

AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH DEBATE AT MAN 1 MANDAILING NATAL

A THESIS

*Submitted to the Department of English Education in a
Partial fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Strata I
(Bachelor of Education) in English Language Education*



Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe
NIM. 22130015

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION
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SUPERVISOR AND EXAMINER APPROVAL SHEET

Proposal supervisor in the name of **Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe**, Nim. 22130015.
With the title **"An Analysis of The Implementation of English Debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal"**.

Viewing that the relevant proposal has met the requirements for research in the English Language Education Study Program. Has met the requirements to seminar.

Thus this approval is granted to be used as needed.

Panyabungan, 28 Juli 2026

Examiner I



Dr. Amrizal, M.Pd
NIP.199110202019031008

Examiner II



Ayu Menta Puteri Siregar, M.Pd
199105252019082001

Examiner III



Resdilla Pratiwi, M.Hum
199110062019032009

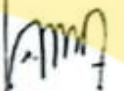
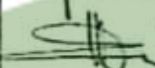
Examiner IV



Rica Umrina Lubis, M.Hum
198811142019032014

ENDORSEMENT SHEET

This thesis entitled "An Analysis of The Implementation of English Debate at Man 1 Mandailing Nata" written by Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe, students Registration Number 22130015, Department of English Language Education, has been examined and defended in front of the board of Thesis examiners on wednesday, 23th September 2026. The thesis accepted and declared to have fulfilled one of requirements for the degree of "S.Pd"

No	Name of Examiners	Position	Signature	Date of Approval
1	Dr. Amrizal, M.Pd NIP. 199102082019031008	First Examiner		02/10 2026
2	Muhammad Hasyimsyah Batubara, M.Hum NIP. 198311182014031002	Second Examiner		28/09 2026
3	Resdilla Pratiwi, M.Hum NIP. 199110062019032009	Third Examiner		05/10 2026
4	Rica Umrina Lubis, M.Hum NIP. 198811142019032014	Forth Examiner		05/10 2026

(Bachelor of Education) in Language Education.



STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

By signing this form, I

Name : Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe
Student Registration Number : 22130015
Place and Date of Birth : Jakarta, 06 September 2004
Status : Student
Address : Mompang Julu

Certify that this *skripsi* entitled: **"An Analysis of The Implementation of English Debate at Man 1 Mandailing Natal"** is original and representing my own work, except all sources that I have used have been properly and clearly acknowledged.

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The researcher,



Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe
NIM. 22130015

STAIN MADINA

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to :

- My beloved parents, whose endless love, prayers, sacrifices, and support have been my greatest source of strength throughout this journey. No words could ever fully express my gratitude for everything you have done for me. This achievement is a reflection of your love and prayers.
- My beloved siblings, Sonia Maharani Rambe, and Najwa Asyilah Rambe, for always being there with your love, encouragement, and support. Thank you for being an important part of my journey and for always believing in me.
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MOTTO

“Allah tidak membebani seseorang melainkan sesuai dengan apa yang diberikan-Nya.”

(QS. Al-Baqarah: 286)

“Pada akhirnya ini semua hanyalah permulaan.”

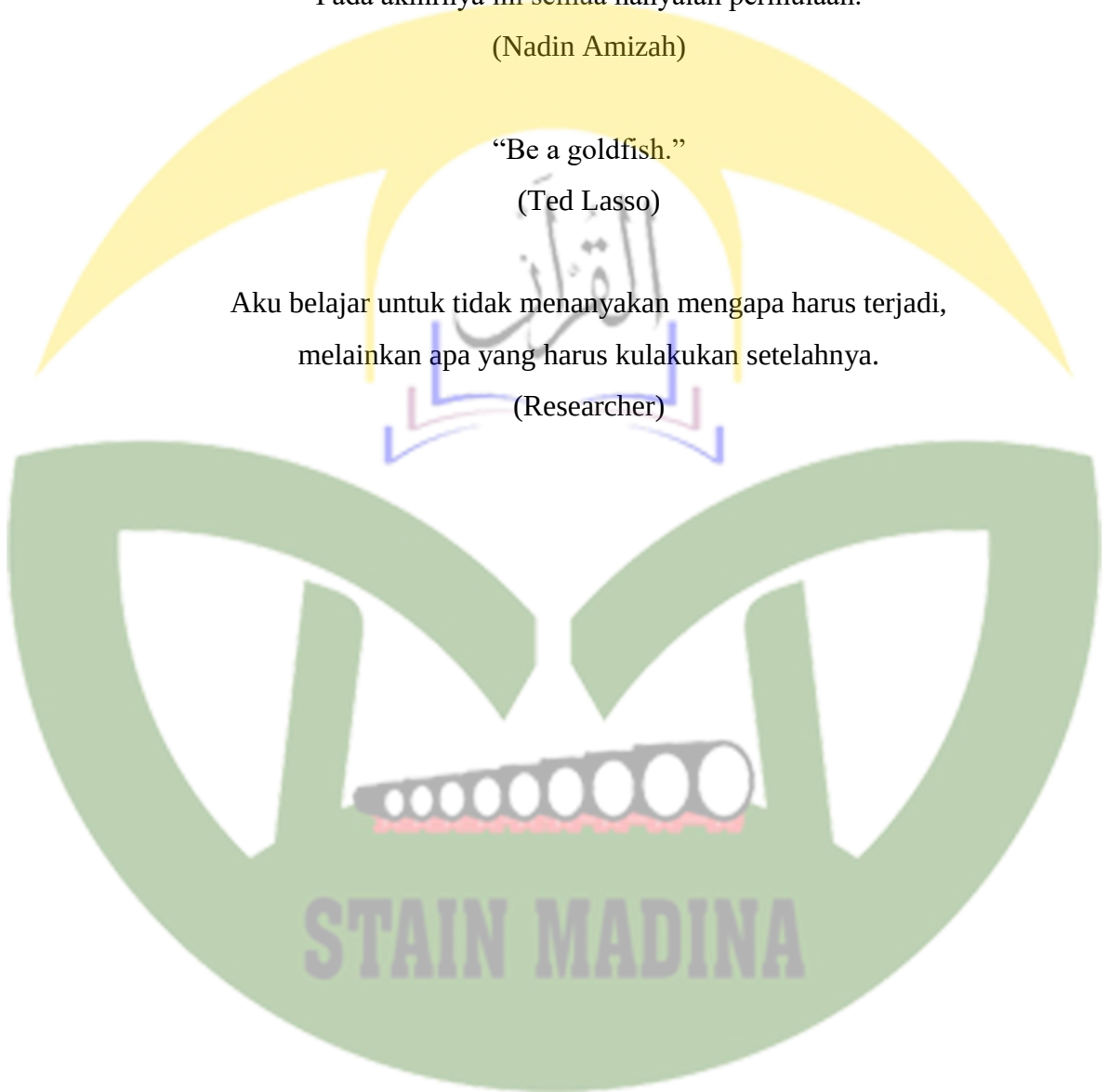
(Nadin Amizah)

