



## Students' Writing Anxiety Levels, Types, and Causes in Writing Undergraduate Thesis Proposal: A Study at English Language and Literature Department

Hanifah Ummul Khairah<sup>1</sup>, and Sitti Fatimah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>English Department

Faculty of Language and Arts

State University of Padang

Email: [hanifal.ummul@gmail.com](mailto:hanifal.ummul@gmail.com)

### Article History

Submitted: 2022-06-01

Accepted: 2022-07-05

Published: 2022-07-05

### Abstract

Anxiety in recent years has become a hot issue discussed by many people one of them is foreign language anxiety which includes various anxiety in foreign language aspects. In terms of writing, this anxiety is known as writing anxiety. This research aims to describe the level, type, and causes of writing anxiety of English language and literature department students at UNP in writing Thesis Proposals. This research used a descriptive study involving 70 fourth-year students that have already taken Thesis Proposal Writing class and are currently writing their thesis proposals. Through random sampling technique, 14 students (20% of the population) were selected. Data were collected through the SLWAI (Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory) questionnaire adapted from Cheng (2004) and interview sessions. The results showed that students experienced anxiety at the medium level with cognitive anxiety being the most dominant type. Other results are four main factors that cause writing anxiety in writing a thesis proposal. They are low self-confidence, language difficulties, insufficient writing technique, and pressure for perfect work.

### Keywords:

Writing anxiety, Writing, Thesis proposal writing

©2022 The Author(s) Publish by Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris FBS UNP. This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

How to Cite: Khairah, H. U<sup>1</sup>., & Fatimah, S<sup>2</sup>. 2022. Students' Writing Anxiety Levels, Types, and Causes in Writing Undergraduate Thesis Proposal: A Study at English Language and Literature Department. Journal of English Language Teaching, 11. (2): pp. 272-285, DOI: [10.24036/jelt.v11i2.117430](https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v11i2.117430)

## INTRODUCTION

Anxiety in recent years has become a hot issue discussed by many people. In the field of foreign language, this type of anxiety is known as Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) or *xenoglossophobia*. It has recently become a matter of concern to educational researchers. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) defined FLA as the sense of tension and dread associated with second or foreign language settings, including speaking, listening, and learning, or the concern and negative emotional reaction

aroused while learning or using a second or foreign language. Therefore, anxiety is believed to have some deleterious effects such as on students' confidence, self-esteem, and level of engagement.

In terms of the type, FLA is divided into several types and one of them is writing anxiety. Writing anxiety is defined by Hassan (2001) as a general avoidance of writing and situations considered by the persons to potentially need some quantity of writing, followed by the possibility of assessment of such writing. Based on one of the results of a study conducted by Tsui (1996 as cited from Liu and Ni, 2015), it was found that learning to write in the foreign language involves as much anxiety as learning the other skills since writing is primarily product-oriented and needs individual effort. Unpleasant feelings always arise when someone reads our writing such as the fear of making mistakes, the fear of writing something that doesn't make sense, and the fear that the writing does not convey the message the author intended.

As English Language and Literature students of UNP, they must write a thesis before completing their education. As written in “Peraturan Akademik Universitas Negeri Padang” in 2015, in Chapter VII article 53 about the language of the final project, it is written that the thesis is written in English, especially for students of the English study program. Therefore, as an English education student, the thesis must be written in English. In the process of writing theses, students' writing skills are needed. However, in reality, many students have difficulty in writing thesis proposals. Prior's (1998, as mentioned in Paltridge and Starfield, 2007) in-depth study of graduate students writing in US within their subjects clearly reveals that even competent students struggle with advanced writing. Based on pre-observations of fourth-year students in UNP's English education study program, it was discovered that only about half of the students had acquired an advisor and had begun writing their thesis proposal. Based on pre-observations of fourth-year students in UNP's English education study program, it was discovered that only about half of the students had acquired a supervisor and had begun writing their thesis proposal.

