

AN ANALYSIS OF WRITING ANXIETY ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the writing anxiety of English students in the eighth grade of junior high school. This study uses mixed methods where quantitative to determine the types and factors of writing anxiety, while qualitative to determine strategies in reducing writing anxiety. The instruments used for data collection are two closed questionnaires, namely Cheng's second language writing anxiety inventory (SLWAI) and Rezae and Jafari's causes of writing anxiety inventory (CWAI). The results of this study found that the type of writing anxiety with the highest results was cognitive anxiety compared to the other two types of anxiety. Then there are six factors that cause writing anxiety, namely fear of negative evaluation, low levels of self-confidence, pressure from task perfection, insufficient of practical writing experience, fear of writing exams and lack of writing techniques.*

Keywords: Anxiety, SLWAI, CWAI

INTRODUCTION

Students learning English need to master a wide range of skills, including writing, listening, reading and speaking. Writing is difficult, especially for people information a second or foreign language (David & Kasim, 2007). The representation of language in the form of symbols, letters and words is called writing. Writing is a way to transmit knowledge as well as convey ideas, sentiments, and intentions to others.

Writing is defined as an effective communication tool to express or distribute ideas about thoughts that will continue for the rest of our lives (Carrol et al., 2001). Writing is a multipart procedure that enables authors to analyse their thoughts and opinions and put them on paper (Gaith, 2002). Writing is primarily learnt and refined during the learning process. Students must think and have a broad imagination, which they must combine into writing. Writing requires a letter of understanding oneself and one's environment, language conventions, and recognition. As a result, emotions, views, and general references to these abilities should be emphasized. Learners must acquire writing skills so that they can convey their opinions, ideas, and emotions in an approach that readers will comprehend.

Language is a tool to ensure human communication and consent. Can (2019) described sacred scripture as "a language system with the possibility of long-term and enduring effectiveness." Writing is a tool that people employ to convey their experiences from their past to the present, as well as a measure of academic accomplishment during the course of their academic career, a primary form of communication, and a fundamental ability in language. In a way, Writing is a means of passing on one's identity to future generations. These skills are essential in transferring life, interest in history and culture to the mortal lives of scholars

throughout the ages. English learners must be proficient in several skills, including Writing, listening, reading and speaking. Writing is a difficult task, especially for people learning a second or foreign language (David & Kasim, 2007). Writing is the representation of language in the procedure of symbols, letters and words. Writing can be used to transmit knowledge as well as convey ideas, sentiments, and objectives to others.

Carrol and colleagues (2001) Writing is characterized as an efficient communication tool for expressing or sharing ideas about concepts that will last throughout our life. Writing is a complicated procedure which enables writers to examine and realize their ideas and thoughts on paper (Gaith, 2002). Writing is mainly learned and developed during learning. Students must think and have a broad imagination, which they must combine into writing. Writing requires a letter of understanding oneself and one's environment, language conventions, and recognition. Consequently, emotions, opinions, and generally referring to these abilities should be highlighted. Students should learn to write to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings in a way that readers can understand.

Language is an instrument for human communication and agreement. Writing is a linguistic system with potential for long-term sustained effectiveness (Kahn, 2019). Writing is a tool that people use to direct themselves from the past to the present, a measure of academic performance throughout their academic career, a basic form of communication and an essential language skill. In a way, Writing is a means of passing on one's identity to future generations. These abilities are essential in transferring life, interest in history and culture of the mortal lives of academics throughout the ages.

An important element of Writing is knowing whether the usual learning process will make our writing activities more or less effective. This situation indicates the effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching and learning process in the acquisition of capabilities. One factor to consider is personal differences. Since personal experience and knowledge can change at any time, attitudes acquired through experience can lead to both positive and negative outcomes. Hassan (2001) also describes writing anxiety as a general avoidance of writing and situations that the individual believes may involve a certain amount of writing, supported by a potential appraisal of that writing. Writing performance was found to be inversely related to writing anxiety (Al Asmari, 2013; Rezaei, Jafari, & Younas, 2014).

