

**EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES ON THE
COUNTER-ARGUMENT OF ENGLISH ACADEMIC
ESSAY AT UNISMUH MAKASSAR**



A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar in part fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Education in English Education Department

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2025

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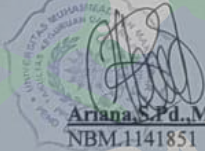
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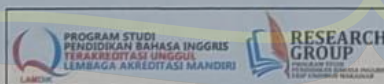


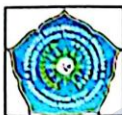
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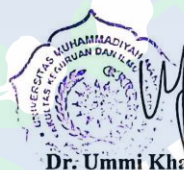
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Day / Date	Chapter	Note	Sign
Sabtu/24/Mai		Instrument of the Research	
31/05/2025	I-V	Finding and Discussion Arrange the Data	
03/07/2025	-IV-	Findings and Discussion Written Form Arrange the Data	
26/07/2025	-IV-	Abstract Finding & Discussion	

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29/07/2025	I - V	Abstract Appendixes Conclusion.	
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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Motto

"The future depends on what you do and think today"

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to:

I dedicate this thesis to all parties who have provided support, hopes and prayers to the author, from the beginning of preparation to the end of writing this thesis. Infinite thanks to my beloved parents, to my supervisors, siblings, family and friends all and the most special thing is to myself. Because at this point in my struggle I have reached the process of completing my final assignment as a student. I hope that in the future I personally can become someone who can be a good role model and can inspire other people out there. Aamiin.

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Makassar September 27 2025



Finalisa

ABSTRACT

Finalisa, 2025. Exploring EFL Students' Difficulties on the Counter-argument of English Academic Essay at Unismuh Makassar, under the thesis of English Education Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. Supervised by Ariana and St. Asmayanti AM.

This research aimed to investigate undergraduate students' difficulties in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay at Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. The method employed in this research was descriptive qualitative research. The data gathered from interview and observation checklist. The participants of this research were the fourth semester students of Unismuh Makassar. The objectives of this research were to find out the students' difficulties and factors in composing counter-arguments.

The findings revealed that students experienced difficulties in writing counter-arguments. The difficulties involving the students were psychological and linguistic factors. For psychological factors, the difficulties have varied from anxiety to motivation. Students experienced several anxiety such as fear of making mistakes, fear of criticism, procrastination, and deadline pressure. In motivation, students faced lack of interest and lack of confidence. The other major factor that students faced in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay is linguistic. Students struggled writing counter-arguments due to lack of vocabularies, repetition, mental block, confusion with grammar usage, and self-doubt. The factors causing students difficulties in writing counter-arguments were also related with anxiety, motivation, vocabulary, and grammar. The researcher found that the most dominant factors were vocabulary and grammar usage as students struggle to find appropriate terms, often repeat basic vocabulary, struggle to use connectors and often misuse transition.

Keyword: Academic Essay, Counter-argument, Students' Difficulties

ABSTRAK

Finalisa, 2025. Menjelajahi Kesulitan Mahasiswa EFL dalam Argumen Tandingan Esai Akademik Bahasa Inggris di Unismuh Makassar, di bawah tesis Departemen Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. Dibimbing oleh Ariana dan St. Asmayanti AM.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki kesulitan mahasiswa S1 dalam menulis argumen tandingan esai argumentatif di Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan lembar observasi. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa semester empat Unismuh Makassar. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesulitan dan faktor-faktor mahasiswa dalam menyusun argumen tandingan.

Temuan menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis argumen tandingan. Kesulitan yang dialami mahasiswa adalah faktor psikologis dan linguistik. Untuk faktor psikologis, kesulitan tersebut bervariasi mulai dari kecemasan hingga motivasi. Mahasiswa mengalami beberapa kecemasan seperti takut membuat kesalahan, takut dikritik, menunda-nunda, dan tekanan tenggat waktu. Dalam hal motivasi, mahasiswa menghadapi kurangnya minat dan kurangnya kepercayaan diri. Faktor utama lain yang dihadapi mahasiswa dalam menulis argumen tandingan esai argumentatif adalah linguistik. Mahasiswa kesulitan menulis argumen tandingan karena kurangnya kosakata, pengulangan, hambatan mental, kebingungan penggunaan tata bahasa, dan keraguan diri. Faktor-faktor penyebab kesulitan mahasiswa dalam menulis argumen tandingan juga berkaitan dengan kecemasan, motivasi, kosakata, dan tata bahasa. Peneliti menemukan bahwa faktor yang paling dominan adalah penggunaan kosakata dan tata bahasa karena mahasiswa kesulitan menemukan istilah yang tepat, sering mengulang kosakata dasar, kesulitan menggunakan kata penghubung, dan sering salah menggunakan transisi.

Kata Kunci: Esai Akademik, Argumen Tandingan, Kesulitan Mahasiswa

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Writing essays is one of the writing assignments that students complete at the lecture level, particularly during the third semester of the English education study program. Student essay writing assignments are not always implemented smoothly; they frequently encounter numerous challenges. Therefore, it is essential to assess and enhance English language acquisition in order to increase students' enthusiasm, interest, and engagement in essay-writing exercises. Given that essay writing exercises are the first step in teaching students how to properly write scientific papers.

For students, being able to write essays is a crucial and useful talent. Additionally, essays can help students develop a critical and creative spirit without inciting anarchist behavior, which is frequently the case when students express their goals to others.

Generally, essays are typically difficult for students to understand. The elements of essay writing are not well understood by students. Learners struggle to identify the traits or format of an essay. The substance and meaning of each essay writing component are not closely considered by students enrolled in essay writing classes. For example, when writing argumentative essay, the students find it difficult to write the components of argumentative essay really well.

One of the most important elements in argumentative essay is the counter-argument. In an argumentative essay, a counter-argument is a point of view that contradicts the writer's primary argument. It increases the essay's credibility by recognizing and addressing divergent viewpoints. Many students find it difficult to completely understand the intricacies of opposing viewpoints. A counterargument must strike a careful balance between presenting opposing viewpoints fairly and convincingly disproving them. It could be challenging for students to fairly present the opposition's viewpoint while also refuting it.

To improve oneself and assist students in tackling their problems, teachers must investigate any potential challenges that their students may face. Wang et al. (2021: 4) defines the most challenging task in language acquisition as generating a unified, fluent, extended piece of writing, which is much more difficult for second language learners. Effective paragraph writing is essential for EFL students at university to succeed academically and in their future employment. Teaching and perfecting this gift is challenging for both instructors and students. Proficiency in writing paragraphs is crucial for advanced students, as they will be required to write extensively in college.

According to Toba et al. (2019: 3), to write a good essay, one should begin with a point, then support that argument with specific facts, and then end the work with a sentence that closes the paragraph and provides a sense of completion. A well-organized essay paragraph possesses three characteristics: it should be unified, coherent, and developed to effectively convey their main

idea. Moreover, one needs to adhere to the stages of the writing process in order to produce a passable piece of writing.

In academic writing course, the students are often tasked to write an essay. Many of university students must have composed an argumentative essay and face some difficulties in constructing the essay, especially if they have to give an argument to their claims. Students' difficulties in composing an argumentative essay is when they have to find counterargument to their argument Austrus et al. (2024:3). A counterargument in an essay is basically an argument against their own main point Nirwanto (2021:7). This sets the stage by showing why the essay is even needed. It is dedicate a paragraph to explain and address an opposing viewpoint.

There are some research discuss about the difficulties students face when writing essay. Bulqiyah et al. (2021:1) found that tertiary students face three types of essay writing challenges: affective problems stemming from students' and lecturers' attitudes, cognitive problems related to writing viewpoint, language transfer, and writing process, and linguistic issues related to lexico-grammar, vocabulary, and essay structure. The research recommends that EFL students and teachers prioritize certain parts of academic writing to address issues. This research's findings have important significance for EFL writing course designers and researchers in language and education

Another recent research from Seprianus et al. (2022:1) conducted a researcher which discuss about university students difficulties in writing

English academic essay. The findings revealed that students still struggled significantly with four components of academic writing: content, structure, discourse, and mechanics. The most common issues (97%) were identified in the following areas: 1) thesis statement; 2) linked concepts; 3) idea development; and 4) use of description/cause and effect, comparison/contrast; 5) practical introduction; 6) topic phrase; and 7) reference.

Bachtiar et al. (2023:1) conducted research discuss about the essay writing challenges experienced by students at Bina Sarana Informatika University. The research found that students reported lexical issues as the most common obstacle when writing essays, with an average score of 2.92. Grammatical errors were the least common concern, with an average score of 2.3. According to 21 respondents, the major challenge students have while writing essays is using proper words and diction based on context.

During preliminary observations, the researcher discovered that many students struggle to write a counterargument in an argumentative essay, which is why the researcher decided to investigate this issue for discussion. The lecturer who teaches an essay writing course supports this idea by stating that students do, in fact, struggle to come up with a counterargument for their argumentative essay. Given the explanation, the researcher was interested in discovering more about the challenges that students encounter when writing academic essays, as well as the elements that contribute to them. There aren't

many academics discussing this subject yet, therefore the researcher decided it was best to chose it as a topic.

Based on the statement above, the researcher aims to conduct this research by observing and interview the students about their difficulties on writing their essay especially when composing the counterarguments.



B. Problem Statement

In keeping with the background of the issue, the problems under investigation in this study are:

1. What are the difficulties in writing counter-arguments of academic essay faced by the English Department students of Unismuh Makassar?
2. What are the factors behind students' difficulties in constructing counter-arguments of English academic essay faced by English Department students of Unismuh Makassar?

C. Research Objective

In accordance with the problem statement, the objectives of this research are:

1. To analyze the difficulties in writing counter-arguments of academic essay faced by the third semester students of Unismuh Makassar
2. To investigate the factors behind students' difficulties in constructing counter-arguments of English academic essay faced by third semester of Unismuh Makassar

D. Significance of the Research

In theory, this content will be easy for researchers to investigate. All of the data needed to collect relevant information for the organization is acquired and organized in accordance with the specifications for future research and studies related to research.

From the result of this study, the researcher expects to provide benefits as follow:

1. Students

The researcher hopes this research can inform and help the students to get a better knowledge about essay writing.

2. Teachers

The researcher hopes this research will provide information to English teachers' about problems which faced by his/her students regarding essay writing.

3. The Researchers

The researcher hopes this research will help future researchers who are interested to discuss the similar topic and discussion.

E. Scope of the Research

To prevent ambiguity and over-examination, the researcher focused on a few key areas of discussions. In this research, the researcher only investigated and analyzed the difficulties students face in writing counter-argument in an argumentative essay. According to Byrne (2002:20) there were three factors that influence the students to face difficulties in writing an essay. The factors were psychological problems, linguistic problems, cognitive problems. In the other hand, there were also five difficulties in writing argumentative essay proposed by Byrne (2002:21). Those difficulties were anxiety, motivation, lack of vocabulary, and grammatical problems. The research analyzed the difficulties of students writing counter-argument in argumentative essay by referencing the those factors and difficulties. However, this research focused on analyzing two specific factors and difficulties from what presented above. In the factors, the researcher limited the discussion by only presenting and analyzing linguistic and psychological factors the students face in writing counter-argument in argumentative essay. Meanwhile in the difficulties, the researcher limited the discussion by only investigating the anxiety, motivation, grammatical problems, and vocabulary.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Previous Related Findings

Several studies have analyzed students' difficulties in writing essays. The researcher sourced studies to support this research. The following studies address students essay writing challenges.

The first study is conducted by Bachtiar (2023:1) that conducted research discuss about the essay writing challenges experienced by students at Bina Sarana Informatika University. The research found that students reported lexical issues as the most common obstacle when writing essays, with an average score of 2.92. Grammatical errors were the least common concern, with an average score of 2.3. According to 21 respondents, the major challenge students have while writing essays is using proper words and diction based on context.

The second previous research is from Nadia et al. (2023:1). This study aims to investigate the components of cohesion and coherence in students' argumentative essays. The analysis is based on the components of text coherence by Oshima & Hogue (2015:5) which involves cohesion devices, such as grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion creating keyword repetition, pronoun consistency, transition signals, and the logical order of the text. The object of this research is 16 argumentative essays written by 4th semester

students of English Department of Gorontalo State University in 2020/2021 academic year. The data were collected through documentation. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative approaches using content analysis proposed by Denscombe (2017:1). The results show that students' argumentative essays achieve a good level of application of cohesion and coherence components. This is shown by their average score reaching 66.95%. The students utilized cohesion devices to build the coherence of their argumentative essays. They are familiar with the components of cohesion and coherence but still have a limited understanding of the role of some items in the components of cohesion and coherence.

The third previous research is from Tasya (2022:2). The purpose of this research aims to identify the reasons behind students' challenges with writing argumentative essays. The population of the research consisted of students from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta's English Department. Students in the fifth semester of the 2020–2021 school year were chosen as study samples using a purposive sample. A qualitative descriptive strategy was employed in this investigation. Questionnaires and student essays served as the study's instruments. Researchers obtained instruments for the study through an internet site. According to the findings, students found it challenging to write argumentative essays. This was demonstrated by the discovery of mistakes in students' argumentative essays that were grouped using the Jacobs et al. (2019) assessment rubric.

Seprianus et al. (2022:1) conducts a research in which discuss about university students difficulties in writing English academic essay. Using a mixed-methods approach, this study investigates students' difficulties in writing English academic essays as well as the most common challenges. The qualitative is used to collect data, while the quantitative is utilized to calculate the difficulty percentage—the data analysis use indicators from Brown (1999). This study's sample size was 30 students from the fifth semester of the English Education Study Program at Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana. The findings revealed that students still struggled significantly with four components of academic writing: content, structure, discourse, and mechanics. The most common issues (97%) were identified in the following areas: 1) thesis statement; 2) linked concepts; 3) idea development; and 4) use of description/cause and effect, comparison/contrast; 5) practical introduction; 6) topic phrase; and 7) reference.

