EXPLORING FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENTS' DECISION TO PURSUE STUDY IN ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

OF UIN AR-RANIRY

THESIS

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Exploring Factors That Influence Students' Decision To Pursue Study In English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry

Adalah benar-benar karya saya, kecuali semua kutipan dan referensi yang disebutkan sumbernya. Apabila terdapat kesalahan dan kekeliruan di dalamnya, maka akan sepenuhnya menjadi tanggung jawab saya. Demikianlah surat pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sesungguhnya.

ما معة الرانرك

Banda Aceh, 16 Desember 2024

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ABSTRACT

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Thesis : Exploring Factors That Influence Students' Decision To Pursue

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Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Muhammad AR., M.Ed

Keywords : English Education department, factors influence, job opportunity

This study aims to explore factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in English Education Department in era where technology could provide many English learning platforms and to get perceptions about future job opportunities associated with English Education degree. This study used a qualitative method with a phenomenological research design. Data was collected through semistructured interviews, with 12 active English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry students from batch 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 as samples. The result shows that factors influencing students' decisions to pursue study in this department are family influence, enjoyment and confidence in learning English, a willingness to become an English teacher in the future, the quality and reputation of English education department of UIN Ar-Raniry, learning environment, track record of the alumni, and get rejected from their dream major and university. Also, job opportunities associated with English Education degree are for every Englishrelated job such as English teachers, interpreters, translators, writers, and work in the hospitality field. ما معة الرانرك

AR-RANIRY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher has written an explanation regarding five important sections including the background of the study, research questions, research aims, significance of the study, and terminologies.

A. Background of The Study

After graduating from high school, the university is the level of education that students want to pursue. In this phase, students often face much confusion about what major and in what university they must continue their studies (Suharno, Lailaturrohmah, Purwanto, Ranto, & Akhyar, 2023). Choosing a major over hundreds of options is like a nightmare because it feels like choosing half of life. The final decision is a crucial aspect in life because it is a motivation fuel to gain knowledge in a particular study and shaping future career opportunities (Diana, et al, 2023)

One of the various majors that exist in many universities, including UIN Ar-Raniry, is English Education. This department equips students with pedagogical knowledge and linguistic proficiency to become a good English teacher. English Education is one of the favorite departments at UIN Ar-Raniry (Ar-Raniry, 2021). The goal of the English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is to produce potential English education graduates who are professional, Islamic, and globally competitive.

According to PDDIkti (*Pangkalan Data Perguruan Tinggi*), the number of students in this major is increasing year by year, with 153 students in 2021, 187 students in 2022, and 202 students in 2023. This growth reflects the department's success in attracting students and suggests effective student retention efforts. Student retention refers to the student's ability to stay enrolled in a particular study in a formal education institution. A good retention rate means the department's ability to keep students enrolled and engaged in the department from the first semester until complete their studies (Azhari, 2021).

As a student majoring in English Education Department, the researcher wondered why people decide to spend years studying English in a world where learning English can be facilitated by technology such as Duolingo and many online platforms (Fauzan, 2020). Technology also could make the availability of jobs for English Education graduates become limited because people will learn English through it instead of a real teacher.

Technology such as AI, online platforms, and mobile applications are precious tools that help educators to make an interactive classroom (Johnson, 2018). From the beginning, technology has been used in the education field but is not very popular because people do not realize technology can easier human life. In 2011, Duolingo, a mobile application for learning languages launched on all platforms and become popular until now. People have started to realize technology is a good 'weapon' to solve every problem in human life and technology has many advantages in the learning process (Shatri, 2020). In the following years, the rise of AI has made the world changed excessively, especially in the education field. AI

can act as a real teacher and take the role of a teacher in providing and facilitating learning processes like practice speaking with the user (Jamal, 2023).

English teachers now seem less important because the ubiquitous of online platforms and mobile applications that are easily accessed and available for free for learning English (Liudmila & Dembovskaya, 2015). People will certainly choose the free one instead of paying a real teacher to teach English. Since technology has been involved in education, the education field nowadays totally changed (Fauzan, 2020). The change in education field because of technology could make English teaching expertise unnecessary because people can learn English independently. However, after all of these issues, there are still many students who want to pursue their studies in the English Education Department.

Based on my pilot study, which sampled English Education students of UIN Ar-Raniry, the reasons they took this major are generally divided into 3 reasons: 1) like English and enjoy learning English but do not have a desire to become a teacher.

2) want to be an English teacher. 3) another reason.

<u>حامعة الرانرك</u>

Prior studies have explored various factors about why students want to pursue their studies in English Education Department. Ariyanti (2018) has conducted a study in Jambi and the results show that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation make a huge impact in guiding students to pursue studies in English Education Department. Nanda (2021) also conducted research on the same topic and the results show students want to pursue their studies in English Education

mostly because of intrinsic motivation. They want to be an English teacher, they enjoy studying English, and aware that English is an International language.

These previous studies have been conducted without considering the technology in learning activities. Nowadays, learning tools become more famous and accessible and can make their users learn English independently (Jamal, 2023). We need to know the reasons why students still want to pursue their studies in English Education Department while technology such as AI can facilitate the learning process like a real teacher (Ali Lashari & Sumera, 2023).

The researcher's motivation to conduct this study is because the results of this study will give a fresh insight. This study is important because students and stakeholders need to understand the current reasons why Indonesian students still want to pursue this major in an era where self-study tools for learning English are widely used because of technology development (Mushthoza, 2023). They need to know the factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in English Education Department in order to develop a better curriculum. The main goal of the English Education Department is to equip students with necessary skills to become proficient English teachers (Habiburrahim, 2017), and if stakeholders know the factors why students pursue this study, the curriculum could improve more.

Another reason to conduct this study is the English Education Department could create programs to fulfill students' needs, and it can help students become more aware of job prospects and career relevance in a world where technology makes a huge impact.