“Be a goldfish.”

(Ted Lasso)

Aku belajar untuk tidak menanyakan mengapa harus terjadi,
melainkan apa yang harus kulakukan setelahnya.

(Researcher)



ABSTRACT

Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe, 2026. *“An Analysis of the Implementation of English Debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal”*

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of English debate and explore students' responses at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal. This study employed a qualitative descriptive design involving one English teacher and eight students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, structured interviews, and documentation. The findings showed that English debate was implemented as a structured and collaborative activity involving preparation, debate activities, students' participation, and teacher facilitation. The debate followed the characteristics of the Asian Parliamentary Debate format, adapted to the school's conditions and available time. Students participated through speaking, listening, argument preparation, rebuttal, and teamwork, although their participation varied. The teacher facilitated the activity by explaining procedures, managing the debate, monitoring participation, and providing guidance. The implementation faced challenges related to English proficiency, vocabulary, spontaneous responses, nervousness, and limited preparation time. Students generally responded positively while also experiencing linguistic, cognitive, emotional, and contextual challenges. They valued opportunities to practice speaking, express opinions, organize ideas, and work collaboratively. Students suggested more preparation time, regular practice, supporting materials, and varied topics.

Keywords: English debate, debate implementation, students' responses, qualitative descriptive, Madrasah Aliyah.

ABSTRAK

Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe, 2026. “Analisis Implementasi Debat Bahasa Inggris di MAN 1 Mandailing Natal.”

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi *English debate* dan mengeksplorasi respons siswa terhadap pelaksanaannya di MAN 1 Mandailing Natal. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain *deskriptif kualitatif* dengan melibatkan satu guru Bahasa Inggris dan delapan siswa yang dipilih melalui *purposive sampling*. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara terstruktur, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *English debate* dilaksanakan secara terstruktur dan kolaboratif melalui tahap persiapan, kegiatan debat, partisipasi siswa, dan fasilitasi guru. Debat mengikuti karakteristik format *Asian Parliamentary Debate* yang disesuaikan dengan kondisi sekolah dan waktu yang tersedia. Siswa berpartisipasi melalui kegiatan berbicara, menyimak, mempersiapkan argumen, melakukan sanggahan, dan bekerja sama dalam tim, meskipun tingkat partisipasi mereka bervariasi. Guru berperan sebagai fasilitator dengan menjelaskan prosedur, mengelola debat, memantau partisipasi, dan memberikan bimbingan. Implementasi debat menghadapi beberapa tantangan, seperti perbedaan kemampuan bahasa Inggris, keterbatasan kosakata, kesulitan merespons secara spontan, rasa gugup, dan keterbatasan waktu persiapan. Siswa secara umum memberikan respons positif, tetapi juga mengalami tantangan linguistik, kognitif, emosional, dan kontekstual. Siswa menyarankan penambahan waktu persiapan, latihan yang lebih rutin, materi pendukung, dan variasi topik debat.

Kata kunci: debat bahasa Inggris, implementasi, respons siswa, deskriptif kualitatif, Madrasah Aliyah.