The last research from Bulqiyah et al. (2021:1). This research found that tertiary students face three types of essay writing challenges: affective problems stemming from students' and lecturers' attitudes, cognitive problems related to writing viewpoint, language transfer, and writing process, and linguistic issues related to lexico-grammar, vocabulary, and essay structure. The research recommends that EFL students and teachers prioritize certain parts of academic writing to address issues. This research's findings have important significance for EFL writing course designers and researchers in language and education.

The similarities between those previous research and in this research is the main topic that is to discuss the difficulties students face in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay. However, there are also certain differences between this research and the previous studies. The differences are since the previous are mainly using quantitative research design, this research will use a qualitative research design as the main method. Another difference is when those previous studies are only assessing the mechanism when it comes to writing an essay, this research will focus to analyze the students' difficulties and factors in composing a counter-argument in argumentative essay. The purpose of this research is to analyze students' challenges in producing counterarguments in an argumentative essay. The participants will be from English Department students from Unismuh in Makassar.

B. Some Pertinent Ideas

1. Concept of Academic Essay

a. Definition of Academic Essay

According to Starkey (2014:67), an academic essay is a structured document with an introduction, body, and conclusion. Andersson and Beveridge define academic essays as structured pieces of writing typically produced in formal academic writing. The importance of academic essays in the academic environment can be seen from a broad definition.

Academic essays currently make up a significant element of formal education. Students write essays about study topics to explain, remark on, or assess them. Essays are widely used at universities to assess students' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Academic essay writing guidelines are followed. Trzeciak and Mackay suggest that academic writing is formal, written in the third person, and follows a logical sequence of reasoning. Schwerin believes that essays are communication instruments. An essay expresses the writer's opinions and demonstrates their interest for the subject. The essay should provide a clear, concise, and logical explanation of a specific problem in a standard manner.

Effective essay writing skills are crucial for academic achievement. Writing academic essays is a key component of academics, standardized examinations, and college applications. There is no universally recognized format for academic essays, which can lead to confusion. Starkey identified four distinct types of academic writings, including.

b. Types of Academic Essay

Keraf (2020:8) provides the types of academic essay as follows.

1. Descriptive essay

A descriptive essay provides a thorough portrayal of a certain person, location, item, or event. The purpose is to let readers visualize the specified item.

2. Narrative essay

A narrative essay, written in first-person present or past tense, depicts a series of events from a subjective perspective.

The purpose is typically to make the narrator's point of view clearer.

3. Persuasive essay

Persuasive essays aim to persuade readers to support a particular idea or viewpoint. Persuasive essays should be well-written, entertaining, and supported by credible evidence.

4. Argumentative Essay

Argumentative essays are typically used to address contentious issues where there is evident disagreement. An argument consists of a stance and justifications. Academic essays are vital for a variety of reasons. Academic writing follows certain rules, such as utilizing the third person singular and avoiding colloquial language. Typically, references support the writer's statements. Students are expected to follow academic writing rules when composing their essays. Improving academic writing abilities helps students develop natural, logical, and objective thinking. The Cardiff Center for Lifelong Learning defines a strong essay as having a solid structure, evenly weighted paragraphs, excellent grammar and punctuation, and references.

c. Components of Academic Essay

Langara (2004:67) provides a breakdown of the essential components of an academic essay.

1. Title page

When creating an essay, it's important to identify the major criteria for the title. The essay title should be capitalized and centered 2 inches from the top of the page, followed by the student's name and number (without capital letters, one inch below the title), course and instructor names, and date (not capitalized, 1 inch from the bottom of

the page). Teachers must specify the areas they wish writers to address.

They will decide on the structure of the essay. For example, the state should not organize industries (debate). The keyword is "discuss".

Discussing entails weighing the advantages and disadvantages of something.

2. Introduction

According Langara (2004:67) introduction part has three objectives

- (a) establishing the topic,
- (b) providing the thesis, and
- (c) explaining the essay's organization.

The methods for introducing people are as follows:

- a) The author may start with a brief history or anecdote, or offer a surprising fact or statistic to pique the reader's interest and emphasize the importance of the issue.
- b) After capturing the reader's attention, present the thesis or argument of the essay. The thesis statement may be a single sentence or a sequence of sentences, depending on its complexity. Keep in mind that your topic does not necessarily align with your thesis statement.

A thesis is a concise argument that can be expressed in one or more sentences.

- c) The introduction should conclude with a summary of major arguments to support the thesis assertions.

3. Body

This section aims to analyze and support a stance. The essay body will contain the writer's analysis and supporting evidence for their thesis. The author's introduction should be followed by a well-organized development of the essay's body. The essay will be organized logically into paragraphs. Each paragraph should have an overarching theme to guide the conversation. Introduce the subject in a topic sentence, provide instances or evidence, then assess the evidence to support the author's perspective and thesis. Paragraphs should consist of numerous shorter sentences rather than a single long one.

4. Conclusion

A summary does not constitute a conclusion. Explain the validity of the thesis or argument, as well as the findings from research and analysis. The conclusion summarizes the main points of the essay and supports the thesis or argument.

2. Concept of Counter-argument of Argumentative Essay

a. Definition of Counter-argument

A counter-argument in an argumentative essay is a critical component that acknowledges opposing viewpoints. It serves to demonstrate the writer's understanding of the complexity of the issue at hand, thereby enhancing their credibility. A counter-argument is a response or rebuttal to an argument that has been presented, aiming to show the weakness or flaws in that argument (Keraf: 2020, 7). By recognizing alternative perspectives, the respect for differing opinions, which can make their own argument more persuasive and robust. A counter-argument is an essential part of a good argument because it shows that the writer or speaker understands other perspectives and can respond to them rationally (Channell: 2021, 8). This acknowledgment is not merely a formality; it reflects a willingness to engage with the topic thoughtfully and comprehensively, which is essential for effective argumentative writing.

The structure of a counter-argument typically involves presenting the opposing viewpoint clearly and fairly. This may include outlining the main points of contention that critics might raise against the writer's thesis. Following this presentation, the writer should refute these points, explaining why their argument remains stronger or more valid. This process often employs transitional phrases such as

"however" or "although," which signal to the reader that a rebuttal is forthcoming. The goal here is to provide a balanced view that ultimately reinforces the writer's position.

Including a counter-argument not only enriches the essay but also serves strategic purposes in persuasion. counter-arguments help improve the quality of argumentative writing as they encourage the writer to think critically about different viewpoints (Andrews: 2020, 5). It allows the writer to address potential objections preemptively, which can disarm critics and strengthen their own argument. By demonstrating an understanding of opposing views, writers can appeal to ethos—establishing themselves as fair-minded and knowledgeable. The counter-argument (rebuttal) is useful for showing the limitations of a claim, making the argument more realistic and reasonable (Toulmin: 2022, 2). This approach can enhance the overall persuasiveness of the essay, as readers are more likely to be swayed by arguments that acknowledge and thoughtfully respond to counterpoints.

In terms of placement within an essay, counter-arguments can be integrated into various sections. Some writers choose to introduce them in the introduction to set up a contrast with their thesis statement. Others may dedicate entire paragraphs to discussing and refuting counterarguments, typically positioned after presenting their main arguments. Regardless of placement, it is crucial that counter-arguments

are articulated clearly and supported by evidence, ensuring they are not just dismissed but rather addressed comprehensively.

Ultimately, a well-crafted counter-argument enhances critical thinking and fosters a deeper understanding of the topic being discussed. It encourages writers to consider multiple facets of an issue, leading to more nuanced arguments and conclusions. By engaging with opposing views, writers not only bolster their own positions but also contribute to a more informed discourse on complex issues.

b. Definition of Argumentative Essay

The meaning of the argument itself determines how a statement is supported by reason and evidence. An argumentative essay is one in which the author attempts to persuade the reader that a statement is correct. Writing an argumentative essay requires the writer to defend their point of view. According to Tardy (2019:7), an argumentative essay is one that presents an issue based on the writer's agreement or disagreement motion and provides reasons (Opaliuk: 2020, 4). In addition to providing explanations, the writer must present proof to back up their claims. Brizee also defined argumentative essays as styles of writing that study the subject, gather, produce, and review evidence, and create a concise perspective on the subject (Martinich: 2024, 6).

To summarize, the definitions provided above for argumentative essays are one form of essay that focuses on conveying the writer's

perspective on whether they support or oppose the topic presented by providing reasoning and evidence to back it up. When writing an argumentative essay, the writer must clearly state whose side they are presenting to the topic, and the supporting evidence must be demonstrated so that the reader does not have any suspicions after reading the essay.

In conclusion, the reasons above demonstrate why, while writing an argumentative essay, students must have a greater understanding of the issue in order to convince the reader of their defense. Writing an argumentative essay necessitates the writer's ability to express their profound understanding and extensive information in writing. That is why an argumentative essay is regarded as the finest form of writing, with a definite descriptive function and bounds.

c. Characteristics of Argumentative Essay

An argumentative essay has three stages that represent the writing's organizational structure: thesis, argument, and conclusion (Martinich: 2024, 7-8)

1. Thesis

The first step in creating an argumentative essay is to expose the reader to the topics that will be discussed in the essay. By creating a thesis, the writer must first capture the reader's attention. Rather than attempting to wow the reader with the thesis, the writer must

be able to help the reader understand the content of the writing. Giving background information on the issue for contextualization is also important in the thesis.

2. Argument

In this stage, explain reason the thesis's introductory section was written. By detailing the grounds for the thesis, it requires more supporting evidence, which does not come solely from the writer's conclusion. To maintain the reader's faith, the writer must be firm in their message. When crafting an argument, do not neglect to include statistics or cite sources.

3. Conclusion

The final stage of an argumentative essay is to grade the writing and confirm the validity of the thesis. The conclusion primarily summarizes the entire article in concise paragraphs, combining the data presented. According to the goal of the argumentative essay, some writers might utilize persuading words or sentences to make the conclusion more credible.

d. Purposes of Argumentative Essay

According to Martinich (2024: 9), the purpose of argumentative essay is to convince the reader to accept or seriously consider the opinion of

the writer on a controversial issue. There are several purposes of argumentative essay.

1. Persuasion

It is aim to convince readers to adopt a specific viewpoint or take action based on logical reasoning and evidence.

2. Critical Thinking

Writing argumentative essays encourages students to evaluate conflicting claims, assess evidence, and articulate their thoughts clearly.

3. Engagement with Counterarguments

It is required addressing opposing views, which enhances the credibility of the argument and demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

4. Research Skills

Crafting an argumentative essay fosters research abilities as students gather and analyze credible information to support their claims.

e. Example of Argumentative Essay

Boyse (2009:21) writes one of examples of argumentative essay below.

Watching TV is Bad for Children (Argumentative Essay)

Today, people of different races and generations become victims of TV addiction. Some people watch television because they want to be updated about what is happening in the world. They want to be aware and get connected with different people all around the globe. Nowadays, not only adults and teenagers, but also children, get hooked on television. Because of the busy world people are living in today, parents do not have time to take care and look after their children at all times anymore. Therefore, children have more freedom to do whatever they want, and in this case, watch whatever TV show they want – be it classified as GP, PG-13, or even R-18. It can not be avoided that children will see violent scenes shown on TV since according to K.D. Browne, an average of 20-25 violent acts are shown in children's television programs each hour. (Children and Media Violence, n.d.) Since, exposure to violence causes aggressiveness, trauma, and desensitization, watching TV is bad for children.

Researchers have found that children are more aggressive after watching violent TV shows. This is because children's minds are not yet that completely developed, that is why they are not fully capable of distinguishing right from wrong. Most children just tend to believe and imitate everything they see, even on TV. Especially when they see the celebrity they idolize do violent acts, children will most probably imitate him or her. Laboratory experiments back in 1963 by professors A. Badura, D. Ross, and S.A. Ross have consistently shown that exposures to violence leads to increased heartbeat, blood pressure, and respiration rate, which motivates the child to act violently and aggressively. (What the Researchers Are Saying, n.d.).

Watching TV is nearly equal to watching violence. Based from the Television Violence Monitoring Project, 96% of TV shows contain violence which can also mean that out of 20 times of watching TV, there is only 1% chance of watching a show that has no violence in it. (Prevalence of Media Violence, n.d.) Media violence stimulates fear in some children and makes them believe that the world is more violent than it really is. (What the Researchers Are Saying, n.d.) It may lead children to be anti-social and not want to be out in the real world anymore. Children will think that what victims on TV have experienced will also happen to them. Most children also have a hard time distinguishing fantasy from reality that is why watching TV causes trauma on children.

Television causes trauma on children, otherwise, desensitization. They will think that violence is acceptable and just normal in society. According to Cline, Croft, and Courier in their 1973 study, people, especially children who are exposed to media violence, tend to be less disturbed when they witness real world violence, and have less sympathy for its victims. (What the Researchers Are Saying, n.d.) Media violence will cause the children to overestimate their risk of being victimized by crime, believe their community is unsafe, and assume that the crime rate is increasing even when it is not. (What the Researchers Are Saying, n.d.)

On the other hand, there are also studies by Andre Gosselin, Jacques de Guise and Guy Paquette in 1997 that show that watching television does not cause viewers to be fearful, but even cause them to be happier and more optimistic about life. (What the Researchers Are Saying, n.d.) That may be true for some, but researches of Professors Singer, Slovak, Frierson, and York in 1998 report that the incidences of psychological trauma, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress increased in proportion to the increasing number of hours of television watched each day. (What the Researchers Are Saying, n.d.) People also say that television can make children be aware and exposed of the real world. There, they can encounter different cultures and ideas that are not available in their own community. Shows with positive role models can be good influences to the children. However, kids are likely to learn things from TV that parents do not want them to learn. TV can affect kids' health, behavior, and family life in negative ways. (Television and Children, 2009) It is true that children need to be aware of the reality, but during their growth years is not the right time. The right time is when they are already capable of deciding what is good and right for them. There are also many other alternatives to television as a source of awareness and knowledge for children. Also, books and other reading materials are more effective sources for children's development.