Based on the background of the study, the researcher conducted this research titled "Exploring Factors That Influence Students' Decision To Pursue Study In English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry". This research was conducted for active students in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry and used semi-structured interviews to collect the data.

B. Research Question

According to the background of the study, the research questions of this study was:

- 1. What are the factors that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry?
- 2. What are the students' desires for future careers as English Education graduates?

C. Research Aim

This study aims to explore the factors that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry despite in an era where technology could provide English teaching and learning, and also to identify students' desires for future careers as English Education graduates.

D. Significance of The Study

This study will be useful for:

1. English Education Department

The result of this research provides the department with fresh perspectives from students which is beneficial for the department to make a curriculum and syllabus that fill the students' needs.

2. Upcoming Students of the English Education Major

The result of this research would give the new upcoming students a fresh and factual insight into why they should take English Education as their major for higher education. This not only helps them avoid long-hour stress of confusion but also assists the students in making the right decision for their future career path and academic journey.

E. Terminology

To avoid any confusion related to terms used in this research, the researcher defines several terms for the general public to get insights from this research in its complete state.

ما معة الرانري

a. Factor

According to Oxford Dictionary (2022), the definition of term "factor" is one of several things that cause or influence something. According to Cambridge Dictionary (2021), factor is one of the things that affects a particular decision, event, or circumstance. In other words, the term factor could be defined as an element that could be a condition, fact, or everything contributing to a final result. The meaning of factor in this study refers to several things that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry.

b. Decision-Making

Decision-making is a process of choosing an option from multiple choices which can be influenced by biases and noises that can affect judgment (Kahneman, et al, 2021). Decision-making process is an uneasy and complex process. The final decision is closely connected to a person's identity, values, and life goals that impact to life. Herbert A. Simon also stated that decision-making is a cognitive process that could be rational or irrational resulting in the selection of a belief among several possible alternative options (Simon, 1997). In this study, the researcher focuses on the students' decision to choose English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry from several options of majors and universities that exist in Aceh.

c. English Education Department

English Education Department is a formal education institution whose curriculum focuses on the pedagogical knowledge and skills of teaching English. This department equips the students with pedagogical knowledge and linguistic proficiency to become good English teachers (Boyd, 2023).

In this study, the researcher focuses on the English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh students from batches 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 which are from freshman year until senior year students. The vision of this department is to develop a variety of competencies including teaching, communication, text-translation, cross-cultural understanding, and research, and the ability to implement the skills into practical aspects in Islamic ways are the

provision for graduates to adapt to the work life as well as to understand various problems in the real life of related work and community.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Concept of Decision-Making

Decision-making is one of the important aspects that necessary in human life (Sola, 2018). Decision-making is a process of selecting one from several available options and the goal is to reach what the decision-maker wants or expected (Vaidya & Acharya, 2023). Choosing a major to pursue in university is one of the decision-making processes among students that is influenced by many factors. In general, in the process of making a decision, the decision maker progresses through multiple stages, starting from understanding the problem, sorting which alternatives can address the problem, deciding, implementing the decision, and assessing the decision (Sola, 2018).

Decision-making process is a hard and complicated process. The final decision is closely connected to a person's identity, values, and life goals that impact to life. There are some decision-making theories that explain how people make a decision and in this research, the theories explain how students decided to pursue English Education major.

In 1970s, Kahneman and Tversky wrote "Choices, Values, and Frames" to introduce Prospect Theory, which explains how people make decisions involving risk and uncertainty. This theory believes that people are more concerned about potential losses than equivalent gains, leading them to avoid risks (Kahneman &

Tversky, 2000). When students choose a major, this probably causes them to avoid a major that seems risky or unconventional for them, even if it matches their passion and interest.

In 1997, Simon wrote a book titled "Administrative Behavior: A Study Of Decision-Making Processes In Administrative Organizations", in this book, Simon explores the limitations of Rational Decision Theory and introduces the theory of Bounded Rationality. Bounded Rationality believes people often make "good enough" decisions rather than perfect ones due to lack of information, time constraints, and mental effort, people tend to make decisions based on what they know and can process (Simon, 1997). According to this theory, students will choose a major after exploring how well the subject aligns with their future career goals, their earning potential in that field, and the students' academic strengths (Patrick, 2021)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991) also helps explain how students choose a major. TPB explains that a person's intention to do something is influenced by their attitude toward the behavior, the social pressure around them, and how much control they feel they have over the outcome (Paul, Arie, & E, The handbook of Theories of Social Psychology, 2014). In education, a student's choice may be shaped by their interest in the subject, the expectations and opinions of family and friends, and their confidence in succeeding in that field. In other words, decision-making is also related to students' motivation.

Decision-making and motivation are closely intertwined. In the process of decision-making, the role of motivation strongly affects the final decision (Pohankova, 2010). The influence of motivation in an educational journey is a well-organized factor. Motivation is a complicated part of human psychology and behavior that impacts how an individual chooses where she/he invests her/his time, how she/he feels about a particular task, and how much energy she/he gives to the task (Filgona, et al, 2020). Motivation is a complex psychological phenomenon that encompasses a wide range of activities, including nervous system responses, cognitive processes, emotional responses, and stable personality traits (F.G. Escobar Fandino, et al, 2019).

Motivation is shaped by two factors, internal and external factors. These two factors can be categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Internal factors such as personal interest and personal needs transform into intrinsic motivation and external factors such as the environment and social pressure transform into extrinsic motivation (Dahliana, 2019).

Intrinsic motivation is characterized by engaging in activities for the pure enjoyment and satisfaction they offer rather than any external benefits. This means when someone is driven by intrinsic motivation, she/he is likely to participate in an activity because she/he finds it fun or challenging, rather than being compelled by external pressures. Intrinsic motivation is more influenced than extrinsic motivation because intrinsic motivation rises from the student's self not influenced by any external factors (Filgona, et al, 2020).

