# EXPLORING STUDENTS' CHALLENGES IN WRITING ENGLISH ACADEMIC PAPER: A CASE STUDY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF UINSA

## **THESIS**

Submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd) in Teaching English



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#### ABSTRACT

Ekasari, Yulita, 2020, Exploring Students' Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers: A Case Study in English Language Education Department of UINSA. A Thesis. English Language Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Supervisors: Dr. Siti Asmiyah, M.TESOL and Fitriah, Ph.D.

Key Words: English Academic Writing, Challenges, Strategies

This qualitative research investigated the students' challenges in writing English academic papers. The aims of this research are to find out the challenges faced by the students in writing English academic papers and the strategies they use to solve the challenges. The subject of this study was students from 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semester of English Language Education Department of UINSA. In collecting the data, interviews with 2 lecturers who teach writing subject and 4 students from 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semesters who have written English academic papers during their study were conducted. Also, online questionnaires were distributed to 72 students from 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semesters. The results of this study highlighted the following: (1) The challenges are mostly faced by the students in writing English academic papers are the grammatical aspects and the difficulties in developing coherent, cohesive English academic paper to make it understandable. (2) The strategies used by the students in solving those challenges in writing English academic papers include learning from good example of academic papers, reading a lot of references and do brainstorming to explore idea. These findings imply that most students have difficulties in grammatical aspects when they write English academic papers and the strategies that mostly used by the students to solve those challenges is learning from good example of academic papers.

#### ABSTRAK

Ekasari, Yulita, 2020, Exploring Students' Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers: A Case Study in English Language Education Department of UINSA. Skripsi. Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Pembimbing: Dr. Siti Asmiyah, M.TESOL dan Fitriyah, Ph.D.

Kata Kunci: Penulisan Akademik Bahasa Inggris, Tantangan, Strategi

Penelitian kualitatif ini menyelidiki tantangan siswa dalam menulis makalah akademik bahasa Inggris. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui tantangan yang dihadapi oleh siswa dalam menulis makalah akademik bahasa Inggris dan strategi yang mereka gunakan untuk menyelesaikan tantangan tesebut. Subjek penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester 2 - 8 Departemen Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris UINSA. Dalam mengumpulkan data, wawancara dilakukan dengan 2 dosen yang mengajar mata pelajaran Writing dan 4 siswa dari semester 4 -8 yang telah menulis makalah akademik bahasa Inggris selama studi. Juga, kuesioner online dibagikan kepada 72 siswa dari semester ke-8. Hasil penelitian ini menyoroti hal-hal berikut: (1) Tantangan yang paling banyak dihadapi oleh siswa dalam menulis makalah academic bahasa Inggris adalah aspek tata bahasa dan kesulitan dalam mengembangkan makalah akademik yang koheren dan kohesif untuk membuatnya dapat dimengerti. (2) Strategi yang digunakan oleh siswa dalam memecahkan tantangan-tantangan dalam menulis makalah akademik bahasa Inggris diantaranya belajar dari contoh makalah akademis yang baik, membaca banyak referensi dan melakukan brainstorming untuk mengeksplorasi ide. Temuan ini menyiratkan bahawa masalah yang paling banyak dialami oleh siswa saat menulis makalah academik bahasa Inggris adalah aspek tatabahasa dan strategi yang paling sering digunakan oleh siswa untuk menyelesaikan masalah tesebut adalah dengan belajar dari contoh makalah akademik bahasa Inggris yang bagus.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN	i
ADVISOR APPROVAL SHEET	ii
EXAMINER APROVAL SHEET	iii
LEMBAR PERNYATAAN PUBLIKASI	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
TABLE OF CONTENT	
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLE	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
LIST OF ABREVIATION	xiii
CHAPTER I	1
INTRODUCTION	1
A. Background of the Study	1
B. Research Questions	4
C. Objective of the Study	5
D. Significance of the Study	5
E. Scope and Limitation of the Study	6
F. Definition of Key Terms	6
CHAPTER II	8
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	8
A. Theoretical Framework	8
1. Definition of Academic Writing	8
2. Components in Academic Paper Writing	9
3. Kinds of Academic Papers	10
4. Essay	10

5. Research Paper	11
6. Scientific Journal and Article	11
7. Thesis	11
9. Strategies in Coping Difficulties in Writing	12
10. Common Problems in Writing Academic Paper	14
B. Previous Studies	15
CHAPTER III	19
RESEARCH METHOD.	19
A. Research Design and Approach	19
B. Research Setting	19
C. Data and Source of Data	20
D. Data Collection Technique	20
E. Research Instrument.	21
F. Data Analysis Technique	22
G. Trustworthiness	24
H. Research Stages	25
CHAPTER IV	27
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	27
A. Research Findings	27
The Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by the Students	27
2. The Students' Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers	34
B. Challenges in Constructing Idea	35
C. Challenges in Constructing the Writing.	36
D. Challenges in Grammatical Aspects	37
E. Challenges in Tenses	38
F. Challenges in Vocabulary	
G. Other Challenges Faced by the Students in Writing English Academic Papers	<i>1</i> .1

H. Factors that Caused the Challenges in Writing English Academic Pap	pers43
1. The Students' Strategies in Solving Challenges in Writing English	Academic Papers
	44
I. Discussion	47
1. Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by the Students	47
2. The Students' Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers	48
3. The Students' Strategies in Solving the Challenges in Writing Engl	ish Academic
Papers	51
CHAPTER V	54
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS	54
A. Conclusion	54
B. Suggestions	55
REFERENCES	56
APPENDICES	58

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4. 1 The Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by Students	31
Figure 4. 2 The Kinds of Most Difficult English Academic Papers Written	by Students32
Figure 4. 3 Students' Challenges in Constructing Idea	36
Figure 4. 4 Students Challenges in Constructing the Writing	36
Figure 4. 5 Students' Challenges in Grammatical Aspects	37
Figure 4. 6 Students' Challenges in Tenses	38
Figure 4. 7 Kinds of Difficult Tenses	39
Figure 4. 8 Students' Challenges in Vocabulary	41
Figure 4. 9 Factors that Caused the Challenges	43
Figure 4. 10 Students' Strategies in Solving The Challenges in Writing	English Academic
Papers	45

# LIST OF TABLE



# LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Instruments Of The Research	58
Appendix 2 Transcript Of Interviews	67
Appendix 3 The Result Of The Rubric Of Students' English Academic Papers Documen	ts .84
Appendix 4 Surat Tugas	87
Appendix 5 Surat Validasi	8
Annendiy 6 Kartu Koncultaci Skrinci	80



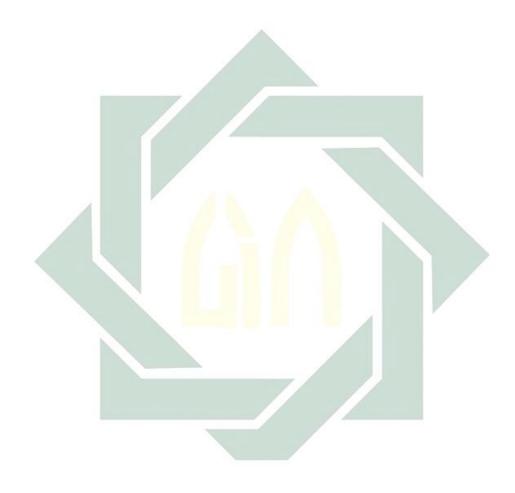
## LIST OF ABREVIATION

UINSA Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel

ESL English as a Second Language
EFL English as a Foreign Language

UIN Universitas Islam Negeri

**ELED** English Language Education Department



#### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

The first chapter addresses the recent theories on the area of challenges in writing English academic paper that will be covered in some headings: (1) background of study, (2) research questions, (3) objectives of the study, (4) significance of the study, (5) scope and limitation of the study, (6) definition of key terms.

## A. Background of the Study

Throughout higher level of education, academic paper writing becomes very important for the students to be mastered. It is because academic paper writing is a skill that requires the students to be able to think and express their idea critically in a form of scientific papers. This skill will be so useful for them since in this modern era students are required to be vocal and critic which this can help them during their study or in their daily life. In relation to academic papers and their study in university, students are asked to make several academic papers, such as essay, research paper, journal and other academic writings. Therefore, academic paper writing is one of skills in English that is important to be mastered by students. Thus, it demands the students to have a good writing skill.

Not to be mentioned that writing is not an easy skill, because English language itself has different structures and rules compared with Bahasa Indonesia. In the process of mastering writing, there are some challenges faced by the students. Such challenges may start from finding the idea and then drafting it to manage their writing, elaborating and exploring their ideas so that it can cover all of their ideas that they want to pour in their papers and other challenges. According to Richards and Rinandya, the difficulties in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Bristol Business School. (2006). *Doing it right – Good practice in academic writing for postgraduate students*. [Online]Available:http://www.brad.ac.uk/learnerdevelopment/media/LearnerDevelopmentUnit/Documents/A cademicSkillsResources/WritingPGskills/Teach\_Yourself\_Good\_Writing\_Practice\_for\_PGs.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Dudley-Evans, A., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

writing lay not only in exploring and managing the idea, but also in translating the idea into readable text.<sup>3</sup> As it has been mentioned before that academic writing is not easy, it is also especially for the students who use English as a foreign and second language. However, in an EFL and ESL context, teachers find students' academic writing weak.<sup>4</sup> According to Al Fadda, those who have no English cultural background tend to find it difficult in writing English papers.<sup>5</sup> Another study done by Bacha, he also found that ESL and EFL students, especially students from Asian universities usually find difficulties in using English to write academic papers.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it has been confirmed that English writing tends to be difficult for EFL students since they have no English cultural background that becomes the main factors of their English writing weakness.

Some researchers have confirmed that writing is generally problematic and challenging for students. Based on studies that have been done by Ibtisam Ali Badi,<sup>7</sup> Hind Al Fadda<sup>8</sup> and John Bitchener and Helen Basturkmen<sup>9</sup> that focused on the challenges that faced by ESL students, it was found that they have difficulties in making their writing coherence and cohesion. Other difficulties that are common are students find it difficult in differentiating between spoken and written English words, drafting before writing the whole paper, determining the skills needed to make a good writing and avoiding plagiarism. Beside the studies of ESL students, a study also done by Ina Suryani, D. Fatimah Petra, W. Rodziah

3

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Richards, J., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Chou, L. (2011). *An investigation of Taiwanese doctoral students' academic writing at a U.S. University.* Higher Education Studies, 1(2), 47-72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Al Fadda, H. (2012). Difficulties in academic writing: From the perspective of King Saud University postgraduate students. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Bacha, N. N. (2012). Disciplinary Writing in an EFL Context FromTeachers' and Students' Perspectives. International Journal of Business and Social Science 3(2),233-256.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>Ibtisam Al Badi. (2015). *Academic Writing Difficulties of ESL Learners*. Oman: Colleges of Applied Sciences-Sohar, the Sultanate of Oman.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Al Fadda, H. (2012). Difficulties in academic writing: From the perspective of King Saud University postgraduate students. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Bitchener John, &Basturkmen Helen (2006). *Perceptions of The Difficulties of Postgraduate L2 Thesis Students Writing the Discussion Section*. Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 5(2006), 4-18.