In the world today, it can be said that watching TV is also like watching violence. Violence already cannot be prevented on television programs that is why watching television is bad for children because it causes aggressiveness, trauma, and desensitization. Television can have positive effects on children but a bigger chance of having negative effects. Television can negatively affect children's performance in school, lifestyle, career, family, and even their future. Would you want that to happen? Think about it.

The text serves as an example of an argumentative essay focused on the negative effects of television on children. It begins by highlighting how TV has become an addiction for both adults and kids. The author points out that children's programming includes a wide range of genres, including those rated GP, PG-13, and PG-18, exposing them to disturbing and violent content. This exposure can lead to increased aggression in children, as discussed in the body of the essay. Additionally, the writer notes that TV addiction may result in trauma and a tendency to normalize violence in real life. However, the essay also presents a counter-argument, acknowledging that television can have positive effects, such as fostering happiness and optimism in children. Ultimately, the conclusion emphasizes that while violent content can negatively impact children, there are also potential benefits to their viewing experiences.

3. Concept of Difficulties in Writing Argumentative Essay

a. Factors in Writing Argumentative Essay

Human learning is essentially a process of constructing meaning by making mistakes, miscalculations, and assumptions. Assumptions are a crucial component of digital learning for any skill or knowledge.

When writing an argumentative essay, challenges may arise when the

writer is unable to generate thoughts from the given topic and finding it tough to present supporting evidence. Other challenges arise from language aspects, in which the writer makes some mistakes when writing. Byrne (2018: 34) identified three categories of writing challenges (Pratiwi: 2019, 5):

1). Cognitive

Cognitive difficulties in writing include issues with punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and organizing. Punctuation in writing refers to the use of spacing and sign marks (comma, semicolon, etc.) as instruments for making an essay intelligible. The challenges in punctuation arose from the lack of a standard for students to follow in order to achieve faultless writing. Spelling is a collection of written words that express the message of writing. Due to the effect of their mother tongue, pupils learning English as a foreign language experience spelling issues. Organization in writing refers to how students communicate their ideas. Paragraphs and sentences are examples of writing organization that influence how readers comprehend students' thoughts. According to Opaliuk (2020: 5), organizational challenges arise in the development of a topic, the structuring of paragraphs, and the overall theme of the discourse.

As an illustration, cognitive issues are to the organization of our thoughts through the use of capitalization, punctuation, addressing topics, and following topics.

a. Organizing ideas

Students find it challenging to write expositions step-by-step when structuring their thoughts; they have problems typing in a theme sentence, strengthen sentence, and concluding sentence.

b. Capitalization

Many students encounter challenges with capitalization, particularly in argumentative essays. This cognitive factor can significantly impact the quality of their writing and their ability to effectively communicate their arguments.

c. Paragraphing

The students have problems distinguishing a theme from supporting ideas, generalizations, and specific delicate features, and their paper has little to do with the exposition portion. Finally, writing is a task that is frequently imposed upon us, perhaps due to external factors. This may also lead to a problem with content—what to say—rather than just having a mental impact. Being at a disadvantage may be a familiar experience for the majority of students when they are required to write. According to the explanation above, a few students struggle with writing because of etymological, mental, and

cognitive problems. Complete attention must be paid to phonetic viewpoints such as language structure, vocabulary, dialect usage, and sentence selection in writing.

2). Linguistic

In writing, linguistic difficulties emerge in the aspects of language use, vocabulary, and word choice. Language use in writing corresponds to the correct grammatical and syntactic pattern in paragraph writing by separating and merging ideas into sentences, phrases, clauses, and creating logical relations. As for vocabulary, it is the way students use suitable words in the essay as not to confuse reader. Difficulties in this category mainly in the grammatical problems also using the correct word in the correct place become a pressure for students that the difficulties in diction appeared.

a) Grammar

The language structure of dialect is the representation of the ways in which words can change their shapes and can be combined into sentences in their dialect. Comma rules are a great example of this, as when a comma is placed in specific ranges in a sentence, it can completely change the meaning.

Understanding linguistic use and traditions can make it difficult for students worldwide to memorize the rules of writing in

English. Capital letters, accentuations, and many other viewpoints may ought to be learned in order for the writing to create sense and convey what the understudy is trying to say.

b) Vocabulary

Undergraduate vocabulary includes synonyms and antonyms. For example, full is the inverse of purge and cheap is the inverse of costly. Scholastic vocabulary is more formal than daily language, hence it may be omitted from the general lexicon.

3). Psychological

In this category, the difficulties in writing come from the students' side. Lack of direct interaction and feedback from reader when writing become the main issue for psychological difficulties. Aside of interaction with reader during writing, students' lack of knowledge regarding writing stages can also be the difficulties can make the difficulties worst. Those issues are derived from lack of motivation and anxiety in writing an essay. As it explains below:

a) Motivation

The absence of immediate feedback can hinder students' confidence and motivation, leading to increased anxiety and self-doubt as they struggle to gauge the effectiveness of their arguments. For example, when the students are given a task

to make an argumentative essay and publishing it in a media that will make people to read their essay, they will have some pressure that will make them doubting themselves in a last minute. Eventually, if they already publish the essay and did not get enough amount of expected result and feedbacks from the reader regarding the essay, they will lose the motivation to make an essay and publishing it in a place where people can get an access to read their essay.

b) Anxiety

When students lack foundational knowledge about the topic or the structure of an argumentative essay, they may feel overwhelmed, exacerbating feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure. These psychological barriers create a cycle where students become disengaged, ultimately impacting their writing quality and academic performance.

b. Students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay

Byrne (2016: 48) has proposed five writing difficulties the students may experience when writing an essay. Those are lack of vocabulary, poor organization and writing skills, poor writing mechanism, lack of content, and poor grammarization.

1. Lack of Vocabulary

This difficulty occurs when a student has a limited range of words to express their ideas clearly and effectively. A lack of vocabulary can hinder students' ability to convey meaning, and it often results in repetitive language or overly simplistic expression. When the students have limited vocabulary, they would write repetitive words in sentences. Example: "The movie was good. The acting was good. The story was good." The word "good" has repeated three times when it could go with other adjectives similar with "good".

2. Poor Organization and Writing Skills

This refers to the inability to structure an essay in a logical and coherent way. Poor organization can include issues like lacking clear paragraphs, having ideas that are not well connected, or not following a logical flow from one point to the next. The example of poor organization would be: "First, I went to the store. I saw my friend. I didn't like the weather. Then, I bought groceries." it lacks of flows and conjunctions.

3. Poor Writing Mechanism

This difficulty refers to a lack of proficiency in the technical aspects of writing, such as sentence construction, punctuation, and paragraph formation. It may involve incomplete sentences, awkward phrasing, or incorrect use of punctuation, making the writing unclear or hard to follow. When students have poor writing mechanism, they would write something like this: "I don't like going to the park because sometimes I play football with friends I don't like." The sentence would be awkward and has incorrect punctuation.

4. Lack of Content

This difficulty refers to a situation where a student's essay lacks depth, evidence, or development. The content may be too brief, or the student may fail to provide sufficient support for their ideas, leaving the argument or points underdeveloped. The example would be: "The government should do more to protect the environment. This is important because the environment is valuable." The sentence itself lacks of depth and evidence.

5. Poor Grammarization and Errors

This difficulty involves incorrect use of language rules, including mistakes in verb tense, subject-verb agreement, sentence structure, punctuation, and other grammatical issues. These errors can detract from the clarity and professionalism of an essay. When students write grammatically error sentence, they would write something like this: "She don't like the movie, but I do." The sentence has used wrong helping verb to explain the subject, which is "don't" supposed to be "doesn't" if the subject is "she/he".

4. Concept of EFL Students

a. Defintion of EFL Students

EFL can be used to help learners who live in areas where English is the primary language of instruction. According to Lenggono (2019, p. 8), these learners have some changes in learning English as the primary language of instruction in the classroom, which is crucial for the students because they need to become proficient in the language. Indirectly, this helps to improve the relationship between language and vocabulary (Rahmat et al.: 2021, 3). Hamer in Lenggono has a similar definition, defining EFL as teaching English to pupils who are either in their own country or in English-speaking nations like the UK, Australia, Canada, Ireland, and New Zealand.

Camelson in Lenggono (2019: 6) proposes a third definition: EFL students may reside in a country where their native language is primarily spoken for communication and may be required to learn. Learn English for academic studies, travel activities in English-speaking countries, and business purposes. He also stated that EFL students only study English in class, have limited exposure to English outside of the classroom, have limited opportunities to practice their newly acquired language skills, and have a native background in the classroom.

Whereas, a successful learning outcome English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia is influenced by various factors, including curriculum design and classroom instruction. Changing the national curriculum and shifting from a teaching paradigm to a learning paradigm in educational institutions is crucial for optimizing learning performance and achieving learning objectives. According Chung (2018: 6), pre-service programs like student-centered learning and sales training are based on approaches that support students.

Students are unique individuals with distinct intellectual and emotional characteristics, making them one of the most important factors in education. Intelligence characteristics include following example, mutability, attitude, behavior, personality, learning style, and strategy, while emotional characteristics include environmental factors,

social background, physical differences, and past experiences. These characteristics are crucial for successful language learning and should be completely optimized and paid attention to by both teachers and students.

Waqui (2017: 5) states that appropriate training techniques and environments should be used to improve students' abilities and their ability to learn new languages, both English and Indonesian, because students come from a variety of backgrounds. Students have diverse backgrounds and language skills, such as English in Indonesia (Jubhari, 2006). According to Jamulia (2018), most students struggle with speaking, writing, and reporting skills. Students may not have the same abilities, goals, or talents.

b. EFL Students Difficulties in Writing Argumentative Essay

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students often encounter significant challenges in academic writing, which is crucial for their academic success. Research indicates that these difficulties primarily stem from language barriers, structural issues, and content-related problems. For instance, many students struggle with grammar and vocabulary, which hampers their ability to express ideas clearly and coherently in written form (Batubara & Fithriani: 2023, 5).

Additionally, the complexity of academic writing genres, each with its

specific conventions, adds to the confusion and frustration experienced by learners (Hakami, 2019).

Another critical aspect affecting EFL students' writing is their self-efficacy. Many students lack confidence in their writing abilities, which can lead to anxiety and avoidance of writing tasks altogether. This psychological barrier often results in a reluctance to engage fully with the writing process, further exacerbating their difficulties (Lestari: 2024, 5). Moreover, the pressure to produce high-quality academic work can be overwhelming, leading to feelings of inadequacy among students who may already struggle with the language itself.

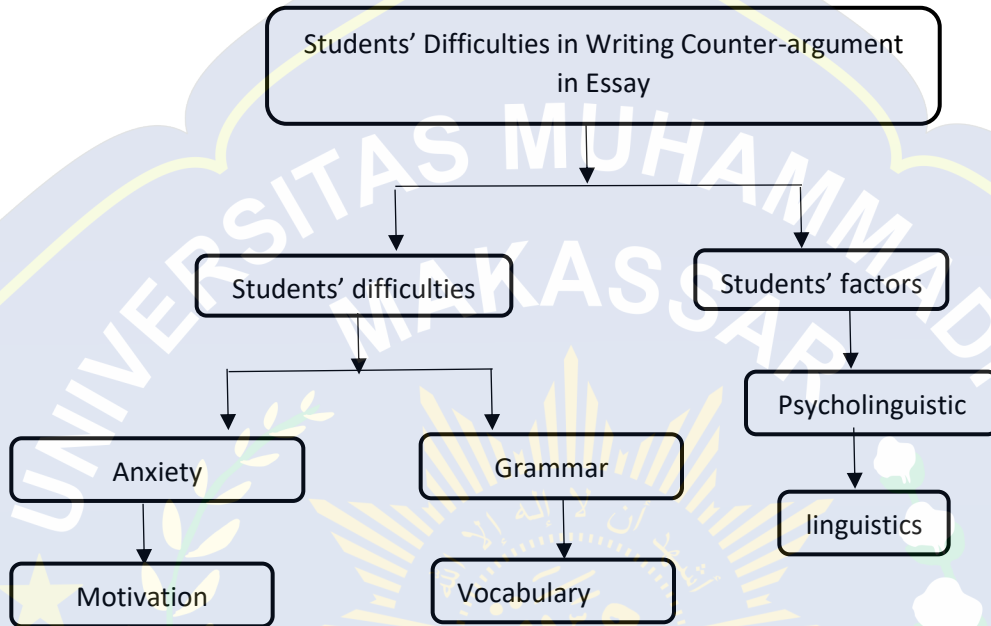
The educational context also plays a significant role in shaping EFL students' experiences in academic writing. Factors such as teaching methods, curricula, and available resources can either support or hinder students' development of writing skills. For example, traditional teaching approaches that emphasize rote learning may not adequately prepare students for the demands of academic writing, which requires critical thinking and creativity (Febrianto: 2023, 6). Consequently, many EFL learners find themselves ill-equipped to tackle academic assignments effectively.

Furthermore, the transition from general to academic writing presents unique challenges. Academic writing demands a higher level of precision and formality compared to everyday writing. EFL students

often struggle with this transition due to insufficient exposure to academic texts and a lack of practice in producing formal written work. This gap in experience can lead to common pitfalls such as plagiarism, as students may resort to copying text when they cannot articulate their thoughts effectively.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges faced by EFL students in academic writing requires a multifaceted approach that includes enhancing language proficiency, building self-efficacy, and providing supportive educational environments. Educators must adopt innovative teaching strategies that encourage practice and engagement with various writing genres while fostering a positive attitude towards writing among students. By doing so, they can help EFL learners develop the necessary skills to succeed in their academic endeavors and beyond.

