar (Harjum, 2020), the suitability of research methods (Safitri et al., 2021), the use of relevant theories (Aryana et al., 2019), etc. In dealing with these difficulties, students certainly need guidance from their thesis supervisors. The thesis supervisors or lecturers acts as a student assistant in working on the thesis. They play a role in directing students and providing instructions, thus the students' thesis can be completed and obtain maximum results.

Most of the time, consultations for the thesis are done in person. Since March 2020, all academic activities, including thesis consultation, must be done online because of a government rule about COVID-19 that says everyone must physically separate and lock down. Students are affected by online consultation, especially those who are used to studying or talking to people in person (Tria, 2020). The disadvantage of using an online thesis consulting service is that it is less efficient with the use of one's time (Donohue, 2021). The online consultation also requires an internet network (Huang, 2020), compatible software or hardware (Winthrop, 2020), as well as the skills of students or lecturers in operating the device so that communication can run optimally (Basilaia & Kvavadz, 2020).

Due to the limitations of online consultations, online communication is less successful than direct or face-to-face interaction. If there is internet interference between the sender and receiver of a message that strongly depends on the internet network, the sender or recipient may experience a delay or a lack of contact (Huang, 2020). In other hand, students must shorten and summarize their questions so that they can be easily understood by the supervisor (Hasibuan, 2020). These difficulties make student questions very limited while many of the students still do not have sufficient knowledge about research.

The lack of research expertise among students is partly attributable to online learning. Online learning is 20 to 35% less effective than in-person learning. This also happens in the learning of research technique, academic

research, statistical research, and other types of research (Donohue, 2021). In other words, students do not have sufficient provisions to conduct research but are required to finish their thesis.

In addition to several weaknesses, thesis online consultation also has advantages. One of the significant impacts is the elimination of the distance or the difference in residence factor between students and their supervisors (Tria, 2020). This makes it easier for students to communicate with their supervisors. In addition, another positive impact is the existence of real-time group video call applications that provide features such as face-to-face communication. Some applications that are often used include google meet, zoom, whatsapp group, discord, etc. In other words, online consultation does not always limit communication between students and teachers. Students can consult about working on their thesis by video call like a face-to-face consultation.

In these consultations students still need a variety of guidance. Some students still do not even understand the difference between qualitative and quantitative research. Other obstacles are errors in the use of grammar, difficulty in choosing words or sentences (Hasibuan, 2020), difficulties in developing topics that are suitable for English or English Education (Hasibuan, 2020), difficulties in carrying out their research or methodology (Yundra et al., 2020), and various other difficulties. In writing a good thesis, it is also necessary to have good mastery of paragraph writing. In line with this, students must also know or present up to date topics that are relevant to the English Education study program.

The number of revision frequencies makes students have to graduate longer. The majority of these students did not graduate on time, i.e. they graduated in semesters 9, 10, 11, 12 and even more. This incident also happened to several English Department students of UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Some UIN SATU students graduate in the ninth semester or more. This is of course very closely related to the difficulties and lack of readiness of the students of the English department of UIN SATU in working on their thesis. These obstacle factors are also added with online consultation in working on the thesis.

Some previous study, Donohue et al., (2021) with their title “Impact Of COVID-19 Pandemic on The Doctoral Student’s Thesis or Dissertation Progress” were intended to find the influence of COVID-19 pandemic on their progress in writing thesis. The finding stated that are some respondents stated that they had difficulties in the research design, access to resources, workload, their mental health, and their finances.

In other hand, second previous study Tria (2020) wrote a research with title “The COVID-19 Pandemic through the Lens of Education in the Philippines: The New Normal.” This research was intended to discover the new normal educational policy affected the learning progress. The findings stated that the online learning or new normal educational policy in Philippines had an impact on students’ knowledge receive.

Similarly in Indonesia, Hasibuan et.al., (2020) conducted research entitled “The Effectiveness of Classroom and Online Learning: A Study for Social Education Students during Covid-19.” The findings showed that the online system made students have a distance each other. That make them lost their motivation and make them graduate longer. In other hand, the online consultation in Indonesia makes a unreadiness to students in doing thesis writing that give the mental impact to them.

Previous studies above found the lack or impact about the online system of learning but not cover about the student’s readiness in doing their thesis writing. Based on these previous studies, researchers are interested to examine the challenges faced by English department students while doing online consultation during the period of writing their thesis.

The researcher intended to conduct this research as there has not been any research that discover the impact of thesis online consultation on thesis writing of English department student in Islamic University Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. Thus, researchers are interested in conducting research with the title “The Challenges of Online Consultations Faced by English Department Students on Their Thesis Writing”.

B. Statement of The Research Problem

Taking into consideration the context of the study background, the researcher organized the research questions in the following manner:

1. What are the difficulties that faced by students on their thesis writing process in online thesis consultation?
2. How online thesis consultation impacts English department students in writing their thesis?

C. Research Objective

Based on the statement of the research problem before, the aims of this study are:

1. To describe the difficulties that faced by students on their thesis writing process in online thesis consultation.
2. To find the impact of online thesis consultation during the pandemic on English department students in writing their thesis.

D. Significance of The Research

This research was carried out in order to provide a few benefits. The importance of the study findings is as follows:

1. For the English Education Department students

This research found impact of online thesis consultation during the pandemic regarding the readiness of writing thesis for English Department students and their difficulties in online consultation. Based on this finding, it can be used to overcome similar difficulties in undergoing thesis online consultation when writing on their thesis. Thus, students can do their thesis well and get maximum results

2. For the English lecturer

This research found impact of online thesis consultation during the pandemic regarding the readiness of writing thesis for English Department students and their difficulties in online consultation. Based on this finding, teachers can use references from the impact caused by thesis online consultation which affects students' readiness in working on thesis, thus that teachers can utilize and design a communication system in good online consultation so that students who are mentored will get better knowledge

3. For the other researcher

This research found impact of online thesis consultation during the pandemic regarding the readiness of writing thesis for English Department students and their difficulties in online consultation. Based on this finding, The researcher hope that another research can found another aspect of the impact of thesis online consultation on students' thesis writing readiness. Another research can focus on psychological aspect, social aspect, linguistic knowledge, and etc.

E. Scope and Limitation of The Research

In order to avoid the deviation from the purpose of the study, this study only focuses to analyze the impact of online thesis consultation during the pandemic regarding the readiness of writing thesis for English Department students and their difficulties in online consultation. The impact in this research only focuses on the academic aspect such as the knowledge of topic, grammar, writing, vocabulary, methodology, and another aspect that related

to academic research. In addition, this research also focused and limited in the difficulties in online consultation based on the process to realize the many aspects before in student's thesis writing. The limitation of the research has a weakness that not cover another aspect such as psychology, social, etc.

F. Definition of The Key Terms

In order to prevent the researcher and the readers from misunderstanding each other and making mistakes in their interpretations, the following key terms is defined:

1. Thesis writing.

Students are required to complete the step of writing a thesis as part of the process of graduating from their graduate degree in university. An activity that involves working on study and producing a summary of a particular research endeavour is called "writing a thesis."

2. Thesis online consultation

Thesis online consultation is a communication process between students who are working on their thesis and their supervisor which is carried out online using the internet network (Tria, 2020). In the consultation, students asked for criticism and suggestions as well as instructions for working on their thesis.