

AN ANALYSIS OF THE WRITING ANXIETY OF THE FOURTH SEMESTER STUDENTS OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU IN WRITING ESSAYS

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Abstract: *This research is aimed to find out the writing process which makes the fourth semester students of English Study Program FKIP Universitas Riau feel anxious in writing essays. This is a descriptive quantitative research conducted by survey design. The population of this research was 107 of the fourth semester students of English Study Program FKIP Universitas Riau and all of it was appointed as the sample. The data were collected through a questionnaire containing 24 close-ended statements. The questionnaire was adapted from Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) designed by Cheng (2004) and Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) designed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). The result of data analysis showed that the fourth semester students of English Study Program FKIP Universitas Riau felt anxious in drafting process of essay writing. The factors that contributed to that were: linguistic problems (18.02%), time pressure (17.75%), lack of topical knowledge (16.80%), and lack of vocabulary mastery (16.66%). Furthermore, it is recommended that students need to find out the factors that contribute to their writing anxiety and try to find the best way to cope with their anxiety. Students also need to do more practice in English essays writing and discuss their problems in writing with the lecturer. In line with that, the lecturer should create a comfortable situations in Writing class to make the students more relaxed in expressing ideas through writing and the lecturer also need to pay more attention in students' problems of writing essays that can lead them to anxiety.*

Key Words: *Writing, Anxiety, Writing Anxiety, Writing Essays*

ANALISIS KECEMASAN MENULIS PADA MAHASISWA SEMESTER EMPAT PROGRAM STUDI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS FKIP UNIVERSITAS RIAU DALAM MENULIS ESAI

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui proses menulis yang membuat mahasiswa semester empat Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Riau merasa cemas ketika menulis esai. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kuantitatif deskriptif yang dilaksanakan melalui survei. Populasi penelitian ini merupakan 107 mahasiswa semester empat Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Riau dan seluruhnya dipilih menjadi sampel penelitian. Data didapatkan melalui kuesioner yang terdiri dari 24 pernyataan. Kuesioner diadaptasi dari *Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory* (SLWAI) oleh Cheng (2004) dan *Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory* (CWAI) oleh Rezaei and Jafari (2014). Hasil analisis data menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa semester empat Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Riau merasakan cemas di proses *drafting* dalam menulis esai. Faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan hal itu antara lain: masalah linguistik (18.02%), tekanan waktu (17.75%), kurangnya pengetahuan tentang topik terkini (16.80%), dan kurangnya penguasaan kosa kata (16.66%). Selanjutnya, disarankan agar mahasiswa perlu menemukan faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan mereka cemas dalam menulis dan mencoba menemukan cara terbaik untuk mengatasi kecemasan mereka. Mahasiswa juga perlu melakukan lebih banyak latihan dalam menulis esai berbahasa Inggris dan mendiskusikan masalah-masalah yang mereka hadapi dalam menulis dengan dosen. Sejalan dengan itu, dosen harus mampu menciptakan situasi yang nyaman di dalam kelas Writing agar mahasiswa lebih tenang dalam mengekspresikan ide melalui tulisan dan dosen juga perlu lebih memperhatikan masalah-masalah yang mahasiswa hadapi dalam menulis esai yang dapat menyebabkan mereka merasa cemas.

Kata Kunci: Menulis, Kecemasan, Kecemasan Menulis, Menulis Esai

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of language skills that should be mastered by students in learning English including the students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau. It is a challenging skill because in writing, students must have an ability to think about ideas in their language and compose them into the correct written form in English. So, students not only have to think about the ideas that they are going to write but also to pay attention to the rules in writing such as organization, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Meanwhile, an essay is a sort of writing that should be mastered by the students of English Study program of FKIP Universitas Riau beginning from the third semester (Buku Pedoman FKIP UNRI, 2016). Writing English essays is more difficult than writing paragraphs because an essay is longer and consists of several paragraphs. Therefore, it is not easy for students to compose it.

Due to these difficulties, students' essays writing ability needs to be reinforced through practice. However, one of the problems that the students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau face during essays writing practice is anxiety. Anxiety is "a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system" (Horwitz, 2001). As cited in Kara (2013), anxiety is one of the factors that affects the process of learning.

