

Investigating Indonesian EFL Students' Writing Anxiety in Online Learning

Received:

Reviewed:

Accepted:

Abstract

This research aims to investigate Indonesian EFL students' writing anxiety in online learning, especially in regards to the current level and the subscales of Indonesian EFL students' writing anxiety in online learning, the causes of Indonesian EFL students' writing anxiety in online learning, and the strategies Indonesian EFL students use to overcome writing anxiety in online learning. The participants involved in this research were 19 fifth-semester students of the English Education Department of a university in Surakarta enrolled in an Article Writing class conducted online. This is a qualitative study that employs a case study method. The data collection process included observation, questionnaire, and interview. The researcher observed five meetings prior to the distribution of the questionnaire and the interviews sequentially. The findings of this research show that the Indonesian EFL students in the context of this research had a moderate level of writing anxiety with most of the subscale being experienced was cognitive anxiety. The results also indicate that linguistic difficulties are the most common cause of students' writing anxiety in online learning, followed by some other causes that occurred in the context of online courses. The findings also display the strategies used by the students to overcome their writing difficulties and the stress-coping strategies.

Keywords: writing anxiety; online learning; strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Language learning or acquisition, in general, covers four big umbrellas of language skills including listening, reading, speaking, and writing. From those four skills, two of them, namely speaking and writing are categorized as productive skills, while the other two are receptive skills. Productive skills are the competence of students to use the language in the form of producing language elements in a certain context both orally, as in speaking, and in written form, as in writing. In using the language productively, it is safe to assume that both of the productive skills easily evoke uneasiness—or researchers address as anxiety—of students derived from the challenge they present. Even though speaking anxiety tends to be more apparent as it is a real-time situation that can be easily observed, it

is undeniable that writing can also cause students to experience anxiety from the demands writing activities to fill in the lack of those speaking skills. The challenges, however, double because writing in the context of other languages is different than that of students' first language (Silva, 1993 in Alico, 2016). Simply, Hjortshoj (2001) in Jawas (2019) defines writing anxiety as a large range of "apprehensive and pessimistic feelings" towards writing or activities related to writing. In regards to the writing anxiety in other languages context, Silva (1993) in Kusumaningputri et al. (2018) elaborates further that the writing anxiety worsens in other languages writing because it is "strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in important ways from L1 writing." This ensures the great possibility for learners of English as a second or foreign language to experience said anxiety. Many of the existing related studies aimed to study the phenomenon of writing anxiety, it can be understood that they may differ from one another depending on each context.

Taking those previous researchers as the guidelines, this paper aims to investigate Indonesian EFL learners' writing anxiety in the context of online learning. Online learning context is chosen because the dynamic of education globally begins to shift with the involvement of technology. To give a brief insight, online learning is the utilization of the internet in some ways to boost teacher-student interaction (Singh and Thurman, 2019). The researcher is interested in conducting research in regards to writing anxiety in the context of online learning because the researcher wonders whether it contributes to students' writing anxiety and studies deeper whether any situation occurring in online learning triggers students' writing anxiety. The purposes of this study are: a) to determine the current level and the subscales of Indonesian EFL students' writing anxiety in online learning, b) to identify the causes of their writing anxiety in online learning, and c) to explore the strategies they use to overcome writing anxiety in online learning. Until recently, there has been little, if not none, research conducted studying writing anxiety in an online learning context. Thus, hopefully, the results of this study will add more information and new insight to the existing related studies whose contexts differ from this research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing Anxiety

The Definition of Writing Anxiety

Anxiety in writing is "a wide variety of apprehensive and pessimistic feelings about writing" (Hjortshoj, 2001 in Jawas (2019)). As stated in Alico (2016), Daly and Miller (1975) were the first to conduct a study regarding anxiety in written communication. Then, Daly and Wilson (1984) came up with the term "writing apprehension" to refer to "a situation and subject-specific individual difference associated with a person's tendencies to approach or avoid situations perceived to require writing accompanied by some amount of perceived evaluation potentially." This definition suggests that there has to be a particular situation

involving writing activity that ends up being evaluated. Likewise, Hassan (2001) in Kusumaningputri et al. (2018) has a similar definition of writing anxiety which he defines as situational-specific anxiety in the form of general avoidance of writing and of a situation regarded by individuals that most likely demands them to write and along with the potential evaluation. In short, the definition of writing anxiety used in this paper is anxiety caused by a specific situation that potentially involves writing activities and the preserved evaluation of the writing product itself.

