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UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROPOSAL WRITING: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

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PROPOSAL WRITING:

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Writing a thesis as the final project frequently has become undergraduate students' barriers in finishing their study, although a number of supporting courses have been taken before the process of thesis writing. "One of the challenges of writing a thesis is that you need to combine a lot of tasks: selecting a topic, reading the best books and articles, conducting sustained research, arriving at your own viewpoint, planning your paper, writing a first draft, and then revising and polishing it, all while managing your own time. This is not a 100-meter dash. It is a hike through the woods, requiring a variety of skills and some persistence" (Lipson, 2005).

Based on the data of April 2015, the average study length of the English education graduates is 5.1 years, meaning that most of students finished their study in semester eleven. As an individual project, the success of writing a thesis largely depends on students themselves. Their motivation, commitment, time management, discipline, persistence, and communication ability may become internal factors that contribute significantly to the success of completing their theses. Externally, an effective system for monitoring and supervising students' final project is also a determining factor for the success of completing students' final project.

To facilitate student teachers of the English education department to write their thesis, this short guide is expected to clarify procedures that they have to follow in completing their thesis as the final research project. The writer expresses his personal thanks to the Head of the English Education Department and the task force who have given me opportunities to write this teaching materials. Hopefully that this very early draft can be a great value for student teachers in completing their final project.

Budi Setyono

COURSE OVERVIEW

"Undergraduate Research Proposal Writing" is a required course that helps undergraduate students of English education department write a proposal for their final research project. In line with the course goal, there are six sub-competencies (KAD) that students have to acquire at the end of the course. Following these sub-competencies, this coursebook is divided into six chapters that are arranged chronologically from understanding background information on the importance of writing thesis up to the strategies to report the research findings and ways to discuss the findings. The contents of each chapter in the coursebook are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Chapter 1 is entitled "Thesis as final research project". The chapter gives readers background information about the importance of writing a thesis as undergraduate student's research project. In the first part, it will be explained three main considerations that require undergraduate student writes a thesis, i.e., the statement of competence in Indonesian Qualification Framework, teacher self-professional development, and teacher promotion. The second part provides background information about the importance of offering pre-requisite courses that give students strong foundations in writing thesis. In the short run, recognizing background information on the importance of writing a thesis may motivate and encourage them to accomplish it seriously. In the long run, writing thesis may become useful experience for undergraduate students to accomplish other research for career promotion in the future. Thus, writing a thesis is expected to lay a strong foundation for the habit of doing research.

Chapter 2 is entitled "Preparing a research proposal". This second chapter contains three parts that will guide students to develop proposal for their final research project. The first part guides students to select a good research topic of interest and identify the research problem. Firstly, this part clarifies the concept of research topic and gives some examples of ELT research topics, followed by discussing the meaning of research problem and how to identify an up-to-date problem. The second part deals with ways to identify

sources of the problems (i.e., through experience, deductions from theory, and related literature). The third part discusses the kinds of literature supporting our research, categorized as the primary sources, secondary sources, and tertiary sources. As beginning researchers frequently get confused with 'what' and 'how' to begin researching the research problem, reading this chapter may help them determine the topic of interest for their final research project. In addition, student researchers will be able to provide quality resources relevant to their topic of interest.

Chapter 3 is entitled "Prevention of plagiarism". It elaborates the concept of plagiarism, the violation of academic norms by students, and how to detect and avoid it. To anticipate the practice of plagiarism by the prospective English teachers, they must be capable of avoiding it by learning to summarize, paraphrase and reference. By reading this chapter, it is expected that student teachers know what to do to avoid plagiarism. In addition, we wish that they are accustomed to using their own words to cite expert ideas and aware of academic norms.

Chapter 4 discusses "organization of a thesis". In this chapter we will examine the whole section of undergraduate thesis structure. There are six sections (title, abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, findings and discussion) that will be discussed chronologically. First, each section will be discussed conceptually. Second, adequately and clearly the examples in each section are given. By reading this chapter, student researchers can understand comprehensively each section of the thesis structure.

Chapter 5 is about "Thesis format". It is important that student teachers know the thesis format/ structure before drafting their thesis proposal. The main format of undergraduate thesis encompasses section of introduction, literature review, research methodology, finding, discussion and conclusion. Lipson (2005, p. 28) argues that "[y]our thesis should be modeled on a good article, not on a book. It should be roughly the same length as major articles in your field". Due to this, undergraduate students of English education are required to write a thesis between 8,000 to 9,000 words. The thesis format for qualitative, quantitative, and textual study designs are presented separately due to slightly different

components.