C. Conceptual Framework



In this study, the researcher wants to investigate the students' writing difficulties and factors in composing counterargument of an essay. A counterargument of an essay is the opposing views or opinions of writer's statement. According to Byrne (2002:2), there are four problems of students' difficulties in writing essay. Those difficulties are anxiety, motivation, grammar and vocabulary. Meanwhile for factors, there are are psychological problems and linguistic problems. In this research, the researcher will focus on discussing the difficulties and factors on the psychological and linguistics problems. The reason is because in previous research, there are a lot research

that already discuss the cognitive and psychological problems. Given that reason, this research will take a different approach with only discussing the psychological and linguistic problems. The researcher will conduct an observation to the third semester students in Unismuh Makassar by giving an interview and observation checklist.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The researcher used descriptive qualitative method to better comprehend and characterize students' issues with producing argumentative essays. The qualitative technique assessed the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or resources (Fraenkel: 2019, 3). This strategy focused on detailing aspects of a situation or action, rather than analyzing the impact of a single variable. The qualitative method involved analyzing human experiences using various data collection methods (Albana et al.: 2020, 5). Hidayat et al. (2020:6) emphasized the importance of qualitative methods in providing correct data to highlight research problems. To summarize, the qualitative technique focuses on social phenomena that occurred around humanity. To summary, the researcher focused to analyze the students' difficulties on the counterargument of argumentative essay in the form of words without using any numerical data. The researcher had employed an interview and observation checklist to collect the data.

B. Research Subject

The participants of this research were the third semester students who have majoring in English education department at Unismuh Makassar. The researcher have chosen five students using purposive sampling because it is based on certain criteria. First, the researcher only chose students from the third semester who have learned about essay writing. Second, the researcher only chose students who already make argumentative essay and struggle to compose counterargument to their essay.

C. Research Instrument

Arikunto (2018) defined an instrument as a tool for collecting data. This research used interview and observation as the primary method. The interview was used to investigate the factors causing difficulties of students' writing counterargument in an essay. The researcher collected the data by using these types of instruments:

1. Observation checklist

The researcher used observation checklist to find and analyze the students' difficulties in composing counterargument in argumentative essay.

2. Interview

The researcher conducted an interview to get the factors of students' difficulties in composing a counterargument of an argumentative essay.

D. Procedure of Data Collection

Merriam and Grenier (2019) stated that the research questions and the best data sources for answering the questions guided the choice of data collection technique. Consequently, the researcher gathered the information by carrying out the subsequent actions:

1. The researcher came to the essay writing class and choose five students to be investigated.
2. The researcher interviewed the students and record their answers to the researcher's questions.
3. The researcher identified the types of students' difficulties in writing counterargument in argumentative essay.
4. The researcher analyzed the factors of students problems in composing a counterargument of an essay.

E. Technique of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data, the researcher will use Miles and Huberman's three-stage data analysis process (Sugiyono: 2016, 5). The method is cyclical and interactive, with three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

a. Data reduction

The initial stage of data analysis was data reduction. Yuanita (2019: 8) explained that the first stage involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and modifying material from written field notes or transcriptions.

Data reduction involves organizing, reducing, and reconfiguring massive amounts of data. The researcher gathered the problems of students in making counterargument in an essay and categorize them based on the aspects that should be assessed.

b. Data display

In the second stage, the researcher presented the data gathered from student's interview and observation checklist. The data could be shown in several formats, but the researcher only showed it in the form of words and present a deep analysis of every problems and factors.

c. Data Conclusion

The final stage was conclusion drawing/verification, which involved the researcher summarizing the data obtained from interviews and observations. The answer to the research question was intended to be explained in this final stage. By comparing interview and observation checklist data, the researcher was able to confirm the answers to the research questions. The study concluded that students have difficulty making a counterarguments in argumentative essays.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the research along with a discussion. The findings section describes several difficulties that undergraduate students face when writing counter-arguments in academic writing class. To support the data, the researcher also examines some possible factors behind these challenges. Meanwhile, the discussion part explores the findings in greater detail.

A. Findings

1. Students' Psychological and Linguistics Difficulties in Writing Counter-argument of Argumentative Essay

a. Psycholinguistic

1). Anxiety

Anxiety were one of psychological factors that causing students' difficulties when writing counter-argument in argumentative essay. Anxiety was derived from students' psychological distress from having to composed an argumentative essay. Based on the interview conducted with the students, the researcher found that there were several difficulties faced by the students included as having anxiety during the period of their essay writing classes, especially from having to write counter-

arguments. The difficulties confessed by the students were fear or making mistakes, fear of criticism, procrastination, and deadlines' pressure.

1). Students Feel Nervous and Anxious in Writing Counter-argument

The first question asked by the researcher was about how nervous and anxious the students when when writing counter-argument part of an argumentative essay. The students response can be seen as follows:

P1: Yes... because I'm still not used to write counter-arguments.

P2: Yes kak, because actually from elementary to junior high I didn't like English, and even in high school the English lessons were mostly just listening, no speaking or writing or anything like that, so I still get confused when it comes to writing argumentative essay, especially in writing counter-argument.

P3: Hmm yes, because I'm afraid it can weaken my own arguments.

P4: Sometimes, because I lack references to strengthen my argument.

P5: Yes, sometimes, if I don't have enough resource.

Based on the excerpts above, most students find it difficult to write counter-arguments.

Several reasons mentioned include their lack of familiarity with writing this section, limited experience with learning english in school, and the fear that presenting a counter-argument might weaken their main argument. In addition, some students struggle due to a lack of references or supporting sources.

2). Students Often Experienced Fear of Making Mistakes When Writing Counter-argument

The researcher asked about how often students feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes them unsure about their ideas. The five students answered as follows.

P1: Hmm yes, a little, like if there are any words that are inappropriate to use.

P2: Often, kak, because like I said earlier, I don't have much experience yet so the fear or panic is always there for sure.

P3: Not really often, because I've learned a lot since high school.

P4: Yes, often. It's because I'm afraid if it's not related to my topic.

P5: yes, for me, often times.

Based on the excerpts above, most students admitted that they often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which leads to uncertainty about their ideas. This fear arises for several reasons, such as being afraid of using inappropriate words, lack of experience, or worrying that the argument might not be relevant to the main topic. However, there was one student who said they don't experience this very often because they have been used to it since high school.

3). Students Often Feel Worry of being Criticized and Judged

The researcher asked the students about how often they feel worry about being criticized and judged when writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay. The students answered the following question as follows.

P1: Not really often, just sometimes, but not often...

P2: Often, kak, it's really because my English skills are still behind compared to others, so when it comes to writing arguments, it happens a lot...

P3: If the criticism is based on actual mistakes, then it's okay. But if the negative comments are just made up, I just ignore them.

P4: Often, kak, because I admit that I'm not very critical, so every time I write I feel afraid of being refuted.

P5: nearly everytime I write kak.

Most of students admitted that they often feel this way, especially due to their lack of confidence in their english skills or critical thinking ability. One student mentioned that they feel afraid of being refuted whenever they write. However, there was also a student who said they only feel this occasionally, and another who stated that as long as the criticism is valid, they are okay with it and tend to ignore baseless negative comments.

4). Students Postponed Writing Counter-argument When Feeling Anxious

The researcher questioned the students if they ever postponed their argumentative essay writing when feeling anxious to write counter-arguments. The students responded as follows:

P1: Eeh no... usually when I write the ideas just flow right away. so.. I don't end up postponing either...

P2: Yes... very often. Maybe because I'm scared, and I also feel like I understand less than the other students in class when it comes to English, and I also postponed college for a year because I studied in a pesantren, so I feel left behind... as a result when working on assignments related to writing I always end up postponing.

P3: If postponing means waiting until close to the deadline to start, then no. But if it's about delaying to do some research, then yes.

P4: Yes, often, but not just because of that, also because I get distracted easily and am easily influenced by my mood.

P5: yes, often. It's because I'm confused and not really familiar in finding references that differs from my main arguments.

Based on the excerpts above, most students admitted that they often postpone writing their argumentative essays when feeling anxious about writing counter-arguments. The reasons vary, such as feeling left behind in English compared to classmates, confusion in finding opposing references, or being easily distracted and influenced by mood. However, one student said they don't postpone writing at all, while another clarified that they don't delay the writing itself but sometimes postpone doing the necessary research.

5). Students Difficult to Focus When Feeling Pressured

The researcher asked the students if the time pressure ever make them difficult to focus writing argumentative essay and counter-arguments. The students answered the following question with these response.

P1: ahh yeah it adds pressure, since Indonesian is different from English so if there's a time limit it feels more stressful like that.

P2: It adds more mental burden, especially if my skills are still lacking, I get confused like "what should I write," things like that.

P3: That depends on the preparation, kak. For example, if I'm asked to write a counter-argument today and only given five minutes to research, then yeah, I'd feel pressured.

P4: Yes, often. Usually, when there's an assignment, especially writing an essay like this and there's a time limit, like just a few hours or minutes, it often makes me go blank, like I don't know what exactly to write.

P5: yeah, often kak, for me personally, I got blank If it has a short deadlines

Based on the excerpts above, all students agreed that time limits increase the pressure they feel when writing counter-arguments. Several mentioned that limited time makes them feel confused or blank, especially when their English skills are still developing. Some pointed out that the difference between Indonesian and English adds to the stress under time constraints. One student emphasized that the level of pressure depends on how much preparation time they are given before writing.

Based on the results above, all of the students admitted to experiencing anxiety when writing the counter-argument part. This was particularly due to feeling anxious and nervous when writing counter-arguments, feeling worry of being criticized or judged, deadlines pressure that made students difficult to focus, procrastination when feeling anxious, and fear of making mistakes. When feeling nervous and anxious, one of the students confessed the basis of their anxiety stemmed from a lack of familiarity with writing counter-arguments and insufficient prior exposure to writing practices in English, which led to confusion and self-doubt. Others expressed that their anxiety was heightened by the fear that their arguments might weaken their main points or appear irrelevant, especially in the absence of supporting references. Several students also admitted that their limited proficiency made them feel left behind compared to their peers, which triggered insecurity and the fear of being negatively judged. As a result, some of them tended to delay their writing, either because they were overwhelmed by pressure or unsure how to begin, which often worsened their mental burden. In addition, tight deadlines further intensified their anxiety, often causing them to feel

mentally blocked and unable to focus when writing the counter-argument part of their essay.

2). Motivation

1). Students' Interest in Writing Counter-argument

In investigating about students' motivation, the researcher first asked the students about their interest in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay. The responses of the students can be seen below.

P1: Ohh very interested... I'm really interested in counter-arguments because.. especially nowadays there's a lot on social media discussing those things, and basically any topic can be turned into a counter-argument. so I'm more interested in learning how to respond to every argument out there

P2: Well, I actually have a hobby of writing, but... in Indonesian. So writing counter-arguments in English is definitely something I'm really interested in, because when I write the inspiration just flows like that, but yeah my weakness is still the same, I lack in English, I don't have enough vocabulary, grammar issues, especially since it's writing—it's different from speaking, in speaking the person understands directly, but in writing you have to get the grammar and the word choice right...

P3: Seventy percent interested, kak. Because I like thinking out of the box, haha. I like expressing my thoughts in writing.

P4: Actually, I'm honestly very, very interested. I think it's really cool when someone can explain their argument confidently, especially when they include lots of references, so I'm really interested.

P5: I'm really interested but maybe if I have to rate it it's only 8/10 because I'm still scared to write an argument.

based on the excerpts above, all five students expressed a clear interest in writing counter-arguments. some students are drawn to it because they enjoy thinking critically

and expressing ideas, while others see it as a relevant skill, especially in the context of social media discussions. despite their enthusiasm, several students also mentioned challenges that affect their motivation, such as limited vocabulary, grammar issues, and fear of making mistakes. one student pointed out the difference between speaking and writing in english, highlighting how writing requires more precision. overall, while their interest is high, their confidence is still influenced by their english proficiency.

2). Writing Counter-argument is an Improvement or Mental Burden to Students

For further investigation, the researcher then asked the students about their thoughts in writing a counter-argument. Whether the students thought writing counter-arguments could improve their writing quality, or it might feel like an extra burden.

The students' answers can be seen as follows.

P1: eeh... if it's for formal studying maybe yes, it adds mental burden, but if it's just casual learning then probably not, because it can also be used to learn vocabulary... more enjoyable. but if it's for serious studying, it does add mental burden.

P2: Yes, definitely, because in writing we don't just present our arguments, we also have to provide refutations or responses that can strengthen the point.

P3: Since this is a counter-argument, we get to see things from another perspective, so for me it doesn't add mental burden, kak.

P4: Yes, it can improve it, but I think not just from that part, it's about the whole piece of writing.

P5: I think it can improve the quality of our writing kak, if we do it often.

Based on the excerpts above, most students believe that writing counter-arguments can improve the quality of their writing. They see it as a way to strengthen their arguments, broaden perspectives, and practice important skills like refutation. However, one

student noted that writing counter-arguments in formal academic contexts can feel mentally burdensome, though it can still be enjoyable in more casual or informal settings. Overall, the students acknowledged the value of counter-arguments in writing, while also recognizing the mental effort it requires.

3). Students Feel Motivated or Unmotivated Writing Counter-argument

The researcher asked the students about their motivation in writing counter-arguments. Whether the students usually feel motivated or unmotivated when reach the counter-argument part of their writing. The students' responses can be seen below.