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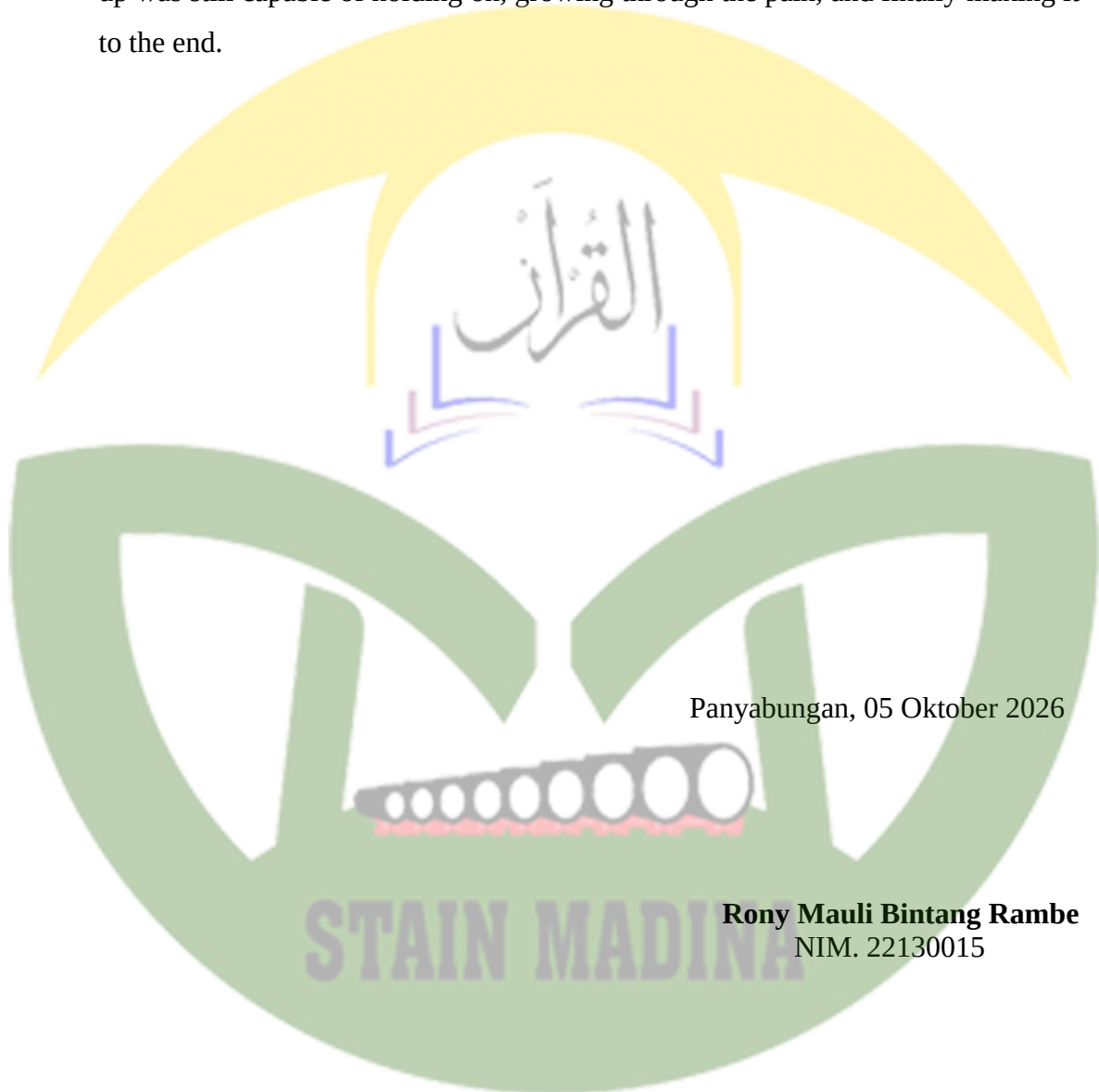
reminder that behind this achievement are two people who have always believed in me, even when I sometimes doubted myself. I hope that this achievement, however simple it may be, can bring happiness and pride to you both. Thank you for always being my home, my source of encouragement, and my greatest reason to keep fighting. May Allah always grant you good health, happiness, a long life, and countless blessings in return for every kindness, prayer, and sacrifice you have given me.

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how much I have changed. I have become stronger, calmer, and more patient in facing life's challenges. Every hardship, disappointment, and experience has taught me something that no book ever could: how to endure, how to let go, and how to keep moving forward even when the path is uncertain. This thesis is more than an academic achievement; it is a quiet reminder that the person who once almost gave up was still capable of holding on, growing through the pain, and finally making it to the end.