There are many issues relate to the difficulties of writing faced by students. In his book, Paltridge and Starfield (2007) develops these four issues into four categories; Behavioral issues, rhetorical issues, social issues and emotional issues. In terms of behavioral issues, Starfield and Paltridge stated that students had difficulty in writing because they had not become used to writing. This is due to the students' “fictional” belief that writing is a creative and inspiring activity, and that people write only when they are inspired. However, according to Zerubavel (1999), writing should become a habit. Therefore, there needs to be habituation and awareness among students that writing requires a process, not something simple where when you get an idea, your writing is guaranteed to be complete and good. What student writers must understand is that thinking and writing are closely intertwined.

According to Paltridge and Starfield (2007), the rhetorical issue is concerned with how thesis writing is utilized to persuade the reader of the validity of the writer's arguments. Advanced academic literacy requires not only linguistic skills but also 'rhetorical insight' to create and convey information. However, problems develop when students are unable to relate existing theories to their ideas, causing readers to doubt the legitimacy of their papers. Supervisors must empathize with

possible issues of self and identity that students may be experiencing, as they can have an impact on their writing.

Social issues concern how students engage with advisors and other close friends and relatives during the writing process. Students' tendency of closing themselves off or engaging in "isolation" has an impact on their writing. However, writing difficulties can be reduced if they are more open to feedback from their advisors and peers. This is supported by Caffarella and Barnett's (2000) findings on 45 doctoral students, who found that preparing critiques for their peers and receiving critiques from professors and peers were the most important factors in helping them in understanding the processes of scholarly writing and improving their academic writing.

On the emotional aspect, as the closest aspect to psychology, these are lack of confidence, sometimes known as the "impostor syndrome," and fear of failure and rejection, or its antonym, perfectionism. From the examples above, we can see from these issues that they may cause 'writer's block,' or the inability to write is the writer's concern that they are incompetent to produce a research thesis; they are an impostor who will be 'found out' and unmasked. Similarly, anxiety about probable thesis failure or rejection might paralyze a foreign student that the consequences are that much higher. As Prior mentioned, the phenomenon of students' writing struggles was also found at the English Language and Literature Department at UNP. Many final-year students have not yet been assigned a supervisor, have not completed a mini-proposal, and have not even submitted the title of their thesis.

A study conducted by Rezaei and Jafari (2014) analyzed the levels, types and causes of writing anxiety among Iranian EFL students. The findings of this study revealed a high level of writing anxiety, with cognitive anxiety as its main type, as reflected in preoccupation with performance and high expectations, and fear of negative feedback from teachers, low self-confidence, and poor linguistic knowledge as its main factors. Imaniar (2016), in her study "Students' Writing Anxiety Levels in Proposal Writing Course in Fifth Semester at English Education Department State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya", found indicates 59 percent of the participants experienced unusual levels of writing anxiety. The most common difficulty with pupils' writing anxiety is the inability to write down a backdrop. This issue was classified as a novelty of the research problem and a title factor.

A previous study conducted by Masriani et al. (2018) investigated the levels and types of writing anxiety and writing strategies used by the 3rd year English department students of Universitas Negeri Padang. Findings reported moderate levels of writing anxiety, with cognitive anxiety being the most prevalent. Another study "Analysis of Students' Writing Anxiety in Academic Writing class at English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang" was conducted by Putrimiati (2021) she found that the level of anxiety is on low level and the type of anxiety that is dominant is cognitive anxiety. In this next research, researcher conducts a research that focuses to analyze the levels, types, and causes of writing anxiety in writing thesis proposal.

Different from previous studies, this research focuses on the level, the types, and the causes of writing anxiety in writing thesis proposal by undergraduate English Education students in UNP. This study is conducted to fill the gaps in existing theory of anxiety, writing anxiety itself, and writing anxiety measures in writing thesis

proposal. The researcher chooses the fourth year students (first enrolled in 2018) of English Department at UNP as the subject of the research.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### *Research Design*

The aim of this study is to describe the level, types and causes of writing anxiety in writing Thesis Proposal. Therefore the design of this study used descriptive research. Descriptive research, according to Ary (2010), are intended to gather information about present status occurrences. The research location of the study is in English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Padang.