& Nazifah Hamidun<sup>10</sup> that researched about the difficulties and challenges faced by Southeast Asian Writers especially Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines and Brunei Darussalam, they found out that the common problems relies on the difficulties of using the lexicogramatical, discourse structure and cultural differences.

From those studies we can see that challenges and difficulties in writing are mostly faced by the students who do not have English cultural background. The reason that might cause these situations is those students who do not use English as their own language tend to have low English language proficiency. This idea is supported by Ghabool, Edwina and Kashef, they found that this is the basic problems that most students tend to face when their write English academic paper. Those students who have low language proficiency will find it difficult to write in English because there are factors in English language that they don't master, such as lack in grammatical, the inappropriate use of words, incorrect punctuation and spelling, structure of the words used and many more.

Beside that, according to Chou, another problem that is commonly faced by the students is, their teachers tend to have high expectations towards the students that the teacher will consider the students are able to write a good academic paper. <sup>12</sup> Therefore the teachers give them a difficult topic for the students to write about. On the other side, the students itself are still having a low language proficiency and are fully depending on the teacher. In Indonesia, there are common challenges and difficulties faced by the students in writing academic paper. One of it happened in Research Proposal Written Class in UIN Sunan Ampel

<sup>10</sup> Ina Suryani, D. Fatimah Petra, W. Rodziah&NazifahHamidun (2015). Challenges in Research Article Writing among the Southeast Asian Writers in Proceedings of Symposium of International Languages and Knowledge

among the Southeast Asian Writers in Proceedings of Symposium of International Languages and Knowledge 2015. p. 123-125, 12th -13th of June, Thailand <sup>11</sup>Ghabool, N., Edwina, M., &Kashef, H. S. (2012). Investigating Malaysian ESL Students' Writing Problems on

Conventions, Punctuation and Language Use at Secondary Level. Journal of Studies in Education, 2(3), 131-143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>Chou, L. (2011). An investigation of Taiwanese Doctoral Students' Academic Writing at a U.S. University. Higher Education Studies, 1(2), 47-72.

Surabaya where the students found it difficult in writing their thesis proposal especially in describing and expressing their ideas into a good writing of academic paper.

From those previous studies mentioned, there are actually a lot of researches have done about the challenges in writing academic paper for the students. Most of them are talking about challenges for EFL and ESL students generally in higher level of education. This research will also study about the students' challenges in writing their academic papers but are more focused on the EFL students who are majoring in English department and have written English academic papers during their whole times studying English. This may be interesting to be investigated since it has been mentioned that EFL students who have no English background tend to have difficulties in writing, and this study wants to do a further investigation about the challenges in writing academic papers faced by the EFL students but are having English background since they major in English department. If this research has successfully investigated what challenges faced by the students in writing their academic papers, this study may inform the teacher about the strategies that can be effective to cope the students' difficulties in writing academic paper.

#### **B.** Research Questions

Based on the background of this study that has been outlined, the problems of this research are formulated as these following questions.

- 1. What kinds of English academic papers are written by the students of English Language of Education Department of UINSA?
- 2. What challenges do the students of English Language of Education Department of UINSA face when they write English academic papers?
- 3. What strategies do the students of English Language of Education Department of UINSA use to cope the challenges?

## C. Objective of the Study

In relation with the research questions stated above, this research will be aimed to:

- Investigate kinds of English academic papers written by the students of English Language of Education Department of UINSA,
- Explore the students' challenges when they write English academic papers during their study in English Language Education Department of State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya,
- 3. Investigate what are the strategies they use to solve the challenges in writing English academic papers during their study in English Language Education Department of State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

## D. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may considered be beneficial for both teachers and students in coping challenges in writing English academic papers. For the teacher, this research may inform what challenges and problems that are commonly faced by the students when they write their English academic papers and the effective strategies that can be used to solve the problems. Therefore, the teacher can implement it and help the students during their English academic paper writing. For the students itself, it can be useful in helping them investigating the difficulties in writing English academic paper so they can cope with it and use the strategies offered by this research.

This research also may give further information and confirm or extend the theory about the challenges in writing English academic papers that hopefully will be beneficial for future researchers who want to do the similar qualitative research about challenges in writing English academic papers there should be more in-depth investigation about

challenges writing English academic papers in larger area of EFL students or students from different major rather than English Education major.

## E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

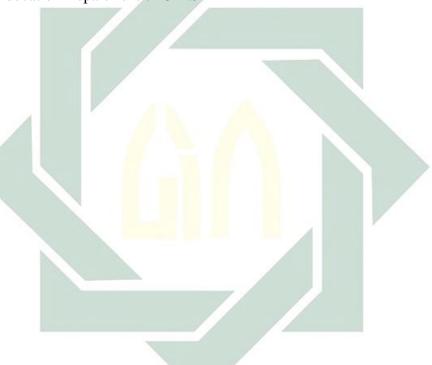
The selection of this research is limited to the students and lecturers of English Language Education Department of State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The participants of this research were 2 teachers and 4 students who were interviewed and 72 were given open ended questionnaires. Those were students in the 2<sup>nd</sup>– 8<sup>th</sup> semesters who have taken English academic paper writings subject, for the lecturers were those who taught writing subject. It was chosen because it would be easier to know the challenges and the strategies to solve the challenges in writing academic papers from those who have done the process of academic papers writing themselves. Those students who were interviewed were those who have strength and low English writing proficiency based on their scores in writing English academic papers. To get further information the interviews were done with the lecturers and questionnaires were conducted to the students. This research only focused on the challenges faced by the students when they write academic papers and how they cope with the challenges.

## F. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid the misunderstanding between the reader and the researcher about the meaning of terms in this research, the researcher clarifies the terms used in this study, those are the following.

 Writing is a form of structured and complex composition in a form of script used to express ideas in English developed by students of English Language Education Department of UINSA.

- 2. Academic writing is an activity that produces a product of mind that can be measured by the students' ability to access, evaluate and synthesize the words, ideas and opinions with the aim to develop their academic voice when they write English academic paper in English Language Education Department of UINSA.
- 3. A challenge is something that is not easy to be done and by that, needed skill, effort and power to require the success this study. In this study, challenge is the difficulties faced by the students in writing English Academic papers during their study in English Language Education Department of UINSA



#### CHAPTER II

#### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The second chapter addresses the theoretical framework on definition of academic writing, components in academic paper writing, challenges in writing academic paper, strategies in coping difficulties in writing, common problems in writing academic paper.

## A. Theoretical Framework

## 1. Definition of Academic Writing

Academic writing is an activity that produces a product of mind therefore it is called as mental and cognitive activity, stated by Burke. <sup>13</sup>The purpose of academic writing is to address the community, in here is the students engage in active learning. Furthermore, the success of writing can be measured by the students' ability to access, evaluate and synthesize the words, ideas and opinions with the aim to develop their academic voice. Academic writing itself is not an easy skill to be mastered especially for students who use English as second and foreign language. <sup>14</sup> According to Mohan and Lo that besides speaking, second language learner finds that academic article writing is difficult. It can be considered as a difficult skill based on the thought that it is not a simple cognitive activity, proved that it requires careful thought, discipline and concentration. For students who have no English cultural background or those who don't speak in English as the first language find it difficult to do the active skill in English, both writing and speaking. <sup>15</sup> One of factors is that English language has different structures and rules compared with their first language used, so that those will

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>Burke, S. (2010). The construction of writer identity in the academic writing of Korean students: A qualitative study of six Korean students in the U.S (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Indiana University of Pennsylvania. <sup>14</sup>Bristol Business School. (2006). Doing It Right – Good Practice in Academic Writing for Postgraduate Students.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup>Mohan, B., & Lo, W. (1985). Academic writing and Chinese students: Transfer and developmental factors. TESOL Quarterly, 19(3), 515-534.

cause some challenges and difficulties when they do writing activity, here is especially writing academic paper.

## 2. Components in Academic Paper Writing

It has been said above by Bristol Business School that the success of writing can be measured by the students' ability to access, evaluate and synthesize the words, ideas and opinions with the aim to develop their own academic voice. 16 It can be determined that when they present what they have learned from others, it is important that students are able to create what they have learned from others and what is their own. Here, the students must also be able to show how much ownership they can claim over their writings. Besides, in order to fulfill the characteristics of good academic writing, the students must follow rules that can make a good academic writing, such as the words or vocabulary we choose when we write academic papers. We can develop and use a broader academic vocabulary to make the writing written formally and academically. Another characteristic is the writer should give only relevant information related to the topic written. The writers' common mistakes are they often give too much information that leads to make the writing irrelevant with the context. the next characteristic that the writer might not really pay attention is to write concisely. In writing, we should avoid repeating ideas over and over, by that, the writer can use few words without losing meaning or complexity.<sup>17</sup>

Here also has been identified by Yugianingrum that the characteristics of a good academic writing <sup>18</sup> those are mentioned that writing should play a significant role in the related community, the topic should be interesting for the writer, who believes that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>Bristol Business School. (2006). Doing It Right – Good Practice in Academic Writing for Postgraduate Students.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> https://www.gcu.ac.uk/characteristicsofacademicwriting/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Yugianingrum (2010). *Producing an English academic paper: Process, problems, and solutions.* US-ChinaForeign Language, 8, pp. 39-49.

there is more to discover about it and the writer must care about the aesthetic quality of the text he or she writes.

#### 3. Kinds of Academic Papers

Academic papers are papers written academically where in the process of writing it, it requires the writer to have a vocal and critical thinking to investigate specific topics. Usually, academic papers are written in a form of scientific studies. As it stated above that the writer needs to have a critical thinking towards specific topics that are written. In writing academic paper, the writing is purposed to investigate cases related to the writer's field of study, to find the answer to a significant question, or to prove existing theories about something.