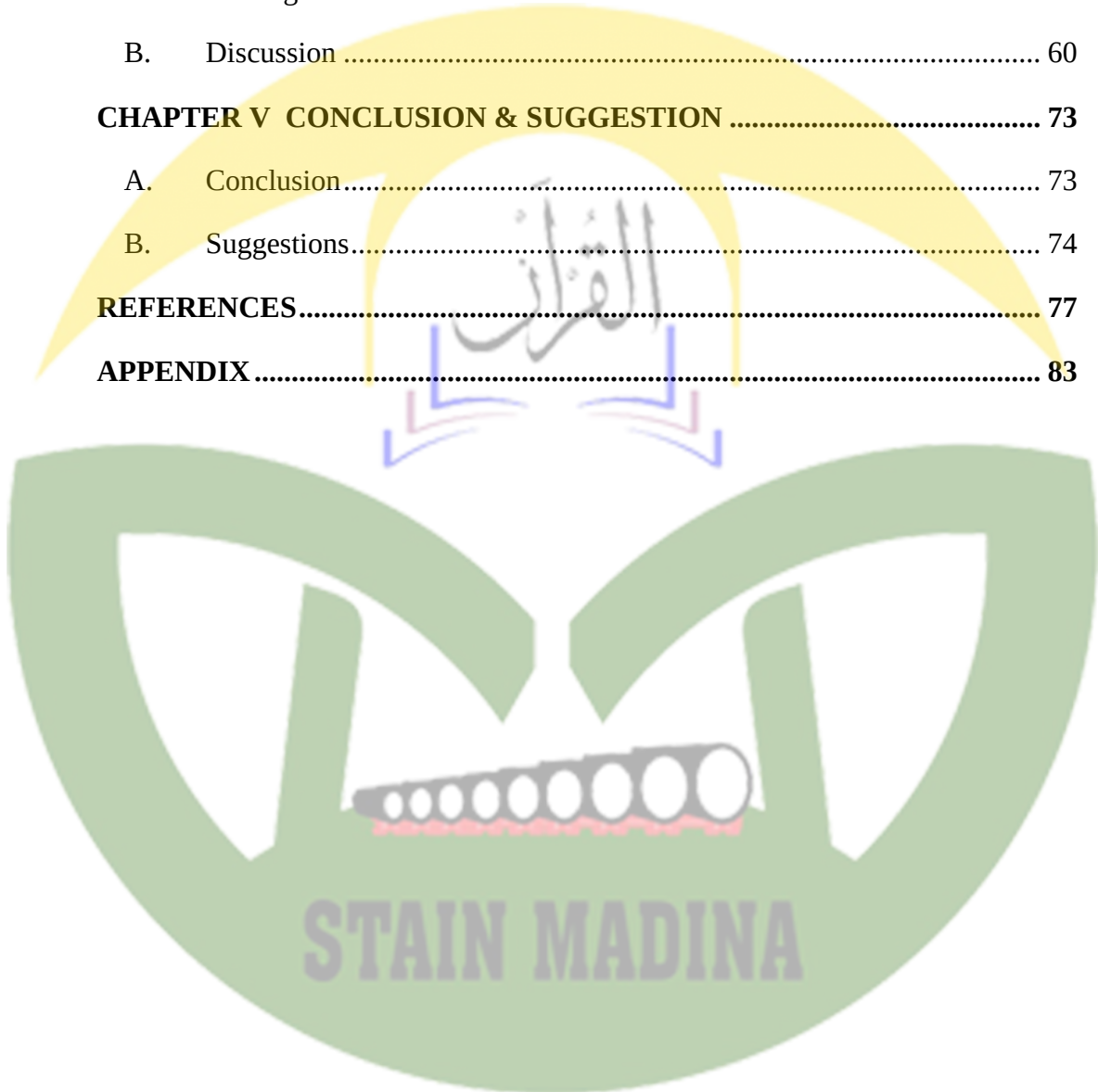
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Rony Mauli Bintang Rambe
NIM. 22130015