P1: yes, very enthusiastic because not every argument should just be agreed with, it also needs to be given another perspective or point of view

P2: Maybe I feel motivated, because like I said earlier, I like writing so the ideas just flow like that.

P3: Yes, I enjoy it, because there's a sense of satisfaction when an argumentative essay includes a counter-argument.

P4: Yes, I feel motivated, especially when my argument gets explained and I receive feedback from friends that strengthens it, I feel even more motivated.

P5: I often feel motivated but it's only during writing time... If I'm not writing, then I get lazy.

Based on the excerpts above, all students stated that they generally feel motivated when writing the counter-argument part of their essays. Some of them mentioned that they enjoy offering different perspectives and feel satisfied when their writing includes a counter-argument. Others explained that their motivation comes from their interest in writing itself or from receiving feedback that helps strengthen their arguments.

However, one student admitted that their motivation mostly appears during the actual writing process, and outside of that, they tend to feel lazy or less driven.

4). Students Feel Confident and Eager to Write Counter-argument

The researcher asked the students about their confidence and eagerness in writing counter-argument part. The students' answers can be seen below.

P1: For me I'm not that very eager.

P2: I don't have much confidence, but the desire to improve is definitely there because I want... to be better like that...

P3: For me it's just normal, or you could say I've done it often, so it's 50-50.

P4: Yes, because I really love writing, and that makes me even more excited to write essays.

P5: Sometimes I'm confident sometimes not, If I'm really eager with my arguments then I'd feel confident.

Based on the excerpts above, students showed varying levels of confidence and eagerness in writing the counter-argument section. Some students expressed low confidence but a strong desire to improve, while others felt neutral or mixed—confident in some situations but not in others. One student admitted not feeling very eager, whereas another showed high enthusiasm due to their love for writing. Overall, while eagerness and confidence levels differ, most students show a willingness to learn and grow in this aspect of writing.

5). Students Don't Actively Learn How to Write Counter-argument

The researcher then asked the students activeness in trying to write better counter-arguments. The students' answer can be seen below.

P1: hmm for now I think I rarely study. I only studied during lessons, but in daily life like in debates, I used this counter-argument very often.

P2: Hmm not really because I'm more interested in learning how to make a thesis statement.

P3: Yes, because when I study it, I can better understand what the sentence structure should be like.

P4: Not really

P5: Not really

Based on the findings above, it was indicated that while many students showed a genuine interest in writing counter-arguments, often associating it with the enjoyment of critical thinking and expressing alternative perspective, this interest did not always mean into confidence. Several participants stated challenges such as limited vocabulary and grammar concerns, which often held them back. Although some viewed the task as an opportunity to improve their writing skills, others described it as mentally demanding, especially in academic writing contexts. Students' motivation tended to emerge during the writing process itself, yet seemed to diminish outside that context, suggesting that their enthusiasm may be situational rather than consistent. Additionally, only a few students reported making active efforts to deepen their understanding of

counter-argument writing beyond classroom activities, implying that this aspect of learning may not yet be a personal priority for most.

b. Linguistic

1). Vocabulary

When writing academic essay, undergraduate students have to use formal language. In academic essay writing class, several students confessed that the struggle of writing counter-arguments derived from the lack of vocabularies. Not only that, students also faced mental block and repetition. This showed that students also faced some linguistics problems in composing counter-arguments of an essay.

1). Students Often Struggle to Find the Right Words to Express Their Counter-arguments

The researcher first asked about how often the students struggle to find the right words to express their counter-arguments. The students answered as follows.

P1: for writing... yes, because sometimes in English there are words that sound off, or the usage just doesn't feel right when translating from Indonesian to English, it definitely happens sometimes.

P2: Always, because in English I'm still not that fluent... so I get stuck more often, unlike in Indonesian writing where I'm used to it and have lots of ideas, so not often—but in English, very often.

P3: Not that hard for me.

P4: Yes, often, especially in writing, because it doesn't use everyday language. It has to be academic, so it's harder and I often need to look up formal vocabulary in the dictionary.

P5: for me, it's often.

Based on the excerpts above, most students reported that they often struggle to find the right words when writing counter-arguments in English. Several students mentioned that translating from Indonesian to English sometimes results in awkward or incorrect word choices. Others highlighted that their lack of fluency in English makes it harder to express ideas compared to writing in Indonesian. One student pointed out the challenge of using academic vocabulary instead of everyday language, which often requires checking the dictionary. However, one student said they don't find it particularly difficult.

2). Students Often Feel Stuck because They Don't Know Appropriate Vocabulary or Expressions When Writing Counter-arguments

The researcher then asked the students about their mental block during writing a counter-argument as they admit they did not really familiar with appropriate vocabulary and expression in writing counter-arguments. The students' responses can be seen below.

P1: quite often yah, especially when I'm under pressure to write, it happens even more like, how could the words I originally knew just suddenly disappear like that. it's like that. but in more relaxed situations, it's easier for me to remember, even more words come to mind. when I really need them, I forget, but when I'm just chill, everything comes back.

P2: For me it's often.

P3: In English, quite often, because you're not supposed to keep repeating the same vocabulary. So yeah, kind of.

P4: Very often, kak, because sometimes I have a word I want to use, but I forget what it is in everyday language too—in Indonesian even—so very often.

P5: Ah yes, and it often makes me lazy because eventhough I got some ideas before, the words suddenly disappeared when I actually want to write them. So yeah, I often stuck.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted experiencing mental blocks when writing counter-arguments, mainly due to their unfamiliarity with appropriate vocabulary and expressions. Several students mentioned that under pressure, words they previously knew tend to disappear, while in more relaxed situations, ideas and vocabulary come more easily. Others expressed frustration about forgetting words in both english and even in their native language. One student also noted that the mental block often leads to a lack of motivation, as ideas vanish when they try to put them into words. Overall, vocabulary limitation and stress were key factors contributing to their mental blocks.

3). Students Used Incorrect or Inappropriate Words due to Limited Vocabulary

The researcher then asked the students about their habit of using incorrect or Inappropriate words due to the limited vocabulary. The students answered the following question can be seen below.

P1: sometimes, especially when the deadline's close, I usually get too lazy to even check if the vocab is correct or not.

P2: Yes, I have. Often in the beginning, but now I check my writing more so thankfully it's getting less frequent.

P3: Yes, I have.

P4: Hmm yes, I have.

P5: Yeah, often kak, sometimes when I use connection, it's not really suitable with the sentence structure or too informal for the sentence.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they have used incorrect or inappropriate words in their writing due to limited vocabulary. Some students mentioned that this happens especially when they are close to a deadline or feeling lazy to revise. Others acknowledged making these mistakes more frequently in the past but said they now try to review their writing more carefully. One student specifically noted having issues with using connectors that don't fit the sentence structure or are too informal. Overall, vocabulary limitation and time pressure were the main reasons behind these word choice errors.

4). Students Repeat the Same Words in the Counter-Argument Section

The researcher asked the students about their habit of repeating the same words when writing counter-argument. The students' answers can be seen as follows.

P1: like I said kak, especially when I'm really under pressure in English, I tend to repeat words a lot because I don't know what other words to use.

P2: Often, but if I think about it again, like yesterday I learned that you shouldn't repeat the same word in a sentence, so I look for alternatives—like what pronoun to use next that's different, something like that.

P3: Quite often.

P4: Yes, often, because like I said earlier, once I find a nice word, I tend to keep repeating it.

P5: yeah often kak, for me it's because of the lack of vocabularies.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they often repeat the same words when writing counter-arguments. This habit is mainly caused by limited vocabulary and pressure during writing. Some students mentioned that they tend to repeat words because they're unsure of alternatives, while others said that once they

find a word that sounds good, they keep using it. One student shared that they're starting to become more aware of this issue and have begun looking for different ways to avoid repetition, such as using pronouns or synonyms.

5). Students Avoid Expressing a Counter-argument Idea

The researcher asked the students about their habit of avoiding expressing counter-argument when writing argumentative essay. The students answered the question can be seen below.

P1: yeah sometimes, when I have no other choice, I look for an easier alternative that I can use to translate into English

P2: Hmm yes... I have.

P3: Quite often, maybe because I'm confused about how to present it like, how do I explain my idea?

P4: Yes, because sometimes when I already have a topic, and I can't find any references related to it, I get lazy to search for the counter-argument.

P5: Yeah because the challenge is always the lack of vocabularies, like I said before kak.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they sometimes avoid expressing counter-arguments when writing argumentative essays. The main reasons include difficulty in translating ideas into english, confusion about how to present counter-arguments, lack of references, and limited vocabulary. One student mentioned preferring easier alternatives when they feel stuck, while another shared that the effort to search for supporting sources can feel discouraging. Overall, avoidance is often linked to linguistic and resource-related challenges.

Based on the findings above, it was inferred that the students showed a struggle in finding the right choice of words when writing a counter-argument of argumentative essay. Several students expressed their struggle to find the appropriate words due to their lack of fluency, unfamiliarity, and feeling stuck. Students also often feeling stuck and tend to repeat the same words during the writing process of counter-argument due to their lack of vocabularies and state of brain fog. In addition, students also expressed that they tend to use incorrect or inappropriate words and often avoiding the counter-argument as they usually get lazy to re-check the words and search more references for counter-argument.

2). Grammar

When writing academic essays, undergraduate students are also expected to use correct grammar consistently. In the academic essay writing class, several students admitted that grammar was one of the challenges they encountered when composing counter-arguments. Some of them struggled with using the correct tenses, while others were unsure about sentence structure or word order. This indicated that, aside from vocabulary and idea development, grammar-related difficulties also contributed to the students' struggles in writing counter-arguments.

1). Students often get Confused About Using Correct Grammar Structures

The researcher asked about the students habit of getting confused in using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments. The students' responses can be seen as follows.

P1: quite often kak, especially in arguments where we don't usually use the same words we'd use in speaking or casual conversation. arguments really need more academic vocabulary, so for me it's probably more common to feel confused when searching for the right words. if it's just for daily use, maybe it's easier, but when it's for arguments or academic writing, it gets more confusing to choose the right words.

P2: Often, because grammar is still confusing for me, like to be and the use of have, I'm still unsure about how to place them so I'm still confused.

P3: Quite a bit, kak, because my grammar understanding is still lacking.

P4: Quite often.

P5: Nearly everytime I write, kak. because of the words choice and sentence structures of course. it's difficult to develop my ideas so I got confused a lot.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they often feel confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments. Several students pointed out that academic writing requires more formal and structured language compared to everyday conversation, which adds to the difficulty. Common areas of confusion include the use of grammar elements like *to be*, *have*, and sentence structure. One student also mentioned that choosing the right words and structuring sentences correctly makes it harder to develop ideas smoothly. Overall, grammar remains a major challenge for the students when writing counter-arguments.

2. Students Doubting which Tense to Use in Writing Counter-arguments

The researcher asked about how often the students doubting which tenses to use in writing counter-arguments. The students' answer can be seen below.

P1: yeah often, especially in regular writing when a word I thought was correct turns out to be wrong, so I often end up feeling unsure like that

P2: Yes, often, again because my grammar is really lacking. That's my weakness, maybe it's because my school was different from others. In high school, in the first year, we only focused on listening. We were given an audio text and had to fill in statements related to it, and even that I often got wrong.

P3: Not sure... yes, I've experienced that.

P4: Yes, I have.

P5: Yeah often because I always confused when it comes to the structures. Not sure if the grammar is correct or not.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they often feel unsure about which tenses to use when writing counter-arguments. This uncertainty is mostly due to their limited grammar knowledge and lack of confidence. Some students shared that their previous learning experiences didn't provide enough focus on grammar, especially in high school. Others expressed general confusion about sentence structures and whether the grammar they use is correct. Overall, tense usage remains a common source of doubt and difficulty for the students during the writing process.

3. Students Grammar Made Counter-argument unclear or Difficult to Understand

The researcher then asked the students about their difficulty in making clear counter-argument for reader to understand. The students' responses can be seen as follows:

P1: yeah often, especially in regular writing when a word I thought was correct turns out to be wrong, so I often end up feeling unsure like that

P2: Yes, often, again because my grammar is really lacking. That's my weakness, maybe it's because my school was different from others. In high school, in the first year, we only focused on listening. We were given an audio text and had to fill in statements related to it, and even that I often got wrong.

P3: Not sure... yes, I've experienced that.

P4: Yes, I have.

P5: Yeah often because I always confused when it comes to the structures. Not sure if the grammar is correct or not.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they often struggle to make their counter-arguments clear and understandable for the reader. The main difficulties stem from limited grammar knowledge, confusion about sentence structures, and uncertainty in word choice. Some students also linked their struggles to past learning experiences that didn't emphasize grammar or writing skills. Overall, the challenge of presenting clear counter-arguments is closely tied to their lack of confidence and difficulties in applying correct language structures.

4. Students Often make Mistakes in Sentence Structure When Writing Counter-arguments?

The researcher often made mistakes in writing sentence structure during the period of writing counter-arguments. The responses of the students can be seen as follows.

P1: not often, unless it's for complex sentences that aren't used much, maybe sometimes. but for commonly used sentences... not that often.

P2: Yes, often, like I said earlier, my English is really lacking. I only started being able to properly answer lecturers' questions in semester 3.

P3: Often, because my grammar's still not good.

P4: Hmm very often.

P5: It's rare for me sih kak.

Based on the excerpts above, most students admitted that they often make mistakes in sentence structure when writing counter-arguments. Common reasons include limited grammar skills and lack of confidence in using english, especially for complex or academic sentences. One student shared that they only began feeling more capable in responding to academic tasks by their third semester. However, a couple of students mentioned that they rarely make such mistakes, particularly when using familiar or simple sentence structures. Overall, sentence structure remains a frequent challenge for most of the students.

5. Students Often Revise or Rewrite Many Parts of Counter-argument Because of Grammar Issues

Students often revised and rewrite many parts of counter-argument due to grammar issues. The responses of this students regarding this question can be seen below.