In university, writing academic papers is very important to be mastered by the students, because in university, students are asked to make several academic papers, such as essay, research paper, scientific journal and article and thesis. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, the students are demanded to master this skill. In order to identify the English academic papers written by university students, the kinds of each paper is described as follows.

#### 4. Essay

Essay is one of academic papers usually written in a short form of writing and only talk about specific object. In writing essay, the writer usually writes to persuade the readers about significant topic.<sup>20</sup> Thus, in writing essays, the students should write their own opinion about the specific topic they write with the aim to persuade the readers regarding to their opinion about their topic.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Dudley-Evans, A., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup>Essay. (2001). In Chambers 21st Century Dictionary. Retrieved from http://www.credoreference.com

## 5. Research Paper

Research paper is a scientific paper where the writer interprets the finding of things they have researched in a scientific writing form. In writing research paper, the writer needs to do a research to find the answer of information related to the study and should present the writer's own perspective supported by experts' ideas.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, in research paper, the writing should not only come from the writer's opinion about the things being researched, but should be backed up by experts' theories to support the writer's ideas.

## 6. Scientific Journal and Article

Scientific journal and article are also included in kinds of scientific papers where the writer does a research and present their research finding. Scientific journal is intended to be published periodically. Just like a research paper, it is a publication based on empirical evidences.<sup>22</sup> In scientific journal and article, it is published regularly throughout the year and also present the writer's ideas based on the findings of their research supported by expert ideas.

## 7. Thesis

Thesis belongs to scientific paper that also becomes the kinds of academic paper that must be written by college students in order to finish their study. In thesis, it is also the same with other scientific papers, where the content is based on evidence that presents the writer's ideas, backed up with other ideas from the previous researches.

#### 8. Challenges in Writing Academic Papers

In the process of mastering writing, there are some challenges or difficulties faced by the students. Such challenges may start from finding the idea and then drafting

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> https://www.esc.edu/online-writing-center/resources/research/research-paper/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> http://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/MPH-<u>Modules/EP/EP713 CriticalReview/EP713 CriticalReview2.html</u>

it to manage their writing, elaborating and exploring their ideas so that it can cover all of their ideas that they want to pour in their papers and so on. Moreover, the difficulties in writing lie not only in exploring and managing the idea, but also in translating the idea into readable text.<sup>23</sup> This thing commonly happens to the students when they start to write their academic papers. They have found the ideas that they are going to write, but the next challenge is that they need to pour out their idea into understandable English sentence.

Al Fadda states that the challenges that commonly faced by the students in writing academic writing are differentiating between written and spoken words and phrases, using grammar including subject-verb agreement and creating sentences together to make a coherent paragraph.<sup>24</sup> Other difficulties are grammar mistakes that can make students difficult in paraphrasing and summarizing other's work, instead they just copy and paste.<sup>25</sup> There are so many researches regarding to the students' problems in writing English academic papers, from that also found that there are a lot of challenges faced by students in English academic writing. It starts from the difficulties in finding and constructing the idea to the difficulties in grammatical aspects.

## 9. Strategies in Coping Difficulties in Writing

A lot of studies have investigated the problems in writing, which also identified the strategies for solving the problems. According to Abdul Kareem, one of the strategies that can be implemented in coping students' difficulties in writing is by using brainstorming ideas.<sup>26</sup> He says that this strategy can give impact to the students by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Richards, J., &Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Al Fadda, H. (2012). Difficulties in academic writing: From the perspective of King Saud University postgraduate students. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Amin, S., & Alamin, A. (2012). Skills and strategies used in the comprehension and production of academic writing in Taif University. English Language and Literature studies, 2(3), 135-139.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup>Abdulkareem, M. (2013). *Investigation Study of Academic Writing Problems Faced by Arab Postgraduate Students at UniversitiTeknologi Malaysia (UTM). Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(9), 1552-1557...

helping them find and explore the ideas that they want to write before they can finally pour it into their papers. Another strategy stated by Al Fadda is asking the students to write an outline before they write the whole ideas. These outlining strategies includes 3 stages, they are planning, writing and editing. He says that this can help the students in their writing successfulness.<sup>27</sup> There are so many proofs that these strategies are used by the students and have helped the students in their writing. This is because this strategy seem to be easy to be done and mostly used to help them in constructing idea for writing, that have stated before that students have difficulties in terms of finding and constructing idea into their writing, so a lot of students use this strategy.

Moreover, Crosby suggests that the teacher needs to give examples for the students about the way to identify their structures, organizations, cohesive devices the other components of writing. For example, the teacher can give the authentic items that they study. The way to achieve the purpose can be done by asking the students to read books, website, journal that can improve their vocabulary and expressions. This strategy also has been proven by Krashen, that reading can improve the students' ability to use grammatical structures and develop a good writing style. Another strategy that can be implemented is suggested by Amin and Alamin, he says that the teacher can give the students the example of good academic papers and discuss about it. This strategy can help the students develop their critical thinking and how to interpret other's word into their own words. Those are strategies done in the previous studies about the difficulties writing academic papers.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Al Fadda, H. (2012). *Difficulties in Academic Writing: From the Perspective of King Saud University Postgraduate Students*. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup>Crosby, C. (2009). Academic reading and writing difficulties and strategic knowledge generation 1.5 learners. In M. Roberge, M. Siegal, & L. Harklau (Eds.), *Generation 1.5 in college composition: Teaching academic writing to U.S-educated learners of ESL* (pp. 105-119). New York, NY: Routledge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Krashen, S. (1993). *The Power of Reading*. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Amin, S., & Alamin, A. (2012). Skills and Strategies Used in the Comprehension and Production of Academic Writing in Taif University. English Language and Literature Studies, 2(3), 135-139.

## 10. Common Problems in Writing Academic Paper

Above has been said that the students who use English as second and foreign language face some difficulties in writing, especially in the academic writing. According to Chou, the common difficulties are; firstly, it can come from the students' cultural backgrounds, where it depends on their teachers. Writing teachers who have high expectations might make the students be able to produce a good writing text. Another problem may come from the students' low language proficiency. Moreover, the problem could be the main problem in their writing. As concluded, the participants of a study declared that their major problems mostly lie in grammatical errors, the inappropriate use of vocabulary, the difficulties in differentiating tenses, irregular verbs, and incorrect punctuation and spelling. Students with no English cultural background tend to have low English writing level of proficiency because they don't used to write in English as a routine, therefore there are so many challenges and difficulties faced by the students in English writing Furthermore, this fact is added by another fact that their teachers expect them to have a good English writing skill where this actually shows the students' weakness in their English writing.

Meanwhile, Chou states the participants in his study admitted that they feel shy and unconfident to ask teachers for clarification.<sup>35</sup> Another study that focuses on research article writing by non-native writers, the challenges of research writing for the students that use English as a second and foreign language, here is especially the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Chou, L. (2011). An investigation of Taiwanese doctoral students' academic writing at a U.S. University. Higher Education Studies, 1(2), 47-72.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup>Al Murshidi, G. (2014). *UAE University Male Students' Interests Impact on Reading and Writing Performance and Improvement*. English Language Teaching, 7(9), 57-63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup>Ghabool, N., Edwina, M., &Kashef, H. S. (2012). *Investigating malaysian ESL students 'writing problems on conventions, punctuation, and language use at secondary level.* Journal of Studies in Education, 2(3), 131-143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup>Al-Khairy, M. A. (2013). Saudi English-Major Undergraduates' Academic Writing Problems: ATaif university perspective. English Language Teaching, 6(6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup>Chou, L. (2011). *An investigation of Taiwanese doctoral students' academic writing at a U.S. University*. Higher Education Studies, 1(2), 47-72.

Southeast Asian students can be categorized into three aspects of lexico-grammatical<sup>36</sup>, discourse structure<sup>37</sup> and cultural differences.<sup>38</sup>This has been confirmed by a lot of researchers that the students tend to have difficulties in English writing because they don't use English as their language that it makes it hard for them to write in English, and the problem in grammatical aspects has been problems that the students have difficulties about. Grammatical problems actually happen because there are differences in English writing structure with the structure of their first language. Again, it's all about the problems in the use of English as their non first language that caused them difficulties in English writing.

## **B.** Previous Studies

A significant number of studies have been presented the common problems and challenges encountered by students in writing academic papers and reasons behind those challenges. One of researches conducted by Ibtisam Al Badi was about Academic Writing Difficulties of ESL Learners. In this study, the researcher examined the Academic writing challenges faced by ESL learners. It purposed to find out the problems encountered by ESL students in their academic writings and the factors that caused those problems. The researcher used questionnaire to collect the quantitative data by giving it 20 postgraduate students of four nationalities studying at a university in Australia. The findings of the study showed that the students have some similarities in facing the difficulties of writing academic papers that related to their previous educational background. The most common

<sup>36</sup>Flowerdew, J. (1999). *Problems in writing for scholarly publication in English: The case of Hong Kong*. Journal of Second Language Writing (8), 123-145

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup>Mirahayuni, N. K. (2010). *Investigating generic structure of English research articles: Writing strategydifferences between English and Indonesian writers*. TEFLIN Journal: A publication on the teaching and learning of English, 13(1).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup>Kanoksilapatham, B. (2007). Writing Scientific Research Articles in Thai and English: Similarities and Differences. Silpakorn University International Journal, 7, 172-203.

problems are about the coherence and cohesion related to the language use and finding relevant references and writing the citations. Above all there is still another factor that can be concluded as the main problems, it is the lack of previous experience and knowledge about academic writing.<sup>39</sup>

Another research proved that writing is considerably challenging was done by Hind Al Fadda about the difficulties that encountered by King Saud University students when learning to write English academic papers and also to differentiate between students' learning needs and objectives. This study used questionnaire as the main instrument for obtaining required quantitative data by collecting 50 postgraduate students during the 2009-2010 academic year. The study showed that the difficulties faced by ESL students in writing academic papers are such as they find it difficult in differentiating between spoken and written English words, drafting before writing the whole paper, determining the skills needed to make a good writing and avoiding plagiarism. The findings also showed that Saudi students who speak English fluently still have a bad writing skill. One of the reasons is because Arabic Language tends to use metaphoric, lengthy sentences, while it is opposite with the academic writing in English.<sup>40</sup>

A study about challenges in academic writing was also done by Ina Suryani, D. Fatimah Petra, W. Rodziah & Nazifah Hamidun. In this study, the researchers were observing about Lexicogramatical, Discourse and cultural differences play significant roles in how researchers write their research article writings. This paper also intends to analyze the language issues faced by non-native English writers from the Southeast Asia in when they write their research articles. This research puts forward studies on research article writing written by the non-native English writers from the Southeast Asia namely, Malaysia,