TABLE OF CONTENT

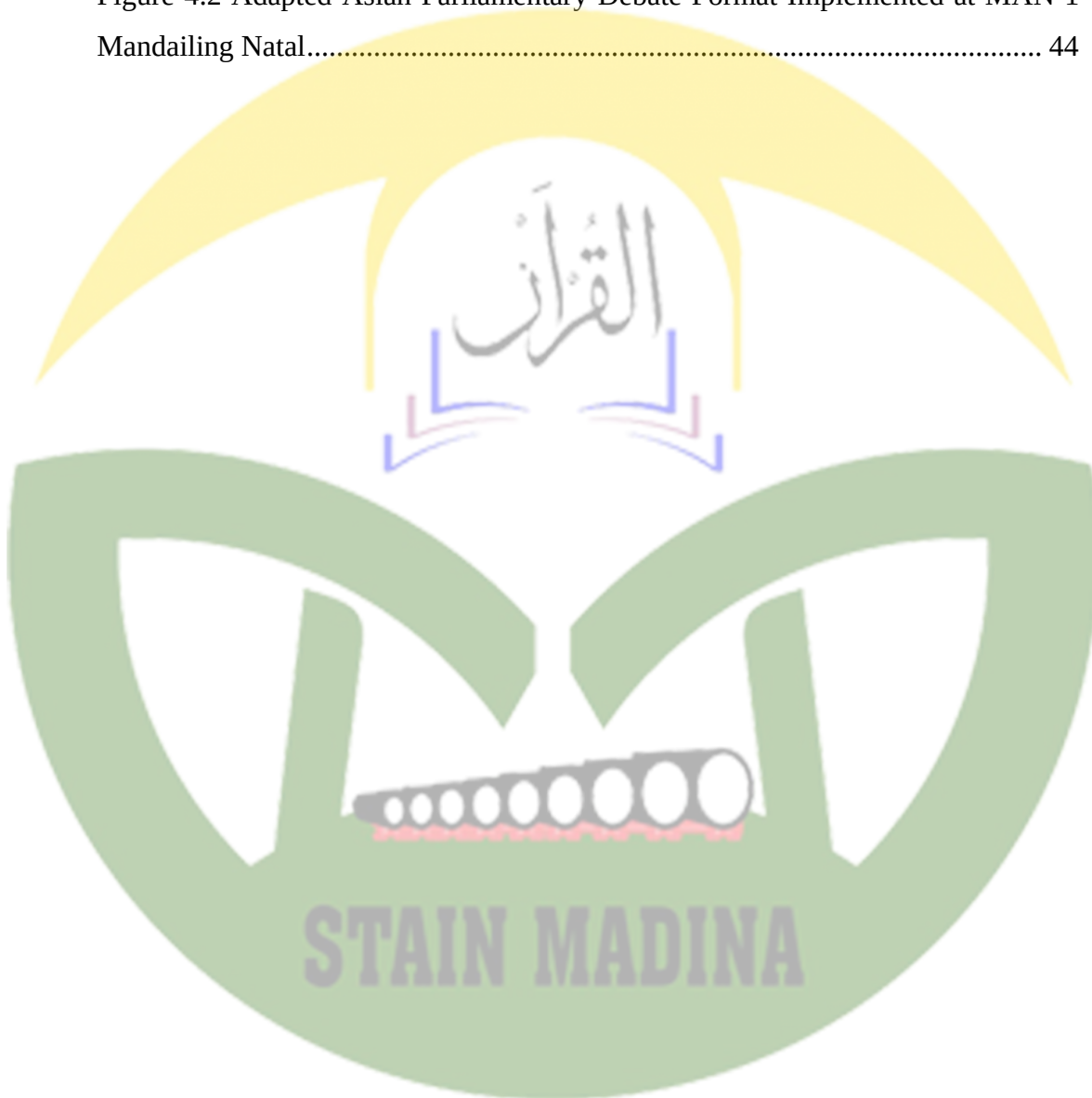
DEDICATION.....	iv
MOTTO	v
ABSTRACT	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	viii
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	xii
LIST OF FIGURE	xiv
LIST OF TABLE	xv
LIST OF APPENDIX.....	xvi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
A. Background of the Study	1
B. Formulation of the Study.....	5
C. Objective of the Study.....	5
D. Significances of the Study.....	6
E. Key Terms.....	8
F. Research Systematics.....	9
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10
A. Review of Related Theories	10
B. Review of Relevant Previous Studies.....	23
C. Conceptual Framework	25
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	28
A. Research Design	28
B. Location and Time.....	29
C. Source of Data	29
D. Technique of Data Collection.....	31

E. Research Procedure	33
F. Technique of Validating the Data	35
G. Technique of Data Analysis	36
CHAPTER IV FINDING & DISCUSSION.....	40
A. Findings	40
B. Discussion	60
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION	73
A. Conclusion.....	73
B. Suggestions.....	74
REFERENCES.....	77
APPENDIX.....	83



LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of The Implementation of English Debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 3.1 Research Procedure of The Study.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 4.1 General Structure of Asian Parllimentary Debate	43
Figure 4.2 Adapted Asian Parliamentary Debate Format Implemented at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal.....	44