The study about writing anxiety in the second or foreign language classrooms has been increased in the present time. However, most studies that are found only focused on the level of anxiety, type of anxiety, the causes of anxiety, or the relationship between writing anxiety and writing achievement in writing generally. Up to now, there is no study found about anxiety in writing which focuses on the students anxiety in the writing process, especially in the context of Indonesian EFL college learners in writing English essays. Therefore, this study attempts to fill this gap by investigating the students' anxiety in the writing process. In which writing process students feel highly anxious when they are writing an English essay in the Writing class? This study is concerned with this question and its possible answer.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that writing anxiety is a serious problem in English essays writing particularly for the fourth semester students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau. Therefore, it is interesting to conduct this research. This issue was discussed in the paper entitled "An Analysis of the Writing Anxiety of the Fourth Semester Students of English Study Program FKIP Universitas Riau in Writing Essays".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used descriptive quantitative method conducted by survey design. A survey research determines and reports the way things are. It involves collecting data to answer questions about people's opinions on some topics or issues in current conditions (Gay *et al*, 2012).

The population of this research was all fourth semester students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau which consisted of three classes (4A, 4B, and 4C) with the total of 107 students. Since this research is categorized as a census survey research, all of the population appointed as the sample.

To collect the data about students' writing anxiety, a close-ended questionnaire called Essay Writing Process Anxiety Scale (EWPAS) was used as the instrument. It was modified from two sets of questionnaires: Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) by Cheng (2004) and Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). The questionnaire has 24 items, followed a Likert scale to gather the responses of the respondents and divided into 4 categories based on the number of writing process (Pre-writing, Outlinig, Drafting, Polishing). Before the questionnaire is administered to the sample, it was pilot tested to 25 fourth year students of English Study Program FKIP Universitas Riau to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. The Result of the Questionnaire

Table 1. The Overall Percentage of the Students' Anxiety in Writing Process

| PRE-WRITING | | |
|-------------|--|------------|
| No | Statements | Percentage |
| 1 | Once I know that I have to write an English essay in the Writing class, I'm not nervous at all. | 57% |
| 2 | I'm freezed up when the lecturer suddenly asks me to write an English essay in the Writing class without any preparation. | 59.62% |
| 3 | I often have difficulties to choose the topic that I want to write. | 57.94% |
| 4 | In the Writing class, my mind often goes blank when I start working on an English essay on the given topic that is unfamiliar to me. | 74.39% |
| 5 | I make myself relax to generate ideas before writing an English essay. | 40.56% |
| 6 | While I'm brainstorming the ideas of the essay that I want to write, I feel my heart beating so fast when I cannot collect as much ideas as I'm supposed to. | 60.56% |
| OUTLINING | | |
| No | Statements | Percentage |
| 7 | It's not difficult to narrow the focus of my essay. | 52.54% |
| 8 | While organizing the outline of my essay, I often anxious that the lecturer would think that my ideas might be out of the topic. | 66.54% |
| 9 | I often run out of ideas when I try to subdivide the major ideas of the essay that I'm going to write which makes me feel panic. | 63.55% |
| 10 | When outlining, I often feel fear that my major points as well as the supporting details that I write are not relevant enough to the topic. | 72.52% |
| 11 | I never feel hard to create the thesis statement and conclusion of my essay. | 53.27% |
| 12 | When outlining an English essay, I often feel fear that I make a mistake with the organization of the ideas. | 68.59% |

DRAFTING

| No | Statements | Percentage |
|----|---|------------|
| 13 | While writing an English essay in the Writing class, I tremble or sweat when I realize that I'm running out of time to finish it. | 73.27% |
| 14 | I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write the draft of my English essay on the given topic that I'm not familiar with. | 69.34% |
| 15 | I'm not anxious when writing an English essay in the Writing class although if I have lack of sufficient English essays writing practice. | 62.80% |
| 16 | I feel stressed while composing my essay due to some linguistic problems such as inadequate mastery of sentence structures, grammar knowledge, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. | 74.39% |
| 17 | While developing the supporting sentences of my essay, I feel stressed when I don't know the right words to express my ideas. | 68.78% |
| 18 | While writing an English essay, I never feel under pressure to give my lecturer a perfect work. | 64.11% |

