WRITING ANXIETY AND WRITING STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

KECEMASAN DALAM MENULIS DAN STRATEGI MENULIS YANG DI GUNAKAN MAHASISWA BAHASA INGGRIS UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

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Abstract

This study investigated the levels and types of writing anxiety and writing strategies used by 3rd year English department students of Universitas Negeri Padang. The participants of this study were 41 students. This descriptive quantitative study used two questionnaires as the instrument. The first questionnaire was SLWAI (Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory) by Cheng (2002) used to obtain the levels and types of writing anxiety. The writing strategies used by the participant were obtained from the second questionnaire namely Writing Strategy Scale developed by Raoofi et.al. (2017). The study found that the 3rd year students of Universitas Negeri Padang experienced moderate level of writing anxiety with cognitive anxiety as the main type. The studey also found that the most used writing strategies were affective and metacognitive strategy.

Key words/phrases: levels of writing anxiety, types of writing anxiety, writing strategies

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menemukan level dan tipe kecemasan dalam menulis dan strategi menulis yang digunakan oleh mahasiswa tahun ketiga Jurusan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Negeri Padang. 41 siswa dipilih sebagai responden dari penelitian ini. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif. Data didapakan dari membagikan 2 kuesioner. Kuesioner pertama yaitu *SLWAI (Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory)* dari Cheng (2002) digunakan untuk mengetahui level dan tipe kecemasan responden. Kuisioner kedua yaitu *Writing Strategy Scale* dari Raoofi dkk (2017) digunakan untuk mengetahui strategi menulis yang digunakan responden. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa responden mengalami kecemasan menulis dalam tingkat yang menengah, dengan tipe kognitif sebagai tipe yang mendominasi. Dari penelitian ini juga diketahui bahwa responden berada di level yang tinggi dalam

penggunaan strategi menulis. Strategi yang sering digunakan yaitu strategi afektif dan metakognitif.

Kata Kunci/frase**:** *level kecemasan dalam menulis, tipe kecemasan dalam menulis, strategi menulis*

A. INTRODUCTION

Writing is important for students' continuity as language learner. In academic field, ideas are conveyed through writing instead of speech. The ideas become more visible and last longer in writing form. In order to survive in academic environment, students are demanded to master writing. Despite its importance, writing is also considered as a difficult skill to master. There are several reasons behind that. Younas et- al. (2014) say that some of the factors that make writing difficult are lack of motivation, lack of target language proficiency and vocabulary and psychological variables such as anxiety.

Writing anxiety is anxious feeling usually caused by the fear of negative feedback and lack of motivation in writing because students see writing as task instead of a necessary skill to have. Hassan (2001) defines writing anxiety as general avoidance of writing and of situations perceived by the individuals to potentially require some amount of writing accompanied by the potential for evaluation of that writing. Writing anxiety has negative correlation with students' achievement in writing. Anxiety makes students unable to enjoy the writing process; as a result, they will write under pressure, making them less able to perform the best of themselves in writing. Therefore, the writing products of the anxious writers are sometimes disappointing.

Cheng (2004) proposed three types of writing anxiety, they are: somatic anxiety and avoidance behavior. Somatic anxiety is the physiological effect of the anxiety experience as reflected in increased autonomic arousal and unpleasant feeling states such as nervousness and tension. Cognitive anxiety refers to the mental aspect of anxiety experience, including negative expectation, pre occupation with performance, and concern about others' perception. Avoidance behavior deals with behavioral aspect of students regarding writing.

Writing anxiety has been studied by a number of researchers. The studies mostly concern about the level, type, factors and coping strategy of writing anxiety among EFL learners. Most of the studies conclude that EFL students felt moderate to high anxiety level and cognitive anxiety became the major type of anxiety of the students. Indonesian EFL students also faced the same level and type of writing anxiety (Tuppang, 2014 and Anggarini 2016). Most of the researchers agree that fear of negative comments become the major factor of writing anxiety among EFL students. It means that, to reduce the negative feeling, students must prepare well before they submit their writing task. This preparation deals with students' strategy in writing.