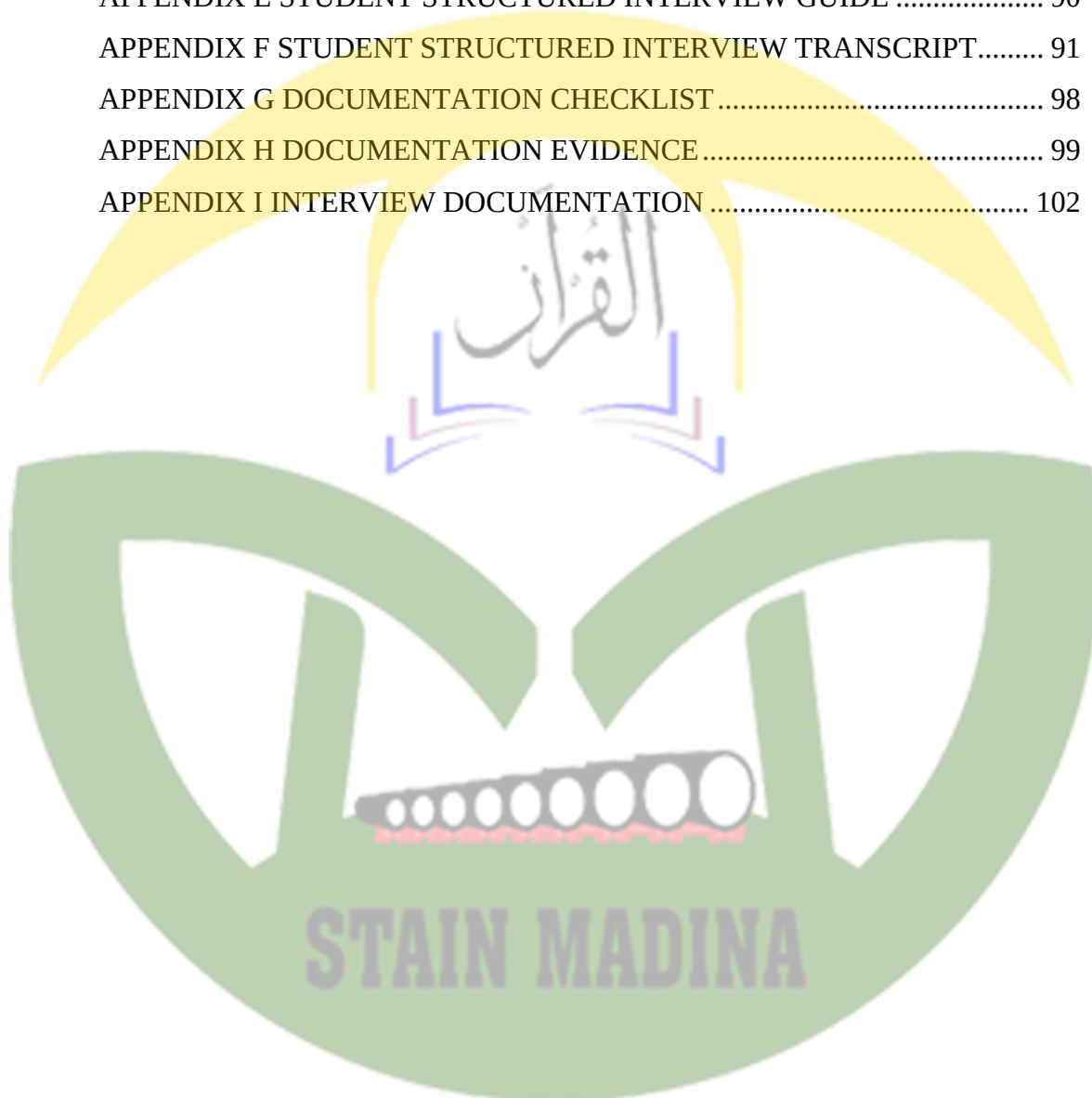
LIST OF TABLE

Table 4.1 Participant Code	40
Table 4.2 Comparison between the General Asian Parliamentary Debate Format and Its Implementation at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal	45



LIST OF APPENDIX

APPENDIX A OBSERVATION SHEET	83
APPENDIX B COMPLETED OBSERVATION SHEET.....	84
APPENDIX C TEACHER STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE	87
APPENDIX D TEACHER STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT	88
APPENDIX E STUDENT STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE	90
APPENDIX F STUDENT STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT.....	91
APPENDIX G DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST	98
APPENDIX H DOCUMENTATION EVIDENCE	99
APPENDIX I INTERVIEW DOCUMENTATION	102



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English has become an essential global language used for communication in academic, professional, and social contexts. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), and students are expected to develop communicative competence, particularly in speaking. Speaking is an important language skill because it enables learners to express ideas and interact with others using English in real time.

However, many EFL students experience difficulties when speaking English, particularly when they have limited opportunities for meaningful oral interaction. Speaking requires learners to use vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency while communicating in real time. Students may also experience anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes when communicating in English. MacIntyre (2020) explains that willingness to communicate in a second language is influenced by psychological factors such as anxiety, self-confidence, and the interactional context. These conditions indicate the importance of learning activities that provide students with opportunities to participate actively and communicate meaningfully in English.

One learning activity that provides such opportunities is debate. Debate is a structured argumentative activity in which students present opinions, defend arguments, and respond to opposing viewpoints. Through debate, students are encouraged to communicate actively, exchange ideas, and engage in meaningful interaction. According to Kassem (2021), debate provides learners with opportunities to use English in communicative situations while developing their ability to express and defend ideas. As a learning activity, debate therefore provides students with opportunities to participate in communication rather than merely receive information from the teacher

In addition to promoting communication, debate requires students to engage actively in the learning process. During debate activities, students are expected to analyze issues, construct arguments, consider supporting information, and respond to different perspectives. Kennedy (2007) explains that classroom debate promotes active engagement and critical thinking because students are involved in discussion and argumentation rather than passive reception of information. Similarly, Kassem (2021) found that debate-based learning encourages learners to participate more actively in classroom communication and increases their engagement during English learning activities. Therefore, debate can be understood as a learning activity that provides opportunities for communicative interaction, active participation, and argumentation.

Several previous studies have investigated the use of debate in English language learning, particularly in relation to speaking skills, confidence, participation, and critical thinking. El Majidi et al. (2024), for example, examined the effects of debate pedagogy on students' English-speaking proficiency using a quasi-experimental design involving secondary school students in the Netherlands. The study reported improvements in fluency, accuracy, lexical sophistication, and coherence. Similarly, Oweis and Karain (2021) investigated debating techniques and speaking skills among university-level EFL students in Jordan using an experimental approach. In the Indonesian context, Lubis and Siregar (2021) and Afri et al. (2021) examined debate through Classroom Action Research and reported improvements in students' speaking performance, participation, and confidence. Lumbangaol and Mazali (2020) also reported that debate encouraged students to express ideas, participate in speaking activities, and develop communication and critical-thinking skills.