POLISHING

| No | Statements | Percentage |
|----|--|------------|
| 19 | While revising my essay draft, I often feel fear that the more I edit it, the worse it will be. | 60.18% |
| 20 | In revising process, I usually find it hard to determine which ideas should be stayed and what should be thrown. | 58.69% |
| 21 | When editing my English essay, I often feel not sure about the parts that should be edited. | 65.04% |
| 22 | In editing process, if the lecturer asked me to get the other students' feedback of my English essay, I don't worry that they would deride me when they read it. | 44.11% |
| 23 | When I'm about to finish my essay, I feel confident that my edited essay is already good in terms of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. | 55.70% |
| 24 | When I'm about to finish and submit my English essay, I'm worried about the negative comments and evaluation of the lecturer. | 71.02% |

Findings in the Pre-writing category show that the students *neither agree nor disagree* with 4 out of 6 statements. It can be interpreted that they *neither agree nor disagree* that they feel anxiety in Pre-writing process of writing essays. In Outlining and Drafting categories, the results indicate that the students *agree* with 4 out of 6 statements. It means that the students agree that they feel anxiety in Outlining and Drafting process. While in the Polishing (revising and editing) category, the findings show that the students *neither agree nor disagree* with 4 out of 6 statements. It can be stated that the students *neither agree nor disagree* that they feel anxiety in Polishing process. From the result of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that the students feel anxiety when they are in Outlining and Drafting process of writing essays.

2. The Writing Process which Makes the Students Feel Anxious in Writing Essays

In this phase, the researcher would like to answer the research question "Which writing process makes for the fourth semester students of English Study Program of

FKIP Universitas Riau feel anxiety in writing essays?”. To answer this question, the researcher calculated the mean of students’ responses on the EWPAS on each category of writing process by using SPSS 25. The calculation can be seen as in Table 2.

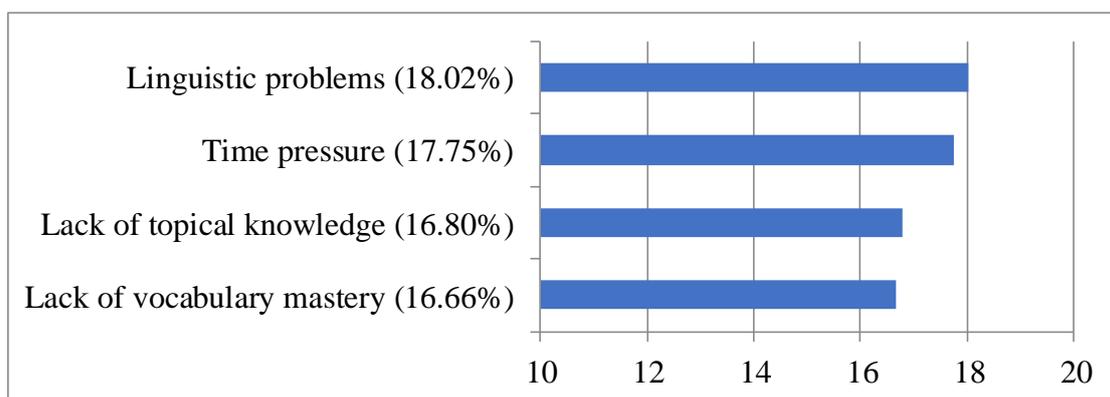
Table 2. The Mean of Each Writing Process

| Process of Writing | Descriptive Statistics | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|------|-------|----------------|
| | N (Respondents) | Sum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Prewriting | 107 | 1873 | 17.50 | 3.332 |
| Outlining | 107 | 2026 | 18.93 | 3.063 |
| Drafting | 107 | 2208 | 20.64 | 4.024 |
| Polishing | 107 | 1898 | 17.74 | 3.773 |

From Table 2 above it can be seen that the lowest mean is on the Pre-writing process with 17.50. In the second and third position, there are polishing process with 17.74 and outlining process with 18.93. While the highest mean is on the Drafting process with 20.64. Thus, it can be concluded that the writing process which makes for the fourth semester students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau feel anxiety in writing essays is Drafting process.

To find out the reasons that make the students feel highly anxious in the Drafting process, the researcher analyzed the statements of the questionnaire that included in Drafting category, the result can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 The Reasons of Students’ Anxiety in Drafting Process



From the percentage, it showed that linguistic problems was the first main factor of anxiety in Drafting process. While drafting an essay, the students have to develop the ideas that have been organized in the outline into several paragraphs. Inadequate mastery of sentence structures, grammar knowledge, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) made the students found it difficult to write. As the result, they feel stressed while composing their essay. This was similar with Wahyuni and Umam (2017) that found that linguistic problems as the first main sources of

writing anxiety. It is recommended that students need to learn more about grammar, sentence structures, as well as the mechanics in English so that they can cope this problem. On the other hand, the lecturer may put more balanced assessment between the students' progress of writing development and the linguistic features instead of only focusing on students' mistakes of linguistic features.