Strategies matters for the development of L2 writing. Raoofi et- al. (2017) state that writing strategies refer to the techniques and operations that students employ to write more effectively or to produce better writing. In order to produce a good writing, students need to plan their writing. In planning the writing, the appropriate techniques and strategies are needed to prevent students from creating technical mistakes such as uncorrelated paragraphs and grammatical mistakes. Thus, good writing strategies lead to betterments in students' writing.

Raoofi et- al, proposed five strategies in writing, they are; meta-cognitive strategy, cognitive strategy, effort regulation, social strategy and affective strategy. Meta-cognitive strategy refers to the global skills of the students that reflect their self-awareness concerning their level of understanding and degree of motivation. Cognitive strategies, on the other hand, are considered personal strategies that enable students to process and transform information. Social strategies aim at developing awareness of and feeling for others. They include the actions learners choose in order to interact with their colleagues, or to help them overcome learning difficulties. Effort regulation strategies were added to the Writing Strategy Scale in order to evaluate how students' regulate their effort strategies in writing and to what extent they exert regulation on their effort for L2 writing skills. Affective strategies "serve to regulate emotions, motivations and attitudes (for example, strategies for reduction of anxiety and for self-encouragement)"

Writing strategy has correlation with writing anxiety felt by students. The lack of strategy in writing makes students' to judge writing as difficult and try to avoid it. Some of the factors lead to the writing anxiety. Firstly, students have shortage of vocabulary stocks and lack of ability in grammar mastery. The limited number of vocabularies the students know prevents them from constructing varying words in sentences and the incomprehensive understanding of grammar makes it difficult to construct them correctly. Secondly, many students have minimum reading exposure. As a result, they acquire less ideas and sentence variations to develop their writing.

Unfortunately, few studies have been done about writing anxiety as well as writing strategies used by students. Atay and Kurt (2006) investigate the level and causes of writing anxiety among prospective teacher (PT) in Turkey. The finding of the study was the participants feeling average to high anxiety. Participants with high writing anxiety suffer from nervousness caused by fear of getting low marks. Similarly, Rezaei & Jafari (2014) indicate the high level of writing anxiety among Iranian EFL students. The major cause which is chosen by 89% of the participant was fear of teacher negative comments. Regarding to coping strategy, Atay and Kurt investigated the effect of peer feedback on writing anxiety of Prospective Turkish Teacher of EFL, the result of the study shown that peer feedback group experienced significantly less writing anxiety than teacher feedback group. All the researches above mostly deal with students' level and type of writing anxiety and the method used to reduce writing anxiety. However, there are no studies investigating the writing strategy used by the students regarding their level of anxiety.

This research fills the gap in previous studies because it will investigate the level and type of writing anxiety along with writing strategies. In the long term, this study can help students to solve the problem of writing anxiety they faced. Once students identify errors in their writing, they will try to change strategies and it hopefully can reduce the writing anxiety they experienced.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This study was descriptive research with quantitative method. The population of this study was the 3rd year students of English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang having already taken academic writing class. The English Department students of 2015 batch were divided into 5 classes: three classes majoring in English Education and two classes concentrating in non-education. Due to the different number of students in each class, this research used proportionate stratified random sampling technique in selecting the sample.

The researcher used two instruments in this research. The first instrument was the questionnaire developed by Cheng (2004) named Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). The SWLAI was used to know the levels and types of writing anxiety of the participants. SLWAI consists of 22 statements. The questionnaire used 4 choices of responses; strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly agree. The second instrument was Writing Strategy Scale developed by Raoofi et al. (2017). The questionnaire consists of 26 questions and followed by 5 choices of response; never or almost never true of me, generally not true of me, somewhat true of me, generally true of me and always or almost always true of me.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Research Findings
a. Level of Writing Anxiety

The results show that students experienced moderate level of writing anxiety. With the average score of 49 (the score within 40-52), the students were classified as experiencing moderate writing anxiety level. The scores were shown in the table 4.1