<sup>39</sup>Ibtisam Al Badi. (2015). *Academic Writing Difficulties of ESL Learners*. Oman: Colleges of Applied Sciences-Sohar, the Sultanate of Oman.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup>Al Fadda, H. (2012). Difficulties in Academic Writing: From the Perspective of King Saud University Postgraduate Students. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

Thailand, Indonesia, The Philippines and Brunei Darussalam. The discussion uses the secondary sources studies on their research article writings. The findings of this research showed that some of the challenges faced by Southeast Asian writers in writing their research papers were inadequate flair of English language, excessive time taken to prepare the papers. It also explained that the South East Asian writers are non-native speakers of English, the cultural differences also considerably challenging.<sup>41</sup>

Another study was from Amin Ali Al Mubarak that studied about academic writings problems level faced by undergraduate students at Al Imam Al Mahdi University-Sudan. The aim of this study was to investigate the various challenges faced by ESL when they write their academic paper. This study took place in Art Colleges of Al Imam Al Mahdi University, Sudan. In this study the researcher used the students' project of graduation to analyze problems and challenges faced by the students when they write their academic papers. This research uses quantitative design. The data was collected from 15 graduation project for the year 2017. The result of the study showed that significant students encountered problems when they write their academic papers. The problems can be identified as the use of articles, punctuation, the use of irregular verbs, singular and plural, consistency, verb tense, weak expressions and unparalleled structure.<sup>42</sup>

The last previous study about the challenges in writing academic paper done by Dr. Ibrahim Mohamed Alfaki with the aims to investigate the writing difficulties faced by university students and ways how to solve the difficulties. This study took place in Teacher's College and the College of Education, Nile Valley University, Sudan. In this research, the researcher used descriptive research method. The participants of this research

<sup>41</sup>Ina Suryani, D. Fatimah Petra, W. Rodziah & NazifahHamidun (2015). *Challenges in Research Article Writing among the Southeast Asian Writers in Proceedings of Symposium of International Languages and Knowledge 2015*, p. 123-125, 12th -13th of June, Thailand.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup>Al Mubarak, A. A. (2017). An Investigation of Academic Writing Problems Level Faced by Undergraduate Students at Al Imam Al Mahdi University - Sudan. English Review: Journal of English Education, 5(2), 175-188.

were chosen using a simple random sampling with 20 English language students. The students then were asked to write "A Description of My Home Town" using about 250-300 words and will be reviewed twice by 10 English language teachers/ This is aimed to investigate the mistakes made by the students based on their writings. The findings of the study found that there are several problems faced by the students in their descriptive writing, such as the problems in morphology and syntax, mechanical mistakes, punctuation and capitalization, spelling and lack of several writing development skills.<sup>43</sup>

According to those five previous studies mentioned, we can see that most of it researched on the same topic which is challenges and problems in writing academic paper but with different focus areas. Most of them were taking the issue of challenges for EFL and ESL students generally in higher level of education. This research will also study about the students' challenges in writing their academic papers but are more focused on the EFL students who are majoring in English department and have written English academic papers during their whole times studying English. This research will investigate what challenges faced by the students in writing their academic papers, therefore from this research it can give solutions about what strategies that can be applied by the teachers who specifically teach in English to help the students in writing their academic papers.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Alfaki, I. M. (2017). University Students' English Writing Problems: Diagnosis and Remedy.International Journal of English Language Teaching Vol.3, No.3, pp.40-52.

#### CHAPTER III

#### RESEARCH METHOD

The third chapter discusses how to conduct this study in investigating students' challenges in writing English academic paper that involves (1) research design and approach, (2) research setting, (3) data and source of data, (4) research instrument, (5) data collection technique, (6) data analysis technique.

## A. Research Design and Approach

This study used descriptive qualitative design by exploring in-depth and focusing on analyzing the students' challenges in writing academic papers and write the results of the research in a form of descriptive writing. The reason for choosing qualitative design is because this study aims to explore in depth about the students' challenges in writing academic paper. Cresswell says that qualitative research provides flexible and detailed information of the phenomenon. The flexibility of this research lays on the data collected in this study that there are possibilities answers that can be found during the process of this research, while the detailed information is related to the findings of the research that were analyzed in depth to find the answer of the research.

#### **B.** Research Setting

This study was conducted for lecturers who teach academic writing and the students in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semesters who have written academic papers during their study in English Language Education Department of State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup>Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. Pearson Education. 218

#### C. Data and Source of Data

The data collected in this research aims to answer the research questions. The data of this research are students' challenges in writing academic paper, the strategies they use to cope with the challenges and the kinds of English academic papers they write during their study in college. The data is in a form of students and lecturers' responses regarding to the first, second and third research questions about the kinds of English Academic papers written by the students, the challenges and difficulties faced by the students in writing academic paper, also the strategies to cope those challenges. The data is also in a form of students' academic papers submitted to identify deeper about the kinds of English academic papers they have written during their study.

Those data were obtained from 2 lecturers who teach English academic writing, 72 students from 2<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semesters in English Language Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University who have written English academic papers and the English academic papers submitted by the students.

## D. Data Collection Technique

The researcher collected the data from the interview of 2 lecturers who teach academic writing and 3-5 students from 4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> semester who have written English academic papers during their study and administered questionnaires to 72 students from 2<sup>nd</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> semester. The researcher used those techniques to collect the data to identify kinds of English academic papers the students write, the challenges in writing English academic papers and the strategies they use to cope with the challenges. Moreover, the researcher also collected the students' English academic papers documents to obtain comprehensive data on their writing.

#### E. Research Instrument

In collecting the data, the researcher used several research instruments, namely: interview guideline, semi open questionnaire and students' English paper writing.

#### 1. Interview Guideline

The researcher interviewed the lecturers and the students. For the students there were 22 questions regarding to the kinds of English academic papers they have written, the difficulties in writing English academic papers, the factor that caused the difficulties, and how they cope with it. Meanwhile for the teachers there were 11 questions that explore the lecturers' views about the students' difficulties in writing English academic paper, the strategies they use to help the students, the level of successfulness they help the students in solving their writing problems and so on. For detailed interview guide please see appendix I.

## 2. Semi Open Questionnaire

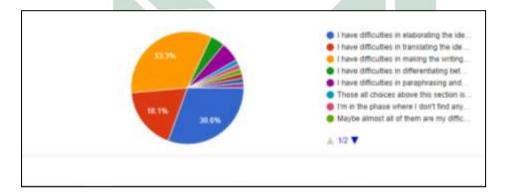
In this research, the researcher distributed semi open questionnaire to the students to get broader information regarding to the challenges and difficulties they face in writing English academic paper and the strategies they use to solve the difficulties. In this questionnaire (see appendix I) there were 14 questions, where the students were given multiple options to make it easy for them to answer.

#### 3. Rubric

The researcher made a rubric (see appendix I) to categorize the students' English academic papers collected documents based on the kinds of the English academic papers. The rubric contains the name of the students who were asked to collect the documents, their semester, the title of their documents and the category of the documents, whether it belongs to essay, research paper, journal, article, or thesis.

## F. Data Analysis Technique

After all the data has been collected, the researcher did some techniques to analyze the data based on the information gathered from the semi open questionnaires, interview and documents of students' English academic paper submitted. For the semi open questionnaires the data were analyzed by calculating the responses from the students who are given the questionnaires. The findings were analyzed based on Google forms chart calculation. The following is the example of the chart about the students' challenges in constructing idea when writing English academic papers.



And then for the interview, the researcher transcribed and did coding to analyze the data. Some steps were done they were; transcribed the result of the interview, highlighted the important things from the interview, grouped main information that were highlighted and then analyzed and described in depth about the result. Below is the example of analysis of data from interview.

# **Interview Analysis**

# **Lecturers' Interviews Analysis**

Lecturer	Factors of Students Writing Level of Proficiency	Responses
A	-No motivation to read -Ability of generating idea -Students's grammar mastering	-Ada 2 faktor yang mempengaruhi yaitu yang pertama adalah kurang membaca -Mahasiswa itu kurang membaca akibatnya mereka kesulitan untuk menemukan ide, menuliskan ideLalu yang kedua adalah kemampuan grammar.
В	-Content of the writing -Ability of generating idea	-Sebenernya ada 2 hal yang mempengaruhi yaitu content dan organization ideaBagaimana mereka menuangkan ide-ide mereka kedalam tulisan yang ingin mereka tulis. Kalau dari kualitas, Misal seperti ide yang dituliskan sudah menunjukkan maksud ide-idenya dengan jelas, menurut saya sudah cukup bagus.

Meanwhile for the document of students' English academic paper, the researcher read the documents that has been submitted, categorized the documents based on the kinds of English academic papers written by the students and then wrote the results briefly. Below is the example of categorization of the students's English academic papers.

				KINDS OF ENGLISH ACADEMIC PAPERS				
NO.	NAME	SMT	TITTLE	ESSAY	RESEARCH PAPER	JOURNAL	ARTICLE	THESIS
1	Yacub Rizki	4	Children Should Not Come To Class Courses	٧				
2	Nimas Mardhatila	6	The Correlation Between Students' Critical Thinking Ability and Writing Ability at 3 <sup>rd</sup> Semester Students of English Language Education Department in UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya		V			

# **G.** Trustworthiness

In doing a research, it is important to do validity checking because it shows the validity of the data that were collected, this is to make sure if the data are valid. In qualitative methods there are some procedures that can be done to check the validity of the data, they are member checking, triangulation and auditing. This research used triangulation for the checking the validity of the data. According to Cresswell, triangulation

is a process to check the data validity using different sources of data by checking it from the evidence of the source. In validity itself, there are four types which are triangulation by theories, triangulation by source, by the method and by observers. In doing the triangulation for this study, the research used triangulation by sources where the researcher interviewed lecturers and students, distributed questionnaires for students and collected students' documents to recheck the data of challenges in writing English academic papers faced by the students.

# H. Research Stages

In the process of doing this research, there were several stages did by the researcher to collect the data, they were below.