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is more likely to produce behavioral change and usually involves little effort or preparation (Matt & Dale, 2002). extrinsic motivation is a concept that applies when an activity is undertaken to achieve a specific goal or pressure, for examples, in learning activity students want to pursue a particular study because of parental influences, good grades, and reward (Filgona, et al, 2020).

B. English Education Department

English Education Department is a program of study that is designed to prepare students for teaching English language and literature. The goal of this department is to equip students with the necessary skills to become proficient English teachers (Habiburrahim, 2017)

Boyd (2023) defined English Education as a structured major that provides students with both linguistic competence and pedagogical skills. The curriculum typically includes courses in English linguistics, applied linguistics, literature, and language teaching methodologies.

ما معة الرانرك

The aim of English Education Department is to develop teachers who are not only proficient in English but are also capable of designing and implementing effective language instruction tailored to learners' needs. This department emphasizes the importance of integrating theory and practice, with a focus on experiential learning through teaching practicums and classroom observations.

English Education graduates develop a variety of competencies including teaching, communication, text-translation, cross-cultural understanding, and

research. According to the official website of English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry, the competency in English skills and the ability to implement the skills into practical aspects in Islamic ways are the provision for graduates to adapt to the work life as well as to understand various problems in the real life of related work and community. The graduates of English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry are currently working in the fields of education as a teacher, headmaster, and consultant; translator; entrepreneur; BUMN; tourism.

C. Factors Influencing Students' Decision To Pursue English Education Major

Students decide to pursue study in English Education Department because of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation come from the inside and do not need a 'pull' from the outside because it is pure from the inside, it is about what students feel and think about that major. If students have an interest in learning English, it is easier for them to choose an English Education major. They will enjoy learning English no matter what (Sari, Taufiqurrohmah, & Fitrianingsih, 2024).

Extrinsic motivation are all the factors from the outside that influence students to choose English Education Department:

1. Parental Influence

Parental influences could be the first consideration when students choose a major to pursue. Many students seek advice from their parents because parents can help students to select the major that suits them the most. Parents know the strengths and the weaknesses of their children, and

with that prior knowledge, parents can give recommendations on which major they should pursue at university (Por, Say, & Mov, 2024).

Parents' expectations and aspirations also influence students to choose English Education major (Sari, Taufiqurrohmah, & Fitrianingsih, 2024). Based on parents' personal experiences or what they see in society, they want their children to have that life path. For example, if the parents are English teachers, they will influence their child to pursue English Education to make it easy for the students to find a job by networking in the future.

2. Job Prospect

When choosing a major, students will consider in what field they possibly get a job if choose this particular major (Uhai, Iswandari, Musdalifah, & Oktavianti, 2020). Most students believe when they pursue education in a particular major, get a degree from a university, and become experts in it, they will get a job easily in the future.

3. Financial Consideration

Education is an expensive thing that students have to pay for. In university, if students want to participate in classes and have some discussions with lecturers, they have to pay tuition fees. According to Oxford Dictionary, the tuition fee is the amount of money that students pay for professional advice and services.

The cost of tuition fees is a crucial thing in deciding a major to pursue. Tuition fees are related to economic factors and for some students,

it is a hard thing to decide. They try to find a major with affordable tuition fees instead of a major that is linear with their passion and interest (Por, Say, & Mov, 2024).

4. University Reputation and The Quality of The Department

University reputation is a considerable thing when deciding a major to pursue. Universities with a good reputation often offer better facilities, programs, and services to produce high-quality graduates and it is good for their future career opportunities (Por, Say, & Mov, 2024).

University's reputation is also linked to the quality of its department and becomes one of the factors that influence students' decision in choosing a major. The department with a good quality in developing students' specific skills will gain much attention for students to enroll.

5. Learning Environment

When people decide something, environment plays a significant role. Environment could influence someone's motivation to do something. The same case happens when students choose a major to pursue, they will consider whether the learning environment at this department is comfortable or not.

D. Job Opportunities Associated With English Education Degree

In an era where technology could provide English learning and study like a real teacher, the job opportunities for English Education graduates have become

limited. Aside from being an English teacher, there are some job opportunities associated with English Education degree:

1. Hospitality and tourism industry employee

Working in the hospitality and tourism industry requires employees to have good communication skills and speaking a foreign language, especially English, is often preferred. English proficiency could ease interactions with international clients and enhance overall service performance (Prima, 2022).

2. Content Writer and Editor

English Education graduates equipped with strong grammar and writing skills. The world of content writing and editing needs these skills to make eye-catching, memorable, and unique content to attract customers or audiences.

3. Public Relations Specialist

A public Relations specialist works to maintain and enhance the public image of a company by creating clear and effective communications for different types of customers. English education graduates are very capable for this role because they are equipped with writing and communication skills. These skills are needed to do a press release, handle media requests, and manage the public's view.

E. Previous Studies

To conduct this study, the researcher has read some previous studies related to this research:

First, "Students' Motivation In Choosing English Study Program At University Of Jambi" was written by Wahyu Jufra Nanda (2021). This Study investigated the reason behind third-year students' selection of the English Study Program at the University of Jambi, focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic factors. To conduct this research, the researcher used a quantitative approach, the study surveyed 100 students and the findings show that the participants mostly have a desire to be an English teacher. It makes intrinsic motivation more dominant than extrinsic motivation.

Second, "An Analysis of Students' Motivation In Studying English (A Survey Study At UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh)" was written by Siti Fachraini (2017). This study analyzed the motivation of English students at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, emphasizing the significance of motivation in learning. It identified two types of motivation that influence students in learning English: intrinsic and extrinsic. The sample of this study is 142 students from various semesters and used a questionnaire to collect the data. This study found that students are mostly motivated by intrinsic motivation which is the personal enjoyment of learning English.