### *Population and Sample*

According to Creswell (2012), population is a group of individuals that have a similar characteristic. The population of the study is the 4th year students that have already taken Thesis Proposal Writing class and are currently writing their thesis proposals. Based on data obtained from the Head of the English Language Education Program, the number of students included in these criteria is seventy students. Ary (2010) defined a sample is a portion of a population that is observed. Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) in their book write that the minimal sample size for descriptive method research is 10% of the total population. In this study, the researcher took 14 students a sample, or equivalent to 20% of the total population. The sample technique used is random sampling using the Spinner Wheel application. The researcher entered the names of seventy students and rotated the wheel 14 times to determine the names of the samples.

### *Instrumentation*

#### *Questionnaire*

A questionnaire was a form used in a survey design that participants in the study completed and returned to the researcher (Creswell, 2012). A questionnaire is also defined as a self-report data collection instrument that each research participant completes as part of a research study. The research instrument will be the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) questionnaire that contains 17-item statements developed by Cheng (2004). These statements are concerned about the anxiety of student writers while writing in English. The option for each item of questionnaire was 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Uncertain, 4 for Agree, and 5 for Strongly Agree.

**Table 1** Specification of SLWAI

Aspect of Writing Anxiety	Example	Number of Item
Somatic Anxiety	My mind often goes blank when I start to work on writing Thesis Proposal	2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.
Cognitive Anxiety	If my writing in Thesis Proposal is to be evaluated, I would worry	1, 3, 5, 7, 14, 15, 16.

		about getting a very poor evaluation.	
Avoidance Anxiety	Behavior	Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write Thesis Proposal.	12, 13, 17.

*Interview Questions*

Based on Cresswel (2012), he defined an interview as mostly a face-to-face interaction between a researcher and a participant in which information is transferred to the interviewer. Interviews are used to collect information from people in their own words about their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings about various circumstances. In this research, the researcher used interview to know specific factors and in what part students experience writing anxiety. The researcher used interview guideline with questions adapted from CWAI (Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory) by Rezaei and Jafari (2014).

**Table 2** Interview Guideline Adopted From CSLWAI by Razei and Jafari (2014)

Aspect	Questions
Fear of Negative Evaluation	Saat menulis Proposal Tesis, apakah Anda merasa takut akan penilaian negatif dari pembimbing Anda atau orang lain?
Time pressure	Saat menulis Proposal Tesis, apakah Anda merasa cemas karena tekanan waktu?
Low self-confidence in writing	Apakah anda merasa cemas saat menulis Proposal Tesis karena kurangnya percaya diri?
Insufficient writing technique	Apakah Anda mengalami kecemasan saat menulis Proposal Tesis Anda karena kurangnya penguasaan teknik dalam menulis?
Linguistic difficulties	Apakah Anda mengalami kecemasan saat menulis Proposal Tesis Anda karena kesulitan linguistic?
Pressure for perfect work	Apakah Anda merasa cemas saat menulis Proposal Tesis karena ingin semua hal dalam tulisan anda menjadi sempurna?
Problems with topic choice	Apakah Anda menjadi cemas saat menulis Proposal Tesis karena Anda kurang mampu menguasai beberapa topik?
Insufficient writing practice	Apakah Anda merasa cemas ketika menulis Proposal Tesis Anda karena kurangnya pengalaman dan praktik menulis?
High frequency of writing assignments	Apakah Anda menjadi cemas saat menulis Proposal Tesis karena frekuensi tugas menulis yang tinggi?

### *Validity*

Data validation is an activity verifying whether or not a combination of values is a member of a set of acceptable combinations. According to Ary (2010), the most crucial consideration in constructing, evaluating, and measuring devices is validity. The purpose of data validation is to ensure a certain level of quality of the final data. In relation to validating the statements of the questionnaire, an expert on educational technology was asked to review the content validity, clarity and appropriateness.