Table 1: *Levels of Writing Anxiety*

	Number	Mean	Percentage
High Anxiety	9	58,77	22%
Moderate Anxiety	29	47,41	71%
Low Anxiety	3	35,34	7%
Total	**41**	**49**	

b. Type of Writing Anxiety

The SLWAI was also used to investigate the types of writing anxiety among 3rd year English department students of UNP. The types was obtained based on the total score of questions for each type; cognitive anxiety (1,3,7,9,14,17,20,21), somatic anxiety (2,6,8,11,13,15,19) and avoidance behavior (4,5,10,12,16,18,22). The highest score among the three determined the students' writing anxiety type. Chart 1 showed the results of the research about respondents writing anxiety types.
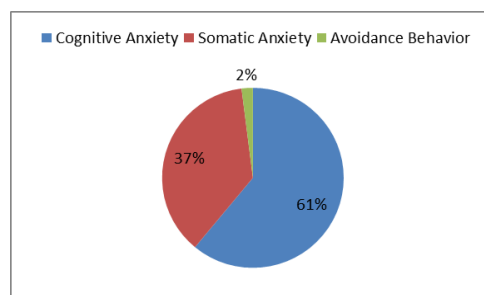

Chart 1. Type of Writing Anxiety

From chart 1, it is known that cognitive anxiety (61%) was the highest type of anxiety experienced by the 3rd year English department students. The second common type of anxiety among 3rd year English department students of UNP was Somatic Anxiety (37%). The least common type of anxiety was Avoidanc ebehavior.

In order to know respondents' writing anxiety types based on the level of writing anxiety, the researcher divided the respondents into three categories (High

anxiety, moderate anxiety and low anxiety) and observed the types of anxiety each level experienced. Regarding the anxiety level, most of the high anxiety students experienced somatic anxiety, the moderate and low anxious students mostly experienced cognitive anxiety.

c. Writing Strategy

The Writing Strategy Scale was used to investigate the writing strategy. The questionnaire consists of 26 questions and was followed by 5 choices of response; never or almost never true of me, generally not true of me, somewhat true of me, generally true of me and always or almost always true of me. The frequency of using writing strategy was obtained from the average of total score with the following classification. The respondents was classified to have low writing strategy if the average score was between 1,0-2,4, middle writing strategy if the score was between 2,5 -3,4 and high writing strategy if the score was between 3,5– 5,0.

In order to know the writing strategies used by the respondents, the average score of the question for each type of writing strategy was calculated with the following classification: Metacognitive strategy (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8), effort regulation strategy (9,10,11,12,13), cognitive strategy(14,15,16,17,18,19), social strategy(20,21,22,23) and affective strategy(24,25,26). The results of the research regarding writing strategy were shown in chart 2.

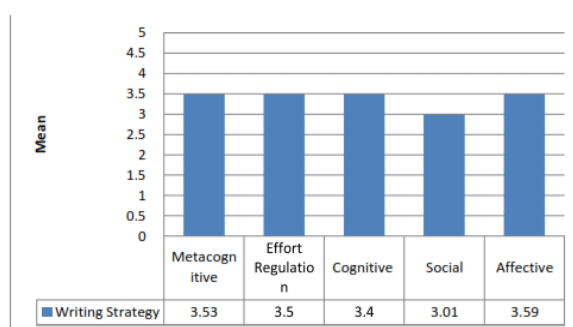|	Metacognitive	Effort Regulation	Cognitive	Social	Affective
Writing Strategy	3.53	3.5	3.4	3.01	3.59

Chart 2. Writing Strategy

In general, the respondents used writing strategy positively. The overall average score for writing strategy was 3,4 (moderate). The most frequently used writing strategy was affective strategy. It was followed by metacognitive and effort regulation as the 2nd and 3rd most used strategy. Cognitive and social strategies were the least used strategy.

Discussion

1. Level of writing anxiety

The level of writing anxiety among 3rd year English department students of UNP was moderate anxiety. This level was considered to be normal condition of EFL learner. According to Al Jafen (2013), moderate level of writing anxiety is considered to be the normal range of writing anxiety. He added that this level of anxiety is the natural feeling of EFL students which later leads them to be a better writer in the future. The findings conform the pervious study (Atay & Kurt; 2006 Aljafen; 2013, Dacwag; 2014, Anggraini; 2016) which found the level of writing anxiety among EFL learner was in Moderate level.