Third, "Choosing A Teacher Education Program: Exploring Reasons of Male Student Teachers of English Education Program At One Public University In Jambi" was written by Tiara Ariyanti et al (2016). This study used a questionnaire to collect the data and focused on understanding why male student teachers specifically select English education as their field of study. The findings of this study showed intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in influencing male students to choose English Education Department but extrinsic motivation also plays a role.

Fourth, "Motivation For Going to University: A Qualitative Study and Class Project" was written by Heather Schmidt et al (2014). This study used semi-structured interviews with 8 students from Cape Breton University to collect the data and focused on the original reason why local female students pursue their studies at that university and major. The result showed extrinsic motivation was the most dominant factor, 8 out of 8 participants mentioned the financial aspect led them to pursue study at a local university.

Fifth, "Students' Motivation Toward Choosing English Education" was written by Choiril Anwar, et al (2018). This study used observation and questionnaire to collect the data and the subject was 37 English students from Sultan Agung Islamic University (UNINSULA) Semarang. The study focused on investigating what motivation influences students the most in pursuing study in this department. The result showed students pursue their studies in English Education Department because they want to strenghten their skills in English, it means intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in this study.

According to the studies above, it was shown that many factors influence students' decisions to pursue their studies in English Education Department.

However, these previous studies have been conducted without considering the technology in learning activities. Nowadays, learning tools become more famous and accessible and can make their users learn English independently. We need to know the reasons why students still want to pursue their studies in English Education Department while technology such as AI can facilitate the learning process like a real teacher.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methodology including research design, research participants, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis, and research location that was used by the researcher when conducting this study.

A. Research Design

The researcher used a qualitative method in this study. Conducting a qualitative research is like plunging into someone's soul while collecting and analyzing the data. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative method could be defined as a method that is used to understand and explore how people or groups perceive a social issue. Qualitative will investigate carefully to small details to understand the issues and construct a wider conclusion.

In this study, the researcher used phenomenological research design to understand the factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry. Phenomenology is a research design that focuses on exploring and understanding a specific phenomenon. According to Oxford Dictionary (2022), phenomenon is a fact or event in nature or society that is not fully understood. This design aims to describe the experiences shared by individuals who have encountered a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2018).

The phenomenon in this study is the number of students who enrolled in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is increasing year by year. It is supposed to be declining not increasing because the role of technology in providing English learning is very advanced now which can cause the job opportunities for English education graduates become limited.

B. Research Participants

A participant is an individual who takes part in a study by providing data or information related to the study (Creswell, 2018). The researcher used a purposive sampling technique with a combination of maximum variation and snowball sub-technique in choosing participants for this study. Purposive sampling is a technique to choose participant where the researcher intentionally selects participants who are particularly knowledgeable about or have experience with the phenomenon under investigation. The goal of purposive sampling is not to achieve generalizability but to gain deep, rich, and detailed insights from a specific group of individuals (Creswell, 2018).

According to Creswell (2018), purposive sampling technique has many sub-techniques, like maximum variation or heterogenous type and snowball type. Maximum variation is a sub-technique of purposive sampling where the researcher deliberately selects participants with diverse backgrounds or characteristics such as academic year. Snowball is a sub-technique of purposive sampling where existing participants refer other participants who meet the criteria of the research.

In this study, for selecting participants, the researcher asked the student representative from batches 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 to find 3

students from their batch who pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry because of the desire to be teachers, enjoy learning English, or another reason. The student representatives from different batches gave the names of students who matched with just one criteria above. To find other participants, the researcher asked existing participants to recommend their friends who suited with criteria of this study.

After a long process, the researcher selected 12 students from English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry. The participants come from the batches 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. Each batch has 3 participants. The first participant is pursuing education in this department because has a desire to be an English teacher, the second participant is pursuing education in this department because enjoy learning English but do not have a desire to be an English teacher. The third participant is pursuing education in this department for another reason.

C. Technique of Data Collection

Technique of data collection refers to the specific method or procedure used by the researcher to collect the data from relevant sources to find the answer to the question of the study (Creswell, 2018). For this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect the data.

According to Creswell (2018), a semi-structured interview is a data collection method where the researcher uses a set of prepared questions or

topics to guide the interview, but allows flexibility in how the conversation unfolds. This approach enables the researcher to explore the topics in more depth and adapt to the responses of the interviewee and provide a balance between structured questions and open-ended discussion.

D. Technique of Data Analysis

Technique of data analysis could be defined as systematic procedures or methods used by the researcher to analyze, interpret, and examine the collected data (Creswell, 2018). In qualitative research, techniques of data analysis often involve coding, identifying themes, patterns, and relationships within the data, and developing interpretations.

In analyzing the collected data for this study, the researcher did this procedure:

- 1. Recording the interview; this is the first step in data collection, ensuring that the data is accurately captured for later analysis.
- 2. Transcribing the interview; in this step, the researcher converts verbal data into a format that can be analyzed. This involves carefully writing out the spoken words, often verbatim.
- 3. Analyzing the pattern; the researcher analyzes the data using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis refers to a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting pattern within data. It starts with reading the data multiple times to gain a deep understanding. After that, the researcher makes initial

codes with labels significant part of the data that is relevant to the research questions (Nowel, et al, 2017)



CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter includes an analysis of the research data, which is divided into two sections: research findings and discussion. The research findings section details the outcomes of what factors influence students' decision to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry in an era where technology could facilitate an English learning process freely and what kind of job that English Education graduates could have in the future. The discussion section interprets the findings and connects them to expert insight.

A. Research Findings

To answer the research questions in this study, the researcher interviewed 12 participants. The participants of this research are active students from English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry from batch 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024. The researcher asked 5 Questions to each participant and there were a few follow-up questions that appeared during the interview. The interview takes approximately 10-15 minutes for each participant. Afterward, the researcher analyzed the data using thematic analysis. The list of participants is explained in the Table 4.1.