Students may experience different types of anxiety due to their diverse psychological backgrounds. According to Horwitz and Cope's (1986) research, The Language of Anxiety has three parts: stress about communicating, fear about exams, and anxiety about receiving bad grades. Based on several multidimensional measures of anxiety, stress is divided into three categories: somatic, cognitive, and behavioral (Cheng, 2004). Similarly, writing challenges, difficulties to start writing well, and lack of encouragement can all cause stress. Therefore, not much work has been done to examine the possible causes of SLWA (Second Language Writing Anxiety) in the EFL context (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing anxiety

Writing is an effective means of communication to express or share ideas about what we want to write to others or ourselves. Writing can also be seen as a skill required in many professions. According to Clark (2005), students' lack of information or understanding of what is needed to complete writing work and students' perception of writing as a difficult endeavour are indeed causes of writing anxiety. This implies that fear of writing is usually anxiety caused by worries about negative reactions and lack of motivation because people view writing as a task rather than a vital ability.

Types of writing anxiety

Writing anxiety is classified into three types of cognitive, somatic, and behavioral avoidance (Cheng, 2004), as follows:

1. Cognitive anxiety

Cognitive anxiety refers to the mental aspects of experiencing worry, such as negative expectations and excessive focus on perceptions of others. How students write, but they are very fixated on high expectations from people around them, such as peers and teachers. It makes students focus only on the opinions of others, not on their Writing.

2. Semantic anxiety

Semantic anxiety is the sense of the psychological side-effects of anxiety events, such as tension and uneasiness, in a person's state of mind (Cheng, 2004). An example is when students are asked to write and complete it within a certain period. Maybe they don't feel nervous and anxious at first, but fear and anxiety will appear if they have finished writing.

3. Avoidance of behavior

'Avoidance' is a verb that means to prevent from doing something or to flee from someone or something. A major component in the description, diagnosis, and management of anxiety disorders has been identified as avoidance, which has been the subject of extensive research in the context of anxiety (Barlow, 2002). Avoidance Anxious students often steer clear of writing. The behavioral component of anxiety is what it is. For instance, some students skip writing classes or neglect to do their homework. Due to the pupils' avoidance of writing, this anxiety may be the most hazardous sort of writing anxiety. They won't participate in the writing class in any way. The kids' written assignments are not being read by anyone.

Causes of writing anxiety

Rezaei & Jafari (2014) someone could argue the case that the Common Reason of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAII) is a crucial tool created to pinpoint the root causes of writing anxiety. Multiple reasons can contribute to writing anxiety. Let us talk about the subsequent causes:

1. Fear of negative evaluation

The majority of learners are going to experience anxiety whenever they have a written test, and exam anxiety is widespread since written tests are thought of as valuable activities that are strongly affected by time restrictions (Zhang, 2011). When teachers expect better from them, students will become anxious when writing, and as a consequence, their teachers will score their work poorly. To ensure that the way they write English is as excellent as their second language, they need additional time to plan, compose, and revise. When students are under time constraints, they become anxious because they find it difficult to concentrate on writing and instead focus on other tasks in the restricted amount of time.

2. Lack of experience or insufficient writing practice

One of the things causing students' concern when creating papers in the language is their lack of expertise communicating in English. For students who haven't received a lot of experience writing, the essay's format will be more important than its subject matter. The more reading comprehension is demonstrated, the more importance is placed on the paper. Exercises in writing are essential for developing writing skills. Students' writing will improve with regular practice.

3. Insufficient writing technique

A student's ability to write well demonstrates their level of skill development and their comprehension of the creative process. Students that are nervous are not proficient writers because they are undeveloped and need assistance understanding the writing process.

4. Lack of topical knowledge

The lack of broad understanding of the topic makes students uneasy. For example, students who are not familiar with politics will feel nervous and afraid to express their thoughts when the teacher teaches them how to write essays. They need to discover something unusual and challenging for themselves. Thus, information has a big impact on how reluctant pupils are to write.