- 1. The first stage that the researcher did was deciding the problems of the research. After knowing what problems that the researcher interested in, the researcher constructed the title of this study, followed by making the research questions and defined the objectives of this study. After that, the researcher determined the scope and limitation, and then created the design for this research and made the proposal.
- 2. The next step was conducting the research. In conducting this research, the researcher started by interviewing the subject of this research and distributed questionnaires in order to gain the information to answer the research questions. The subjects that were interviewed was 2 lecturers and 4 students of ELED UINSA and for the questionnaires, it was also distributed for the students of ELED UINSA. The information that gained was to identify what kinds of English academic papers written by the students, the challenges faced by the students in writing English Academic Papers and how they solve the challenges. Beside collecting the data from interviews and questionnaires, the researcher also collected documents of students' English

- academic papers in order to analyzed the first research question about the kinds of English academic papers that usually write by the students.
- 3. After all the data were collected, the researcher started analyzing the data using the data analysis techniques written above. For the semi open questionnaires the data were analyzed by calculating the responses from the students who are given the questionnaires. And then for the interview, the researcher transcribed and did coding to analyze the data. Meanwhile for the documents of students' English academic paper, the researcher read the documents that has been submitted, categorized the documents based on the kinds of English academic papers written by the students and then wrote the results briefly.
- 4. The last stage was concluding the result of the research. After all the data were analyzed completely, the researcher made conclusions of the whole study which became the final result of the research.

#### **CHAPTER IV**

#### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion of the study about the students' challenges in writing English academic papers and their strategies to cope with the challenges. This chapter presents the findings to answer the research questions. The data was from interviewing two lecturers who teach English Writing subject and the students who have been writing English academic papers and adminitering questionnaires to 72 students. The data analyzed in this chapter are written based on the order of the research questions of this study.

#### A. Research Findings

As mentioned earlier, the organization of the findings follows the three research questions. First, it presents the findings about kinds of academic papers students write. Then, it describes the challenges in writing academic papers, and the last explains the strategies in coping with the challenges. The detail explanation of each finding follows.

#### 1. The Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by the Students.

In this study, interviews were conducted with 2 lecturers who teach Writing subject and 4 students from 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> semesters. In the interview section, in order to answer the first research question about the kinds of English academic papers written by the students, there are 2 questions asked to the lecturers and the students, they are (1) What kinds of English academic papers have been written by the students and (2) What kinds of English academic papers students find it most difficult to write.

The first interview sections were done with 4 students. Based on the interviews, the researcher could categorize the kinds of academic papers they have written based on the semester of each student, which can be seen in table 4.1 as follows.

Table 4. 1 The Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by Students

Students	The Kinds of English Academic Papers						
	Essay	Research Paper	Article	Journal	Thesis		
4 <sup>th</sup> semester	٧	٧	-	-	-		
6 <sup>th</sup> semester	٧	٧	٧	٧	-		
8 <sup>th</sup> semester	٧	٧	٧	٧	٧		
8 <sup>th</sup> semester	٧	٧	٧	٧	٧		

The table 4.1 above shows that the higher the semester of the students, the more kinds of English academic papers they have written during the study. It was proven that the student from 4<sup>th</sup> semester stated that the kinds of English academic papers he has written were only essay and research Paper. Student A stated that "I have written Essays such as Argumentative essay, Descriptive essay, and Narrative essay and the Research Paper I wrote it in Qualitative Research subject in this semester." While the 6th semester students almost have written all the kinds of English academic papers except thesis and the 2 students from 8<sup>th</sup> semester answered that they have written all the kinds of English academic papers. Just like the statement of student C "Along the way of my study in this department, I have written journal, article in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, and not forget to mention essay. I write a lot of essays in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, while now I am writing my thesis and in the previous semesters I also have written several research papers. From the table 4.1 based on the interview, it can be seen that the kinds of English academic papers that have been written by the students during their study were ordered from essay to thesis. The students started to write Essay in the earlier semester, and then they started to write Research paper, next was Journal and Article and the last one was Thesis.

From the interview with the students, it also investigated the kinds of English academic papers the students found it most difficult to write. There are various answers

to these questions. A 4<sup>th</sup> semester student said that the most difficult English academic paper that has been written is Argumentative essay. Since he only has written 2 kinds of English academic papers, he believed that the most difficult one to write was Argumentative essay, "I think I find it most difficult to write the Argumentative essay, since I don't really have a good critical thinking and somehow it is just hard to keep a strength argument about something. It's hard for me when these two things are required in the Argumentative essay writing." While the student from 6<sup>th</sup> semester taught that it was mostly hard to write Research paper. She said that among all the English academic papers that have been written by her, Research paper needed more details in writing it. "I think that research paper is more complicated to write compared to the other academic papers that I have written, because in writing research paper I still have difficulties to find previous studies that relate to my research and how to combine the theories in to my writing is also difficult for me."

It was agreed by the 8<sup>th</sup> semester students, he also stated that he had difficulties in writing Research Paper. Besides that, the kind of English academic papers he finds it difficult to write is thesis, because he is now in the process of writing Thesis. Just like what he stated in the interview "I think that that there is no difference between writing thesis and research paper, since both of it research about something. Both of them need to collect a lot of previous studies and theories to support our data, and those still becomes my main problems beside the process of the writing itself." Therefore, for him, these two kinds of English academic papers have similarities which are very complex and needed a lot of previous studies to make a good English academic paper.

On the other hand, another 8<sup>th</sup> semester student believed it was journal that was the most difficult one to write. "When I wrote journal article in the previous semester, I think it was hard because the problem was actually about the time required by the

lecturer to finish it, so I wrote it in a rush that it made me difficult to find the data and wrote the result in a clear and understandable writing. So that I just write it whatever I want, I mean I did not do my best in writing it." Besides, she also agreed that writing Thesis is difficult, "Writing Thesis is hard, but the difference is, when we write Thesis, we have a longer time so that we can make a good concept of our writing and what we want to write is based on our interests."

Those are the results from the students' interviews. Meanwhile, from the results of the lecturers' interview regarding to the kinds of English academic papers written by the students, the 2 lecturers that were being interviewed had various answers based on their writing teaching experiences. The lecturer A stated that the students had difficulty in writing article. In her opinion, it was the most difficult one, but she also agreed with the students' statements above that some of the students found it difficult to write Research Paper. While for essay, it was approved by both lecturers and students that Argumentative essay was the most difficult one for the students. The lecturer B agreed that the students usually found it difficult to write Argumentative essay. Based on the interview with lecturer B, she explained that she actually did not really sure what kinds of English academic papers students had difficulty to write. "I did not really know because now I am only teaching Article subject where I got the class with the level of student's proficiency is above average, and it was also because I never asked the students which one of the English academic papers is the most difficult one, but when I taught Written Class, the most difficult one was Argumentative essay." This comment by the lecturer highlights that most students find it difficult to write argumentative essay.

Those are the data gained from the students and lecturers' interviews. To get a broader data, the researcher also conducted online questionnaires distributed to the

students of English Language Education Department. In order to identify the kinds of English academic papers written by the students, same with the interview, there are 2 questions in the questionnaire ask about what kinds of English academic papers written by the students and what kinds of English academic papers students find it most difficult to write, that will be explained as follows.÷

In the online questionnaires there were 72 students participated. They were students from 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> semester who have been writing English academic papers during their study. This was a semi-open questionnaire where there were given options to answer the questions. In this online questionnaire, the percentage of the students who filled this questionnaires were 13 students (18.1%) from 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, 22 students (27.8%) from 4<sup>th</sup> semester, 11 students (15.3%) from 6<sup>th</sup> semester, 25 students (34.7%) from 8<sup>th</sup> semester and 1 student (1.4%) who incorrectly answered from 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. The result of the questionnaire that shows the kinds of English academic papers written by students can be seen on this figure 4.1.

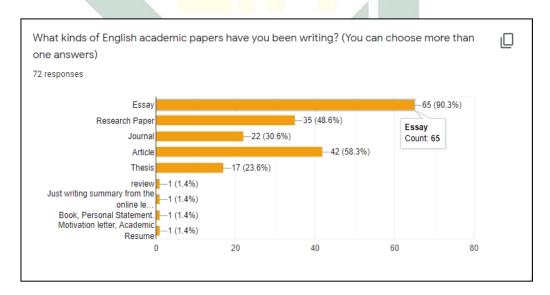


Figure 4. 1 The Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by Students

From the figure 4.1 above, it can be seen that from the 72 responses, most of the students have written Essay with the total students answer reach to 65 students (90.3%) which is the highest, and the second highest is Article with 42 students

(58.3%), followed with Research Paper with 35 students (48.6%), Journal with 22 students (30.6%) and the lowest is Thesis, answered by 17 students (23.6%). Beside of all the options given above, there are also students who add other academic papers they have written such as Review, Summary, Book, and Academic Resume with the percentage is 1.4% for each academic paper.

Compared with the result from the interviews stated that the higher the semester, the more kinds of English academic papers have written by the students during their study, with the English academic papers writing order started from the writing of Essay, followed by Research Paper, Journal and Article and the last one is Thesis can be defined as true. It is proven that Essay reach the highest percentage because students from each semester have written Essays during their study, while Thesis got the lowest percentage because not all the students have written Thesis, only students from 8<sup>th</sup> semester who have written Thesis.

Furthermore, the questionnaire also investigated about the kinds of English academic papers student find it most difficult to write, the result can be seen on the figure 4.2 below.÷

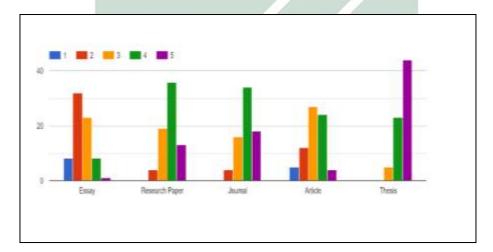


Figure 4. 2 The Kinds of Most Difficult English Academic Papers Written by Students

The researcher asked the respondents to rate each of the English academic paper from the scale 1-5 with 1 for the easiest until 5 for the hardest. Therefore it can be explained that the kinds of English academic papers students think as the easiest by rating it with "1" are Essay with 8 students, followed with Article with 5 students choose it, while for other English academic Papers, there are no students claim it as the easiest to write.

Next, students who give rate "2" for the kinds of English academic papers that categorized as the second easiest, students still choose Essay with the highest total reaches 32 students, followed with Article, with 12 students, Research Paper and Journal 4 students and 0 students or still no one thinks Thesis is Easy. And then the higher level of difficulty with the scale "3" are Article with 27 students, Essay with 23 students, Research Paper 19 students, Journal 16 students and again, Thesis is the lowest with 5 students.

