

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING DISCUSSION  
TEXT AT ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM IN UNIVERSITAS  
NEGERI PADANG**

**THESIS**

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment as the Requirement to obtain Bachelor of  
Education (B. Ed) in English Language Education Program*



by:

**SILVA HUSNA**

**15018059 / 2015**

Advisor:

**Fitrawati, S.S., M.Pd**

**NIP. 198011192008122002**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS  
UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG  
2020**

## HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

Judul : An Analysis of Students' Ability in Writing Discussion Text at English Education Study Program in Universitas Negeri Padang

Nama : Silva Husna

NIM : 15018059/2015

Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

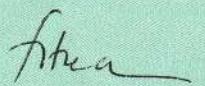
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Agustus 2020

Disetujui oleh,

Pembimbing

  
Fitrawati, S.S., M. Pd

NIP. 198011192008122002

Mengetahui  
Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris



Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M. Hum., Ph. D  
NIP. 19710525 199802 2 002

## HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan lulus setelah dipertahankan di depan Tim Penguji Skripsi  
Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang  
Dengan judul

An Analysis of Students' Ability in Writing Discussion Text at English  
Education Study Program in Universitas Negeri Padang

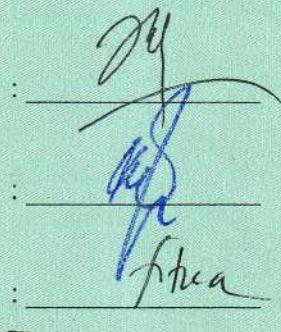
Nama : Silva Husna  
NIM : 15018059/2015  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, Agustus 2020

Tim Penguji

Tanda Tangan

1. Ketua : Dr. Rusdi Noor Rosa, S. S., M. Hum.
2. Sekretaris : Dr. Muhd. Al Hafizh, S. S., M. A.
3. Anggota : Fitrawati, S.S., M. Pd.



Handwritten signatures of the committee members: Dr. Rusdi Noor Rosa, Dr. Muhd. Al Hafizh, and Fitrawati, S.S., M. Pd.



UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG  
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI  
**JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS**  
Jl. Belibis. Air Tawar Barat. Kampus Selatan FBS UNP. Padang. Telp/Fax: (0751) 447347

**SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT**

Saya yang bertandatangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Silva Husna  
NIM/TM : 15018059/2015  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Jurusran : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : FBS UNP

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Diketahui oleh,

Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D.  
NIP. 19710525 199802 2 002

Saya yang menyatakan,  
**METERAI TEMPAL**  
TGL. 20  
06FB4AHF298595032  
**6000**  
ENAM RIBU RUPIAH  
  
Silva Husna  
15018059/2015

## ABSTRAK

**Husna, Silva. 2020. “Analisis Kemampuan Mahasiswa dalam Menulis Teks Diskusi di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Negeri Padang”. *Skripsi*. Padang: Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk melihat kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks diskusi dan masalah yang dihadapi oleh siswa. Sampel penelitian ini adalah 22 mahasiswa tahun kedua Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris tahun akademik 2018 di Universitas Negeri Padang. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis konten. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menulis teks diskusi dalam kondisi yang wajar. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari hasil tes menulis siswa, lebih dari 60% dari siswa memiliki skor di bawah 60. Adapun masalah siswa dalam menulis teks diskusi, peneliti menggunakan hasil tulisan siswa yang telah dianalisis berdasarkan struktur teks dan fitur bahasa. Dari hasil penelitian, mengembangkan ide-ide, kurangnya persiapan dan data dalam menulis argumen, kurangnya saran yang disampaikan dalam pragraf rekomendasi, struktur teks yang tidak teratur dan tidak terkait satu sama lain dalam mengungkapkan informasi menjadi masalah yang dialami oleh siswa dalam menulis teks diskusi.