5. language difficulties

Foreign language learners frequently experience language barriers while writing essays in English. Since it is difficult to explain thoughts through precise and varied sentences, which must be presented according to the rules of grammar, language challenges make people feel embarrassed or lazy to write articles in English. Also, due to limited vocabulary, students need help presenting articles in English (Zhang, 2011).

6. Pressure for perfect work

Students may experience anxiety as a result of the pressure to finish the assignment. They contend that flawless writing necessitates diligence and high requirements (Bloom, 1981). Students frequently become anxious and reluctant writers as a result of this self-imposed pressure to produce good work. Students are anxious while writing since they must meet a high quality.

7. Time pressure

One of the primary causes for writing anxiety is time constraint. The root of writing anxiety is also there (Rezeai and Jafari 2014). Additionally, Donaldson S.I. And. al. (2002) noted that authors who are under time constraints and wish to write are more likely to experience the impacts of writing anxiety. As a result, the author claims that time pressure occurs when teachers place time restrictions on their students. To guarantee their English writing is flawless, they require plenty of time to plan, write, and rewrite.

8. Low self-confidence

When it comes to how pupils respond to written tasks, confidence is crucial. When they think they will perform poorly, even students with strong writing ability experience anxiety (Hassan, 2001). Students will not write correctly even if they have a high level of proficiency in writing in a second language if they lack confidence in their abilities.

9. Fear of writing tests

For many students, a prevalent issue is their fear of written exams. Their worries about receiving poor scores served to fuel their skepticism about their writing abilities. This feeling is frequently accompanied by concerns about grammatical, spelling, or sentence structure errors that can diminish the quality of their writing. All of these concerns have the potential to hinder creativity and keep pupils stuck in a cycle of fear.

10. High frequency of assignment.

The huge volume of schoolwork is another factor in writing anxiety. Rezeai and Jafari (2014) claim that a specific of the reasons of writing anxiety is the frequent nature of assignments. However, writing was the least popular choice and had a low percentage of respondents who identified it as a worry-inducing factor.

Strategies to reduce anxiety

Strategies for reducing anxiety are required after identifying the cause. Kondo and Ying-ling (2004) list emotional approaches, cognitive approaches, and behavioral approaches as different types of anxiety management techniques. Cognitive techniques relate to the capacity to think of experienced anomalies as the primary cause of worry, as described by Hashemi and Abbasi (2013). In addition, H. Mejias et al. (1991) suggested that "cognitive modification" (CM) be used as a treatment to lessen anxiety. They also assert that CM techniques can be used to alter people's cognitive expectations by teaching them how to speak for themselves. When this tactic is used, Students are encouraged to be more upbeat and are better equipped to handle accurate self-evaluations.

Exercise and trying to compose instructions outside of the classroom can be two of the most effective ways to calm anxiety. This is the case because, in Kondo and Ying-ling's opinion (2004), concern is caused by a lack of intellectual capacity. To help participants overcome their fear, participants should get clear instructions and engaging activities. For instance, individuals who keep writing better will fare better than others who have never written anything. According to Kondo and Ling (2004), there are five ways to lessen pupils'

anxiety. Some of these include preparing, relaxing, thinking positively, making friends, and resigning.

METHOD

This study used a combination of methods by combining components of qualitative and quantitative methods to obtain depth, breadth, and strength of data in order to identify how foreign languages affect the anxiety about writing of English language students (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner, 2007). This study attempted to identify the typical forms, root causes, and mitigation techniques for writing anxiety in kids. Participants in this study included thirty eighth-graders at a junior high school in Depok City.

The data was gathered using two questionnaires: the SLWAI by Cheng (2004) and the CWAI by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). The SLWAI is the first instrument to evaluate students' writing anxiety, especially when writing in a second or foreign language. The SLWAI has strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91 and is commonly used as a benchmark to discover factors in foreign/second language writing anxiety (Cheng, 2004).