### *Reliability*

Reliability of a measuring instrument means the degree of consistency with which it measures whatever it is measuring (Ary, 2010). It means that if a reliable questionnaire is given again, the results will be consistent. To test the reliability, the researcher distributed questionnaires to 7 students in the population and calculated reliability using SPSS. The type of reliability used based on Cronbach's Alpha Standardized Item, with the following scale:

**Table 3** Reliability Range

Reliability Coefficient	Category
0.1 - 0.20	Not reliable
>0.20 – 0.40	Rather reliable
>0.40 – 0.60	Reliable enough
>0.60 – 0.80	Reliable
>0.80 – 1.00	Very reliable

The reliability test of the SLWAI (Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory) used by the researcher is:

**Table 4** Reliability Statistics of SLWAI

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.827	17

### *Technique of Data Collection*

In this research, the data will be taken from the questionnaire and the interview to 4th year students of English Department. The questionnaire will be given to measure the students' writing anxiety scale. The questionnaire was printed and distributed to the sample one on one. This is thought to be more promising because the researcher saw the sample in person, understood it, and completed the questionnaire. Then, right after a sample completed the questionnaire, the researcher conducted an interview. Each respondent was given about 10-15 minutes to be interviewed. The answers of each respondent were recorded in order to help researcher in analyzed the data.

### *Technique of Data Analysis*

In analyzing the data, the researcher conducted *some processes in order to* answer all research questions.

- Calculated the number of SLWAI questionnaire scores received from the respondents to determine the level of writing anxiety. The questionnaire consists of 17 statements with 13 negative statements and 4 positive statements. Thus, for scoring, the following rubric is used:

**Table 5** Likert’s Scale for SLWAI

Statements		Positive	Negative
Level	Strongly Agree	1	5
	Agree	2	4
	Neutral	3	3
	Disagree	4	2
	Strongly Disagree	5	1

According to the literature review, there is no fixed guideline in calculating the level of anxiety on the existing foreign language anxiety scales. Therefore, Liu and Jackson (2008) suggest using a scale of 1 to 5 based on the treatment of calculations using the FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale). If the average is 3.0-4.0, the anxiety level is medium. If it is below 3.0, it is in a low level, while above 4.0 it is in a high level category.

**Table 6** Writing Anxiety Level adopted from Liu and Jackson (2008)

Level	Mean
Low Anxiety	1.0 - 2.99
Medium Anxiety	3.0 - 4.0
High Anxiety	4.1 - 5.0

- Grouped each item into one of the following three categories: Cognitive Anxiety, Semantic Anxiety and Avoidance Behavior. Then, the average is calculated for each category that describes the type of writing anxiety. The highest average determines the type of writing anxiety.
- Analyzed the causes of writing anxiety. Some questions that refer to the causes of writing anxiety are asked. The participants' comments and thoughts are written in order to reinforce and clarify the responses to the causes of writing anxiety.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Data Description and analysis*

#### *Level of Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal*

The level of writing anxiety is determined by the students’ responses to SLWAI positive and negative statements. The description of the score for each item can be seen in the appendix 3 & 4. After that, the researcher entered each data into Microsoft Excel and carried out the analysis. From this analysis, the conclusions of the analysis are obtained as can be seen in the table

**Table 7** Levels of Students Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal based on the total score of SLWAI Questionnaire

Level	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Number of Students	Percentage
Low	42	47	5	35,71%
Medium	52	61	9	64,29%
High	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	17	85	14	100%

According to the table above, 5 out of 14 students (35.71 %) reported low levels of writing anxiety when writing a thesis proposal. The lowest score obtained by students in this level is 42 points and the highest is only 5 points apart, which is 47 points. A higher percentage was discovered at the medium level, with 64.29 percent or 9 pupils experiencing anxiety at this level. The lowest score at this level is 52, while the highest possible score is 61. There is a 9-point difference here. At the high level, not a single student was found to have experienced it.

#### *Type of Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal*

The researcher used SLWAI questionnaire calculations to determine the type of writing anxiety experienced by students by measures the mean of each type of writing anxiety. The grouping and calculation of the data can be seen in appendix 6. Cheng (2004) distinguishes three types of writing anxiety: somatic, cognitive, and avoidance behavior. Each item in SLWAI represents one of the three types of writing anxiety. The mean of each type of writing anxiety can be seen table.