Followed with the scale "4" defined as the second most difficult English academic papers, students choose Research paper as the highest total reaches 36 students, the next is Journal with 34 students, Article 24 students, Thesis 23 students and the lowest is Essay with only 8 students. The last category that the students rate it "5" where they think it is the most difficult to write is Thesis with the highest total reaches 44 students, followed with Journal 18 students, Research Paper 13 students, article 4 students and the lowest is Essay with only 1 student chooses it as the most difficult English academic papers. From the explanation above, it can be categorized that the kinds of English academic papers student find it most difficult to write is Thesis, followed with Research Paper and Journal, and then Article, and the easiest one is Essay.

Besides conducting interviews and distributing online questionnaires, the researcher also collected students' English academic papers documents from 4 students who were being interviewed to check and categorize the kinds of English academic papers written by the students. From the collected documents, compared with the result of the interviews and questionnaire, it is proven that the kinds of English academic papers written by the students are Essay, Research Paper, Journal, Article and Thesis.

For example, the student has written an Argumentative essay entitled "Children Should not Come to Class Courses". It is categorized as Argumentative essay because the student writes his opinion that convinces or persuades the reader about his perspectives. For the Research Paper, the research usually in a form of a mini qualitative or quantitative study that researched about cases happened around them. One example is a research about Students' Writing Level Proficiency at 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester of ELED UINSA. While Journal, Article and Thesis are same with Research Paper where they researched cases that mostly related with English literature where the cases are things happen around them or those that they have studied in the semesters. One of the students' Journals and Article studied about Teacher's Perspectives about Critical Thinking in Academic Essay, and for the Thesis, the students from 8<sup>th</sup> semester usually research about their interests in English education topic.

#### 2. The Students' Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers

The data collected about students' challenges in writing English academic papers was gained from interviews with students and lectures, also from distributed online questionnaire, same with the previous data of the first research question. To investigate the challenges faced by the students in writing English academic papers, there are several questions both in the interviews and questionnaires ask about the students' challenges in writing English academic papers, constructed based on theories

in the chapter 2. From the theories about the challenges in writing English academic papers, the challenges that are commonly faced by the students are the challenges in constructing idea, constructing the writing, grammatical aspect, tenses, vocabulary and other challenges that usually faced by the students. The researcher will explain the finding of the analyzed data briefly.

#### B. Challenges in Constructing Idea

Based on the interviews, 2 lecturers confirmed that the students have difficulties in constructing idea. Lecturer B stated in the interview that the students' actual problem in writing lies in the ability in writing their idea. This was agreed by lecturer A that students find it difficult to interpret their idea in their writing. The student A also stated the same, "When I have found idea that comes from reading references, I often have no idea how to write it on my paper." While student D finds it difficult in finding an interesting idea. Another challenge faced by the student is when they have found the idea for their writing, that idea have already used by other researchers from the previous studies and the students feel difficult in finding the gap. Those are the results from the interviews, compared with the results from the questionnaire, it stated that many students also have difficulties in constructing their idea. It is proven by 24 students (33.3%) who have difficulties in elaborating idea, followed with 22 students (30.6%) have difficulties in translating idea. The results of the questionnaire can be seen on the figure below:

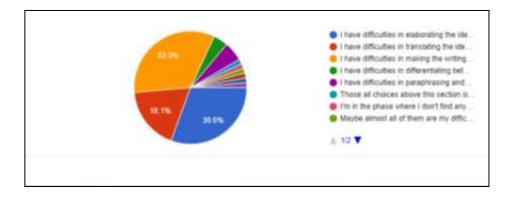


Figure 4. 3 Students' Challenges in Constructing Idea

Based on the various responses above, it can be concluded that many students have difficulties in constructing their idea. Most of them find it difficult to write their idea in their mind into their writings, some of them have difficulties in finding an interesting idea and the other one has no idea what to write.

# C. Challenges in Constructing the Writing.

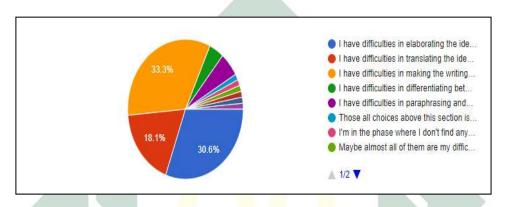


Figure 4. 4 Students Challenges in Constructing the Writing

From the figure 4.4 above, the responses collected from the questionnaire regarding to the challenges in constructing the writing, majority have problems in making the writing coherence and cohesion with the total percentage reaches to 33.3% or 24 students, followed with 22 students (30.6%) who have difficulties in elaborating their idea before writing. It is also found that another problem usually faced by the students is translating the idea into their writing, chosen by 13 students (18.1%). A student confirmed about it in the interview that "The problem is when I know what to write but I don't know how to write it."

While another student revealed that his problem is where he often finds himself difficult in paraphrasing the sentences. It was agreed by 4 students (5.6%) from the questionnaire. Another problem related with the problems in constructing the writing is the difficulties in choosing vocabulary. Two students from the interview stated that they

often had difficulties in finding suitable vocabulary that related with the context of their writing. Besides, if we take a look at the figure 4.4, it is shown that there are other problems added by the students and most of them stated that all of the options given become their problems in constructing their writing. Therefore it can be concluded that one of the major problems faced by the students in constructing idea lies in the elaborating the idea before their writing, it is agreed both by the students from the questionnaire and the interview, while other problem such us difficulties in paraphrasing and finding vocabulary are also categorized as challenges that are commonly faced by the students.

#### D. Challenges in Grammatical Aspects

Based on the students' answers in the interview, there are various problems related to the grammatical aspects when they write English academic papers. A student from the mentioned that he has almost all problems in grammatical aspect, and sadly it was also happened to many students based on the result of the questionnaire.

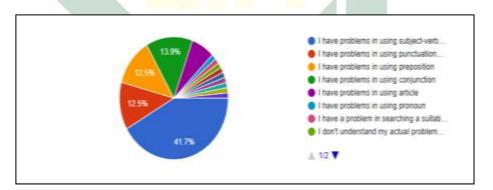


Figure 4. 5 Students' Challenges in Grammatical Aspects

Based on the figure 4.4 above, those colors who where each have little percentage, only 1.4%, stated that their problems are all the options given. Another problem that is often faced by the students is the difficulty in using subject-verb agreement that reaches 30 students (41.7%). It also agreed by 1 student from the interview. From the figure, it can be seen that 10 students (13.9%) have difficulties in the use of conjunction, and with the same

percentage (12.5%), 9 students have difficulties in using preposition, punctuation and spelling. Another problem is the use of article, chosen by 5 students (6.9%).

Compared with the result of the interview, each student has different answers about their difficulties in grammar, such as the problems in lexico-grammatical aspects, problems in using the appropriate tenses, problems n constructing the sentence structure and problem in choosing the right vocabulary. On the other hand, when there are many students who have problems in grammar, there is 1 student from the interview stated that she has no problems in grammar. From the various responses regarding to the difficulties in grammar, it can be concluded that grammar might be the main problems for many students, proven that many aspects of grammar that become students' difficulties in writing English academic papers.

# E. Challenges in Tenses

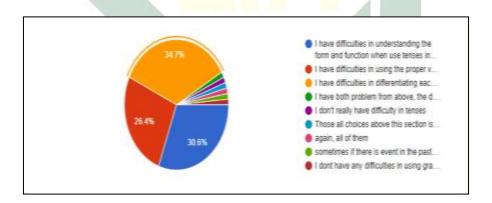


Figure 4. 6 Students' Challenges in Tenses

Regarding to the result of the questionnaire, the figure 4.6 above shows that students have most difficulties in differentiating each of tenses used in their writing, with the total of the respondents reach 25 students (34.7%). This problem also happens to 1 student who was being interviewed. He said that he often incorrectly uses the tenses when he writes sentences. Another problem related with the tenses that is commonly faced by the students

is the difficulties in understanding the form and function of tenses, chosen by 22 students (30.6%). This problem is also stated by 2 students from the interview. They said that they hardly can understand the form and function of each tenses when writing English academic papers. There is a student from the interview also revealed another problem faced by him regarding to the use of tenses, it is that he often misuses the correct verb form to express the time of the event. This problem is also reflected by 19 students (26.4%) from the questionnaire. While above all the problems stated by the students, there is 1 student who has a good tenses mastering that she has no significant problems in using tenses.

Besides investigating the challenges in tenses, the researcher also investigated the kinds of tenses students find it difficult to write.

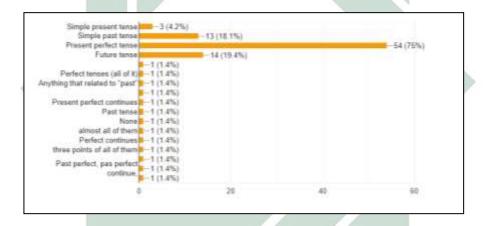


Figure 4. 7 Kinds of Difficult Tenses

From the figure above, it can be concluded that the tenses students commonly find it difficult to write is Present Perfect tense with the total students reach 54 students (75%). The second hardest tenses is Future tense, chosen by 14 students (19.4%). Two students from the interview also have problem in Present Perfect and Future tense. Another high percentage of the tenses where students find it difficult is Past tense. It happens to 13 students (18.1%) from the questionnaire. On the other side, students from the interview don't see it as difficult tenses. This may be because the students from the interview have most problems in Present Perfect tense, just like 1 student explained that she finds Present

Perfect tense difficult because she often confuses in choosing the auxiliary verb when using Present Perfect tense.

Based on the figure, it also can be seen that there are some students stated that they have all problems mentioned by the options. On the other hand, there is one students from the interview stated that she has good tenses mastering that she does not have any problems with it. It can be concluded that tenses problems faced by the students are various, started from the difficulties in differentiating each of tenses, difficulties in understanding the form and function of tenses and misusing the correct verb form to express the time of the event, while the kinds of tenses that students mostly find it difficult is Present Perfect tense.

#### F. Challenges in Vocabulary

From the result of the students' interview, one of challenges faced by the students related to the use of vocabulary is limited amount of vocabulary. This problem is also confirmed by 34 students (47.2%) where it is the highest percentage from the result of the questionnaire. On the other hand, another problem that is frequently mentioned by the students in the interview is they have difficulties in differentiating words that have similar or related meanings. This is also reflected by many students from the questionnaire, reach to 17 students (23.6%). Another problem that becomes the common problem faced by the students is when they have difficulties in remembering the meaning of new words. This happens to 16 students (22.2%) from the questionnaire and is confirmed related with other 2 students from the interview.