The concept of writing anxiety is agreed to be classified under three subscales proposed by Cheng (2004), namely cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior. The division is as follows.

1. Cognitive anxiety

Cognitive anxiety refers to “the mental aspects of anxiety experience including negative expectations, preoccupation with performance, and concern about others’ perception.” Kusumaningputri et al. (2018) mention that anxiety takes a toll on cognitive resources since learners may become anxious, which leads to negative self-related cognition such as thoughts of failure.

2. Somatic Anxiety

The second subscale, Somatic Anxiety, refers to “one’s perception of the psychological effects of anxiety.” The second subscale is arguably more apparent to the eyes as learners with somatic anxiety tend to develop autonomic arousal and unpleasant feelings. They usually show physical responses like sweating, trembling, breathing rapidly, suffering a headache, and increasing their heart rate.

3. Avoidance Behavior

The term avoidance behavior is pretty self-explanatory. Learners’ avoidance behavior is reflected in how they try to dodge the situations in which they have to engage in any writing activity in English.

As for the level of writing anxiety, as stated in Zhang (2011), Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) suggested by Cheng (2004) aims to know the level of writing anxiety experienced by the subject of the study. The three levels include high level of writing anxiety for those who score above 65 points; low level of writing anxiety for those who get below 50 points; and moderate level of writing anxiety for those who obtain a score between 50 and 65. However, for the sake of this research some alteration is made, changing the a 5-Likert scale to a 4-Likert one and thus the classification becomes: high level of writing anxiety for those who score above 52 points; low level of writing anxiety for those who get below 40 points; and moderate level of writing anxiety for those who obtain a score in between.

The Possible Causes of Writing Anxiety

Writing anxiety occurring among learners may be caused by different reasons from one individual to another. Amid being uncertain, some researchers have come up with some possible reasons for writing anxiety. Hassan (2001), cited in Zhang (2011), lists some possible causes of writing anxiety, namely: “a linguistic and cognitive perspective, such as poor skill development, inadequate role models, lack of understanding of the composing process, and authoritative, teacher-centered, product-based model of teaching.” These concerns themselves may affect each learner differently. Hassan adds that self-confidence plays a significant role in it. Similarly, based on his research conducted in 2017, Alico (2017) mentions several reasons as to why learners may experience writing anxiety. The research-based reasons proposed are: a) “unreasonably high regard” for the correctness of language aspects such as grammar and vocabulary, which can pressurize and discourage the learners; b) unfavorable learning environment to the learners’ development in the writing skills due to harsh feedback or criticism from both the teacher or their peers; c) irrelevant and dull topics the learners are assigned to write about.

Online Learning

Singh and Thurman (2019) state that many terms overlap online learning, such as e-learning, online education, online courses, etc. Fry (2001) in Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) defines online learning as internet usage, including other primary technologies, “to develop materials for educational purposes, instructional delivery and management of the program.” Curtain (2002) in Singh and Thurman (2019) agrees with this idea by stating that online learning can be broadly defined as the utilization of the internet in some way to boost teacher-student interaction. In terms of online interaction, Curtain (2002) mentions that the online delivery covers asynchronous and synchronous forms, which further explained by Alamri (2016), who states that the interaction can happen in two ways, using synchronous tools (videoconferencing, audio stream, etc.) and asynchronous tools (emails, discussion boards). Joosten and Cusatis (2020) list down three natures of online learning, namely: (1) online, involving the access to technology, skills, and efficiency; (2) flexible, entailing students to self-manage their learning with discipline and control; and (3) mediated, demanding the students to be able to communicate and interact in an online environment with others. In conclusion, from the definitions and perks mentioned by the experts, the context of online learning in this paper refers to the learning process which involves technology, including the use of the internet, to accommodate the online interaction between teachers and students through synchronous and asynchronous tools.