**Kata kunci:** *kemampuan menulis, teks diskusi*

## ABSTRACT

**Husna, Silva. 2020. “An Analysis of Students’ Ability in Writing Discussion Text at English Education Study Program in Universitas Negeri Padang”. *Thesis*. Padang: English Department. Faculty of Languages and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

This research was conducted to see the students' ability in writing discussion text and the problems faced by the students. This research sample is 22 second-year students of English Education Study Program academic year 2018 in Universitas Negeri Padang. This research used a content analysis method. The results showed that the students' ability in writing discussion text was in Fair condition. It can be seen from the students' writing test results, more than 60% of the students had a score below 60. As for the students' problems in writing the discussion text, researcher used the results of students' writing that had analyzed based on the text structure and language features. From the results, developing ideas, lack of preparation and data in written arguments, lack of advice conveyed in recommendations, irregular text structure and not related to each other in expressing information are becoming a problem experienced by students in writing discussion texts.

**Key words:** *Writing Ability, Discussions text*

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Problem

Nowadays, writing has become an important indicator of academic success in schools and universities. Students work hard to learn how to make more informed decisions about their writing and gain greater influence over developing English writing skills. Writing is generally about composition. It means either the ability to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narration or description, or the ability to convert information into new texts as in the exhibitory or debate essay. Omaggio (1993) states that writing is better described as a series of behaviors ranging from a more functional or formal type of "writing down" on the one side to a more complex composition on the other. Even so, many students find writing more difficult than other skills, especially for EFL students. It is because they have to prove mastery of all writing elements such as content, organization, purposes, vocabulary, and the proper mechanic.

Several studies were conducted to examine the difficulties of the EFL students in writing tasks like essays. First, Rahmatunisa (2014) is one of them; she finds that in essay writing, EFL students face three main problems. There are linguistic, cognitive, and psychology. While teaching EFL students in a class with multilevel language skills, it is especially important to consider the abilities and challenges of the students in the writing process as it is often difficult to ensure that all students learn in the same strength of comprehension. Second, different

from Rahmatunisa, Nofriati (2017) finds that students are struggling to find ideas when they start writing, putting their ideas into good paragraphs, and apparently unable to combine their paragraphs into a good essay due to lack of vocabulary. Third, Richards and Renandya (2002) find that students' difficulties are not only about creating and coordinating thoughts, but also about students' inability to translate them into readable text.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher finds that there are many studies that still have low writing skills, especially when lecturer asked them to write an essay. For example, Layaalia (2015) finds in her research that about 54.5% of students are in a fair grade writing argumentative text. Putra (2007) finds that 42.74% of students were unable to develop a good main concept and that 48.23% were unable to develop ideas with good support.

Although writing is one of the most difficult English skills, students should be able to master and apply it. Students are also expected to use correct grammar and vocabulary when writing. In addition, writing skills are also needed in the future for students to get a job when they graduate from college. In fact, some students still have difficulty finishing their writing. It could be caused by low self-confidence and anxiety writing, which is why writing is difficult for students to master. Indeed, writing anxiety is a major factor in writing that can cause stress and worry.

In the curriculum of the English Department, there are four courses of writing that students need to master before they can write their own thesis as part

of the Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) requirement. It includes paragraph writing, essay writing, academic writing and article writing. In line with previous examples of writing skills, essay writing is one of the courses that students need to learn and understand. In the course of essay writing, at the end of the third semester, students are required to be able to write different kinds of texts. The different types of text that students are expected to master under the English Department syllabus are narrative, explanation, hortatory exposition, analytical exposition, discussion and review. Discussion text was chosen as a focus of this research because of writing discussion text has received less research attention when compared with another text. Some students also had a problem in the discussion text with arguing for and against the issue.

Discussion text is an assignment in college that requires students to present two sides of an argument. According to Refnaldi (2010:268), Discussion text is a text which discusses all sides of the case (reasons for and arguments against) and concluding by making a suggestion or recommendation in favor of one side. A discussion text discusses issues surrounding a particular subject. Such a topic should be open for debate. Writer should interpret the problems with two or more hands beyond clearly and logically delivering meaning, and he or she should understand the readers so that statements in their writing can get the aim.