The researcher analyzed the data according to the research questions that have been stated in Chapter I; (1) What are the factors that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry,

and (2) What are the students' desires for future careers as English Education graduates?

Table 4.1

List of initial participant

No	Initial of Participant	Batch
1	CRA	2021
2	NN	2021
3	SAM	2021
4	ID	2022
5	SDT	2022
6	CL	2022
7	MR	2023
8	MZ	2023
9	DT	2023
10	المعة الرائري PU جا معة الرائري	2024
11	AR-RANIRY	2024
12	IR	2024

The researcher has collected the data from participants mentioned in Table 4.1 and from the data, the researcher divided into 2 sections based on research questions. It was explained in detail as follows;

1. Factors that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry

a) Enjoyment in learning English

Enjoy learning English leads students to feel confident in learning English. This is the most common reason why students decide to pursue study in English Education Department even though technology could provide free and accessible English learning. There are 8 out of 12 students said that they are pursuing their education in this department because they are enjoy and confident in learning English.

IR said that:

"I chose to pursue study in English Education Department because

I love English and I want to improve my English better."

CL stated that:

"...I feel more confident in English department because I have already started learning English in my previous school. While pursuing my education in this department, I want to deepen my knowledge and increase my English skills... We can learn about Linguistics, Literature, and cultural aspects that technology does not provide while 'teaching' English to us."

CRA also expressed that:

"...I feel that I can survive well. It's easy for me, because I have a guide and I speak English."

ID explained that:

"... I also enjoy learning English, I decided to pursue my education in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry.....Even though we can learn from technology, I think interaction is something that we really need when we pursue a language study because we have to practice in real life. Technology can not give a real interaction while formal education provides that by presentation, discussion, and something like that. Then with formal education, we can have a wider knowledge about English. The skill, the culture, and many more like linguistics, technology do not provide that but formal education do."

SAM mentioned that:

"I wanted to join English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry because I've heard a lot about it. I like English since I was in elementary school..."

NN also stated that: R _ R A N I R Y

"...and I chose English because I didn't have any fear that I wouldn't be able to cover the English field. Because I knew I already had the basics of English since I love learning English... we learned about culture, political issues, government issues, global issues, and things like that. So, why do I still stick to formal education in English in a time where technology can provide English learning? Because there

are a few elements that are offered in the concept of learning English that are related to my passion."

SDT expressed that:

"... I liked to watch vlogs in English, and listen to English songs. I love English."

DT admitted that:

"...I was confused what kind of major matched my interest and I found English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is the answer."

According to the explanations above, students still want to pursue their education in English Education Department in an era where technology could provide and facilitate English learning process is because they love English, they enjoy and confident in English so they want to diving-deep into the English Language.

With joining English Education Department, they can practice all of English skills in a real-life context because what they need is a real interaction with people. They also be able to discuss and present something that they are interested in using English. That is the reason why some students decide to pursue study in English Education Department because they love and enjoy learning English and this department could fulfill what they need as well since technology can not.

b) The quality of the department

The quality of the department are also one of the factors that influenced 5 of 12 students to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry. Learning environment and track record of the alumni in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry show this department has good quality.

Learning environment is the biggest support in the learning process, it could make our motivation last longer and make students eager to learn and improve to be better, especially in English language study. Students need a supportive environment to practice English and get used to using English in formal and informal contexts. Track record of the alumni also important because students make the first assumption about the quality of one department or university from the alumni track record.

ID stated that:

"...Because I know English Education Department at UIN Ar-Raniry better than the other universities in Banda Aceh"

SAM also mentioned that:

"...I got information the branding of English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is better than other universities in Aceh so that's why I decided to pursue my study here."

CD explained that:

"...I also aware that English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry has a good quality with excellent accreditation (Unggul). It makes me positive to join this department."

NN stated that:

"I chose English Education Department because I like the environment, I see a supportive environment here, and the alumni track record is good too"

MR expressed that:

"I do some research about this department and I found out that this department is surrounded with amazing people and I really want to become like them."

From the statements above, the quality and reputation of English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is good and it is also one of the factors that influence students' decision to study in this department. Quality and reputation could be a consideration when students want to pursue study in a department because quality and reputation indirectly show how well it facilitates, learning environment, the quality of educators, and the quality of the alumni.

A supportive environment could help students have a strong motivation to learn English and they can also be involved in a supportive

social environment which is beneficial for their skill improvement. Students also consider the track record of alumni because alumni are the group of people who graduated from the same department. Students evaluate whether this department could give them a chance to have a better future or not.

c) Family influence

Family is a strong influencer that could influence students to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry. There are 4 out of 12 students stated that the main reason why they want to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is influenced by their parents or siblings.

CRA stated that:

"actually that's because my sister graduated from this department.

So, I felt that when I came here, I would be safe... The point is, when I came to this department, I already had a guide (sister) and basic English."

Furthermore, MR mentioned that:

"my dad told me to study in English Education department of UIN Ar-Raniry."

ID also admitted that:

"After facing a long confusion, my parents told me to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry. They would be very happy and support me if I take English Education

Department."

CD said that:

"That's because my parents told me to do so."

According to the explanations stated above, most students said that they pursuing education in English Education Department because their family influenced them to do that. They were confused about deciding their future, so they asked their family, they followed their family's recommendation, and with that, they felt safe and had a guide in pursuing this study.

d) Personal dream to be an English teacher in the future

English Education Department is a department that equips students with English proficiency and pedagogical knowledge. Because of that, there are also some students who join this program because they want to be English teachers in the future. There are 4 of 12 students who pursue this study because of a willingness to be an English teacher.

SAM said that:

"I want to be an English teacher, I've always wanted to study English... For people who want to become an English teacher in the future, of course learning English in formal education is a must."