The 16-item SLWAI survey used a Likert scale with five possible responses: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). Then they were divided into three subcategories: avoidance behavior (12,13,14,15,16), semantic category (8,9,10,11), and cognitive category (1,2,3,4,5,6,7). The findings indicated that SLWAI has excellent parallel and satisfactory criterion-related validity, excellent internal reliability, respectable test-retest reliability, and good test-retest reproducibility (Cheng, 2004).

Rezaei & Jafari, 2014 served as the basis for the CWAI questionnaire, which was modified into 26 items. According to Rezae and Jafari (2014), this questionnaire was created to identify the primary causes of foreign language anxiety, which include (fear of a poor evaluation, lack of experience or insufficient writing practice, insufficient writing technique, lack of topical knowledge, language difficulty, pressure to produce flawless work on time, low self-confidence, the fear of writing tests, and a high frequency of assignments). The following actions were taken by researchers during data analysis:

1. Classifying questionnaire answers to determine the type of writing anxiety by collecting questionnaire data using SLWAI questionnaires from respondents. From 3 sub-categories of student anxiety types, namely the cognitive category (1,2,3,4,5,6,7), semantic category (8,9,10,11) and avoidance behavior category (12,13,14,15,16). The researcher then determined the mean of the students' replies for each category of writing anxiety. Students typically exhibit the highest levels of writing anxiety, according to research. Using the algorithm below, average scores are determined:

$$\text{Mean of score } M = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f}$$

M : mean
f : frequency

x : 5-1 (specific value given)
 $\sum f$: total number of student (30)

- CWAI should be divided into twenty-seven categories, followed by a percentage score and data analysis. Most people will cite writing-related anxiety as its primary cause. The percentage was calculated using the formula below:

$$\text{The percentage} = \frac{\text{Total score each item}}{\text{Total score of all item}} \times 100\%$$

- Describes information about strategies to relieve students from interviews recorded and transcribed by researcher.
- Conclude from the results of questionnaires and interviews to find out reduction strategies to reduce student anxiety.

After the data were collected and tabulated data, interviews were conducted with five participants who were selected to have a very low level of effectiveness in learning based on their English teachers. The interview aimed to clarify and extract data on strategies in reducing their anxiety in writing exams, to provide an overview of their experiences and perspectives when facing anxiety in writing. The results of the interviews and the SLWAI and CWAI questionnaires are then detailed in detail to paint a picture of the participants' experiences with anxiety and how anxiety affects how they learn to write in English.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Types of writing anxiety.

Utilizing the Second Language Writing Inventory (SLWAI) questionnaire, the researcher calculated the means of each form of writing anxiety to identify the most common type. Based on the reviewed SWAI questionnaire, the researcher divided students' writing anxiety into three categories: cognitive anxiety, semantic anxiety, and avoidant conduct. Table 1 displays the mean for each category.

Table 1. The Mean of Each Category of Writing Anxiety

Types of writing anxiety	Number of students	Total score	Mean
Cognitive	30	1158	22.57
Semantic	30	474	15.80
Avoidance behavior	30	215	10.50

From the table, the average level of cognitive anxiety is 22.57, the average level of semantic anxiety is 15.80, and the average avoidance behavior is 10.50, according to the table above. Semantic anxiety ranks second and avoidance has the lowest mean, but cognitive anxiety is the most common or has the highest mean. Thus, the most common form of foreign language writing anxiety experienced by many 8th graders in high school has been shown to be cognitive anxiety.

When The most typical kind of anxiety is cognitive anxiety, it means that students pay a lot of attention to external factors, namely teacher and peer evaluations and expectations of students' writing (Cheng, 2004). Cognitive anxiety has a huge effect on students' distraction when writing in English. Students will be less anxious when they are guided to do the work on their own without making any mistakes. This showed that cognitive anxiety has to counteract some negative external factors, as we will see later, in which causal factors are also the main cause of students feeling anxious.

Causes of writing anxiety inventory

The Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) was developed to determine the causes of writing anxiety. The researcher created a table of the CWAI results after gathering the data and presented them as percentages. Table 2 displays the CWAI findings.