Although these studies demonstrate the potential contributions of debate to English language learning, the reviewed research has predominantly focused on outcomes or effectiveness. Less attention has been given to the implementation process itself, particularly how debate is prepared, organized, conducted, and facilitated in an actual school setting. In addition, relatively limited attention has been given to the implementation of English debate within the context of Madrasah Aliyah. The experiences and responses of students toward the implementation of debate also require further contextual description. Therefore, this study addresses the

gap by examining English debate as an implementation process rather than only as an instructional intervention whose outcomes are measured. Specifically, the study examines preparation, debate activities, students' participation, and teacher facilitation, while also exploring students' responses to their participation in the activity.

The focus on implementation is important because the same educational activity may be carried out differently depending on the context in which it is implemented. Schultes (2021) emphasizes the importance of examining how an activity is delivered, how participants engage with it, and how contextual factors shape the implementation process. From this perspective, examining English debate requires attention not only to what students may gain from the activity but also to how the activity is actually prepared, conducted, facilitated, and experienced by its participants. An implementation-focused approach can therefore provide a more detailed understanding of how debate operates in an actual educational setting.

This issue is particularly relevant in the context of Madrasah Aliyah. As Islamic secondary schools, Madrasah Aliyah have their own institutional characteristics, educational culture, and learning environments that may shape how educational activities are organized and conducted. Differences in students' abilities, teachers' strategies, school programs, available resources, and learning conditions may influence how debate activities are implemented. Therefore, context-specific research is necessary to understand the implementation of English debate within an Islamic secondary school setting rather than assuming that the implementation process is the same across different schools.

The selection of MAN 1 Mandailing Natal as the research site was based on a preliminary site investigation conducted by the researcher in January 2026. During this preliminary investigation, the researcher had an informal conversation with an English teacher at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal to obtain initial information about the existence and general implementation of English debate at the school. Based on the information obtained, MAN 1 Mandailing Natal was identified as a school that regularly implements English debate as part of its school activities, while a similar routine practice was not identified in the other schools investigated by the researcher in Mandailing Natal. Therefore, MAN 1 Mandailing Natal was considered a relevant

research setting for examining the implementation of English debate within a Madrasah Aliyah context.

English debate is routinely conducted during Saturday morning assembly programs at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal. The activity provides students with opportunities to prepare arguments, express their positions, respond to opposing views, and participate in English communication. Its regular occurrence within the school program provides an actual setting for examining how debate activities are organized, how students participate, and how teachers facilitate the activity.

In the policy context of madrasah education, KMA No. 450 Tahun 2024 (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2024) provides guidelines for curriculum implementation in madrasahs, including Madrasah Aliyah, and was subsequently amended through KMA No. 1503 Tahun 2025 (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2025). These regulations provide a broader framework for curriculum implementation while allowing madrasahs to consider developments in science and technology as well as diverse social and cultural contexts. In this study, these regulations are considered only as contextual background for understanding the educational setting of MAN 1 Mandailing Natal; they do not constitute the direct basis or a specific mandate for implementing English debate at the school.

Despite the regular implementation of English debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal, limited information is available regarding how the activity is actually implemented in practice. In particular, there is a need to understand the procedures used in preparing and conducting the debate, the ways students participate during the activity, and the role of the teacher in facilitating the process. The existence of a debate activity alone does not explain how its different components operate in practice. Therefore, examining the implementation process at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal can provide a more detailed description of the activity within its actual school context.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the implementation of English debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal. The study focuses on how the debate activity is implemented through four analytical aspects, preparation, debate activities, students' participation, and teacher facilitation. In addition, the study explores how students respond to the implementation of English debate through their reported

perceptions, experiences, emotional responses, perceived benefits, difficulties, and suggestions. Rather than measuring the effectiveness of debate or statistically determining its effect on students' speaking ability, this study seeks to describe and interpret how the activity is implemented and how students respond to it in its natural educational setting.

The findings of this study are expected to provide both scientific and practical contributions. Scientifically, the study is expected to enrich the literature on English debate by providing a contextual understanding of its implementation in an Indonesian Madrasah Aliyah. The study may also provide insights into how institutional characteristics, learning environments, and educational practices shape the implementation of debate activities. Practically, the findings may serve as a contextual reference for English teachers, schools, and educational institutions interested in planning, facilitating, or adapting English debate activities in similar EFL and Islamic secondary school contexts. Since this is a context-specific qualitative study, its contribution is not intended to provide statistical generalization but rather detailed contextual information that may support transferability to settings with comparable characteristics.

B. Formulation of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the formulation of the problems in this research are:

1. How is English debate implemented at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal?
2. How do students respond to the implementation of English debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal?

C. Objective of the Study

In line with the formulation of the study, it is important to clearly define the objectives of this research in order to provide a focused direction for data collection and analysis. The objectives of this study are formulated as follows:

1. To analyze how English debate is implemented at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal.
2. To explore students' responses toward the implementation of English debate at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal

D. Significances of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its theoretical and practical contributions to the understanding of English debate implementation in an EFL educational context. The contributions of this study are presented as follows.