**Table 8** The Mean of Each Type of Writing Anxiety

Type	Total Score	Mean
Somatic	269	38.43
Cognitive	337	48.14
Avoidance Behavioral	111	37

According to the data in Table 4.2 above, somatic anxiety has a mean of 38.43. While the mean score for cognitive anxiety is 48.14. Avoidance behavior has a rating of 37.00 which is slightly lower than somatic behavior. Thus, the highest position of the mean is held by cognitive, followed by somatic and avoidance behavior respectively. As the type with the highest mean among the other two types, it can be concluded that cognitive is the dominant type of writing anxiety experienced by UNP English education students in writing thesis proposals.

#### *Causes of Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal*

The researcher conducted interviews with the 14 students who made up the sample to answer the third research question about the causes of writing anxiety. Right after each student filled out the questionnaire, they were immediately interviewed one by one. There are 10 questions in the interview and 9 out of 10 questions contain causes of writing anxiety which were adapted from CSLWAI by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). The transcript of the interview can be seen in Appendix 4.



The researcher then concludes the respondents' answers and presents them in the table below.

**Table 9** Causes of Writing Anxiety

Causes of Writing Anxiety	Number of Students	Percentage
Fear of Negative Evaluation	9	64.29%
Time Pressure	7	50%
Low of Self-Confidence	11	78.57%
Insufficient of Writing Techniques	10	71.43%
Language Difficulties	11	78.57%
Lack of Topical Knowledge	9	64.29%
Insufficient of Writing Practice	7	50%
Pressure for Perfect Work	10	71.43%
High Frequency of Assignment	3	21.43%

From the table above, it seen that there are four main factors that caused writing anxiety in writing thesis proposal. They are low of self-confidence, language difficulties, insufficient writing technique, and pressure for perfect work. Low self-confidence and language difficulties are the most common causes, accounting for percentage of 78.57%. By a slight difference, insufficient writing technique and pressure for perfect work with a percentage of 71.43%. Then the next position was followed by fear of negative evaluation and lack of topical knowledge with a percentage of 64.29%. Furthermore, 50% of students feel anxiety due to time pressure and insufficient writing practice. Lastly, only 21.43% of students feel anxiety because of the high frequency of assignments.

**Discussion**

*Level of Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal*

Based on Horwitz et al. (2009) and Cheng's (2004) theory, the level of anxiety is divided into three levels; low level of anxiety, medium/moderate level of anxiety, and high level of anxiety. After analyzing the data, the researcher found that 64.29 percent of students had a medium level of anxiety, 35.71 percent had a low level of anxiety, and no student had a high level of anxiety. Based on these data, the dominant level experienced by students is the medium level of anxiety.

**Table 10** The Statistical Result of Students' Writing Anxiety Level

NAME	TOTAL	AVERAGE	LEVEL
AA	56	3,29	Med
AF	52	3,06	Med
CY	47	2,76	Low
DA	44	2,59	Low
TLA	53	3,12	Med
FHH	44	2,59	Low
FCA	54	3,18	Med

FE	43	2,53	Low
HN	55	3,24	Med
IEA	61	3,59	Med
JAF	52	3,06	Med
KNAR	61	3,59	Med
NA	53	3,12	Med
SR	42	2,47	Low