Collaborative Writing in Online Learning

In Talib & Cheung (2017), the term collaborative writing refers to the process that facilitates the students with opportunities “to explore, discuss, cooperate and develop learning capabilities” (Dobao, 2012; Heidar, 2016; Noël & Robert, 2004). Similarly, Storch (2013) in Vorobel & Kim (2017) states that collaborative writing is an activity in which a process of sharing and negotiating to reach a decision is made, as well as the division of the

responsibility to produce a text.” The first two definitions suggest that collaborative writing is a process; however, another definition proposed by Howard (2001) in Deveci (2018) argues that collaborative writing is an assignment that enables students to work collaboratively from beginning to end to produce a text from the group. Deveci (2018) adds that the role of teachers shifts from being the source of knowledge to being the facilitator that encourages students to be actively engaged in activities. To conclude, collaborative writing refers to an assignment that accommodates students to engage in a collaborative process in which they are to share and discuss ideas in order to be able to construct an article that meets the requirements of being a well-written piece of an article which includes the basic aspects of writing, such as content, organization, syntax, diction, and mechanics, and the features of article writing. According to Onuoha (2013), a well-composed article has to consist of these following features: introduction, methods, results, discussion, acknowledgement, references, and abstract. As for the target of the course itself, due to the limited time and the situation of a pandemic, the students are expected to produce an article that has all of the sections listed above with some adjustment.

As a teaching method under the umbrella of collaborative learning, there are some advantages and challenges in implementing collaborative writing in the classroom, especially in the online learning context. Deveci (2018) lists some of the advantages and challenges as follows. Among many advantages, some of them are: a) rising students’ awareness of their responsibilities and critical thinking, b) enhancing their vocabulary during discussions, c) getting instant feedback from peers during discussions and lecturer during revising. However, there are also some challenges in employing this method in the classroom such as: a) time-consuming in regards to the sufficient time for the writing process, b) teacher’s feeling towards student-centered teaching methods like collaborative writing, c) students’ discomfort working along with other students, or with a new environment like the involvement of technology.

Review of Related Studies

One of the most famous research studies on writing anxiety is the one done by Cheng in 2004 that aimed to develop and assessed self-report second language (L2) writing anxiety measures conformed to a three-dimensional subscale. Through exploratory factor analysis of the data collected from the sample of 421 EFL majors who were asked to enrol in a pilot test as the preliminary writing anxiety scale, he concludes a final version of the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) consisting of three subscales covering Somatic Anxiety, Cognitive Anxiety, and Avoidance Behavior. SLWAI is later often referred to or employed by researchers who are to conduct similar studies. For example, Ekmekçi (2018) employed Cheng’s SLWAI items to explore Turkish EFL students’ writing anxiety. The purpose of the study was to determine the levels and types of foreign language writing anxiety and determine whether there were statistically prominent differences between freshman and senior students regarding the first issue. The study

included 126 prospective teachers of English who attended an ELT department of a state university in Turkey. This study showed that 60% (n: 76) of the participants had average writing anxiety in English. The results also suggested a statistically prominent difference between freshman and senior students regarding anxiety levels in general and somatic anxiety levels in specific; however, there was no statistically noticeable difference between the two groups in terms of avoidance behavior and cognitive anxiety. Similarly, the research conducted by Kusumaningputri et al. in 2018 entitled Second language writing anxiety of Indonesian EFL students employed the same set of instruments proposed by Cheng (2004) accompanied by another set of data instruments named Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). This study aimed to report the types and factors of writing anxiety experienced by the participants consisting of 44 Indonesian students in their first or second year of college. The findings showed that cognitive anxiety was the type of writing anxiety experienced by most of the students and that there was a slight difference in terms of factors causing the writing anxiety among the freshmen and sophomores. Another study about writing anxiety involving Indonesian EFL students was carried on by Jawas in 2019. It aimed to know the factors that cause writing anxiety of Indonesian EFL students in writing essays along with the strategy to overcome the problem. The results suggested that there were several factors that brought about writing anxiety but the obligation to finish the writing within the class period took the first place. As for the strategy, Jawas set collaborative works as the preferred method in the questionnaire. The results shown in the students' answers pointed out that the preferred method made writing more manageable. Meanwhile, Aloairdhi (2019), in his research studying about the writing anxiety of Saudi female learners majoring in English, employed a different set of instruments: the Writing Apprehension Test (WAT), developed by earlier researchers Daly and Miller in 1975. The findings indicated that 105 participants had moderate anxiety levels in writing, with the main roots of the writing anxiety being evaluation, finding ideas, grammar, time allocation, and lack of confidence.