1. Theoretical Contribution

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on debate-based learning by providing a rich contextual description of how English debate is implemented in a Madrasah Aliyah environment. The findings provide insights into the implementation process, particularly in terms of debate preparation, debate activities, students' participation, and teacher facilitation. Rather than aiming for statistical generalization, the study provides contextual insights that may be transferable to educational settings with similar characteristics. The findings may also serve as a conceptual reference for future researchers and practitioners interested in understanding or developing debate-based learning in comparable EFL contexts.

2. Practical Contribution

a. For Teachers

This study provides useful information for English teachers about the practical implementation of English debate activities. The findings illustrate how teachers can organize debate preparation, manage the debate procedure, facilitate students' participation, and provide guidance when students experience difficulties. The findings may also help teachers consider students' different levels of English proficiency, vocabulary limitations, preparation needs, and difficulties in responding spontaneously during debate activities.

b. For Students

This study provides students with insights into their participation and experiences during English debate activities. The findings help illustrate the benefits and challenges reported by students, including opportunities to practice speaking, organize arguments, respond to opposing views, work collaboratively with teammates, and participate in competitive activities. The findings may encourage students to make better use of preparation time, teamwork, and learning materials when participating in future debate activities.

c. For Schools

This study provides schools with a contextual reference for supporting and developing English debate activities as part of their educational programs. The findings provide information about the practical conditions, preparation needs, resources, time allocation, and teacher support involved in implementing debate activities. Such information may assist schools in considering the institutional support needed to maintain and develop English debate activities within their own educational contexts.

d. For Other Schools

This study provides other schools, particularly Madrasah Aliyah and other Islamic secondary schools, with a contextual reference for developing English debate activities. The implementation at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal can serve as a practical example of how debate may be organized through structured preparation, argument presentation, rebuttal, concluding statements, collaborative student participation, and teacher facilitation. However, the findings are not intended to prescribe a fixed procedure that must be replicated by other schools. Instead, schools may adapt the principles and practices described in this study according to their students' English proficiency, available preparation time, learning resources, teacher capacity, and institutional conditions. In this way, the findings provide practical insights that may support the development of English debate activities in schools with comparable contexts.

e. For Researchers

This study provides additional reference material for future researchers interested in English debate, debate-based learning, students' participation and experiences, and the implementation of speaking-related activities in EFL contexts. The findings may also provide a basis for further research in different educational settings, with different participants, research approaches, or additional aspects of English debate implementation.

, and researchers working in educational contexts with similar characteristics.

E. Key Terms

1. English Debate

English debate refers to a structured speaking activity in which participants present and defend their positions on a given motion, respond to opposing arguments, and engage in an organized exchange of ideas. In this study, English debate refers specifically to the debate activity implemented at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal. The term is used to describe and analyze how the activity is prepared and conducted, how students participate and interact during the activity, and how the teacher facilitates and manages the debate process. Accordingly, English debate in this study is examined through four analytical aspects, preparation, debate activities, students' participation, and teacher facilitation.

2. Implementation of English Debate

Implementation of English debate refers to the process of putting an English debate activity into practice within an educational setting. In this study, implementation specifically refers to how English debate is organized and conducted at MAN 1 Mandailing Natal. It is analyzed through four components: preparation, debate activities, students' participation, and teacher facilitation. These components are used to examine how the debate is prepared before the activity, how the debate is conducted, how students participate and interact during the activity, and how the teacher facilitates and manages the debate process.

3. MAN 1 Mandailing Natal

MAN 1 Mandailing Natal refers to the Madrasah Aliyah Negeri that serves as the research site of this study. In this research, MAN 1 Mandailing Natal is the educational setting in which the English debate activity is implemented and investigated. The school was selected as the research site because English debate is regularly conducted as part of the Saturday morning assembly program. Therefore, the term MAN 1 Mandailing Natal in this study specifically refers to the institutional and educational context in which the implementation of English debate and students' responses to the activity are examined.

F. Research Systematics

This thesis consists of five chapters that are systematically organized to present the research process and findings.

Chapter I, Introduction, presents the background of the study, formulation of the study, objectives of the study, significances of the study, key terms, and research systematics. This chapter introduces the research problem, focus, and overall direction of the study.

Chapter II, Literature Review, discusses the theoretical and empirical foundations of the study. It presents relevant theories of English debate and its implementation, students' responses, previous studies, and the conceptual framework underlying the research.

Chapter III, Research Methodology, describes the research design, research setting, participants, research instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness of the data, ethical considerations, and researcher reflexivity.

Chapter IV, Findings and Discussion, presents the findings of the study based on the collected data and discusses them in relation to the research questions, relevant theories, and previous studies. The chapter covers the general description of the English debate activity, its implementation, and students' responses to the activity.

Chapter V, Conclusions and Suggestions, presents the conclusions drawn from the findings and discussion and provides suggestions for teachers, the school, other schools, students, and future researchers based on the results of the study.