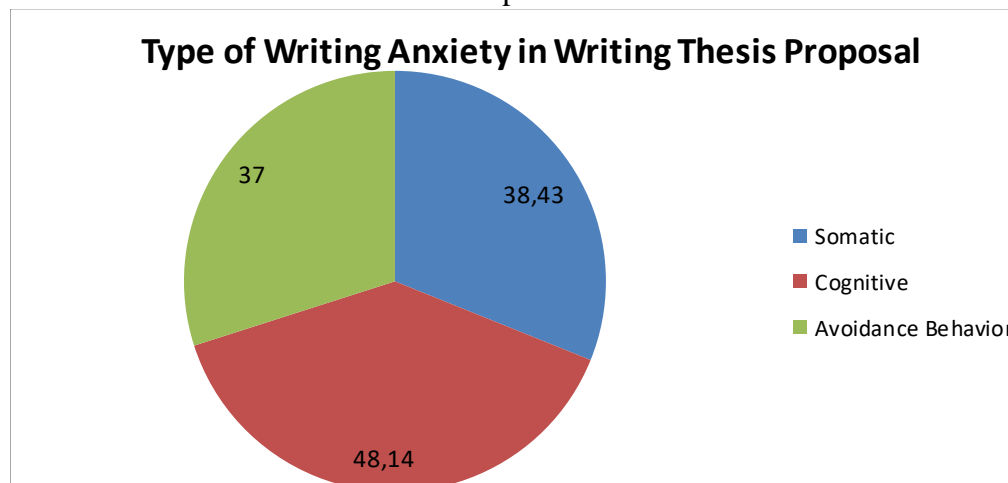
From the table above, it can be seen that the 5 students who experienced low level anxiety were CY, DA, FHH, FE, and SR. According to Hortwitz's description of anxiety at this level, these students are persons who have great confidence in their writing; they do not experience anxiety issues while communicating through writing, yet they do face difficulties that sometimes cause worry. However, the researcher noticed that they are really good at dealing with those difficulties and worries.

On the other side, students who experience medium level anxiety are AA, AF, TLA, FCA, HN, IEA, JAF, KNAR, and NA. Horwitz describes those who are at this level are people who lack confidence in their writing, still doubt about their writing skills, have difficulty in communicating their thoughts into writing, and are still much influenced by other people's opinions on their writing. They can, however, deal with these issues well. They are people who listen to other people's perspectives, thus they require the guidance of others to assist them in writing.

*Type of Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal*

The second research question is about the type of writing anxiety experienced by students in writing a thesis proposal. Cheng (2004) classified writing anxiety into 3 types: somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and avoidance behavioral anxiety. After analyzing the SLWAI questionnaire given to students, the data obtained are presented in the form of a chart as follows.

**Figure 1** Data Frequency Distribution of Type of Writing anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal



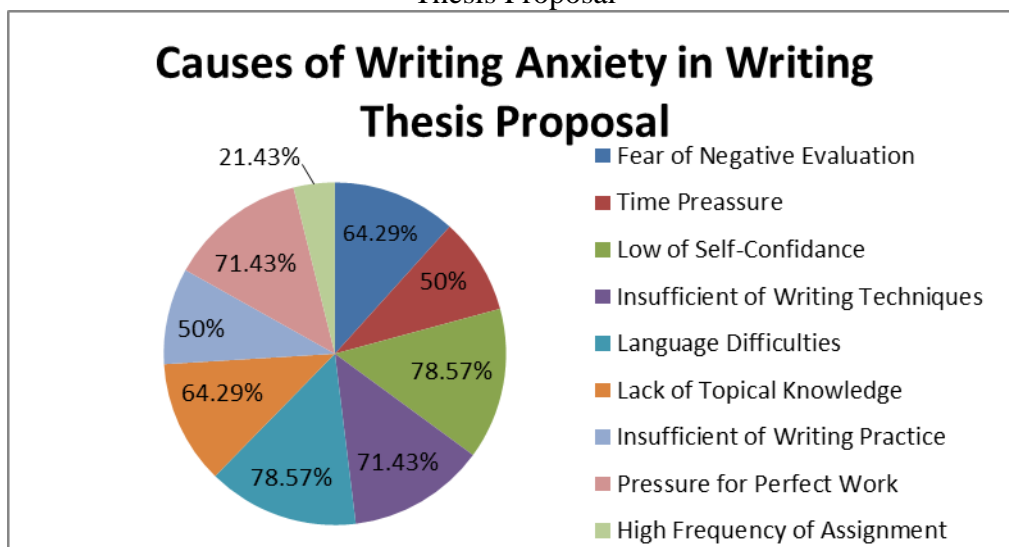
Based on the chart above, the highest average type of writing anxiety is cognitive anxiety, with an average of 48.14. Somatic anxiety and avoidance behavioral anxiety take the second and third positions. Somatic anxiety has a mean of 38.43 while avoidance behavioral anxiety has a mean of 37. Based on these data, the dominant type of writing anxiety experienced by students in writing thesis proposal is the cognitive anxiety.