P1: yeah, like I said earlier, when I'm confused and the words start sounding too wordy, I often revise and look for better alternatives that fit more naturally.

P2: Maybe just revising the parts that are incorrect, no need to completely rewrite everything. For example, if I've already written one paragraph and there are a few wrong words, it's unlikely that I would rewrite the whole paragraph. Something like that, maybe.

P3: Yes, often kak, because when I write, I usually break it down into bullet points first, and if I feel any of the points aren't clear, I revise them again like that.

P4: Hmm yes, for example, if I've already written something and then I read it again and find writing errors, whether grammar or typos, I revise it.

P5: yes kak, often. I always got revision in this course because of the sentence structure and a lot of stuff.

Based on the excerpts above, all students admitted that they often revise or rewrite parts of their counter-arguments due to grammar issues. While some students prefer to make minor corrections without rewriting entire sections, others frequently revise their writing to improve clarity and fix errors. Common reasons for revision include awkward word choices, unclear bullet points, sentence structure problems, and grammar or typing mistakes. One student also mentioned consistently receiving revision feedback in their course, highlighting how grammar issues often require them to make adjustments.

Based on the findings above, it was indicated that the students showed difficulty in grammar when writing a counter-argument such as getting confused in using correct grammar structure, unsure which tenses to use, doubting themselves that their grammar are still lacking, often made mistake in using grammar, and also often revise or re-write their counter-arguments. Some students confessed their difficulty as they stated that the reason why they were struggling based on their lack of understanding of grammar structures and also due to their limited experience in writing counter-arguments. Some of them even expressed that their lack of vocabularies also played a part in making them difficult to write a better counter-argument.

2. Students' Factors in Writing Counter-argument of Argumentative Essay

Students Factors in writing counter-arguments derived from observation checklist of all five students.

a. Psychological

1). Anxiety

The first factor that caused students difficulties is anxiety. This psychological factors appeared in students' trial of writing counter-arguments in their academic writing session. Students expressed that hesitation, uncertainty, overstimulation, avoidance, and lack of focus, defensiveness hindered them in making counter-argument.

1). Students hesitate to make counter-arguments

Four out of five students showed hesitation in writing counter-arguments. this indicated that most of them still feel unsure or lack confidence when asked to challenge or critique a certain opinion. This may be due to lack of experience, fear of making mistakes, or unfamiliarity with how to structure a proper counter-argument.

2). Students display uncertainty when asked to critique or oppose an idea

In this criteria, nearly all students showed uncertainty when asked to critique or oppose an idea, with the exception of one (P1). This suggests that giving criticism or refuting others' ideas is still a major challenge, possibly because they feel uncomfortable or fear making mistakes when expressing their thoughts.

3). Students appear overwhelmed by the complexity of presenting opposing views

Three students reported feeling overwhelmed when asked to present opposing views. they might see counter-arguments as something complex that requires deeper understanding and more formal language structure, which makes it harder for them to start or develop their ideas.

4). Students avoid discussing opposing views to prevent disagreement

Two students admitted to avoiding opposing viewpoints to prevent disagreement or conflict. This indicated that some students still perceive counter-arguments as confrontational rather than part of critical thinking and academic discussion.

5). Students tend to focus on supporting only one side of the argument

A similar pattern appears here, where two students preferred to only support one side of the argument. This showed that they were not yet accustomed or comfortable with exploring multiple perspectives in academic writing.

6). Students seem defensive when asked to challenge their own position

In this criteria, four out of five students showed defensiveness when asked to challenge their own arguments. This meant students tend to stick to their initial stance and are reluctant to evaluate its weaknesses, which becomes a barrier in developing strong counter-arguments.

2). Motivation

The second factor that derived from the students observation checklist is motivation. The researcher found that in this factor, students expressed their lack of motivation in writing counter-arguments. Students' lack of interest and low effort in incorporating counter-argument were some of the reasons students having difficulty in writing counter-arguments of an essay.

1). Students struggle to engage with counter-arguments due to lack of interest in multiple views

Three students had difficulty engaging with counter-arguments due to lack of interest in exploring different perspectives. This showed that they still prefer one-sided writing and are not fully motivated to consider opposing sides.

2). Students demonstrate low effort when incorporating counter-arguments

All students showed low effort in incorporating counter-arguments into their writing. This may be influenced by many factors, such as lack of understanding, low motivation, or technical difficulties like grammar and vocabulary.

b. Linguistic

1). Vocabulary

The third factor students experienced in writing counter-argument is lack of vocabulary. In this category, students expressed their struggle to find appropriate terms to express counter-arguments and often repeat basic vocabulary instead of nuanced language in their counter-arguments.

1). Students struggle to find appropriate terms to express counter-arguments

All students struggled to find suitable words or expressions to write their counter-arguments. this strongly supports the idea that limited vocabulary is a major barrier to expressing ideas in academic contexts.

2). Students repeat basic vocabulary instead of nuanced language

four out of five students tended to repeat basic words rather than using more varied and precise vocabulary. this makes their writing sound monotonous and weakens the argumentative strength of their essays.

2). Grammar

The last factor that caused students' difficulties in writing counter-argument is grammar. Students expressed that they often present counter-argument in disjointed or unclear manner, fail to connect counter-argument to the thesis argument, struggle to use connectors, misusing transition, lack reasoning, and provide weak or no evidence to the counter-arguments.

1). Students present counter-arguments in a disjointed or unclear manner

All students presented their counter-arguments in a disorganized or unclear way. this suggests that they struggle to organize their thoughts properly or lack an understanding of academic writing structure.

2). Students fail to connect counter-arguments to thesis or other arguments

Again, all students failed to connect their counter-arguments to the main thesis or supporting points. this causes their writing to feel fragmented and less convincing.

3). Students struggle to use connectors like “however,” “in contrast,” etc.

All students had difficulty using common connectors for counter-arguments. this reflects their lack of exposure to academic expressions and weak control over logical structure in writing.

4). Students overuse/misuse transitions, causing awkward argumentation

All students also tended to overuse or misuse transitional phrases, leading to awkward or unnatural argumentation. this shows that they have not yet mastered how to guide the flow of their writing effectively.

5). Students' counter-arguments appear unbalanced or lack reasoning

Four out of five students produced counter-arguments that were unbalanced or weak in reasoning. this means their ideas were often shallow or unsupported by strong logic.

6). Students provide weak or no evidence to support counter-arguments

Similarly, only one student managed to provide evidence to support their counter-arguments, while the others failed to include supporting data or references. as a result, their counter-arguments lacked credibility and were easier to dismiss.

Based on the findings above, the researcher can conclude that in terms of anxiety, most students showed psychological barriers when writing counter-arguments. They tended to hesitate when presenting opposing views, as reflected in their reluctance to critique or challenge ideas and feeling overwhelmed by the complexity of expressing contradictory perspectives. Some students even avoided discussing opposing views to prevent conflict or disagreement. In addition, there was a tendency to support only one side of the argument and to become defensive when asked to challenge their own stance. These patterns suggest that anxiety and emotional discomfort are significant factors hindering their ability to construct counter-arguments effectively.

From the perspective of motivation, many students appeared disinterested in exploring multiple viewpoints. This lack of interest contributed to the low effort they put into writing counter-arguments. Almost all participants demonstrated minimal engagement when incorporating opposing ideas into their writing. This indicates that their intrinsic motivation is not yet strong enough to drive them to engage with diverse perspectives, which is essential in producing balanced and critical argumentative writing.

In terms of vocabulary, all students struggled to find appropriate words to express counter-arguments. As a result, they often relied on repetitive and basic vocabulary rather than using more nuanced language. This limited vocabulary not only affected the clarity of their arguments but also restricted their ability to compose persuasive and academically sound counterpoints. This suggests that vocabulary challenges are a common linguistic barrier faced by students in constructing counter-arguments.

Regarding grammar, all students encountered significant difficulties. Their counter-arguments were often poorly structured, lacked clear connections to the thesis or main arguments, and showed limited use of linking words such as “however” or “in contrast.” Even when transitions were used, they were often overused or misapplied, which led to awkward and ineffective argument flow. Additionally, the arguments presented were frequently unbalanced and lacked supporting evidence. This indicates that weaknesses in grammatical competence directly impact the quality of reasoning and the delivery of their opposing ideas.

B. Discussion

Based on the interview findings, it can be concluded that students faced various challenges when writing counter-arguments in argumentative essays. These challenges were related to psychological factors, motivation, and linguistic difficulties.

From a psychological perspective, most participants reported experiencing anxiety while composing counter-arguments. This anxiety stemmed from fear of making mistakes, fear of criticism, procrastination, and deadline pressure. The fear of making mistakes appeared through their concerns about choosing the wrong words that might lead to misinterpretation. Some participants also admitted to feeling panicked due to their lack of experience in writing essays in English, which made them hesitant during the writing process. This finding is in line with Prasetyaningrum et al. (2021), who found that writing anxiety among Indonesian EFL students is strongly associated with lack of experience, limited linguistic ability, and tight time constraints.

In addition to anxiety, motivation was also an important factor. Some participants expressed disinterest in writing the counter-argument section, feeling that it was not necessary, while others lacked confidence in their writing abilities. However, despite their low confidence, there was still a strong desire to improve. This shows that intrinsic motivation remained, even when students experienced internal challenges. These findings align with Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, which suggests that learners can stay motivated to grow even when their confidence is low, as long as they see value in the task.

From a linguistic standpoint, the most dominant issue was the lack of academic vocabulary. Students found it difficult to choose formal words that matched academic context. As a result, they often repeated the same words within a paragraph. Some participants admitted that they tended to rely on “safe” words because they were unsure of what alternatives to use. This issue was worsened by time pressure, which limited their opportunity to search for better word choices. These findings support Albaqami’s (2023) study, which highlights that limited vocabulary and psychological pressure can reduce lexical variety in academic writing among EFL learners.

Grammatical issues were also a major challenge. Several participants mentioned that they often felt confused about using the correct tense and constructing proper sentence structures. This uncertainty caused hesitation and slowed down the process of developing their ideas. These findings are consistent with Akmal et al. (2022), who found that sentence structure and grammar errors are common obstacles for Indonesian EFL students in academic writing.

Finally, mental block was another barrier frequently encountered by participants, especially under time pressure. One participant stated that she often forgot the vocabulary she already knew when under pressure. However, in more relaxed situations, she found it easier to recall words and generate ideas. This indicates that emotional stress can significantly impact students’ thinking process and decision-making while writing.

Overall, these findings showed that students' difficulties in writing counter-arguments were not solely due to their understanding of the material but are also closely related to psychological, motivational, and linguistic factors that are deeply interconnected. Therefore, it is important for instructors to provide support not only in linguistic skills but also in building confidence, managing time, and developing effective idea-generation strategies.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

This research focuses investigating factors and students' difficulties in composing counter-arguments. The data is gathered from undergraduate students of Unismuh Makassar. A total of 14 excerpts containing students' information regarding difficulties in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay. Based on the research findings and discussion, there are two conclusions that we could draw from this research:

1. The undergraduate students faced difficulties in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay. The first major problem that the students faced in writing counter-arguments is psychological problem. For psychological problems, the difficulties have varied from anxiety to motivational problems. In anxiety, students experienced several problems such as fear of making mistakes, fear of criticism, procrastination, and deadline pressure. In motivational problems, students faced lack of interest and lack of confidence. The other major problem that students faced in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay is linguistic problem. During the period of writing an essay, students struggled writing counter-arguments because of several problems related with their vocabulary and grammar usage. Lack of vocabularies, repetition, mental block, confusion with grammar usage, and uncertainty have caused students to struggle writing counter-arguments.

2. The factors that caused students difficulties in writing counter-arguments were also related with anxiety, motivation, vocabulary, and grammar. The researcher concluded that the most dominant factors were vocabulary and grammar usage as students struggle to find appropriate terms, often repeat basic vocabulary, struggle to use connectors and often misuse transition.

B. Suggestion

The researcher expects that this research would help other researchers understand the difficulties in writing counter-arguments of argumentative essay. Understanding the difficulties is necessary to help undergraduate students in writing academic essay. The researcher expects that the reader will have a better understanding after studying about argumentative essay and counter-argument. The researcher proposes that researchers who work on similar themes employ diverse research methodologies to achieve new discoveries. This research does not cover all of the factors and difficulties, but the researcher hopes that future researchers will develop and produce a comprehensive one. The researcher also expects that this research will serve as a resource for future researchers in the field of english for academic purpose.

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1st Instrument

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Students Factors	Criteria	Present	Not present
Pyschological (anxiety and motivation problems)	<i>ANXIETY</i> ➤ Students hesitate to make counter-arguments. ➤ Students display uncertainty when asked to critique or oppose an idea. ➤ Students appear overwhelmed by the complexity of presenting opposing views. ➤ Students avoid discussing opposing views to prevent disagreement. ➤ Students tend to focus on supporting only one side		

	of the argument. ➤ Students seem defensive when asked to challenge their own position. <i>MOTIVATION</i> ➤ Students struggle to engage with counter-arguments due to a lack of interest in exploring multiple perspectives ➤ Students demonstrate low effort when incorporating counter-arguments into the essay..		
Linguistic (grammar and vocabulary problems)	<i>VOCABULARY</i> ➤ Students struggle to find appropriate terms to express counter-arguments. ➤ Students repeat basic or simplistic vocabulary		

	rather than using nuanced language to present opposing views. ➤ Students present counter-arguments in a disjointed or unclear manner. ➤ Students fail to connect counter-arguments logically to the main thesis or other arguments in the essay. <i>GRAMMAR</i> ➤ Students struggle to use logical connectors like “on the other hand,” “however,” “in contrast,” etc., to introduce counter-arguments. ➤ Students overuse or misuse transition words, resulting in		
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	unclear or awkward argumentation ➤ Students' counter-arguments appear unbalanced, with insufficient explanation or reasoning. ➤ .Students provide weak or no evidence to substantiate counter-arguments.		
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Adapted from factors of writing argumentative essay by Byrne (2018) in Syamsu (2022)

2nd Instrument

INTERVIEW

Anxiety

1. Do you feel nervous or anxious when writing the counter-argument part of an argumentative essay?
2. Do you often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes you unsure about your ideas?
3. How often do you worry that your counter-argument writing will be judged or criticized negatively?
4. Have you ever postponed writing the counter-argument because you felt too anxious about it?
5. Does time pressure or deadlines make it harder for you to focus when writing the counter-argument?