Contextually, the studies indicate that they were done in a conventional school setting where the teacher and students meet in person. Thus, despite the number of studies conducted to investigate writing anxiety, as far as the researcher is concerned, there is still few, if not none, that takes place in an online learning context. Given the situation this research is conducted, which is in a pandemic where most of the human activities including education have to be carried on virtually, it interests the researcher to know what level of writing anxiety Indonesian EFL students bear and whether being in an online learning context is one of the possible causes.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a case study method as the research design. This method was used because this research aimed to explore the phenomenon of writing anxiety in online

learning occurring in a very contextual condition that took place in a real-world context which was a writing class at a university in Surakarta that conducted online learning. The online class in which the researcher conducted the research was an Article Writing class. To give a brief context, the lecturer for this subject conducted the learning process both synchronously and asynchronously. The data sources used in this research were respondents and events. The event from which the data were taken was an online teaching-learning process in which the phenomenon of writing anxiety was experienced by the participants. The teaching-learning process was conducted synchronously via video conference "Zoom Meeting" and asynchronously on SPADA (*Sistem Pembelajaran Daring (Dalam Jaringan)*, or: Online Learning System) and manuscripts.io. The participants of this research were 19 fifth-semester students of the English Education Department of a university in Surakarta who joined an Article Writing class that was conducted through online learning. The choice of the class of the EFL learners was based on the purposive sampling done by the researcher and the recommendation by the lecturers.

In this study, the data were collected by doing four steps: observations, the distribution of questionnaires, and interviews. The observations were done by the researcher during the process of teaching and learning activity in an online learning context. The researcher joined the meeting of the writing class to observe the data needed as well as joining the class asynchronous activity in SPADA and manuscripts.io. Meanwhile, the distribution of questionnaires to the students was conducted after some period of time in the online learning class. It was shared in the form of Google Form to minimize the inconvenience both for the participants and the researcher. To avoid possible misunderstanding, the items were translated to Bahasa Indonesia. The items for the first part of the questionnaire were adapted from the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory by Cheng (2004); some of the items were altered to fit the context of this study. There were 22 items of the questionnaire that were divided into three categories representing the subscales of writing anxiety, namely 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 response to the questionnaire was in the form of scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) except for five items (1, 4, 17, 18, 22) which were going to be reversely scored due to the negative forms of the words in the questionnaire. The second set of items of the questionnaire was adapted from Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (CSLWAI) proposed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). It consisted of 18 questions regarding the causes of the students' writing anxiety with some alteration to fit the context of online learning. Lastly, the interview in this study was conducted after the researcher had studied the results of the questionnaire filled by the participants. The researcher, then, picked randomly the students who had been categorized to their level of writing anxiety to be interviewed and agreed to do the interview. There were two to four students for each level of writing anxiety. Given the situation of the pandemic, the interview was held via

Google Meet or other communication platform the students chose for the sake of convenience. This interview mainly aimed to confirm the causes of writing anxiety in online learning and to ask further about the participants' strategies in overcoming their writing anxiety.

The data analysis consisted of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data collection was the process of collecting all the data to answer the research questions which were gathered through observations, the distribution of questionnaires, and interviews. Data condensation refers to "the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and/or transforming the data that appear in the full corpus (body) of written-up field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials" (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014, p. 31). The next one is data display that can be in the form of matrices, graphs, charts, and networks. It is designed to arrange the data into "an immediately accessible, compact form" that allows the researcher as the analyst to examine and draw conclusions. After all of the data are analyzed, the researcher as the analyst is allowed to draw conclusions based on the analysis and after that, the conclusions have verified the validity where "the data have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their confirmability" (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014, p. 32).

FINDINGS

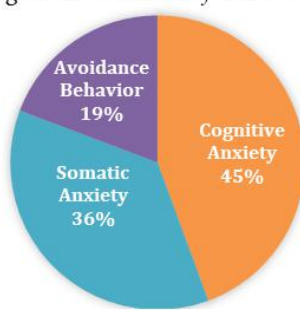
The Levels and Subscales of Writing Anxiety

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the SLWAI

	Number (Percentage)	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean	
High Writing Anxiety	8 (42.10%)	55	75	61.75	$61.75 \geq 52$
Moderate Writing Anxiety	9 (47.37%)	40	52	47.89	$47.89 \leq 52$
Low Writing Anxiety	2 (10.53%)	28	34	31	$31 \leq 52$
Total	19			46.88	$46.88 \leq 52$

Table 1 above shows the results of the level of writing anxiety possessed by the participants who, in this research, are Indonesian EFL students who enrolled in Article Writing class conducted online. As shown in the table, the number of students experiencing low writing anxiety is very little compared to the other two classification levels that have almost the same number of students, with the moderate level experienced by nine students and the high level by eight students. The mean of the data scores is 46.88 which is below the upper bar, 52, and indicates that the overall writing anxiety level of the class is moderate level anxiety.