The last chapter is entitled "Research findings and discussion. It deals with the way to report the research findings both qualitative and quantitative research findings. In quantitative research, the result section begins with data presentation (containing numbers) frequently summarized in forms of tables, matrices, and diagrams. In contrast, the result section in qualitative research usually contains descriptions or narrations that are summarized in tables, matrices and sometimes diagrams. Ways to discuss and interpret the findings are also explained to provide beginning student researchers model of discussion.
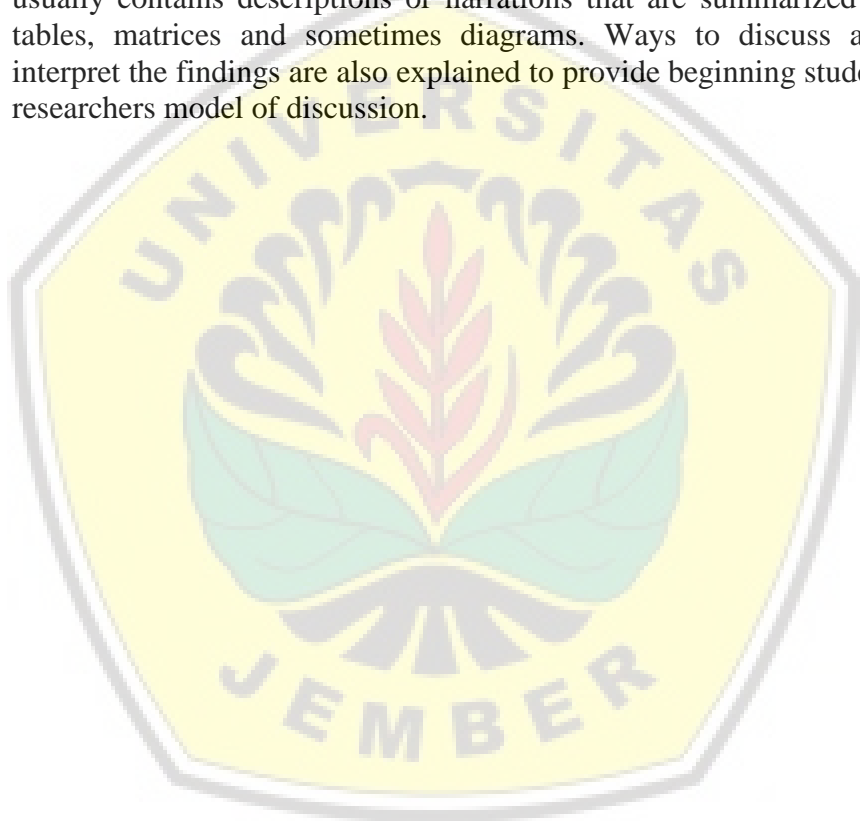
COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Undergraduate Research Proposal Writing" is a required course that helps course participants write a proposal for the final research project. Previously, before joining this course, students have already been familiar with the process of writing a research proposal when they were required to compose a draft of research proposal in two research courses, i.e. Qualitative and Quantitative Research in Language Education. In the first three meetings, students are guided to select and determine the topic of interest, identify research problem and issue, formulate research questions, and propose the tentative title by completing the research proposal form. In week four, every student is assigned to complete the research proposal form and consult the plan to the main advisor to get his/her approval.

Technically, in the second meeting KOMBI (the advisory commission) in coordination with the lecturers of "Undergraduate Research Proposal Writing" distributes the main advisors to course participants. Having got approval from the main advisor, beginning from week five up to week fifteen, every student has to complete a draft of the research proposal under the lecturer's guidance.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (LO)
ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

CAPAIAN PEMBELAJARAN SIKAP	S1	Bertakwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa dan mampu menunjukkan sikap religious.
	S2	Menjunjung tinggi nilai kemanusiaan dalam menjalankan tugas berdasarkan agama, moral, dan etika.
	S3	Berkontribusi dalam peningkatan mutu kehidupan bermasyarakat, berbangsa, bernegara, dan kemajuan peradaban berdasarkan Pancasila.
	S4	Berperan sebagai warga Negara yang bangga dan cinta tanah air, memiliki nasionalisme rasa tanggung jawab pada Negara dan bangsa.
	S5	Menghargai keanekaragaman budaya, pandangan, agama, dan kepercayaan, serta pendapat atau temuan orisinal orang lain.
	S6	Bekerja sama dan memiliki kepekaan sosial serta kepedulian terhadap masyarakat dan lingkungan.
	S7	Taat hukum dan disiplin dalam kehidupan bermasyarakat dan bernegara
	S8	Menginternalisasi nilai, norma, dan etika akademik.
	S9	Menunjukkan sikap bertanggungjawab atas pekerjaan di bidang keahliannya secara mandiri.
	S10	Menginternalisasi semangat kemandirian, kejuangan, dan kewirausahaan.
	S11	Mampu bertanggung jawab pada pengelolaan pembelajaran di kelas secara mandiri maupun kolaboratif.
	S12	Mampu beradaptasi di tempat bertugas di seluruh Wilayah Republik Indonesia yang memiliki keragaman sosial budaya

CAPAIAN PEMBELAJARAN PENGETAHUAN	P1	Menguasai konsep Linguistics (Pengetahuan tentang kebahasaan)
	P2	Menguasai dasar budaya dan sastra Inggris.
	P3	Menguasi ilmu pendidikan dan metodologi belajar dan pembelajaran yang meliputi perencanaan, implementasi, dan evaluasi pembelajaran.
	P4	Menguasai prinsip- prinsip dasar penelitian.
	P5	Menguasai prinsip- prinsip pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk Anak dan tujuan khusus.
CAPAIAN PEMBELAJARAN KETERAMPILAN UMUM	KU1	Mampu menulis karya ilmiah atau penelitian sederhana.
	KU2	Mampu mengambil keputusan dan memberi penyelesaian masalah pendidikan Bahasa Inggris secara tepat berdasarkan data dan informasi yang akurat baik secara mandiri atau kelompok.
CAPAIAN PEMBELAJARAN KETERAMPILAN KHUSUS	KK1	Mampu menggunakan Bahasa Inggris untuk menciptakan komunikasi baik lisan maupun tertulis secara lancar, akurat dan berterima.
	KK2	Mampu melaksanakan proses pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris dengan memanfaatkan berbagai media pembelajaran dan TIK untuk menghasilkan pembelajaran yang efektif, kreatif, dan berpusat pada siswa.
	KK3	Mampu melaksanakan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk Anak-anak dan tujuan khusus berbasis TIK.

COURSE GOAL

Guided by a course lecturer and approved by main supervisor, students will be able produce a proposal draft for their final research project by selecting a topic of interest and determining the appropriate research design.

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