

**CHALLENGES OF USING AI WRITING TOOLS IN THE THESIS
WRITING PROCESS: A STUDY ON UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH
EDUCATION STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH
BENGKULU**



THESIS

WRITTEN BY:

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**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF BENGKULU**

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of English Education**



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2025

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Bengkulu, 15 Agustus 2025

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CURRICUCLUM VITAE



Revo Aditama Febrian was born in Kepahiang on February 9, 2004. He completed his elementary education at State Elementary School 1 Kepahiang in 2015, his junior high school at State Junior High School 1 Kepahiang in 2018, and his senior high school at State Senior High School 1 Kepahiang in 2021. He is currently pursuing his undergraduate degree in English Education at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Throughout his academic journey, he has been active in both academic and non- academic activities, aiming to develop his skills in education, communication, and teamwork.

During his studies, Revo was actively involved in various organizational activities. He served as a member of the OSIS (Student Council) in both junior and senior high school, participated as a member of the Esamub organization, and worked as the Public Relations Officer at Artery Ecourse. In addition, he joined the tutor team at the Language Center of Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. These experiences have helped him build strong communication skills, leadership abilities, and a collaborative mindset.

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

MOTTO

La'in syakartum la-azīdannakum...

"If you are grateful, I will surely increase your favor..."

— **Qur'an, Surah Ibrahim (14:7)**

"To hold back true fate is not of our nature. Let's be mature."

— **Adapted from Reality Club, "2112"**

"You can control the ship, but you cannot control the wind."

— **Adapted from a sailor's proverb**

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to all those who have supported me throughout this journey.

- To my beloved parents and family, whose love and sacrifices have always been my foundation. Your endless prayers, constant encouragement, and belief in me have made this achievement possible.
- To my dearest partner, Nandita Chyntia Dewi S., my biggest support system, whose calm is the gentle breeze that soothes my storm and whose encouragement is the flame that keeps my spirit alive. Your presence has given me strength when I was weak and hope when I doubted myself. This work is as much yours as it is mine.
- To my thesis advisor, Mr. Ivan Achmad Nurcholis, M.Pd, thank you for your valuable guidance, advice, and support throughout the process. Your mentorship has been very important for my academic growth and the completion of this thesis.
- To my academic advisor, Ms. Ria Angraini, M.Hum, who has consistently reminded and guided me every semester, ensuring I stayed on track and motivated to finish this journey.

- To my close friends Rizqi, Rafly, Bayu, Akbar, Meira, Anggun and Erza, thank you for your friendship, laughter, and support that brightened my days and made the journey easier.
- To all the lecturers of the English Education Study Program, I am grateful for your dedication and passion in teaching, which have inspired and guided me in my studies.
- To my fellow classmates of the 2021 class, thank you for sharing this journey together, through both struggles and successes. Our shared experiences have made this time unforgettable.

With deepest gratitude, I dedicate this work to all of you who have been part of my story and supported me along the way.

PREFACE

All praises be to Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, for His blessings, health, and guidance that have enabled the author to complete this thesis proposal entitled "**CHALLENGES OF USING AI WRITING TOOLS IN THE THESIS WRITING PROCESS: A STUDY ON UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH BENGKULU**". This proposal is submitted to fulfill one of the requirements to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in English Education at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu.

In the completion of this thesis proposal, the author has received support, guidance, and motivation from various individuals and institutions. Therefore, the author would like to express sincere gratitude and appreciation to:

1. Dr. Susiyanto, M.Si, as the Rector of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, for all the facilities and support provided during the author's educational process.
2. Drs. Santoso, M.Si, as the Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, for the direction and academic encouragement given throughout the study.
3. Washlurachim Safitri, M.Pd, as the Head of English Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, who has continuously provided guidance and motivation during the process of writing this thesis proposal.
4. Ivan Achmad Nurcholis, M.Pd, as the thesis supervisor, who has given valuable advice, insightful feedback, and continuous support from the beginning to the completion of this proposal.
5. All lecturers in the English Education Study Program, Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, who have shared their knowledge and experiences throughout the author's academic journey.
6. All students of the 2021 English Education Batch at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, for their support, motivation, and memorable academic experiences.

The author realizes that this proposal is far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions from readers are sincerely welcomed for the improvement of this work. Hopefully, this thesis proposal will be useful for readers, especially those interested in English language teaching and digital learning platforms.