Cognitive anxiety refers to the cognitive component of anxiety experience, which includes negative expectations, worry with performance, and concern about how others think about someone’s writing (Cheng, 2004). In one of the cognitive anxiety items in SLWAI, it was written "While writing a Thesis Proposal, I feel worried and uneasy if I know it will be evaluated." Therefore, it may be assumed that people show the symptoms outlined by Cheng above, particularly when they are concerned that their writing will be evaluated. There is a feeling of pressure on an expectation, both from themselves and from the person evaluating (advisor).

*Causes of Writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal*

Anxiety in writing experienced by students is caused by several factors. Through interviews with 14 students, findings from this study revealed about the major factors that cause writing anxiety when writing a thesis proposal. The questions for the interview were adapted from CSLWAI by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). They stated that there are 9 factors that cause writing anxiety; (1) fear of negative evaluation and fear of test, (2) time pressure, (3) low of self confidence, (4) insufficient of writing techniques, (5) language difficulties, (6) lack of topical knowledge, (7) insufficient of writing practice, (8) pressure for perfect work, and (9) high frequency of assignment.

**Figure 2** Data Frequency Distribution of Causes of writing Anxiety in Writing Thesis Proposal



According to the chart above, there are four major factors that cause writing anxiety when writing a thesis proposal. The first and second causes, reported by more than 78 percent of students, were a lack of self-confidence and language difficulties. The third and fourth most common factors, as indicated by 71.43 percent of students, were insufficient writing technique and pressure to complete perfect

work. Thus, if the factors are sorted from highest to lowest, the list looks such as this one:

- (1) Low of self confidence
- (2) Language difficulties
- (3) Insufficient of writing techniques
- (4) Pressure for perfect work
- (5) Fear of negative evaluation and fear of test
- (6) Lack of topical knowledge
- (7) Time pressure
- (8) Insufficient of writing practice
- (9) High frequency of assignment

Students mentioned numerous situations that showed how low self-confidence had been the cause of writing anxiousness as a result of the interview results. Here are the conditions: (1) I have a low self-confidence because it's the first time to write a thesis proposal, (2) I'm not that confidence because I feel that I have not mastered what has been written (3) I am nervous when others have high expectations for my writing (4) I am nervous when my advisor have high expectations for my writing (5) I feel not good at writing than others (6) I feel anxious because I feel that what I write is not good enough for other people to read. In short, students with low self-confidence are doubtful of their writing, think it is unworthy, and are concerned that they will not be better than others. This is what causes people to feel anxious, worried, and fearful. All of these requirements are confirmed by Cheng's (2004) claim that even students with good English writing skills can feel nervous if they write something more organized, which is the characteristic of academic writing.

On the other side, on the language difficulty factor, students feel the following conditions: (1) Lack of vocabulary mastery, (2) I'm still having trouble using the new term and grammar (3) I'm worried if plagiarism is found in my thesis proposal. Despite the fact that there are just three situations, almost all students experience one, two, or all three of them. According to Wahyuni and Khotibul (2017) research findings, the experience of being incorrect about the structure of language causes discomfort in writing even when the current ideas are very good. This is how most students feel while they are writing a thesis proposal.

Insufficient writing techniques are indeed the third most common reason of students' anxiety when writing thesis proposals. The following are the students' descriptions of the conditions they encountered: (1) I still poor in using writing technique (2) I was worried because I didn't master the correct paraphrasing technique (3) I feel anxious because I still lack practice and understanding of the technique of writing a thesis proposal in the previous classes (4) I feel that I still cannot use writing technique well. In fact, after conducting interviews, a lack of understanding of writing techniques leads to a lack of student confidence. They had difficulties writing at first due to their lack of technical mastery, but when their writing was evaluated to be poor, insecurity set in, causing them to be anxious when writing.

