

STUDENTS' CHALLENGES IN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS DEFENSE

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Abstract

Abstract

Universities in Indonesia require students who will complete their undergraduate to write an undergraduate thesis as one of the graduation requirements. This study wanted to see students' challenges in undergraduate thesis defense. There was a research question of this study "*What are students' challenges in undergraduate thesis defense?*". This study is a qualitative research using phenomenological research design. The study was conducted at one private university in Yogyakarta, with three participants which were from students of English Language Education Department batch 2014. Based on data collection, this study revealed various findings about students' challenges in undergraduate thesis defense; nervousness, forget the content of the research, cannot maintain eye contact with the audience, difficult to answer the question. In conclusion, every students' had different challenges in undergraduate thesis defense and it can be concluded that students are lack of preparation and confidence.

Keywords: undergraduate in thesis defense, thesis defense, challenges in undergraduate thesis defense.

Background of The Study

Universities in Indonesia require students who will complete their undergraduate degree to write an undergraduate thesis as one of the graduation requirements. Then, an undergraduate thesis is examined by the examiners to agree that the student has made the an undergraduate thesis and presented it. Based on Academic Guidance Book of private University in Yogyakarta in the academic years 2017-2018, the thesis is a formal final paper which is the result of scientific research done by the students with common procedures determined by each faculty in one private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. After students complete their thesis writing, students must present the results of their undergraduate thesis at the undergraduate thesis defense.

An English Language Education Department (ELED) of one private university in Yogyakarta, an undergraduate thesis is the requirement that should be fulfilled by students to finish their study, especially in one private university in Yogyakarta. After they make five chapters of the thesis, the students of ELED must present it in a undergraduate thesis defense. Although the presentation in front of the examiners and supervisor is a usual thing done by students of ELED, doing the presentation on undergraduate thesis defense is something challenging for the students of ELED. Students of ELED must submit all the contents of an undergraduate thesis that has been written and must get B grades for graduation.

Based on an informal interview with some students who have done thesis defense, they find some challenges in doing the presentation in a thesis defense, for example, the challenges

are the presenter feel nervous, worried and that feeling makes them weak because thesis defense is one of the requirements for students to graduate from college and must get the best grade. Based on the above situation, the researcher of this study looks for some challenges by students of English Language Education Department while undergraduate thesis in an undergraduate thesis defense.

From the challenges faced by students before and after the in undergraduate a thesis defense, it makes the ELED students feel not confident or unable to complete the undergraduate thesis defense and presenting in undergraduate thesis defense. Therefore, the researcher needs to limit this study. This study focused only on the challenges that students face during thesis defense.

Research Methodology

To help researcher achieve his purpose for the study, the researcher used phenomenology research design. According to Ahazrina (2017), Phenomenology itself has two meaning, namely as a philosophy of science and also a method of research, which aims to find the meaning or meaning of experience in life. Phenomenology is exploring data to find the meaning of basic and essential things from phenomenon, reality, or experience experienced by the object of research.

Setting and Participant of The Study

This research was conducted at ELED of one private university in Yogyakarta. Because it made the researcher easy to get access, collect data from the participants of the research, and make efficient time. This study had three students as the participant and they were from students' one private university Yogyakarta and they had been in undergraduate thesis defense. The

participants were from ELED in one private university Yogyakarta batch 2014. Two participants was girl and one participant was boy.