After interviewing ten students of the English Education Study Program in the academic year 2018, the researcher found that some of the students are unable to produce a good essay or writing, it was because the students were still confused to distinguish between each part of the text. Sometimes students create a

discussion text that does not specifically address the structure and language features of the text. It's because they tend to think about how to finish the essay within a time limit. Students also said that the lack of knowledge on the subject presented by the lecturer had become their main problem in the text of the written discussion. As a result, the outcome of the learning discussion text is not effective. So, they have some difficulty completing their essay. It is because the researcher wants to choose essay writing, especially discussion text, as the focus of this research to find second-year students' ability to write essays. The researcher chooses discussion text because of writing discussion text has received less research attention when compared with another text. Some students also had problems writing the discussion text; it was difficult to arrange and explain information about the problem/issue in a general statement in writing, just to focus on one-sided argument for or const, and often to use repetitive sentences in a recommendation. Students also have some difficulty in writing the sentence structures and organizing the text.

There are several recent studies that have been conducted on students' ability to write the text of the discussion. the researches were conducted by Ting and Chai (2013) and Fadhillah (2018). Both of these researches focused on language features, which Fadhillah focused on explaining what language features students used in the discussion text, while Ting and Chai focused on the textual and language features of the discussion texts written by university students. Second, the studies were conducted by Budianto (2016) and Gailea, Syafrizal and Hafipah (2018). Both of these studies focused on the organization of the text of

the discussion. The differences in these studies are focused on the use of conjunction in the discussion text, while Gailea, et al. identify the types of coherent devices in the student discussion text. Third, research was conducted by Solihat and Novianti (2015) and Kharmilah and Narius (2019). Both of these studies focused on student error in the written text of the discussion. The differences in these studies were analyzed by Solihat and Novianti on the error types of verb writing, while Kharmilah and Narius analyzed the usual grammatical errors made by English Language students.

Based on the previous study, similarities and differences occur with this research. The similarity between previous research and this research is discussed in the text of the discussion written by the students. There are also some differences between previous research and this research. First, this research focused on the ability of students in writing a discussion text that includes rhetorical structure (general statements, arguments for and against and recommendations) and lexico-grammatical features. Second, the researcher focused on the students' problem in writing the rhetorical structure, and how they develop their ideas into an essay using the lexico-grammatical features they choose. Third, this research focused on second year students who have already completed the Essay Writing course. However, very few studies that analyze the ability of second-year students to write a discussion text that focused on students' problems in writing a discussion text.

## **1.2 Identification of the Problem**

Writing is one of the most difficult skills to master, especially for the students of EFL. This is caused by the problems that have been explained in the context of the background of the problem above. There are four factors that make it impossible for students to write a discussion text properly: difficult to arrange and explain information about the problem / issue in a general statement in writing, just focus on an one-sided argument that is for or const, and often use repetitive sentences in a recommendation. Students also have some problems in writing sentence structures and organize the text. Students also have some problems in writing sentence structures and organizing the text. Of course, these problems were caused by: lack of grammar, lack of knowledge on the subject, lack of understanding of the rhetorical structure of the essay and time limitation. Because of this, it is difficult for students to write the text as well as the goal specified in the written curriculum.

## **1.3 Limitation of the Problem**

As stated in the identification, this research limitation on the ability of students to write the text, the research limits and the focus of this research is on the ability of second-year students of the English Education Study Program academic year 2018 at the Universitas Negeri Padang. In this study, the researcher analyzed the fulfillment of the rhetorical structure (general statements, reasons for and against, and recommendations), the arrangement of the text, as well as the lexico-grammatical features that concentrate on grammar that are widely used in the text. The students' question was then explored in writing the text.

#### **1.4 Formulation of the Problem**

The problem of this research can be formulated as follows: "How is the second-year students of English Education Program ability in writing discussion text?"

#### **1.5. Research Question**

Based on the problem formulated above, the research questions of this research are:

1. How is the second-year students of English Education Program ability in writing discussion text?
2. What is the students' problem in writing discussion text?

#### **1.6. Purpose of the Research**

Based on the research questions above, the purposes of this research are:

1. To find out the ability of the second-year students in fulfilling the elements of rhetorical structure of the discussion text based on the topic give
2. To find out students' problems in writing the discussion text based on rhetorical structure of discussion text (general statement, arguments for and arguments against, and recommendation) and also the lexicogrammatical feature of the discussion text.