Motivation

1. How interested are you in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay?
2. Do you think writing a counter-argument improves your writing quality, or does it feel like an extra burden?
3. Do you usually feel motivated or unmotivated when you reach the counter-argument part of your writing?
4. Do you feel confident and eager to improve your counter-argument writing skills?
5. Do you actively try to learn how to write better counter-arguments?

Lack of vocabulary

1. Do you often struggle to find the right words to express your counter-arguments?
2. How often do you feel stuck because you don't know appropriate vocabulary or expressions when writing counter-arguments?
3. Have you ever used incorrect or inappropriate words due to limited vocabulary in your counter-argument writing?
4. Do you repeat the same words in the counter-argument section because you don't know other options?
5. Have you ever avoided expressing a counter-argument idea because you didn't know how to say it in English?

Grammatical Problems

1. How often do you get confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments?
2. Have you ever been unsure about which tense to use in writing counter-arguments?
3. Do you feel that your grammar makes your counter-argument unclear or difficult to understand?
4. Do you often make mistakes in sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement, complex sentences) when writing counter-arguments?
5. Do you usually need to revise or rewrite many parts of your counter-argument because of grammar issues?

Adapted from students interview regarding students' factors in writing counter-argument of argumentative essay by Faradilla (2021)

APPENDIX I

1st Transcription

Researcher: Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, okay bismillah, what's your name?

Student: Eh.. Dwi Astri

Researcher: ready yah..

Student: InsyaAllah kak...

Researcher: Okay... first question... do you feel nervous or anxious when writing the counter-argument part of an argumentative essay?

Student: Yes... because I'm still not used to write counter-arguments.

Researcher: okay... next question, do you often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes you unsure about your ideas?

Student: Hmm yes, a little, like if there are any words that are inappropriate to use.

Researcher: Alright, how often do you worry that your counter-argument writing will be judged or criticized negatively?

Student: Not really often, just sometimes, but not often...

Researcher: not often yah... so have you ever postponed writing the counter-argument because you felt too anxious about it?

Student: Eeh no... usually when I write the ideas just flow right away. so.. I don't end up postponing either...

Researcher: Does time pressure or deadlines make it harder for you to focus when writing the counter-argument?

Student: ahh yeah it adds pressure, since Indonesian is different from English so if there's a time limit it feels more stressful like that.

Researcher: How interested are you in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay?

Student: Ohh very interested... I'm really interested in counter-arguments because.. especially nowadays there's a lot on social media discussing those things, and basically any topic can be turned into a counter-argument. so I'm more interested in learning how to respond to every argument out there

Researcher: Do you think writing a counter-argument improves your writing quality, or does it feel like an extra burden?

Student: eeh... if it's for formal studying maybe yes, it adds mental burden, but if it's just casual learning then probably not, because it can also be used to learn vocabulary... more enjoyable. but if it's for serious studying, it does add mental burden.

Researcher: Next, do you usually feel motivated or unmotivated when you reach the counter-argument part of your writing?

Student: yes, very enthusiastic because not every argument should just be agreed with, it also needs to be given another perspective or point of view

Do you feel confident and eager to improve your counter-argument writing skills?

Researcher: Next, do you actively try to learn how to write better counter-arguments?

Student: hmm for now I think I rarely study. I only studied during lessons, but in daily life like in debates, I used this counter-argument very often.

Researcher: next, do you often struggle to find the right words to express your counter-arguments?

Student: for writing... yes, because sometimes in English there are words that sound off, or the usage just doesn't feel right when translating from Indonesian to English, it definitely happens sometimes.

Researcher: How often do you feel stuck because you don't know appropriate vocabulary or expressions when writing counter-arguments?

Student: quite often yah, especially when I'm under pressure to write, it happens even more like, how could the words I originally knew just suddenly disappear like that. it's like that. but in more relaxed situations, it's easier for me to remember, even more words come to mind. when I really need them, I forget, but when I'm just chill, everything comes back.

Researcher: next, have you ever used incorrect or inappropriate words due to limited vocabulary in your counter-argument writing?

Student: sometimes, especially when the deadline's close, I usually get too lazy to even check if the vocab is correct or not.

Researcher: next, do you repeat the same words in the counter-argument section because you don't know other options?

Student: like I said kak, especially when I'm really under pressure in English, I tend to repeat words a lot because I don't know what other words to use.

Researcher: Next, have you ever avoided expressing a counter-argument idea because you didn't know how to say it in English?

Student: yeah sometimes, when I have no other choice, I look for an easier alternative that I can use to translate into English

Researcher: Next, how often do you get confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments?

Student: quite often kak, especially in arguments where we don't usually use the same words we'd use in speaking or casual conversation. arguments really need more academic vocabulary, so for me it's probably more common to feel confused when searching for the right words. if it's just for daily use, maybe it's easier, but when it's for arguments or academic writing, it gets more confusing to choose the right words.

Researcher: Have you ever been unsure about which tense to use in writing counter-arguments?

Student: yeah often, especially in regular writing when a word I thought was correct turns out to be wrong, so I often end up feeling unsure like that

Researcher: Do you feel that your grammar makes your counter-argument unclear or difficult to understand?

Student: Not often

Researcher: Do you often make mistakes in sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement, complex sentences) when writing counter-arguments?

Student: not often, unless it's for complex sentences that aren't used much, maybe sometimes. but for commonly used sentences... not that often.

Researcher: Okay... last question, do you usually need to revise or rewrite many parts of your counter-argument because of grammar issues?

Student: yeah, like I said earlier, when I'm confused and the words start sounding too wordy, I often revise and look for better alternatives that fit more naturally.

2nd Transcription

Researcher: Okay let's get to the first question, do you feel nervous or anxious when writing the counter-argument part of an argumentative essay?

Student: Yes kak, because actually from elementary to junior high I didn't like English, and even in high school the English lessons were mostly just listening, no speaking or writing or anything like that, so I still get confused when it comes to writing, especially in writing counter-argument.

Researcher: Next, do you often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes you unsure about your ideas?

Student: Often, kak, because like I said earlier, I don't have much experience yet so the fear or panic is always there for sure.

Researcher: Next, how often do you worry that your counter-argument writing will be judged or criticized negatively?

Student: Often, kak, it's really because my English skills are still behind compared to others, so when it comes to writing arguments, it happens a lot...

Researcher: Next, have you ever postponed writing the counter-argument because you felt too anxious about it?

Student: Yes... very often. Maybe because I'm scared, and I also feel like I understand less than the other students in class when it comes to English, and I also postponed college for a year because I studied in a pesantren, so I feel left behind... as a result when working on assignments related to writing I always end up postponing.

Researcher: Next, does time pressure or deadlines make it harder for you to focus when writing the counter-argument?

Student: It adds more mental burden, especially if my skills are still lacking, I get confused like "what should I write," things like that.

Researcher: Next, how interested are you in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay?

Student: Well, I actually have a hobby of writing, but... in Indonesian. So writing counter-arguments in English is definitely something I'm really interested in, because when I write the inspiration just flows like that, but yeah my weakness is still the same, I lack in English, I don't have enough vocabulary, grammar issues, especially since it's writing—it's different from speaking, in speaking the person understands directly, but in writing you have to get the grammar and the word choice right...

Researcher: next, do you think writing a counter-argument improves your writing quality, or does it feel like an extra burden?

Student: Yes, definitely, because in writing we don't just present our arguments, we also have to provide refutations or responses that can strengthen the point.

Researcher: Next, do you usually feel motivated or unmotivated when you reach the counter-argument part of your writing?

Student: Maybe I feel motivated, because like I said earlier, I like writing so the ideas just flow like that.

Researcher: Next, do you feel confident and eager to improve your counter-argument writing skills?

Student: I don't have much confidence, but the desire to improve is definitely there because I want... to be better like that...

Researcher: do you actively try to learn how to write better counter-arguments?

Student: Hmm not really.

Researcher: Do you often struggle to find the right words to express your counter-arguments?

Student: Always, because in English I'm still not that fluent... so I get stuck more often, unlike in Indonesian writing where I'm used to it and have lots of ideas, so not often—but in English, very often.

Researcher: Next, have you ever used incorrect or inappropriate words due to limited vocabulary in your counter-argument writing?

Student: Yes, I have. Often in the beginning, but now I check my writing more so thankfully it's getting less frequent.

Researcher: Next, do you repeat the same words in the counter-argument section because you don't know other options?

Student: Often, but if I think about it again, like yesterday I learned that you shouldn't repeat the same word in a sentence, so I look for alternatives—like what pronoun to use next that's different, something like that.

Researcher: Have you ever avoided expressing a counter-argument idea because you didn't know how to say it in English?

Student: Hmm yes... I have.

Researcher: how often do you get confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Often, because grammar is still confusing for me, like to be and the use of have, I'm still unsure about how to place them so I'm still confused.

Researcher: have you ever been unsure about which tense to use in writing counter-arguments?

Student: Yes, often, again because my grammar is really lacking. That's my weakness, maybe it's because my school was different from others. In high school, in the first year, we only focused on listening. We were given an audio text and had to fill in statements related to it, and even that I often got wrong.

Researcher: next, do you feel that your grammar makes your counter-argument unclear or difficult to understand?

Student: Yes...

Researcher: do you often make mistakes in sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement, complex sentences) when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Yes, often, like I said earlier, my English is really lacking. I only started being able to properly answer lecturers' questions in semester 3.

Researcher: Okay last question... do you usually need to revise or rewrite many parts of your counter-argument because of grammar issues?

Student: Maybe just revising the parts that are incorrect, no need to completely rewrite everything. For example, if I've already written one paragraph and there are a few wrong words, it's unlikely that I would rewrite the whole paragraph. Something like that, maybe.

3rd Transcription

Researcher: What is your name, dek?

Student: Musfirah Ardila Hamsir

Researcher: okay... we move to the first question, do you feel nervous or anxious when writing the counter-argument part of an argumentative essay?

Student: Hmm yes, because I'm afraid it can weaken my own arguments.

Researcher: Do you often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes you unsure about your ideas?

Student: Not really often, because I've learned a lot since high school.

Researcher: How often do you worry that your counter-argument writing will be judged or criticized negatively?

Student: If the criticism is based on actual mistakes, then it's okay. But if the negative comments are just made up, I just ignore them.

Researcher: Have you ever postponed writing the counter-argument because you felt too anxious about it?

Student: If postponing means waiting until close to the deadline to start, then no. But if it's about delaying the research part, then yes.

Researcher: Does time pressure or deadlines make it harder for you to focus when writing the counter-argument?

Student: That depends on the preparation, kak. For example, if I'm asked to write a counter-argument today and only given five minutes to research, then yeah, I'd feel pressured.

Researcher: How interested are you in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay?

Student: Seventy percent interested, kak. Because I like thinking out of the box, haha. I like expressing my thoughts in writing.

Researcher: Do you think writing a counter-argument improves your writing quality, or does it feel like an extra burden?

Student: Since this is a counter-argument, we get to see things from another perspective, so for me it doesn't add mental burden, kak.

Researcher: Do you usually feel motivated or unmotivated when you reach the counter-argument part of your writing?

Student: Yes, I enjoy it, because there's a sense of satisfaction when an argumentative essay includes a counter-argument.

Researcher: Do you feel confident and eager to improve your counter-argument writing skills?

Student: For me it's just normal, or you could say I've done it often, so it's 50-50.

Researcher: Do you actively try to learn how to write better counter-arguments?

Student: Not really.

Researcher: Do you often struggle to find the right words to express your counter-arguments?

Student: Not that hard for me.

Researcher: How often do you feel stuck because you don't know appropriate vocabulary or expressions when writing counter-arguments?

Student: In English, quite often, because you're not supposed to keep repeating the same vocabulary. So yeah, kind of.

Researcher: Have you ever used incorrect or inappropriate words due to limited vocabulary in your counter-argument writing?

Student: Yes, I have.

Researcher: Do you repeat the same words in the counter-argument section because you don't know other options?

Student: Quite often.

Researcher: Have you ever avoided expressing a counter-argument idea because you didn't know how to say it in English?

Student: Quite often, maybe because I'm confused about how to present it like, how do I explain my idea?

Researcher: How often do you get confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Quite a bit, kak, because my grammar understanding is still lacking.

Researcher: Have you ever been unsure about which tense to use in writing counter-arguments?

Student: Not sure... yes, I've experienced that.

Researcher: Do you feel that your grammar makes your counter-argument unclear or difficult to understand?

Student: Ehh... yeah, maybe if someone else reads it, but if I read it myself, then no hehe.

Researcher: Do you often make mistakes in sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement, complex sentences) when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Often, because my grammar's still not good.

Researcher: Do you usually need to revise or rewrite many parts of your counter-argument because of grammar issues?

Student: Yes, often kak, because when I write, I usually break it down into bullet points first, and if I feel any of the points aren't clear, I revise them again like that.

4th Transcription

Researcher: okay... we move to the first question, do you feel nervous or anxious when writing the counter-argument part of an argumentative essay?

Student: Sometimes, because I lack references to strengthen my argument.