From the questionnaire, it was known the major factor that caused students' writing anxiety was the fear of failure. In correspondence to Horwitz' (1986) theory, the students was classified experiencing Test anxiety. Test anxiety refers to type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure (Horwitz et al.1986). The data was obtained not in the form of test that makes students less anxious. Thus, this study resulted to moderate anxiety experienced by the participant. However, this finding was contradictory to other previous studies suggesting that EFL learners experienced high level of anxiety (Zhang: 2011, Rezaei & Jafari; 2014, Younas et. all;2014). The theory proposed by MacIntyre (1989, in Atay 2006) about the degree of proficiency is relevant here. The theory says that language anxiety level would be the highest at the early stage of language learning and then declines as the learners reach the higher level of English proficiency. This theory was supported by the study conducted by Dacwag (2014) saying that the first year students experienced the higher level of writing anxiety compared to the 2nd and 3rd year students. This theory becomes the basis of different results of writing anxiety level among the EFL learners. For example, the study conducted by Younas et all. (2014) found that B.S English students experienced the high level of anxiety. It was due to the fact the participants of the study was not English- majored students. The study conducted by Atay & Kurt (2006) whose sample was the final year English students showed different results. This study found that the participant only experienced moderate anxiety. The participants of this study were the 3rd year English department students, with the result showing the moderate writing anxiety of the participants.

Another factor that affects students writing anxiety was the classroom environment. Latif (2015) states that formal language classroom setting was a major source of stress and anxiety because of its demand to be more correct and clearer in using the target language. The demand in formal classroom was centered to the teacher. Atay & Kurt (2006) agreed that factor affecting students' writing anxiety was the anxiety of the demand and the expectation of the teacher. Supporting this theory, some research have been conducted. Study conducted by Aljafen (2013) found that the considerably less proficient in English participants were only experienced moderate anxiety. The possible reason for this was the nature of Arabic instructors did not demand the students to have excellent writing. The instructors evaluated the idea of the students rather than the quality of their writings, made the students less anxious to write. In contrary, the study conducted by Rezaei & Jafari (2014) concluding that the level of anxiety among Iranian students was high. The possible reason was the nature of education in Iran which provokes fears such as the teachers who become the main reader and evaluator of the students' writings, pressure for perfect work, and writing goals which are not compatible with those of the students' expectations.

This study resulted that the statement "I am afraid of my English compositions will be chosen as a sample to be discussed in class" that correlated with teachers' demand and expectation has a low total score. It means that students were less anxious if there was lesser demand from the teachers. This might cause them to only experience moderate anxiety.

2. Type of Writing Anxiety

The type of writing anxiety among 3rd year English department students was Cognitive Anxiety. Among 41 respondents, 25 of them experienced cognitive

anxiety. It was followed by somatic anxiety and avoidance behavior as the 2nd (15 respondents) and 3rd (1 respondent) type of anxiety. This finding confirmed almost all of previous studies about the type of writing anxiety (Zhang; 2011, Tuppang; 2014, Rezaei & Jafari; 2014, Anggarini 2016). The results of this study showed that students were afraid if their writing was to be evaluated because they might obtain low mark. This result was in line with the one proposed by Rahim et. all (2016) concluding that students believed that their grades are solely based on the quality of their works, and that assessment was not based on the perceived effort to produce the works. This was due to the nature of learning which was product oriented; writing products of the student became the only source of grades because the teacher might not be able to assess all process of writing done by the students due to the large number of students in a class. One writing class may have more than 30 students. Thus, the products of writing were used by the teachers to assess the learning process. To overcome this problem, the autonomous learning of the students is required. Students are expected to write more in order to improve their writing and that they are more confident to hand their works to teacher. However, based on the results of the study, the participants still lack in practicing writing, causing them to have low ability and less self-confidence leading to cognitive anxiety. The questionnaire showed that the item "whenever possible I would use English in writing composition" was scored only 71 and "I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside class" was scored only 85 in range score of 41 to 164. This results proved that the lack of practice became one of the reasons students had cognitive anxiety.