Another problem about vocabulary that reflected the students is the difficulties in writing the correct spelling of the words. This happens to 2 students (2.8%) from the questionnaire, but the students who were being interviewed did not see it as a problem. This may be because the main problem of the students from the interview is more

specifically about the use of vocabulary itself such as limited amount of vocabulary, difficulties in remembering new vocabulary, and so on. Therefore it can be concluded that there are various problems faced by the students regarding to the use of vocabulary when they write English academic papers. The majority has problems in limited amount of vocabulary, another problem that is frequently mentioned by the students is they have difficulties in differentiating words that have similar or related meanings and problems in remembering the meaning of new words. Those are some problems that are commonly faced by the students based on the questionnaire and the interview that can be seen on the figure below:

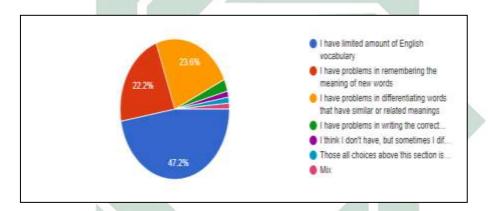


Figure 4. 8 Students' Challenges in Vocabulary

#### G. Other Challenges Faced by the Students in Writing English Academic Papers

Regarding to the all of challenges in writing English academic papers identified above, the researcher also investigated other possible challenges faced by the students when they write their English academic papers. Based on the questionnaire, after being analyzed, many students stated that they have problems related to making their writing readable and understandable. This includes their problems in elaborating idea, developing idea into structured, systematic and coherently text, elaborating the theories into their writing and arranging the structure of the sentences. These kinds of problems are reflected by most of the students from the interview. One of the students stated that "Another"

problem in writing that often happens to me is that I find it difficult to explore idea and then translate it into my writing. This usually leads to a state where I can hardly construct my writing."

Another problem mentioned by 1 student from the interview is that he lacks in finding interesting topic to write. This is also found in the result of the questionnaire. Many students mentioned that they often find it difficult to find an interesting topic. Besides, this is also caused by the problems in finding good writing resources and references. Some students mentioned that they can hardly find proper articles, journals, or other writing resources that can support their writing. Other problems based on the result of the questionnaire and interview where some students agreed that laziness, finding a good mood to write are also problems that are commonly faced by the students. One student from the interview explained that laziness often becomes her problems in writing and if she does not have a good mood to write, it often makes her stuck and difficult to write her idea.

Those are the data collected from the students, compared with the teachers' responses from the interview, 2 lecturers mentioned the same related problems that faced by the students in writing, one of the problem is finding the idea. Both of the lecturers agreed that the difficulties in finding and constructing idea frequently happen to the students. Lecturer B stated that "Actually, the main problem that students or most of us can relate is, it is difficult to write our idea into the text." Another problem agreed by both lecturers is that students lack the understanding of the writing theories and techniques. Lecturer A explained that "Most of times the students do not understand the theories of writing, for example if they want to write Argumentative essay, they don't understand the generic structure of Argumentative essay. Therefore it makes the students difficult to write." While for the lack of the writing techniques, lecturer B stated that "It's so obvious"

that students lack of the writing techniques, such as the technique in writing the title of their research, and then the technique in how to choose and write the correct words for their writing, and also how to define the effective keywords." On the other side, lack of skill such as limited amount of vocabulary, grammatical error, the coherence and cohesion of the students' writing also mentioned by the lecturers as the challenges that are commonly faced by the students.

Based on the students and lecturers' responses regarding to the students' challenges or difficulties in writing, it can be concluded that both lecturers and students have the same views about the problems that are frequently happened to the students and it also can be conclude that most problems are related to the difficulties or challenges in making their writing readable and understandable.

# H. Factors that Caused the Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers

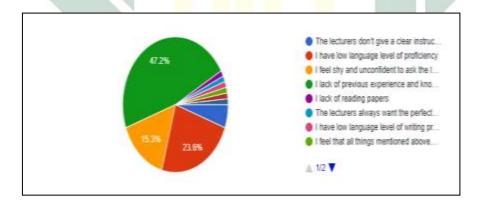


Figure 4. 9 Factors that Caused the Challenges

Based on the figure 4.9 above from the result of the questionnaire, it can be seen that majority mention the factors that caused their challenges or difficulties in writing is the lack of previous experiences and knowledge about English academic paper writing with 34 students (47.2%) responses. While the students from the interview mention different factors. There are 3 out of 4 students who were being interviewed mentioned that most factor that causes their difficulties lie in the lack of motivation to read. Two lecturers who

were being interviewed confirmed the same. Just like the statement of lecturer A "A lot of students don't like reading, so that they don't have much insights or knowledge to be written on their papers." Another problem mentioned by 1 student that frequently causes the difficulties in writing is their less interest in writing so that they don't like writing where it leads to the difficulties of writing.

Compared with the result from the questionnaire, other major factors of students' difficulties are students' low language level of proficiency, this happens to 17 students (23.6%) and another factor is because students often feel shy and unconfident to ask the lecturers for explanation, chosen by 11 students (15.3%). These two factors are not mentioned by the students from the interview, this may be because less motivation to read becomes the major cause of difficulties in writing for the students from the interview. From the result explained above, it can be concluded that many factors cause the students' challenges in writing, some of the big factors come from the students' lack of previous experiences and knowledge in writing, their less motivation in reading and also their low language level of proficiency. These factors are agreed by both the students and the lecturers regarding to the causes of the students' difficulties in writing.

# The Students' Strategies in Solving Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers.

The data to answer this third research question about the students' challenges in writing English academic papers was collected from the students and lecturers' interviews and the distributed online questionnaire, same with the previous data of the first and second research questions. In collecting the information regarding to the strategies used by the students to cope the challenges in writing English academic papers, there is one question in both the interview and questionnaire ask about what

strategies used by the students in solving their challenges or difficulties in writing English academic papers. The researcher will explain the result deeply.

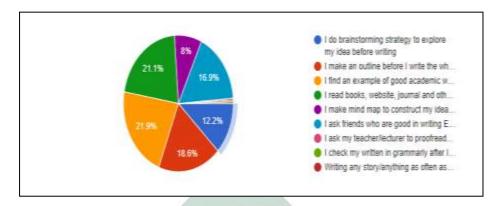


Figure 4. 10 Students' Strategies in Solving The Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers

Based on the responses collected from the questionnaire, the figure 4.10 shows that the strategy that mostly used by the students is finding an example of a good academic writing and learn from it. This strategy is chosen by 52 students (21.9%). Another strategy that is mostly chosen by the students is reading books, websites, journals and other references that can help them in writing. This strategy reaches 50 students (21.1%) responses. This strategy is also agreed by 1 student and 1 lecturer from the interview. Another strategy that used by many students is making outline before writing the whole idea. There are 44 students (18.6%) from the questionnaire choose this strategy. Two lecturers from the interview also agreed that this is a good strategy.

While from the interview, there are 2 students mention that sharing with friends that can help them solving their problems in writing English academic papers is also one of good strategies. This strategy is also confirmed by other 40 students (16.9%) from the questionnaire. If we take a look at the figure 4.10, it can be identified that other strategies used by students are brainstorming strategy to explore idea, reached by 29 students (12.2%) and making mind map before writing is used by 19 students (8%).

Compared with the result of the lecturers and the students' interviews, both lecturers and students mention other various strategies. Two lecturers believed that one of students' strategies in solving the writing problems is by writing based on feedbacks given by the lecturers. Just like what lecturer A said, "After the students accept the feedbacks from the lecturer it will be good if they want to correct it and improve their writing based on the feedbacks." Besides, keep writing practices are also believed by the lecturers as a good strategy that can help the students in improving their writing skill.

Based on the interview, the researcher also finds another strategy that is not mentioned by the lecturers and students from the questionnaire. This strategy is making a writing target and schedule. Student C and D in the interview said that this strategy helps them in writing. Student D explained that "Because I often feel lazy, I have to make a writing target and schedule so that I can finish the writing on time." Besides that, there is still one strategy revealed by 1 student from the interview, it is having a good mood when writing. She stated that if we don't write in a good mood, it will be hard for us to write and finish our writing. From all the responses above, it can be conclude that there are so many strategies that can be used to help the students solve their challenges and difficulties in writing English academic papers, and different students may have different strategies based on their suit and difficulties.

#### I. Discussion

After explaining the findings of the research, this section discusses the findings based on the theories written in chapter 2 relating to the research questions of this study. Therefore, the researcher will explain each of the findings based on those research questions by reflecting it with the theories.

#### 1. Kinds of English Academic Papers Written by the Students

Having ability to write academic papers for university students is important. Dudley Evans says that this skill is essential as they will asked to write several academic papers such as essay, research paper, journal and other academic papers as part of their assignment.<sup>45</sup>

This study found that the students wrote essay, research paper, journal, article and thesis during their study. Based on table 4.1, it shows that when the students at the last semester of their study, they have written all mentioned academic papers, and the students from below semester have not yet completed writing all types of academic papers. Therefore, the findings support Dudley's statements that university students will experience writing different types of academic papers.

This research found that essay is one of academic papers the students wrote during their study. "Essay is one of academic papers written in a short form of writing and only talk about specific object with purpose to persuade the readers about significant topics", this study showed that the kinds of essay written by student A is related to the definition of essay based on the theory stated, where student A wrote an essay entitled "The Reasons Why Students Should not Come to Class Courses." If we take a look at the definition of essay above, here student A has written

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> Dudley-Evans, A., & St. John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in ESP: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

about specific object which was "the students" and also has persuaded the readers about significant topic that was "the reasons why they should not come to class courses." Thus, it can be seen that the findings about the kinds of English academic papers written by students are in line with the theories regarding to the kinds of academic papers based on experts.

#### 2. The Students' Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers

In writing English academic papers, for some students there found challenges faced by them. A lot of researchers have confirmed that writing English academic papers tends to be problematic and challenging for students, especially those who have no cultural background in English. It is strengthened by many theories stated about the challenges faced by the students in writing English academic papers. One of the challenges, according to Richard and Rinandya, the difficulties in writing lies in exploring and translating the idea into readable text. 46 The result of this study also showed that students have difficulties in constructing the idea to make their writing readable and understandable. This is proven by the result of the questionnaire that can be seen in figure 4.3 about the students' challenges in constructing their idea, shows that some of the students have problems in elaborating idea and some have problems in translating their idea into the writing. Besides, it is also supported by the data from the interview that presents the difficulties that is commonly faced by the students, one of it is constructing their idea and making it into an understandable writing. Besides, those results are also in line with the previous research done by Ibtisam Ali Badi. He found that many students in his research find it difficult in terms of exploring and writing their idea which led into making their writing are hardly to be understood. This

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup>Richards, J., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

happened because they also have difficulties in making their writing coherence and cohesion.<sup>47</sup>

Al Fadda also states that one of the challenges that commonly faced by the students is making a coherent paragraph. The students find it difficult to write English academic papers because they still have difficulties in making their writing coherence and cohesion.<sup>48</sup> The findings of this research showed that the majority of the students from the questionnaire have problems in making the writing coherence and cohesion that is shown in figure 4.4. Based on the findings about the students' difficulties in making the writing coherence and cohesion, it can be said that between the theories, the findings and the previous study have a correlation.

