

## AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' WRITING ANXIETY AT ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM OF UIN RADEN FATAH PALEMBANG

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### ***Abstract:***

The aims of this research are to know the factors cause students writing anxiety and to find the way to anticipate students writing anxiety. This study was qualitative research. The research used students at the fifth semester at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang and the total 6 students by using purposeful sampling. Interview was conducted to find the factors of students writing anxiety and the data from interview were analyzed by using thematic analysis. The findings showed that there were six factors of students writing anxiety and various way to anticipate students writing anxiety (1) time pressure; (2) low of self-confidence; (3) insufficient writing technique; (4) language difficulties; (5) lack of experience; and (6) high frequency of assignment.

### ***Keywords:***

Analysis;  
Anxiety;  
Writing Anxiety.

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## INTRODUCTION

English is one of language used to communicate in the world as international language. English language is also in the field of education. In many countries, children are taught and encouraged to learn English. English has become the most essential language in the world. Based on Nunan (2010), English has become a communication tool for transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technological processes, and scientific research. Almost all people from many different countries around the world use it to communicate. Therefore, Indonesia prepares students well to learn English. Learning English is now very necessary to study in Indonesia. In fact, there are many books dealing with current science and technology written only in English. English is an important educational subject from the first year of elementary school until in the universities. Learning English in Indonesia requires a lot of attention to improve English education.

In teaching and learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered, there are speaking, listening, reading and writing. Writing is one of the important skills in learning English. In writing, students should be able to express their thoughts in writing. Writing is used in human life for daily social purposes such as writing letters, composing e-mails, creating recipes, sending invitations, etc. As a result, people can communicate with one another by written text. Harmer (2004) states that writing encourages students to focus on the correct use of language because they think as they write because it solves the problem that come in their mind, writing is often used as way to reinforce the language of thought and writing often helps prepare for another activity. Therefore, writing is an important skill because it is applied in many areas of life because writing is the primary basic upon which one's learning and intellect will be judged. Writing skill equips with communication with everyone.

Most of students consider writing to be the most difficult skill to learn because many elements of grammar such as structure, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation. So, that causes students feel anxious and afraid in writing. This anxiety can be affected to students how to write well in English. Based on Shabti and Rashid (2019), that many researchers view if anxiety as one of the main factors influence achievement in writing performance. Anxiety was found to have a significant effect on students' writing achievement. Anxiety has also been shown that have a negative effect on the quality of writing in English. The students who experience anxiety in learning English can make students feel afraid and fear to learn English.

Writing anxiety correlates negatively with students' achievement in writing. As a result of their anxiety, students are unable to enjoy the writing

process. Individual distinction associated with a person's proclivity to approach or avoid situations that appear to require writing accompanied by some perceived evaluation. Hancock (2001) states that the students with high level of anxiety show significantly less motivation in classroom when writing perceived as a highly evaluative compared to students with low level anxiety. The students with high level of anxiety had lower vitality and learning scores comparing to their peers with low level anxiety. This result is important, because students with a high level of thriving can overcome with stress and feel themselves better psychologically than others. The results also indicated that anxiety had negative and significant effect in learning.

Based on preliminary research, the researchers has found that the students had writing anxiety. The researchers conducted interview and observed at the writing assessment documents of fifth semester from the archives of the lecturer who teach writing at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, it was found that the students' achievement in writing still low. They still had problems in writing such as grammar and vocabulary. Meanwhile, from the interview the students, they explained that writing was very difficult. They did not know how to begin in writing because lack of vocabulary so that the students did not know some words in English. Therefore, the students feel anxiety when the lecture gave a limited time.

There are some previous studies related to the research that the researchers do. First, a study from Febrianti (2020) showed that linguistic difficulties are the main cause of writing anxiety experienced by students during online learning. Second, a study from Asrori (2022) conclude that the causes of writing anxiety in writing thesis are fear of negative evaluation, language difficulties and time pressure. Third, a study from Susanto (2019) stated the highest cause writing anxiety such as linguistic difficulties and insufficient writing technique. Furthermore, this research to find out factors of students' writing anxiety and the ways to anticipate.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Concept of Writing**

Writing is an important composition of the world of education. By writing, students will gain knowledge about how to write effectively and share ideas with others through writing. According to Nurgiyantoro (2001), writing is an active, productive, complex and structured language skill in the form of expressions that are realized through writing. Based on Nunan (2003), writing is a task of inventing an idea and express it, and organizing it into a paragraph that the reader can understand. According to Komaidi (2011), there are five benefits of writing: practice curiosity and sensitivity in observing the realities of life, motivate us to look for other references in writing, practice in arranging

ideas and arguments systematically and logically, get a sense of satisfaction when our writing can provide benefits to others, through print or online media, and achieve popularity in the public or its environment.