Data Collection Method and Data Analysis

In this study, researchers used two techniques: observation and interview. According to Unila (2012) observation is a method or means that analyzes and records systematically about behavior by seeing or observing individuals or groups directly. the observation used checklist observation The second techniques in this research use interviews, interviews were done in a one-on-one interview to give privacy for each participant, so every participant shared their opinions and ideas unhampered. Kurniawan (2015) explained that the interview is like a conversation and frequently asked questions that are directed to achieve certain goals. To collect the data, the interview using the unstructured interview method. In data analysis, the researcher of this research had several ways of analyzing the data or information collected from the interview. The first step was the researcher transcribed the data from recording of the interview session, the researcher transcribe the interview recording from audio into text. To know validity and reliability data, after transcribing the data, the researcher necessarily did a member checking. A member checking is a process of confirming the data transcribed. After member checking, the transcription was analyzed by using some steps of coding. There were three types of coding that were done by the researcher to get the findings of the research. Those three kinds of coding are open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Finding and Discussion

Students' Challenges in Undergraduate Thesis Defense

Nervousness. The first challenge in undergraduate thesis defense is nervousness. Of all the participants researcher interviewed said that the challenge of doing undergraduate thesis defense was nervous. Based on National Institutes of Mental Health (2014) stated Panic Disorder is an anxiety disorder and is characterized by unexpected and repeated episodes of intense fear accompanied by physical symptoms that may include chest pain, heart palpitations, and shortness of breath, dizziness, or abdominal distress. Thody (2006) said that in a presentation to be effective preparation is very necessary. This is supported by Al-Nouh, Abdul Kareem, and Taqi, (2005) that anxiety during an oral presentation can also be caused by personal traits of students. And the presentation skills are important roles in students' anxiety feeling.

Forget the content of the research. At this point, my only participant said that he forgot the points that will be explained during the thesis defense because there were too many discussions or chapters in the thesis. Because when doing thesis defense must explain the 5 chapters that we have written in the thesis. With many chapters in the thesis making my participants forget about the explanations points.

In addition, Al-Nouh, Abdul Kareem, and Taqi, (2005) mentioned oral presentations are planned and practiced speeches that are memorized or read from the notes. Meaning memorization is still needed for the success of the presentation. And supported by Nadia (2013) oral presentation is like a formal conversation, speaking to many people as a natural activity. So the presentation does not have to be remembered but must be done naturally with lots of practice.

Cannot maintain eye contact with the audience. The other challenges in an undergraduate thesis defense. Raja (2017) mentioned, listed few things that hold great importance during a speech or presentation: the first is presenter must be intended to be open

with the presenter's audience, the second is the presenter must be intent to connect with the audience, while third is the presenter intent to be passionate about the topic, and the last is the presenter intent to listen to the presenter's audience. These are a few tips that help speakers connect with the audience, to become good speakers. Hence, when presenters are going to make a presentation they have to approach first to the audience present at our presentation so that when they present, they explain the material they convey. They will not find it difficult to adjust the eye contact with the audience that is present and that will not interfere with the ongoing presentation.

Difficult to answer the questions. The last finding in research is a difficult to answer the questions. In the last sessions from undergraduate thesis defense, which is a question and answer session, students were asked questions by 2 examiners, where during the question and answer session students feel the greatest challenges when doing thesis defense. From of the 3 participants above said that they felt the biggest challenge when the undergraduate thesis defense was at answering the question from 2 examiners.

Conclusion

This study is aimed to explore students' challenges in undergraduate thesis defense at a private university in Yogyakarta. This study has one purpose, namely to find out the students' challenges in undergraduate thesis defense at a private university in Yogyakarta. To answer the research question, the researcher employed phenomenology research. The researcher will use two techniques in the first research data retrieval using observation. Observations in this data collection also use the checklist observation method. And the second collection technique is using interviews, the interviews were done in a one-on-one interview to give privacy for each

participant, so every participant shared their opinions and ideas unhampered. The researcher involved three participants of ELED students' at a private university in Yogyakarta.

The researcher found some the challenges students' in thesis defense based on observation and interview with three participants of ELED at a private university in Yogyakarta are nervousness, forget the content of the presentation, cannot maintain eye contact with the audience, cannot maintain eye contact with the audience. Over all, all of the challenges in thesis defense it can be concluded that students are lack of preparation and confidence. So from this study conclusions and recommendations can be obtained.

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