Furthermore, the result of this study also found other challenges that many students face it in their English academic papers writing. The findings of this study showed that students have serious problems in grammatical aspects, proven by the result of the questionnaire and the interview found that there are a lot of aspects in grammar that the students find it challenging. The findings include the difficulties in using subject-verb agreement, followed with the difficulties in the use of conjunction, preposition and the inappropriate use of punctuation and spelling. As a proof, this is shown in the figure 4.5. Moreover, those challenges mentioned are in line with the statement from Ghabool, Edwina and Kashef, that those problems such as lack in grammatical, incorrect punctuation and spelling become the basic problems that most students tend to face.<sup>49</sup> To strengthen it, there was a study done by Amin Ali Al

<sup>47</sup> Ibtisam Al Badi. (2015). *Academic Writing Difficulties of ESL Learners*. Oman: Colleges of Applied Sciences-Sohar, the Sultanate of Oman.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Al Fadda, H. (2012). *Difficulties in Academic Writing: From the Perspective of King Saud University Postgraduate Students*. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Ghabool, N., Edwina, M., &Kashef, H. S. (2012). *Investigating Malaysian ESL Students' Writing Problems on Conventions, Punctuation and Language Use at Secondary Level*. Journal of Studies in Education, 2(3), 131-143.

Mubarok, in his research showed that the problems in writing that are commonly encountered by the students are the use of spelling and punctuation, the use of preposition, followed with other difficulties such as the difficulties in consistency, choosing irregular verb, and the use of tenses.

Based on the difficulties in choosing verb in vocabulary and the difficulties in the use of tenses found in the research from Amin Ali Al Mubarok stated above, this research also revealed that those problems also happened to the participant of this research where each of the participant of the questionnaire and the interview encountered those two problems. First, the problems in choosing the appropriate vocabulary are shown in the 4.8. This problem is strengthened by the results of the interview where the students usually have problems in choosing the correct vocabulary for their writing such as finding the synonyms of the words. The second problem about the use of tenses can be seen in figure 4.6 which shows some problems faced by the students regarding to the uses of tenses such as the difficulties in differentiating each of tenses used in their writing. This problem is also agreed by a student from the interview. Thus, from all the findings explained above, it supports the statement from Al Khairy according to the major problems in writing lie in grammatical errors, the inappropriate vocabulary, the difficulties in differentiating tenses and followed with other problems such as the use of irregular verbs and incorrect punctuation and spelling. 50

On the other hand, another problem that causes the student's difficulties in writing English academic papers is the students' low language level of proficiency. This problem is stated by Ghabool, Edwina and Kashef.<sup>51</sup> This theory is sadly also reflected

<sup>50</sup>Al-Khairy, M. A. (2013). Saudi English-Major Undergraduates' Academic Writing Problems: ATaif university perspective. English Language Teaching, 6(6).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup>Ghabool, N., Edwina, M., & Kashef, H. S. (2012). *Investigating Malaysian ESL Students Writing Problems on Conventions, Punctuation and Language Use at Secondary Level*. Journal of Studies in Education, 2(3), 131-143.

in the result of this research that can be seen from the result of the questionnaire in the figure 4.9 where it shows that the students chose that they have low language level of proficiency. This finding is also supported by the result of the previous study done by Chou, found that the participants of his study still have low language level of proficiency and are fully depending with the teacher when they write English academic papers. <sup>52</sup> Therefore it can be stated that the theories and the previous study reflect the findings of this research.

Based on the findings discussed above regarding to the to the students' challenges in writing English academic papers, it can be concluded that there are so many challenges faced by the students when they write English academic papers. According to the result of the questionnaire and the interview that also reflected with the theories related, it shows that grammatical aspects becomes the problems that mostly faced by the students, followed with the difficulties in constructing idea into writing and making the writing understandable.

# 3. The Students' Strategies in Solving the Challenges in Writing English Academic Papers

Regarding to the findings of this research there are found many strategies used by the students to solve their challenges in writing English academic papers. According to the result of the questionnaire that can be seen in the figure 4.10, the highest percentage shows that most students find an example of a good academic writing and learn from it as a strategy. This finding is supported by Amin Al-Amin, he says that a good example of academic writing can help the students write their academic papers.

<sup>52</sup>Chou, L. (2011). *An investigation of Taiwanese doctoral students' academic writing at a U.S. University*. Higher Education Studies, 1(2), 47-72.

Based on the result of his study, he found that this strategy can help the students develop their critical thinking and how they interpret other's words into their own words.<sup>53</sup>

Another strategy that mostly used by the students is reading books, websites, journals and other references that can help them in writing. This is proven by the result of the questionnaire that is shown in the figure 4.10, that a lot of students choose this strategy to solve their problems in writing English academic papers. According to Crosby, by reading a lot of references, it can improve the students' vocabulary and expressions. This is also strengthened by the result of the students' interview that they also believed that by reading it gives a big impact to their writing skill. Besides, the result of this finding is also in line with the research done by Krashen. In his research found that the students also use this strategy to cope with the 55 challenges they face in writing and it is found that by using this strategy can improve the students' ability in using grammatical structures, where this problem is faced by most of the students. Besides, it can also develop the students' writing styles. From the explanation above, it can be said that the findings are related to the theories stated by experts.

On the other hand, another strategy that can be used by the students in solving their difficulties in writing is by brainstorming to explore their idea before writing. This strategy is also stated by Abdul Kareem. He says, this strategy can give impact to the students by helping them find and explore the idea that they want to write before they can finally pour into their paper.<sup>57</sup> The successfulness of using this strategy is also felt

<sup>53</sup>Amin, S., & Alamin, A. (2012). Skills and Strategies Used in the Comprehension and Production of Academic Writing in Taif University. English Language and Literature Studies, 2(3), 135-139.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup>Crosby, C. (2009). Academic reading and writing difficulties and strategic knowledge generation 1.5 learners. In M. Roberge, M. Siegal, & L. Harklau (Eds.), Generation 1.5 in college composition: Teaching academic writing to U.S-educated learners of ESL (pp. 105-119). New York, NY: Routledge.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup>Krashen, S. (1993). *The Power of Reading*. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup>Abdul Kareem, M. (2013). *Investigation Study of Academic Writing Problems Faced by Arab Postgraduate Students at University Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(9), 1552-1557.

by the students in this research, proven by the result of the questionnaire in the figure 4.10. It shows that some students use this strategy to help them in writing.

Moreover, another strategy is found to help reducing students' difficulties in writing English academic papers. From this study, it was revealed that the students choose to make an outline before writing as their strategy. This finding can be seen in the figure 4.10. This result is found to be in line with Al Fadda's theory, where he states that this outlining strategy includes 3 stages, they are planning, writing and editing. He says by using this strategy can help the students in their writing successfulness. There are so many proofs from the previous researches, found that many students use this strategy because it seem to be easy to be done and mostly used to help them in constructing their idea before writing, which has been mentioned that many students have difficulties in terms of finding and constructing idea into their writing. Based on the findings stated above, we can conclude that there is a correlation between the findings of this study with the experts' theories.

Regarding to the results of the findings discussed above, the researcher can take a conclusion that there are so many strategies used by the students in solving their writing challenges that reflect the theories from the experts regarding to the strategies in writing English academic papers. Besides, this research also found other strategies that commonly used by the students based on interviews that have done with the students and the lecturers who teach Writing subject. From that, it can also be concluded that there have expanded strategies that are found to be used by the students, out of the strategies mentioned by the experts above, that help them coping with the challenges they face in writing English academic paper.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup>Al Fadda, H. (2012). Difficulties in Academic Writing: From the Perspective of King Saud University Postgraduate Students. English Language Teaching, 5(3),123-130.

#### CHAPTER V

#### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study about the students' challenges in writing English academic papers. This chapter also proposes suggestions and recommendation for future researchers or teachers who are interested to conduct similar study. The conclusion and the suggestions are presented in the following:

#### A. Conclusion

For the first research question about kinds of English academic papers the students write, the findings showed that students wrote five English academic papers, namely essay, research paper, journal, article and thesis. They write the five academic papers depending on the semester where the students are at the moment. For example, they write thesis when they have completed all the unit or at the end of their study. Therefore, the higher students are, they will write more English academic papers. According to the result of this study, it is also concluded that the kinds of English academic papers written by the students are ordered from essay to thesis, where in the earlier semester, the students are asked to write essay, followed with research paper, and then journal and article and the last one is thesis.

For the second research question about the students' challenges in writing English academic papers, it shows that there are so many challenges faced by the students. Based on the results of the questionnaire and interview, it can be concluded that the challenges that are mostly faced by many students are related to the grammatical aspects, such as the problems in using subject-verb agreement, the problems in using conjunction, preposition and punctuation and spelling. This is followed by other challenges such as constructing idea and making their writing understandable.

While for the last research question deals with the strategies used by the students to cope those challenges in writing, the researcher concludes that there are found various

strategies used by the students to help them in writing English academic papers. Based on the data from questionnaire, most students choose to learn from an example of good academic writing. Followed with other strategies where the students usually read a lot of references to help them finding their idea for writing. While from the results of the interview, there also found strategies such as making target and schedule to write to avoid laziness when writing English academic papers.

#### **B.** Suggestions

For the students of English Language Education Department of UINSA, after knowing the challenges in writing English academic papers from the result of this research, they can be more aware with their own challenges and can use the strategies provided in this research that suit them based on their difficulties in writing English academic papers. The same suggestions also goes for the lecturers, especially those who teach *Writing* subject, they can implement those strategies to help the students solving their difficulties in writing English academic papers.

For further researcher, this research only investigated the challenges in writing English academic papers in a small area of English Education Department students. Therefore, if there any researcher wants to do the same research topic, there should be more in-depth investigation about challenges writing English academic papers in larger area of EFL students or students from different major rather than English Education major. This is because there could be identified different challenges faced by the students in writing English academic papers.

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