### **Writing Process**

Writing process is the step before beginning to write. According to Writing process is the stage a writer goes through in order to produce something in written form. This process may be affected by the content of writing. Based on Harmer (2007) there stage of writing process are as follows: First is pre-writing that is the initial stage where students think about writing ideas. This stage is also referred to as planning where students prepare a written outline first. Planning can also be a written guide. The benefit of pre-writing is that it can help students in generating various ideas so that they can be arranged into a logical writing. Second is drafting which means the stage of preparation after completing the pre- writing stage. In this preparation process, the writer is ready to carry out writing activities. The author puts forward ideas based on the framework that has been made into a written form that is logical and easy to understand. During the writing process, new ideas usually emerge from the author. After this phase is complete, the writer sees and re-reads to find out the lacks in the writing. Third is revising that is related to how students improve their writing. In the process of revising, it can train students' accuracy in checking the results of their writing, so that the writing can be understood and in accordance with the information provided. When revising, students should pay attention to what was changed then change it in order. Therefore, students need to check the content and unity and coherence in the writing so that the message conveyed is obvious, logical and effective.

### **Anxiety**

Anxiety is the emergence of fear or worry experienced by someone. According to Durland and Barlow (2006), anxiety is a mood that feels negative effects characterized by symptoms of tension in a person's body. Anxiety can be in the form of feelings, behaviors and physiological responses. According to Wiramihardja (2007), anxiety is a condition of a person who feels weak so that the individual does not have the courage to do something. According to Safaria and Saputra (2009), theoretically, anxiety occurs when an individual meets a stimulus in the form of a situation that results in an influence in forming anxiety.

### **Writing Anxiety**

Writing anxiety is a term for the tension and nervousness or other negative feelings that may occur when doing a writing task. Based on Hassan

(2001), the writing anxiety can be interpreted as writing activities that are avoided by students so as not to cause anxiety. Some students' writing results need to be evaluated so that students feel anxious because they have negative assessment related to students' writing skills. Anxiety can cause students not enjoying the writing process so that students write under pressure and do not get appropriate writing. When writing in English, students still doubt, this case occurs because of the students themselves.

Anxiety can prevent their ability to write and compose using English. Writing apprehension occurs because writing requires knowledge of how to make a good writing because they are worried about their writing. They are afraid of making grammatical mistakes and worried that their writing will be evaluated.

### **Factors Which Cause Writing Anxiety**

Writing anxiety due to some causes. The factors influence the result of writing. Based on Rezaei and Jafari (2014) some of the factors that cause writing anxiety will be explained as follows:

First, time pressure means that writing in English requires more time so students need enough time in writing assignment. Based on Rezaei and Jafari (2014) states that time pressure is one of the main causes of writing. Writing in English for students is needed more time. They need extra time to plan, write and revise in order to make sure that their writing in English can be as good. It can be concluded that students cannot concentrate on their writing because students feel anxious because they are writing under time pressure. Second, low of self-confidence. The most important thing in doing something is self-confidence, including when writing. Confidence can determine student responses in writing. Therefore, if students have self- confidence, they are able to deal with writing anxiety, because they feel confident in what they have written (Hassan,2001).

Third, insufficient writing technique, if students have good writing skills, they will understand how to write and develop skills well. Students who feel anxious in writing mean that students do not have good writing skills (Hassan,2001). Fourth, language difficulties, common problems that are often faced by foreign language students are difficulty in using language so that they are lazy to write in English and have difficulty conveying varied ideas which are only written according to grammar in addition to vocabulary which makes students find it difficult to write compositions using English (Zhang,2011). Fifth, lack of experience or insufficient writing practice, another reason that causes students to experience anxiety in writing is the lack of practice in speaking using English so that students only focus on the written form not on the content of the writing. Writing exercises can help develop writing skills so that their writing will be better. And the last, high frequency of assignment is

one of the reasons for writing anxiety. The greater number of assignments, the students do not only focus on the task so that students' minds are divided between one task and another. Students feel anxious because they are afraid that their writing assignments will not achieve maximum results.