The second factor was time pressure. Writing an essay in English for the students needs more time than writing in Indonesian. They need extra time to think and organize the idea in pre-writing and outlining process in order to make sure that their writing in English can be as good as writing in their first language. However, this might consume much time and made them anxious while drafting that they could not finish their essay before the time is up. Consequently, the anxiety feeling made their body sweating or even trembling. This was supported by Alfiansyah *et al* (2017) in their research found that students experienced anxiety in writing when they write under time pressure, they were afraid and panic that the time given to them was not enough. For this matter, the lecturer should train the students about time management so the students can practice how to manage and adjust their time in each process of writing an essay.

The third factor of anxiety in the Drafting process was lack of topical knowledge. Students who had insufficient knowledge about the topic that they write would consequently felt anxiety. They feel their body rigid and tense when they have to think about the topic which is unfamiliar for them. Thus, the lack of knowledge seriously affects the students writing anxiety. Based on Zhang's study (2011), 70% of the students reported that they usually had no idea about the topic and what to write especially with the time control. Therefore, they might have nothing to say about the topic and eventually made them anxiety. It is suggested that students enhanced their knowledge about topical issues so that they know what to write on the topic given by the lecturer. The lecturer, on the other hand, should give the topics that suitable for their level.

Lack of vocabulary mastery was the fourth main factor of anxiety in the Drafting process. Vocabulary knowledge is one of the important aspects in essay writing because when the words are known, the students can compose their essay effectively. Otherwise, the students found it hard to composing an essay in English because they still had lack of vocabulary knowledge. They did not know how to express their ideas with the right words so it made them feel stressed, especially in a test-situation where they usually were not allowed to use a dictionary. As stated by Genc and Yayli (2019), poor vocabulary knowledge was found as one of main reasons that made the students anxious in writing an essay. The researcher suggested that students should enhance their vocabulary knowledge so they know how to express their ideas even when using dictionary is not allowed for them.

In conclusion, it can be said that the fourth semester students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau felt anxious when they have to write an English essay in the Writing class. However, they felt anxiety mostly in the Drafting process. It happened because some factors such as linguistic problems, time pressure, lack of the topic knowledge, and lack of vocabulary mastery.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the data analysis from the research, it can be concluded that the fourth semester students of English Study Program of FKIP Universitas Riau felt anxiety in Outlining and Drafting process of essay writing. While they were neutral in Pre-writing and Polishing (revising and editing) process. However, the mean of each process from the result of the questionnaire showed that Drafting was the highest mean (20.64) among the other process such as Outlining (18.93), Polishing (17.74), and the lowest was Pre-writing (17.50). Therefore, it can be stated that Drafting is the process where the students highly experienced anxiety in writing an essay in the Writing class. The factors that contributed to that were: (1) Linguistic problems, the students have some linguistic problems such as grammar knowledge, sentence structures, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization that make them find it difficult to write essays, (2) Time pressure, the students feel anxiety while drafting their essays when the time is almost up but they have not finish their essay yet, (3) Lack of topic knowledge, the students have lack knowledge about the topic that they are writing about, and (4) Lack of vocabulary mastery, the students don't know the suitable words to express their ideas (because they lack of vocabulary knowledge).

Recommendations

Based on the results found in this research, several recommendations were offered in order to reduce students' writing anxiety. The recommendations might be helpful for English students, lecturers, as well as readers. Those are as follows:

1. To overcome writing anxiety, the students need to find out their own factors that contribute to writing anxiety and find the best way that suitable to cope with them. It is also suggested that they discuss their problems in writing that make them anxiety with the lecturer, so the lecturer know their problems and give the solution to them.
2. For the lecturers, it is recommended that they create a comfortable situation for a writing class. It is because the comfortable situation will help students to feel more relaxed to express their idea through writing. It is also suggested that the lecturer should pay more attention in students' problems of writing an essay and should be more aware of the factors that can increase students' anxiety in writing and try to find the best strategy to help students to overcome them.
3. As for the readers, this research will help them to gain more knowledge about writing anxiety. Readers can read this study and use it to conduct further studies. They may use different research design with more specific factors on students' anxiety in writing an essay.

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