SDT stated that:

"The reason why I want to study in this department is not just because I want to be a teacher... A teacher needs interaction, right? So I want to become an English teacher because I can interact with people using English."

PU also expressed that:

"I felt like I loved to share what I got with people. Teaching people everything and I felt that my passion is to teach people. So, I decided to join English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry."

MZ told that:

"That's because I want to be an English teacher in the future, I want to work at school, teaching students, and have a slow living."

From the statement above, some students decided to pursue their education in this department because they dreamed of being English teachers. Being a teacher requires qualification, which can be proven by a certificate of graduation from a formal education like the English Education Department.

e) Lack of option

Every student has their own dream major and university, sometimes they are too focused on that and forget to make another plan if it is their dream that does not come true. When that worst scenario happens, most of the students have no options and will likely join a department that is recommended by their surroundings. There are 3 of 12 students who experienced this and it was a factor that influenced them to decide English Education as their major.

MR mentioned that:

"Honestly, that's because I ain't accepted by my dream university."

ID also stated that:

"At first, this department was not my priority because I didn't know what department I really wanted to pursue in college."

DT told that:

"Actually that's because I failed to be a law student. So I was confused what kind of major matched my interest and I found English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is the answer."

When students are not accepted by their dream major and university, they lack of options about what major to pursue and often face a very long confusion and frustration. During that time, students will start to seek what major they enjoy pursuing and will likely ask their closest ones to give them advice and recommendations.

2. Students' desires for future careers as English Education graduates

(a) Education Field

English education equips students with pedagogical knowledge and English proficiency. There are 4 of 12 students stated that they want to become a person who pursues a career in the education field.

PU mentioned that:

"I want to be an English teacher. So, I think pursuing a formal language in English Education Department really gives me advantages that show my skills are qualified."

SDT explained that:

"I wanna be a teacher but I also hope that I can be a ministry of education or work in a related field in education since I graduated from education field."

Furthermore, CD also explained that:

"I wa<mark>nt to be an English teacher and ope</mark>n my own study center"

MZ stated that:

"I just want to be a teacher or a curriculum developer"

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The explanation from participants explained that, despite the rise of technology in English teaching and learning, students still want to become an English teacher or someone who works in education field. The role of human as English teachers and curriculum developers are still needed because in this department, students not just learn English but also how to educate people and convey English material to someone who wants to learn English. English teachers are still needed forever because not everyone understands learning through technology. Also, the advantage for students who graduate from English Education Department is they have a certification of graduation which shows their English and teaching skills are valid compared to people who learn English by themselves.

(b) Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur is a person who actively involved in business activities (Azmy & Didip, 2022). 4 from 12 students mentioned that they want to be entrepreneurs and with English skills, it really helps them to reach a global level in this field.

SAM explained that:

"I already work in business field and have my own business brand."

So with English skill, I can use English in promoting my brand."

MR also explained that:

"Actually I was influenced by one alumnus of this department, she has her own foundation and her income is crazy, so I want to be like her, a CEO in my own foundation, and this department helps me to be a CEO because I have English to expand my network for funding."

IR stated that:

"I want to build my own study center, so it's an entrepreneur."

ID also stated the same thing like IR:

"I want to open a study center that focus in English learning."

From the statement above, an entrepreneur is a common job that possible to pursue for every major, such as businessmen, businesswomen, and CEO. However, English Education department graduates could use their English skills to expand their network for funding and promote their brand to a higher level.

(c) Translator

There are 2 of 12 students argued that a translator is a job position that can be filled by English education graduates because they have qualified English skills.

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NN stated that:

"I want to do a freelance job in translation field, so I think I want to be a translator since I have a strong knowledge related to translation"

CL also stated that:

"I will try to be a translator because we already familiar with English."

Translator is a job that helps people who speak different languages still able to communicate well because a translator and interpreter could translate and interpret what the speaker says in the target language. Students who graduate from this department could be a translator or interpreter because they are familiar with English since studying in English education department. Technology cannot be perfect for doing this kind of job because language always changes and phrases from one language to another is different, technology will just translate it directly word by word and it can make the meaning of one utterance not convey well to the target audience.

(d) Tour Guide

2 out of 12 students mentioned that they want to pursue their career as a tour guide.

DT argued that:

"For me, I want to be a tour guide because I think it is a cool job."

CL stated that:

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"My expectation is I work in tourism field as a tour guide."

From statements above, there are 2 of 12 participants stated that they want to be a tour guide. Tour guide is someone who helps the guests while traveling to another place that they are not familiar with, this job is easier if people who fill that position is able to speak English fluently.

(e) Journalist

1 of 12 students stated that journalism is her dream job because she has a strong skill in writing and expects that in the future she can pursue a career that matches her passion.

CRA mentioned that:

"About career, to be honest, I don't explore how my career will be in the future with English Education certification. But my expectation, I can go to the world of journalistic because I have a strong writing skills in English. I also have been in discourse analysis and linguistics class."

Writing skills are skills that English Education students have because the entire lecture process is in English. Therefore, the expectation of the student is that after graduating from this department, she can work in journalism field."

B. Discussion

The researcher has conducted a study that aims to explore the factors that influence students' decisions to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry in era where technology could be everything to provide English learning and to get students' perceptions about future job opportunities associated with English Education degree. There are 12 participants in this research and each participant was asked 5 questions regarding this study during the interview. All of

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the participants are active English Education Department students from batch 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

This study has two research questions, the first question is "What are the factors that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry?". From the research findings, it is revealed that five factors influence students' decisions to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry. It was enjoyment in learning English, the quality of the department, family influences, personal dream to become an English teacher in the future, and lack of options.

Starting from intrinsic factors, intrinsic factor happens because of intrinsic motivation. In this result, two intrinsic factors influenced the participants to pursue studies in this department; enjoyment in learning English, and personal dream to become an English teacher in the future.