#### How to anticipate writing anxiety

After the causes of the fear has been identified, the ways are needed to anticipate the anxiety. There are some ways to anticipate writing anxiety will be explained as follows: First, asking other friends about or lecture about writing has become the most popular way for student to anticipate writing anxiety. According to Zhang (2011), the current level and specificity of knowledge (also known as knowledge schemata, also known as real world knowledge, can be used interchangeably structures of knowledge memory) language learners can also be assumed or required to have an effect on their emotional reactions to the task of writing. This method of anticipating usually help students in increase their understanding of what they will write in their writing task by asking their writing-expert friends' skills.

Second, believe in him or herself while performing tasks became the second anticipate for writing anxiety. Based on Choi (2013), proposes that students expressed a lack of confidence in English writing when they were asked had no idea where to start writing in English. Because of this, students build their confidence in an anticipatory manner for their work and always have a positive attitude toward their writing decrease their anxiety while writing their assignment.

Third, take a break time when doing their writing assignment can help to reduce their workload anxiety. According to Rezaei and Jafari (2014), more students will feel that anxiety when they are writing task will be evaluated and anxiety is widespread because writing test is considered a productive activity. Students describe this method to make them feel relaxed and calmer while doing their homework or writing a journal class on an academic article in English. There is possibility that they may still be motivated to do on their class tasks and they may still have term to relax. Furthermore, they will easily think to continue their writing.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher used a qualitative research. The research design is clearly described and appropriate for the purpose of the study. In collecting a data related to participants. Inductively analyze the data to build details about common problems., and interpret the mean of data. The final report was a flexible structure. In addition, the data for this research was obtained through interview. The interview conducted to find out factors that

cause students' writing anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

In this study the participants were students at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. In this research, the researcher used purposeful sampling. The researcher selected students based on score of writing in the class. There were two students were selected who had low score in writing. The reason of the researcher chose the two students at 5th semester because their score in writing still low. The study focused on 5th semester students who were taking paragraph writing and essay writing subject in English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

In collecting the data based on research problem and research design, the researcher used interview to find out factors that cause students' writing anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. The researcher used interviews as an instrument to obtained and collected data as a source of information about factors that cause writing anxiety. Interview was a structured conversation where one participant asks questions, and the other provides answers.

In analyzing the students' factors that cause writing anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang the research applied a thematic analysis. After the collecting the data, all the responses from participants were analyzed by thematic analysis.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### FINDING

There are some themes and codes factors that cause students' writing anxiety were listed from the analysis of qualitative data that shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Themes and Codes of the Factors that Cause Students' Writing Anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.**

Themes	Codes
Time Pressure	Students' feel anxious when they have writing assignment in limited time.
Self of Confidence	Students' have a self-confidence when they do in writing.
Insufficient Writing Technique	Students' who have experience in writing anxiety are those who have poor expertise and insufficient writing technique.
Language Difficulties	Students have language difficulties in writing.

Themes	Codes
Lack of experience	Students had lack of experience in writing.
High Frequency of assignment	Students had anxiety to manage

**Table 2**  
**Themes and Codes of the Ways to Anticipate Students' Writing Anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.**

Themes	Codes
Asking to lecturer	Students will ask to the lecturer when they feel writing anxiety to improve their understanding.
Believe in his/herself while doing their task	Students will revise their mistake in writing so they feel confidence if their writing assignment will be evaluated.
Take a break	Students will have a break so it can help students to think easy when doing writing assignment.

## DISCUSSION

Thematic analysis was used in data analysis above, after that the researcher found some factors of students writing anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. There are (1) time pressure, (2) low of self-confidence, (3) insufficient writing technique, (4) language difficulties, (5) lack of experience, (6) high frequency of assignment. As a result, in order to learn more about the factors, there were explained as follows:

The first factor of students writing anxiety was time pressure. The students had writing anxiety because the lecturer only give time to write in 3-4 days. The students also explained that the duration of time to writing assignment is not enough because there are so many assignments and deadlines. According to Rezaei and Jafari (2014), writing on English takes more time for students than writing in their mother tongue or first language. They needed more time to plan, write and revise. When students were required to write in under time pressure, they became anxious because they were unable to concentrate on their writing and concerned with the limited time. However, students will find it more difficult if they are asked to write with limited time. It can make students feel anxious when writing because they will feel treated and panic. As a result, the students' attention will be drawn to the clock rather than their writing.