#### **1.7. Significance of the Research**

This research is intended to provide scientific benefits and contributions to the university, lecturer, reader and researcher, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, for the university, this research is an improvement to educational

literature and references. For the lecturer, this research will provide guidance on the ability of second-year students to write discussion texts, especially for other researchers who wish to conduct second-year college students. Through this research, the lecturer, and another researcher will get descriptive information about students' ability in writing discussion text and the aspects of students' problem in writing discussion text, especially for the lecturer to know how far the students know and understand about the discussion text. For the reader, this research will be course orientations in learning how to improve their ability in writing.

Practically, the results of this research will make a major contribution to the advancement of writing essay teaching. As for the advantages of second-year students, it is hoped that this research will be a recommendation for students to develop their weakness and ability to compose a discussion text or other text based on the results of this study.

## **1.8. Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Writing**

Writing is conveying information or expression of original ideas in a consecutive way in the new language.

### **2. Essay Writing**

Essay writing is one of four writing skills in the English Education curriculum that students need to master before they can write their own thesis as part of the Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) requirement.

### **3. Discussion text**

Discussion text is a text that discusses all sides of the issue (arguments for and arguments against) and ends by pointing to one side as a suggestion or advice.

### **4. Writing ability**

Writing ability is the competency of someone to write correctly. Writing ability is the ability to create coherent and cohesive discourses following prescribed patterns for developing and organizing discourse.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The problems students face in writing discussion texts are the main reason why students' writing is in fair condition. This is also due to the lack of students' ability to understand the text and the structure of the text they write. The study showed that the university students had more difficulty producing the textual structure of a conventional discussion text than using persuasive language features to discuss the issue. The difficulty with the textual structure lies in the unclear statement of the issue in the introduction and unsatisfactory assessment of foregoing arguments in the recommendation. Out of the language features analyzed, only the conditional clause was minimally used in the discussion text but a high frequency of modal verbs and connectors were used.

Based on the research findings in chapter IV, there are several conclusions that can be drawn. First, the students' ability in writing the rhetorical structure of discussion text was 2.33 (fair); general statements was 2.27 (fair), arguments for and against was 2.27 (fair), and recommendation was 2.45 (fair). It means that the students got a good grade in fulfilling the elements of rhetorical structure.

Second, the students' ability in organize the text was 2.22 (fair). It shows that the students also got a fair grade in organize the discussion text. So, the students need to learn how to organize their text.

Third, the students' ability in writing mechanics was 2.52 (good). The students got a good grade too in writing and choosing the discussion text mechanics. It means that the students had implemented the lexico-grammatical features and rhetoric grammar correctly in discussion text.

Then, there were some problems in students' writing:

1. The problem in writing the general statement of the text, the students did not really understand how to write a good thesis and provide specific details to direct the readers. Some information were lack details.
2. In writing arguments for & against, researcher found that the students could not write the balance arguments between arguments for and against, some students even forgot to write another opposite side. They just focused on one-sided arguments they chose.
3. In writing the recommendation, the students lack in giving suggestion based on what they wrote in the paragraphs above. The recommendation summarized the main topics, but it was repetitive.
4. In organize the text structure, their writing at some points remain misplaced and stray from the topic.
5. In grammar features or discussion text's mechanics, students' writing contained structural weaknesses and grammatical errors. Some sentences in their writing also made the reader confused to receive the information they gave.

## 5.2 Suggestion

Based on the findings, there are some suggestions that the researcher offered to the students, lecturer, and the next researchers. First, it can be suggested that the second-year students of English Education Study Program need to be more aware in writing the discussion text. They need to understand more in writing this genre of the text. The students need to develop their academic language further, it is not adequate to teach students to insert modal verbs and connectors in their writing but to emphasize the semantics and usage to ensure appropriate usage to convey intended attitudinal and propositional meanings.

Second, this test was done to find out the ability of students in writing the discussion text. Although the reader can understand the information in the text, there are some misspelled and the sentences are not arranging in good grammar. So, the researcher suggested that the English lecturers should give more examples and explanation about how to write a good sentence in writing a text. It is also important to teach the conventional structure of discussion texts, and expository texts for that matter, adequate practice may be needed to internalize the production of the conventional structure, without which the effectiveness of the text would be compromised.

Third, the suggestion for the next researcher who is may be interested in the research about the discussion text. The next researcher can do this research on senior high school or college, especially the ones who are in Education major. They need to analyze how the students write the discussion text or another

argumentative text because the research can show how much they understand the theory that they will teach to their students later on.



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