There are 8 out of 12 students decided to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry because of enjoyment in learning English. Students choose a formal education to learn English because they love English since the beginning and pursued their study in this department, they can make friends and have real interactions where they can share everything they love in English.

Students also mentioned that they pursue study in this department because they love learning English and feel confident to survive in this department. They explained that even with the ubiquitous of English learning platforms that technology could provide, it is still different from learning in formal education. They enjoy and love learning English so they want to dive deep into all English aspects, interact with real people in English, and discuss everything they love in English. That is the reason why they still choose to pursue English Education Department when they have an option to learn English through technology.sss

Another intrinsic factor is personal dream to become an English teacher in the future. 4 of 12 students explained that they still want to become English teachers in the future even though technology is very advanced in providing English learning now because human educators are still needed. They believe they can be English teachers so they pursue their studies in English Education Department to get certification of graduation to show that their English and teaching skills are valid.

Two factors above are related to the idea of intrinsic motivation by Filgona (2020) who stated that intrinsic motivation is characterized by engaging in activities for the pure enjoyment and satisfaction they offer rather than any external benefits. It means when students are led by intrinsic motivation, they are likely to participate in an activity because they find it fun.

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The bounded rationality theory is also in line with these factors, people tend to make decisions based on what they know and can process (Simon, 1997). When students decide to pursue study in this department because of the "enjoyment in learning English" and "personal dream to become an English teacher in the future" factor, in the first place, students know that they will survive in this department and what they will be in the future.

Besides intrinsic factors, there are extrinsic factors that are driven by extrinsic motivation; the quality of the department, family influences, and lack of options. This result related with Dahliana (2019) who mentioned that external factors such as the environment and social pressure transform into extrinsic motivation.

5 of 12 students explained that the quality of English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry is good and it was a factor that influenced them in deciding to study in English Education department. The quality of one department is important because students can assume how good learning environment and track record of the alumni in that department is.

Learning environment makes students eager to learn and improve to be better, especially in English language study. Students need a supportive environment to practice English and get used to using English in real-life interactions. Track record of the alumni also shows the learning and teaching process in the department is good and influences students to pursue study here. This idea is in line with Sanchez (2012) who mentioned that the quality of the department and university is the thing that students consider when they want to decide what major they must pursue.

4 of 12 students admitted that they wanted to pursue this study because family influences. Students mentioned their parents asked them to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry, and some of them because one of their family members graduated from this department so they feel

safe and think that they have a guide to ask whenever they need. The last factor is lack of options, 3 out of 12 students do not have any options because they already failed to reach their dream major and university, therefore they pursue their studies in English Education Department because of that factor.

Most of all, the factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in English Education Department are in line with theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991). This theory explains that a person's intention to do something is influenced by their attitude toward the behavior, the social pressure around them, and how much control they feel they have over the outcome.

The second question is "What are the students' desires for future careers as English Education graduates?". There are some career options that students mentioned regarding this question; starting with 4 of 12 students want to work in education field since they graduate from education department; 4 of 12 students want to be an entrepreneur, open a business and use English skills to expand network and search for funding; 2 of 12 students want to be a translator since they have a strong translation skill; 2 of 12 students want to work as a tour guide because they think it is cool and fun; and 1 of 12 students want to become a journalist because they have strong writing skills. These findings of this study are in line with Nurwakhidah (2014) explanation, that the biggest factors that influence students' decisions to pursue a major because their personal interest and job opportunities, like the idea of English education graduates have wider job opportunities in the future.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is the conclusion, containing a summary of this study and the second one is the recommended suggestion related to this study.

A. Conclusion

This research aims to explore the factors that influence students' decision to pursue their studies in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry in era where technology could be everything to provide English learning and to get students' perceptions about future job opportunities associated with English Education degree. As has been written in the previous chapter, the findings and discussion, it show that there are five factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in this department and there are five job opportunities associated with English Education degree.

The results explain when students face much confusion about what major they have to pursue after graduating from high school, there are seven influencing factors for them in deciding the English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry; enjoyment in learning English, the quality of the department, family influences, personal dream to become an English teacher in the future, and lack of options.

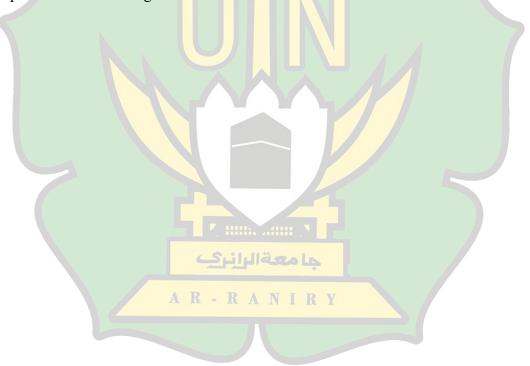
This study also exposed numerous jobs that students want to pursue for their future careers as English Education graduates. From this study, we know English skills are like a weapon and students who graduate from this department could apply to every English-related job such as English teacher, curriculum developer, translator, journalist, entrepreneur, and tour guide.

In conclusion, this study discovered factors that influence students' decisions to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry come from intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Despite the availability of technology that plays a very significant role in the education field nowadays, especially in English education, students value formal education for its environment, direct interaction that could give them advantages in applying for jobs in the future. This study shows that enjoyment in learning English as intrinsic motivation is the dominant factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry.

B. Recommendation

This study revealed the factors why students still want to pursue their education in English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry despite technology could provide English teaching and learning. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations, including the following: 1) merely focuses on the factors that influence students' decision to pursue study in the English Education Department and students' perception of job opportunities associated with an English Education degree. 2) used 12 participants and the scope is only for English Education Department of UIN Ar-Raniry that cannot be used for a general conclusion.