The second factors of students writing anxiety was self-confidence. The students state that having a self-confidence is important because self-confidence influence the result of writing. The students need self-confidence to do something that they want. The students also explained that they usually train their self-confidence through practice writing when they have a free time. In conclusion, students with low of self-confidence are hesitate of their writing, believe it unworthy, and are concerned that they will not be better than others. This is what makes people anxious, worried, and afraid. Based on Cheng (2004) claims that even students with good English writing skills can feel nervous if they write something more organized.

The third factors of students writing anxiety was insufficient writing technique. The students explained that the technique they use in writing assignment according to the lecturer explanation and also the good technique influence to writing skills because if they use a good technique so can produce good writing. According to Hassan (2001), good writing ability explained that students have a good understanding of the writing process as well as good skill development. Students who have writing anxiety have poor skill development and a lack of understanding of composing process, which means they are not have skill in writing. In addition, a lack of understanding of writing techniques leads to a lack of student's confidence after conducting interviews. They struggled to write at first due to a lack of technical mastery, but when their writing was judged to be poor, insecurity set in, causing them to be anxious when writing.

The fourth factors of students writing anxiety was language difficulties. The students described that they will check their grammar in writing assignment use grammar check applications. And also, the students explained that the aspect can make they feel anxious is grammar, because there are many types and own function from grammar so they feel confused to determine grammar that is suitable for writing. The use of language aspects or abilities in writing, such as punctuation, spelling, grammatical, vocabulary is the fundamental point that makes writing anxiety. Based on Jordan (1997), the process of putting words on paper in the same structure as an outline prepared with appropriate style and vocabulary the major ideas arranged in some often on the correction of mechanical and grammatical errors.

The fifth factors of students writing anxiety was lack of experience. The students explained that the experience of writing will affects writing skills. If we have a good experience in writing, our writing skills will be improved. According to Wahyuni and Umam (2017), one of the reasons students felt anxious when writing English compositions was a lack of experience expressing themselves in English. Then the students were too nervous to do a writing assignment. The students became anxious because they were afraid that their classmates mock their English composition. When they were not in

a class, the students tried to avoid speaking English as much as possible. As a result, the students were more concerned about their writing assignment than others. Writing practice will give advantages for students such as they can evaluate their knowledge and improve it to be better.

The last factors of students writing anxiety was high frequency of assignment. The students state that in managing time to do many assignments, they will do easy assignment first so that they have a free time to do a writing assignment. According to Rezaei and Jafari (2014), one of the causes of writing anxiety is the high frequency of assignment. However, the percentages of respondents in the study who choose it as a cause of writing anxiety are small, making it the least preferred item.

After getting the results of the factors of student's anxiety of writing. There were some methods to anticipate students' anxiety of writing. First, asking to lecture about writing assignment. Second, believe in his or herself while doing writing assignment. And the third, taking a break. For the first way, this method to anticipating usually help students increase their understanding of what they will write in their writing assignment by asking the lecturer. These solutions can help students improve their understanding what they will write in their writing assignment and it is very helpful for students to improve their knowledge.

Second, believing in his or her self while doing writing assignment if they make a mistake when they do write, they will check and revise it. When they make a mistake, they must self-confidence. According to Choi (2013), explained that the students expressed low of confidence in English writing when they don't know how to start writing in English. For this anticipate method, students make themselves confidence about their writing assignment and always think positive about their work.

And the third was taking a rest time when doing writing assignment anticipate students' anxiety of writing. According to Rezaei and Jafari (2014), take a break time to reduce writing anxiety, take a self-selected break before completing assignment. Most students feel anxious while their writing will be assessed but test anxiety is common because writing tests are seen as productive activity that is heavily influenced by pressure of time. Mentioning your students in this way in the interview section will make them feel more relaxed and calmer as they complete their writing tasks. This kind of anticipation helps students calm down and refresh their minds after thinking about writing for a long time.

## CONCLUSION

According to research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, there were some factors that cause students' writing anxiety at English Education Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, such as: Time pressure; Self of confidence; Insufficient writing technique; Language difficulties; Lack of experience; and High frequency of assignment.

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