Table 2. Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory

No	Cause writing anxiety inventory	total	percent
1.	Fear of negative evaluation	306	12%
2.	lack of experience or insufficient writing practice	273	11%
3.	insufficient writing technique	264	11%
4.	lack of topical knowledge	226	9%
5.	language difficult	184	7%
6.	pressure of perfect work	281	11%
7.	time pressure	196	8%
8.	low of self confidence	300	12%
9.	The fear of writing test	273	11%
10.	high frequency of assignment	180	7%
	total	2483	100%

According to the table above, eighth-graders in junior high schools experience writing anxiety most frequently due to fear of a poor grade (12%), low self-confidence (12%), pressure to produce perfect work (11%), a lack of experience or insufficient writing practice (11%), apprehension about writing tests (11%), and inadequate writing technique (11%). According to a percentage that was significantly more than the other 10 factors contributing to writing anxiety, the primary factor was selected. The dread of receiving a poor mark, which accounts for 12% of eighth-grade students' writing anxiety, is the main cause.

Students' Behavioral Avoidance Strategies to reduce writing anxiety

The third focus is an interview to find out students' strategies in dealing with writing anxiety. The researcher used an interview tool and then categorized their anxiety reduction strategies to collect data. According to the interview findings, they almost all used the same strategies. There are five types of methods used: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, finding a partner, and resignation.

a. Preparation

Based on the interview results, this preparation is used to reduce their nervousness. Then, in the process of reducing writing anxiety, find the behavioral elements of students. On the question "What preparation do you do if you feel anxious about the writing test?" the researcher got answers from the interview including students choose to prepare themselves by studying from home, learning by memorizing vocabulary and some just rely on Google.

b. Relaxation

When students were nervous about the test, they relaxed because taking the time to calm their minds before starting minimized tension and increased focus and creativity. On the question "What efforts did you make to reduce your anxiety when you started taking the writing test?" the researcher got strategic answers from the interview results where students chose to study in advance, read the questions so they can focus and some made efforts by playing games to reduce anxiety.

c. Positive thinking

Another method for lowering writing anxiety is to think positively. On the query, "What do you think about when you feel anxious, when you don't know what you will write in the writing test?" Other students stated that even though they thought about the score due to lack of preparation they believed that they would not receive remedials, and still other students stated that they believed in their own abilities, including by doing easy questions first so that not much time was wasted. The researcher received answers from all of these students.

d. Find a partner

This was done to seek out other people who could assist them if they needed English language assistance. On the question "What efforts did you make when you had no ideas/struggled with the topic during the writing test?" the researcher found that the participants chose to work with friends rather than not taking the writing test at all. After transcribing their answers, the researcher found that three out of five students answered "asking questions and cooperating with friends" to ease the anxiety of running out of time and reduce the lack of confidence in their abilities.

e. Resignation

These students are anxious and will try everything to ease their writing anxiety. Regarding the query, "What do you do while working on a piece of writing and you really can't and don't know what to write?" The majority of the interviews gave nearly identical responses, with the researcher finding that "thinking until you know the idea and then free-writing so that time is not wasted-" was the best strategy. Alternatively, the respondents preferred to engage in freewriting rather than doing nothing in order to receive an assessment even with limited outcomes.

Discussion

This study intends to identify the primary causes for writing anxiety among eighth graders at junior high schools in Depok City, as well as the predominant types, main variables,

and avoidance techniques of those pupils. One of the three kinds of writing anxiety became the most common kind, with this kind of anxiety scoring higher than the others, according to the recognition results from 30 students. The mean score for cognitive anxiety was the highest, reaching in at 22.57. It may be argued that most pupils in one eighth-grade class experience cognitive anxiety, considered a form of writing anxiety.