The last major factor is anxiety because of the pressure to perfect work. Most students are perfectionists, indicating they feel their writing is still lacking in many aspects yet want it to look perfect and be judged perfect by others. Lynn (1997)

stated that students agree that successful writing is the result of putting in a lot of effort. Similarly, some students who have been interviewed recognize that writing a thesis proposal needs effort and great caution, so they prefer to push themselves to look perfect. As a result, when they realized their writing was not that 'perfect,' they became worried.

## CONCLUSION

Anxiety in writing is something that many students experience when writing in English. Each student experiences various types, levels, and causes of writing anxiety. In this research, the researcher measured the level of writing anxiety, as well as the types and causes of writing anxiety experienced by fourth-year students of English education study program students at UNP. Based on the data analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher came to numerous conclusions. Firstly, most students experience a medium level of anxiety. According to the data, 9 students (64.29%) experience medium level of anxiety, 5 students (35.71%) experience low level of anxiety, and no student had a high level of anxiety.

Secondly, researchers discovered that cognitive anxiety, with a mean of 48.14, is the most dominant type of writing anxiety based on the information gathered from data analysis. The second and third positions are occupied by somatic anxiety with an average of 38.43 and avoidance anxiety with an average of 37. Cognitive anxiety itself refers to the cognitive aspect of anxiety experience, such as negative expectations, worry with performance, and concern about how others see your writing.

Thirdly, there are four main factors that caused writing anxiety in writing thesis proposal. They are low of self-confidence, language difficulties, insufficient writing technique, and pressure for perfect work.

## REFERENCES

- Ary, D. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education* (8th Editio). Wadsworth: Nelson Education, Ltd.
- Bloom, L. Z. (1997). Why Graduate Students Can't Write: Implementation of Research on Writing Anxiety for Graduate Education, 32, 1–22.
- Caffarella, R. S., & Barnett, B. G. (2000). Teaching Doctoral Students to Become Scholarly Writers: The importance of giving and receiving critiques. *Studies in Higher Education*, 25(1), 39–52. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/030750700116000>
- Cheng, Y. S. (2004). A measure of second language writing anxiety: Scale development and preliminary validation. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13(4), 313–335. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2004.07.001>
- Cresswel, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*.
- Hassan, B. A. (2001). The Relationship of Writing Apprehension and Self-Esteem to the Writing Quality and Quantity of EFL University Students. Report Research. Faculty of Education, Mansoura University. Mesir. *Eric*, 1–37.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, Michae, B., & Cope, J. (2009). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 93(2), 425–428.

- Imaniar. (2016). Students' Writing Anxiety Levels in Proposal Writing Course in Fifth Semester at English Education Department State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya, (2016), 2015–2016.
- Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(1), 71–86.
- Liu, M., & Ni, H. (2015). Chinese university EFL learners' foreign language writing anxiety: Pattern, effect and causes. *English Language Teaching*, 8(3), 46–58. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n3p46>
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The Subtle Effects of Language Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in the Second Language. *Language Learning*, 44(2), 283–305. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01103.x>
- Masriani, E., Wahyuni, D., & Hamka Air Tawar Padang, J. (2018). *Writing Anxiety and Writing Strategies Used by English Department Students of Universitas Negeri Padang*. *Lingua Didaktika: Jurnal Bahasa dan Pembelajaran Bahasa*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.24036/ld.v12i1.8766>
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: Context, identity, genre*. *Journal of Second Language Writing* (Vol. 43). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2018.10.002>
- Putrimiati, R. (2021). Analysis of Students' Writing Anxiety in Academic Writing Class at English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang. *Skripsi Thesis, Universitas Negeri Padang*.
- Rezaei, M., & Jafari, M. (2014). Investigating the Levels, Types, and Causes of Writing Anxiety among Iranian EFL Students: A Mixed Method Design. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1545–1554. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.577>
- Wahyuni, S., & Khotibul, M. (2017). An Analysis on Writing Anxiety of Indonesian Efl. *Jeels*, 4(1), 105–128.
- Zerubavel, E. (1999). *The clockwork muse: a practical guide to writing theses, dissertations, and books*. Harvard University Press.