Somatic anxiety was in the 2nd place of type of anxiety among the participants. Somatic anxiety was the physiological effect of the anxiety as reflected in increased "autonomic arousal and unpleasant feeling states such as nervousness and tension". Regarding the anxiety level, somatic anxiety was mostly experienced by high anxiety participants. This led the conclusion that the high anxiety students experienced the anxiety that affected their physics. This result confirms the study conducted by Kurt and Atay (2006) stating that high anxious students experienced somatic anxiety. The main reason proposed by Kurt and Atay (2006) was the inability to organize thoughts and to produce new ideas.

Avoidance behavior became the least type of writing anxiety. Avoidance behavior deals with the behavioral aspect of the students. The behavior was often in form of avoid taking writing course. Rahim (2016) states that the main reason why students experienced avoidance behavior were due to their low competence in conventions of writing, mainly in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction. Their inhibition leaves a negative impact on their interest in writing in English. As a result, they try to avoid writing as much as possible because despite the many years of learning the language, they are still unable to write proper essays in English.

3. Writing Strategy

The findings related to the writing strategy show that the 3rd year English departments students were used writing strategy in the high level. This finding confirms the previous study about the high level of writing strategy used (Altahri; 2011, Sarab & Farsani; 2014, Raoofi et al.; 2017). This means that the participants seem aware of the need to regulate and manage their writing task. The participants were aware of writing because of their proficiency in writing. They had already passed paragraph and essay writing classes, providing enough techniques for

successful writing. The results of the study conducted by Raoofi (2017) states that high proficiency students who tend to use more strategy in writing is of relevant discussion here. The more proficient the participants, the more information they receive to produce better writing. Thus, writing strategy was one of the techniques to have better writing.

The mostly used writing strategy was Affective strategy and Metacognitive strategy. The affective strategy was considered as "serving to regulate emotions, motivations and attitudes (for example, strategies for reduction of anxiety and for self-encouragement. This result supports the findings of Raoofi (2017) that says the highly- proficient students prefer using affective strategy in writing to reduce their writing anxiety and improve their writing performance.

The second mostly used writing strategy was Metacognitive strategy. The metacognitive strategy requires high awareness of the students in writing process.This result confirms the previous study conducted by Sarab & Farsani (2014). The main reason of why the students used metacognitive strategy was that the students were explicitly taught some techniques and strategies about ESL/EFL writing (Raoofi; 2017). The explicit instructions manifest in practicing opportunities, setting goal and objective, scheduling the writing and planning the writing (Sarab& Farsani; 2014).

The least used writing strategy was social strategy. However, it was still used by the students. With the mean score of 3,01 (the score between 2,4- 3,4) social strategy was considered to be in moderate level strategy used by the students. Based on its definition, social strategies aim at developing awareness and feeling of others. They include the actions learners choose in order to interact with their colleagues or to help them overcome learning difficulties. This result showed that the students still needed peers to correct their writing, to help them in solving writing problems and to discuss the ideas in their writing. These actions helped them to be more confident in writing because their writing was evaluated by other people. However, this strategy became the least used strategy among 3rd year English department students. With regard to their writing anxiety level, the possible reason of why students only used social strategy in moderate level was their fear to be judged by their friends. This factor might be the reason why social strategy was in the moderate level in strategy used by the students.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, the 3rd year students of English department of Universitas Negeri Padang experienced Moderate writing anxiety with cognitive anxiety as the most dominant strategy. It was found that most of the high anxious students experienced somatic anxiety. Moreover, the moderate and the low anxious students experienced cognitive anxiety. This study also concluded that the students positively use strategies in writing; the most used strategies were metacognitive strategy and metacognitive strategy. The least used strategy was social strategy. From the discussion, it was found that the factors influencing writing anxiety level were students are afraid of evaluation; this might happen because the assessment for writing was in form of test. Another possible reason was that because the data were not obtained in form of test, the students feel less anxious. The presence for actively used strategy in writing was influenced by teachers' explicit instruction in teaching writing that made students more aware in employing strategies in writing.

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