For future research, thus, similar studies may emphasize more on the advantages of pursuing a degree in the English Education Department compared to learning English through technology such AI, mobile applications, and online platforms. This research could explore the benefits offered by formal education and examine how qualified formal education contributes to make students' skills improve more and get better career opportunities. The results of the research is provide information about the value of English Education Department that can be beneficial for upcoming university students to decide what major they should pursue and avoid long-hour stressed.



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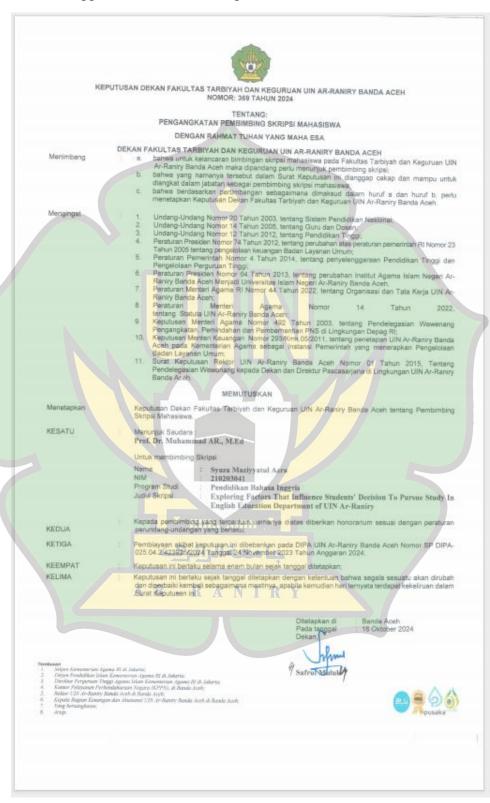
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Appendix A Appointment Letter of Supervisor



Appendix B Recommendation Letter from The Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan to conduct field research



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN

Jl. Syeikh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh Telp/Fax.; 0651-752921

Nomor : B-10240/Un.08/FTK.1/TL.00/12/2024

Lamp :

Hal : Penelitian Ilmiah Mahasiswa

Kepada Yth,

Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Assalamualaikum Warahmatul lahi Wabarakatuh.

Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry dengan ini menerangkan bahwa:

NIM : 210203041

Nama : SYAZA MAZIYYATUL AZRA
Program Studi/Jurusan : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Alamat : jln.Tgk.Direuleng,Dusun Jeurat Lee

Saudara yang tersebut namanya diatas benar mahasiswa Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan bermaksud melakukan penelitian ilmiah di lembaga yang Bapak/Ibu pimpin dalam rangka penulisan Skripsi dengan judul EXPLORING FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENTS' DECISION TO PURSUE STUDY NN ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF UIN AR-RANIRY

Banda Aceh, 09 Desember 2024

An, Dekan

Wakil Dekan Bidang Akademik dan Kelembagaan



Prof. Habiburrahim, S.Ag., M.Com., Ph.D.

Berlaku sampai : 17 Januari 2025 NIP. 197208062003121002

جا معة الرانرك

AR-RANIRY

Appendix C Confirmation Letter of Conducting Research at the English Education Department



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN PRODI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS

Jln Syeikh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh Email: bbi.ftk@ar-raniry.ac.id. Website: https://ar-raniry.ac.id.

SURAT KETERANGAN

Nomor: B-704/Un.08/PBI/Kp.01.2/12/2024

Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Darussalam Banda Aceh menerangkan bahwa yang nama tersebut di bawah ini:

Nama : Syaza Maziyyatul Azra

NIM : 210203041

Prodi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

Alamat : Ilie, Ulee Kareng

Benar telah melakukan penelitian dan mengumpulkan data pada Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh dalam rangka penyusunan Skripsi yang berjudul:

"Exploring Factors That Influence Students' Decision To Pursue Study In English Education
Department of UIN Ar-Raniry"

Demikianlah Surat Ke<mark>terangan ini</mark> kami buat agar <mark>dapat dipe</mark>rgunakan seperlunya.

Banda Aceh, 18 Desember 2024 Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris,

Syarifah Dahliana

Appendix D Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Research title : Exploring Factors That Influence Students' Decision To

Pursue Study In English Education Department of UIN

Ar-Raniry

Interviewer : Syaza Maziyyatul Azra

Name of the interviewee

Batch of interviewee : 2021/2022/2023/2024

Date of interview :

Place of interview

LIST OF QUESTION

- 1. Why did you decide to study in the English Education Department?
- 2. Why do you think formal education in English is still important in a time when technology offers free learning resources?
- 3. Do you think a formal degree offers something that technology-based learning cannot?
- 4. How do you see your career prospects after graduating from this department?
- 5. Do you think studying English Education gives you an advantage in the job opportunity compared to learning English independently?

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1. Name : Syaza Maziyyatul Azra

2. Place/Date of Birth : Banda Aceh/September 29, 2003

3. Sex : Female 4. Religion : Islam 5. Nationality : Indonesia

6. Address : Jln. Tgk. Direuleung, Ds Ilie, Kec. Ulee kareng,

Kota Banda Aceh

7. Email : 210203041@student.ar-raniry.ac.id

8. Occupation : Student at English Education of UIN Ar-Raniry

9. Parents

: Muhammad Zardi, M.T a. Father's Name

b. Mother's Name : Yusraini, S.Ag c. Father's Occupation : Lecturer d. Mother's Occupation: Teacher

e. Address : Jln. Tgk. Direuleung, Ds Ilie, Kec. Ulee kareng,

Kota Banda Aceh

10. Educational Background

a. Elementary School : MIN 9 Banda Aceh b. Junior High School : MTsN 1 Banda Aceh c. Senior High School : MAN 1 Banda Aceh

: UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh d. University

جا معة الرانري

Banda Aceh, 17 Desember 2024

The Researcher,

Syaza Maziyyatul Azra