This finding is in line with the findings of two earlier research due to the kind of writing anxiety discovered. The most typical form of writing anxiety, according to Rezaei and Jafari (2014), is cognitive anxiety. 42.5% of survey respondents who said they had writing anxiety in the study acknowledged having cognitive anxiety. The findings of this study are also comparable to those of a 2019 survey on anxiety and writing issues among EFL English learners in Indonesia conducted by Hartono Hartono and Mega Mulianing Maharani. They discovered that cognitive anxiety got the highest score (31.79) in their investigation.

The first major Low self-confidence and other factors contributed to writing anxiousness. fear of criticism, which grew to be the leading cause at 12%. Due to their surroundings, children experience anxiety when writing because they worry that their teachers or other classmates will think poorly of them. And the pupils demonstrate this by behavioral avoidance, choosing to put off finishing something out of fear rather than risk it. An individual might become less confident and more concerned while writing in the future if they have previously received rejections or criticism that reduces their writing. Such negative encounters can have a lasting impact on one's self-confidence and limit one's inventiveness and daring to express oneself.

The outcomes for the contributing factors to writing anxiety were comparable. The findings show that the research concentrated on worry about making the wrong choice, low self-confidence, and feeling under pressure to perform excellent work. Rezaei and Jafari's (2014) finding that negative instructor feedback, a lack of confidence, and a lack of language proficiency are the main causes of writing anxiety is comparable to these findings.

The avoidance tactics used by students when writing with nervousness. To succeed academically, kids should develop techniques for lowering writing anxiety. The five strategies are: planning, unwinding, maintaining optimism, finding peers, and resignation. Five approaches to overcoming language anxiety are suggested by the theory (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004), which include (1) preparation (2) relaxation, (3) positive thinking, (4) peer search and (5) resignation.

Preparation, the first step in this study, is crucial for students since it can lower anxiety. Everything is properly organized, and it appears that planning makes learning successful. Kondo and Ling (2004) define preparation as a student's attempts to minimize risks in the classroom and enhance their study and learning techniques. As a result, students' comprehension of their subject matter improves and their fear about language sessions subsides.

The second technique is relaxation, which can be accomplished by simply inhaling deeply and slowly exhaling through the lips. Relaxation entails lessening the anxiety sensations that students experience prior to learning, according to Kondo and Ling (2004).

Another technique is to think positively. It alludes to the necessity for pupils to have a positive outlook on everything linked to the teaching and learning process as well as their abilities in other areas. Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) outline different types of positive thinking, including attempting to believe in oneself, seeing oneself, doing admirably, thinking about something enjoyable, or refraining from worrying about repercussions.

Another strategy friends employ is peer seeking. Students who struggle with English seek advice from their more experienced friends. Children talk about their issues, and their friends give them counsel. According to Kondo and Ling's (2004) theory, learners' propensity to know individuals who appear to suffer from writing anxiety defines friends seeking. Using this strategy, students can learn from their mistakes and develop their talents.

The last strategy is resignation, where students cease to give attentive to themselves and their work in an effort to reduce writing anxiety. According to Kondo and Ling (2004), students who are reluctant to take any initiative to reduce their language fear are resigning.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Several inferences can be derived from the information offered in the results of the study and discussed in the preceding chapter. First, the dominating worry in writing is cognitive writing anxiety. Semantic anxiety is the second type, followed by avoidance tactics. Cognitive anxiety refers to components that contribute to the anxiety experience such as unfavorable assumptions and assessments made by others.

The primary cause of writing anxiety, which is also linked to cognitive anxiety, is the dread of receiving a poor grade, followed by low self-esteem, the pressure to produce flawless work, a lack of writing expertise or practice, and the fear of taking writing examinations. Additionally, they employ the following techniques to combat writing anxiety: 1) preparation, 2) relaxation, 3) positive thinking, 4) peer search, and 5) resignation.

Based on the results of this study, which explains the types of writing anxiety and factors that trigger writing. The researcher gives suggestions for the students that this study recommends foreign language students to assess their own fear of writing. Therefore, students should find their own strategies to overcome the fear of writing. For English teachers, this study recommends teachers in the classroom as mentors and tutors to find appropriate strategies to help students reduce their writing anxiety so that students can improve their writing skills.

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