Researcher: Do you often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes you unsure about your ideas?

Student: Yes, often. It's because I'm afraid if it's not related to my topic.

Researcher: How often do you worry that your counter-argument writing will be judged or criticized negatively?

Student: Often, kak, because I admit that I'm not very critical, so every time I write I feel afraid of being refuted.

Researcher: Have you ever postponed writing the counter-argument because you felt too anxious about it?

Student: Yes, often, but not just because of that, also because I get distracted easily and am easily influenced.

Researcher: Does time pressure or deadlines make it harder for you to focus when writing the counter-argument?

Student: Yes, often. Usually, when there's an assignment, especially writing an essay like this and there's a time limit, like just a few hours or minutes, it often makes me go blank, like I don't know what exactly to write.

Researcher: How interested are you in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay?

Student: Actually, I'm honestly very, very interested. I think it's really cool when someone can explain their argument confidently, especially when they include lots of references, so I'm really interested.

Researcher: Do you think writing a counter-argument improves your writing quality, or does it feel like an extra burden?

Student: Yes, it can improve it, but I think not just from that part, it's about the whole piece of writing.

Researcher: Do you usually feel motivated or unmotivated when you reach the counter-argument part of your writing?

Student: Yes, I feel motivated, especially when my argument gets explained and I receive feedback from friends that strengthens it, I feel even more motivated.

Researcher: Do you feel confident and eager to improve your counter-argument writing skills?

Student: Yes, because I really love writing, and that makes me even more excited to write essays.

Researcher: Do you actively try to learn how to write better counter-arguments?

Student: Yes, because when I study it, I can better understand what the sentence structure should be like.

Researcher: Do you often struggle to find the right words to express your counter-arguments?

Student: Yes, often, especially in writing, because it doesn't use everyday language. It has to be academic, so it's harder and I often need to look up formal vocabulary in the dictionary.

Researcher: How often do you feel stuck because you don't know appropriate vocabulary or expressions when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Very often, kak, because sometimes I have a word I want to use, but I forget what it is in everyday language too—in Indonesian even—so very often.

Researcher: Have you ever used incorrect or inappropriate words due to limited vocabulary in your counter-argument writing?

Student: Hmm yes, I have.

Researcher: Do you repeat the same words in the counter-argument section because you don't know other options?

Student: Yes, often, because like I said earlier, once I find a nice word, I tend to keep repeating it.

Researcher: Have you ever avoided expressing a counter-argument idea because you didn't know how to say it in English?

Student: Yes, because sometimes when I already have a topic, and I can't find any references related to it, I get lazy to search for the counter-argument.

Researcher: How often do you get confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Quite often.

Researcher: Have you ever been unsure about which tense to use in writing counter-arguments?

Student: Yes, I have.

Researcher: Do you feel that your grammar makes your counter-argument unclear or difficult to understand?

Student: Yes, often, especially when using English, it just feels harder.

Researcher: Do you often make mistakes in sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement, complex sentences) when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Hmm very often.

Researcher: Do you usually need to revise or rewrite many parts of your counter-argument because of grammar issues?

Student: Hmm yes, for example, if I've already written something and then I read it again and find writing errors, whether grammar or typos, I revise it.

5th Transcription

Researcher: okay... we move to the first question, do you feel nervous or anxious when writing the counter-argument part of an argumentative essay?

Student: Yes, sometimes, if I don't have enough resource.

Researcher: Do you often feel afraid of making mistakes when writing counter-arguments, which makes you unsure about your ideas?

Student: yes, for me, often times.

Researcher: How often do you worry that your counter-argument writing will be judged or criticized negatively?

Student: nearly everytime I write kak

Researcher: Have you ever postponed writing the counter-argument because you felt too anxious about it?

Student: yes, often. It's because I'm confused and not really familiar in finding references that differs from my main arguments.

Researcher: Does time pressure or deadlines make it harder for you to focus when writing the counter-argument?

Student: yeah, often kak, for me personally, I got blank If it has a short deadlines.

Researcher: How interested are you in writing the counter-argument section in an argumentative essay?

Student: I'm really interested but maybe if I have to rate it it's only 8/10 because I'm still scared to write an argument.

Researcher: Do you think writing a counter-argument improves your writing quality, or does it feel like an extra burden?

Student: I think it can improve the quality of our writing kak, if we do it often.

Researcher: Do you usually feel motivated or unmotivated when you reach the counter-argument part of your writing?

Student: I often feel motivated but it's only during writing time... If I'm not writing, then I get lazy.

Researcher: Do you feel confident and eager to improve your counter-argument writing skills?

Student: Sometimes I'm confident sometimes not, If I'm really eager with my arguments then I'd feel confident.

Researcher: Do you actively try to learn how to write better counter-arguments?

Student: Not really

Researcher: Do you often struggle to find the right words to express your counter-arguments?

Student: for me, it's often.

Researcher: How often do you feel stuck because you don't know appropriate vocabulary or expressions when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Ah yes, and it often makes me lazy because eventhough I got some ideas before, the words suddenly disappeared when I actually want to write them. So yeah, I often stuck.

Researcher: Have you ever used incorrect or inappropriate words due to limited vocabulary in your counter-argument writing?

Student: Yeah, often kak, sometimes when I use connection, it's not really suitable with the sentence structure or too informal for the sentence.

Researcher: Do you repeat the same words in the counter-argument section because you don't know other options?

Student: yeah often kak, for me it's because of the lack of vocabularies.

Researcher: Have you ever avoided expressing a counter-argument idea because you didn't know how to say it in English?

Student: Yeah because the challenge is always the lack of vocabularies, like I said before kak.

Researcher: How often do you get confused about using correct grammar structures when writing counter-arguments?

Student: Nearly everytime I write, kak. because of the words choice and sentence structures of course. it's difficult to develop my ideas so I got confused a lot.

Researcher: Have you ever been unsure about which tense to use in writing counter-arguments?

Student: Yeah often because I always confused when it comes to the structures. Not sure if the grammar is correct or not.

Researcher: Do you feel that your grammar makes your counter-argument unclear or difficult to understand?

Student: Yes of course kak, my personal challenges are speaking and writing so when I speak or write I always overthink about grammar.

Researcher: Do you often make mistakes in sentence structure (e.g., subject-verb agreement, complex sentences) when writing counter-arguments?

Student: It's rare for me sih kak.

Researcher: Do you usually need to revise or rewrite many parts of your counter-argument because of grammar issues?

Student: yes kak, often. I always got revision in this course because of the sentence structure and a lot of stuff.

APPENDIX II

Factors	Criteria	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
ANXIETY	Students hesitate to make counter-arguments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
	Students display uncertainty when asked to critique or oppose an idea.	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Students appear overwhelmed by the complexity of presenting opposing views.	X	✓	X	✓	✓
	Students avoid discussing opposing views to prevent disagreement.	X	X	✓	X	✓
	Students tend to focus on supporting only one side of the argument.	X	X	✓	X	✓
	Students seem defensive	✓	X	✓	✓	✓

	when asked to challenge their own position.					
MOTIVATION	Students struggle to engage with counter-arguments due to lack of interest in multiple views.	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
	Students demonstrate low effort when incorporating counter-arguments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
VOCABULARY	Students struggle to find appropriate terms to express counter-arguments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Students repeat basic vocabulary instead of nuanced language.	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
GRAMMAR	Students present counter-arguments in a disjointed or	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	unclear manner.					
	Students fail to connect counter-arguments to thesis or other arguments.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Students struggle to use connectors like “however,” “in contrast,” etc.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Students overuse/misuse transitions, causing awkward argumentation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Students’ counter-arguments appear unbalanced or lack reasoning.	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
	Students provide weak or no evidence to support counter-arguments.	✓	X	✓	✓	✓



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Nim : 105351106920

Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

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Makassar, 21 Agustus 2025

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Kepala UPT- Perpustakaan dan Penerbitan,


Nursihah S. F. N. M. L. P.
NBM. 964 594

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Nomor : 0433 /FKIP/A.4-II/V/1446/2025
Lamp : 1 Rangkap Proposal
Perihal : Pengantar Penelitian

Kepada Yang Terhormat
Ketua LP3M Unismuh Makassar
Di,
Tempat

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh
Dekan Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar menerangkan dengan sebenarnya bahwa benar mahasiswa tersebut di bawah ini:

Nama : Finalisa
NIM : 105351106920
Prodi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Alamat : Jl. Sultan Alauddin
No. HP : 085398679396
Tgl Ujian Proposal : 12 Maret 2025

akan mengadakan penelitian dan atau pengambilan data dalam rangka tahapan proses penyelesaian Tugas Akhir Kuliah (Skripsi) dengan judul :
"Exploring EFL Students' Difficulties On The Counter-Argument Of English Academic Essay At Unismuh Makassar"

Demikian Surat Pengantar ini kami sampaikan kepada Bapak/Ibu, atas perhatian dan kerjasamanya ucapkan terima kasih
Jazaakumullahu Khaeran Katsiraan.
Wassalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

25 Dzulqaidah 1446 H
Makassar _____
23 Mei 2025

Dekan
FKIP Unismuh Makassar,

Erwin Akib, S.Pd., M.Pd., Ph.D.
NBM: 860 934

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Jl. Sultan Alauddin No. 259 Telp. 0411 806772 Fax (0411) 8065580 Makassar 90221 e-mail: lp3m@pusfermuha.ac.id

Nomor : 7055/05/C.4-VIII/V/1446/2025
Lamp : 1 (satu) Rangkap Proposal
Hal : Permohonan Izin Penelitian

23 May 2025 M
25 Dzulqa'dah 1446

Kepada Yth,
Kaprodik Bahasa Inggris FKIP
Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar
di -
Makassar

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Berdasarkan surat Dekan Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, nomor: 0433/FKIP/A.4-II/V/1446/2025 tanggal 23 Mei 2025, menerangkan bahwa mahasiswa tersebut di bawah ini :

Nama : FINALISA
No. Stambuk : 10535 1106920
Fakultas : Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan
Jurusan : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Pekerjaan : Mahasiswa

Bermaksud melaksanakan penelitian/pengumpulan data dalam rangka penulisan Skripsi dengan judul :

"EXPLORING EFL STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES ON THE COUNTER-ARGUMENT OF ENGLISH ACADEMIC ESSAY AT UNISMUH MAKASSAR"

Yang akan dilaksanakan dari tanggal 26 Mei 2025 s/d 26 Juli 2025.

Sehubungan dengan maksud di atas, kiranya Mahasiswa tersebut diberikan izin untuk melakukan penelitian sesuai ketentuan yang berlaku.
Demikian, atas perhatian dan kerjasamanya diucapkan Jazakumullahu khaeran

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Ketua LP3M,

Dr. Muhi Atief Muhsin, M.Pd.
NBM-1127761

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Nama Mahasiswa : Finalisa
 NIM : 105351106920
 Judul Penelitian : *Exploring EFL Students' Difficulties on the Counter-argument of English Academic Essay at Uinibmuh Makassar*
 Tanggal Ujian Proposal : 25 Maret 2025
 Tempat/Lokasi Penelitian : Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar

Hafid Sulhan Alauddin 16. 229 (Sekretaris)
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Nomor : 0103/FKIP/A.4-II/VIII/1447/2025

Dekan Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar menerangkan dengan sebenarnya bahwa mahasiswa tersebut namanya di bawah ini :

Nama : Finalisa
NIM : 105351106920
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Fakultas : Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan

Adalah benar telah melaksanakan penelitian di Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Tahun Akademik 2024/2025 terhitung sejak 23 Juni 2025, dalam rangka penyusunan Skripsi dengan judul:

'Exploring EFL Students' Difficulties on the Counter-argument of English Academic Essay at Unismuh Makassar'

Demikian Surat Keterangan ini dibuat dengan sesungguhnya untuk dapat dipergunakan sebagaimana mestinya.

29 Shafar 1447 H
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23 Agustus 2025 M

Dekan,
FKIP Unismuh Makassar,

Dr. H. Bakarullah, M. Pd.
NBM. 779 170

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APPENDIX VII LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

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LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE
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Dear FINALISA

It is our pleasure to inform you that, after reviewing your paper:
**EXPLORING PSYCHOLOGICAL AND LINGUISTIC BARRIES IN WRITING
COUNTER-ARGUMENT: INSIGHTS FROM EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**
The manuscript ID: 1902
Detail checklist:

Checkpoint	Yes	No
The author has sent the manuscript by using the institutional email	✓	
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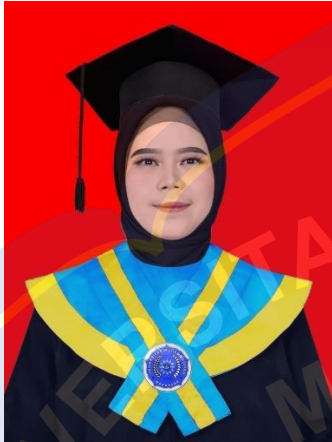
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Curriculum Vitae



Finalisa was born on January 3, 2001 in Karumpa, Pasi Lambena District, Selayar Regency. The author is the first child of four siblings of Mr. Alijeni and Mrs. Maisa. The author took her first education at Kindergarten in 2006-2007, and continued elementary school at SDN Impres Karumpa Timur in 2008-2013, then the author continued to the next level of education at SMP Negeri 4 Pasilambena in 2014-2016. After that the author continued to the next extension of education at MA Aliyah Dobo in 2017-2019, and in 2020 the author continued her education at one of the universities in Makassar, namely at the Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. The author majored in English Education at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. All praise be to Allah SWT who has given strength to the author, as well as motivation and prayers from the author's parents and inspiration from siblings, as well as support from all family and friends who always accompany the author, so that the author is able to complete the thesis entitled "Exploring EFL Students' Difficulties on the Counter-Argument of English Academic Essay at UNISMUH Makassar.