Bengkulu, 15 Agustus 2025

Revo Aditama Febrian

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ABSTRACT

Revo Aditama Febrian, 2025. "The Challenges of Using AI Writing Tools in the Thesis Writing Process: A Study on Undergraduate English Education Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu". Thesis, English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Supervisor: Ivan Achmad Nurcholis, M.Pd.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based writing tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot has become increasingly common in academic contexts, including thesis writing. While these tools assist students in generating ideas, improving grammar, and refining sentence structures, they also present potential risks such as overdependence, reduced originality, and non-compliance with academic standards. This study aims to explore the challenges faced by undergraduate English Education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu in utilizing AI writing tools during the thesis writing process and the strategies they employ to address these challenges. A descriptive qualitative design was applied, with data collected through open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews involving 22 final-year students. Thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's framework was used to analyze the data. Findings indicate five major challenges: dependency on AI, difficulty maintaining originality, struggles with academic conventions, technical and conceptual limitations, and negative impacts on writing confidence. To overcome these, students reported strategies such as restricting AI use, paraphrasing outputs, conducting plagiarism checks, seeking feedback from peers and supervisors, and strengthening independent writing skills. The study concludes that AI writing tools can support the thesis writing process if used critically and responsibly, accompanied by adequate supervision and enhanced digital literacy.

Keywords: AI Writing Tools, Challenges, Thesis Writing, English Education Students.

ABSTRAK

Revo Aditama Febrian, 2025. “Tantangan Penggunaan Alat Bantu Penulisan Berbasis AI dalam Proses Penulisan Skripsi: Studi pada Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu”. Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Pembimbing: Ivan Achmad Nurcholis, M.Pd.

Penggunaan alat bantu penulisan berbasis Artificial Intelligence (AI) seperti ChatGPT, Grammarly, dan Quillbot semakin marak dalam penulisan akademik, termasuk skripsi. Alat ini membantu menghasilkan ide, memperbaiki tata bahasa, dan menyusun kalimat, namun juga menimbulkan risiko seperti ketergantungan, berkurangnya orisinalitas, dan pelanggaran kaidah akademik. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan tantangan mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu dalam menggunakan AI writing tools saat menulis skripsi, serta strategi mengatasinya. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan kuesioner terbuka dan wawancara semi-terstruktur kepada 22 mahasiswa semester akhir. Data dianalisis dengan teknik analisis tematik Braun dan Clarke. Hasil menunjukkan lima tantangan utama: ketergantungan pada AI, kesulitan menjaga orisinalitas, hambatan mengikuti konvensi akademik, keterbatasan teknis dan konseptual, serta pengaruh terhadap kepercayaan diri. Strategi yang digunakan meliputi membatasi penggunaan AI, parafrase, pemeriksaan plagiarisme, konsultasi, dan peningkatan keterampilan menulis mandiri. Penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa AI writing tools bermanfaat jika digunakan secara bijak dengan bimbingan dan literasi digital memadai.

Kata Kunci: Alat Bantu Penulisan AI, Tantangan, Proses Penulisan Skripsi, Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a brief discussion of the background of the study, the research questions, the objectives of the research, the limitations of the research, the significance of the research, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing a thesis is one of the final requirements that students must complete before graduating from university. This process is not only about understanding theories or research methods but also requires students to write academically, think critically, and organize their ideas clearly. For students in the English Education Study Program, the challenge is even bigger because their thesis must be written in English. This is not easy, especially for those who are not confident in using English for academic writing. (Wahid et al. 2024) found that many EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students face problems with grammar, sentence structure, and organizing their ideas in a logical way.

Because of these difficulties, many students look for tools that can help them in the writing process. One of the most popular options today is using AI writing tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, or Quillbot. AI writing tools provide several useful features, such as offering sentence improvement suggestions, correcting grammatical errors, organizing paragraph structure, and summarizing content. These tools are considered beneficial for students, as they help speed up the writing process, minimize mistakes, and support idea generation during writer's block, particularly in academic English writing. Research by (Ratih and Kastuhandani 2024) and (Husnaini and Madhani 2024) showed that many students feel more confident and productive when using AI tools during their writing process.

However, while these tools offer many benefits, they also bring new challenges. Some students become too dependent on AI, which can reduce their ability to think critically and write independently. (Schwenke et al. 2023) explained that using AI too much can stop students from learning how to plan and develop their own ideas. There are also concerns about plagiarism, incorrect information, and writing that sounds unnatural or too robotic (Dangin and Hikmah 2024).

At Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu, especially in the English Education Study Program, many students have started using AI writing tools when writing their thesis. Even though this practice is becoming more common, there is still not enough research that focuses on the challenges faced by students when using these tools during thesis writing. Most existing studies talk more about the benefits, but not the difficulties that students might face.

That is why this research aims to explore the challenges experienced by English Education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu when using AI writing tools in the thesis writing process. The findings are expected to help students, lecturers, and the university better understand how to use AI wisely and effectively in academic writing. This research also hopes to provide useful input for future policies and guidance on using AI tools in a responsible and ethical way.

1.2 Research Question

This study focuses on the challenges faced by undergraduate English education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu in using AI-based writing tools during thesis writing. It highlights issues such as dependency on AI, originality of the content, and adherence to academic writing standards. The study also explores how students respond to these challenges during the writing process.

The research is guided by the following questions:

1. What challenges do undergraduate English education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu face when using AI writing tools in the thesis writing process, particularly in terms of dependency, originality, and adherence to academic writing conventions?
2. How do these students respond to or overcome the challenges they encounter when using AI writing tools during the thesis writing process?

1.3 Research Objective

The objectives of this research are:

1. To identify and analyze the challenges faced by undergraduate English education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu in using AI-based writing tools during the thesis writing process, particularly in terms of dependency, originality, and adherence to academic writing conventions.

2. To explore how these students respond to or overcome the challenges they experience when using AI writing tools in the process of writing their thesis.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give benefits both in theory and in practice.

1. Theoretical Significance

This study can give additional knowledge about the use of AI-based writing tools in academic writing, especially in thesis writing. It can also be a reference for future researchers who want to study the use of technology in education.

2. Practical Significance

For students, this research can help them understand the benefits and challenges of using AI writing tools so they can use them more wisely. For lecturers or academic supervisors, this study may help them understand how students use AI tools in writing, so they can give better advice and guidance. For universities, the results of this study may be useful in making rules or support systems related to the use of AI in academic writing.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations that need to be explained. First, this research was only conducted with final-year students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Because of that, the results may not represent students from other departments or universities who might have different experiences in using AI writing tools.

Second, this study used a qualitative method with an open-ended questionnaire and interviews. Although this method gives deep information about students' experiences, it does not show the wider picture because it does not include numerical data. As a result, the findings cannot be used to make general conclusions about all students.

Third, this study only focused on some popular AI writing tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot, based on the tools reported by the participants. Other tools that students might use were not included, so there could be other challenges that were not explored.

Lastly, the data in this study came from students' own answers. This means the accuracy of the data depends on how honest and clear the students were when sharing their

experiences. Some students might forget details or give answers that they think are expected.

Even with these limitations, this study still gives useful understanding about the challenges students face when using AI writing tools in writing their thesis. It can also be a good starting point for future studies that want to explore this topic more deeply and with a wider range of participants.

1.6 Definition of Keyterms

To avoid any misunderstandings in the interpretation of the terms used in this study, the operational definitions of the key terms related to the research on the benefits and challenges of using AI writing tools in thesis writing by students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu are presented below:

1. AI Writing Tools

In this study, AI writing tools refer to artificial intelligence based technologies used to assist academic writing, particularly in thesis writing. Examples include ChatGPT, Grammarly, and Quillbot. These tools are commonly used to help generate ideas, correct grammar, paraphrase content, and construct sentences. The study explores how these tools are used and how they may support or challenge the writing process.

2. Challenges

Challenges refer to the difficulties or obstacles faced by students when utilizing AI writing tools in writing their theses. These include limited understanding of the technology, overdependence, difficulty in evaluating the accuracy of generated content, and concerns regarding originality. Data related to these challenges are collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews with participants.

3. Thesis Writing Process

The thesis writing process refers to a series of academic steps that undergraduate students go through to complete their final academic writing project. This includes choosing a topic, preparing a proposal, writing each chapter, consulting with academic advisors, and revising the draft before submission. This study focuses on how AI writing tools are used during these stages and what kinds of challenges students face throughout the process.

4. Undergraduate English Education Students

This term refers to final year students of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu who are currently writing thesis. Participants in this research are students who have experience using AI writing tools during their thesis writing process.