Figure 1. Subscales of SLWAI



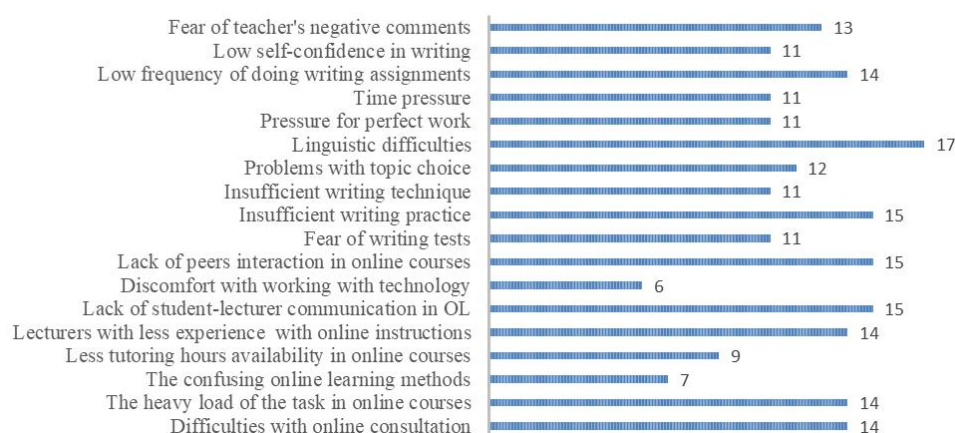
Furthermore, the data resulted from Appendix A

were also to determine the subscales of the writing anxiety of the participants. The findings showcased in Figure 1 show that Cognitive Anxiety is the most frequent subscale among Indonesian EFL students with 45%. The next subscale tails right behind with 36% is Somatic Anxiety. The least common subscale is Avoidance Behavior with 19%. These findings are in line with the results of studies conducted by both Zhang (2011) and by Rezaei and Jafari (2014).

The Cause of Writing Anxiety in Online Learning

The Findings from Questionnaire

Figure 2. Descriptive Statistics of CSLWAI



As shown in Figure 2, the most common cause of the writing anxiety experienced by Indonesian EFL students is linguistic difficulties with the percentage of 89.47% or 17 out of 19 students choosing it. The fact that almost every participant happened to have linguistics difficulties intrigued the researcher and this finding became the background information to conduct the interview. The next causes, tying with 78.95% or 15 out of 19 students experiencing them, are insufficient writing practice, lack of peer interaction in online courses, and lack of student-lecturer communication in online learning. The lack of communication in online learning context seemingly became one of the big themes in the interview conducted following the distribution of questionnaires. The findings of the interview will soon be explained in the next part. The third common causes of the writing anxiety in online learning are low frequency of doing writing assignments, lecturers with less experience with online instructions, the heavy load of the task in online courses, and difficulties with online consultation, all four with 73.68% or 14 out of 19 students choosing them. The following cause, being the only cause with 68.42% or experienced by 13 out of 19 students, is fear of lecturer's negative comments. It came as no surprise that this was one of the most experienced one, considering the weekly progress report done via Zoom Meeting. During this synchronous lesson, the researcher noticed, during the observation done for several meetings, that some students were hesitant to report their group progress. This issue was also one of the topics that was frequently brought up during the interview whose

findings are to be discussed in the next section. The fifth cause of the writing anxiety among the participants is problems with the topic choice with a percentage of 63.16% or 12 out of 19 students selecting it. The sixth causes, which got 57.89% or picked by 11 out of 19 students, were a group of five causes consisting of students' low self-confidence in writing, time pressure, pressure to present perfect work, insufficient writing technique, and fear of writing tests. The next cause is fewer tutoring hours availability in online courses with 47.37% or 9 out of 19 students experiencing it. The penultimate cause with 36.84% or picked by 7 out of 19 students is the confusing online learning method. What closely follows is the least experienced cause by Indonesian EFL students, which is the discomfort of using technology during the writing process with only 6 out of 19 students choosing it or presented in a percentage of 31.58%. All of these findings obtained from the questionnaire were utilized to gain a deeper understanding in the interview that was conducted a week after the last participant submitted the questionnaire result.

The Findings from the Interview

The findings from the interview show that there are some causes of writing anxiety in the online learning context experienced by almost every participant despite what classification level they belong to. Those causes are linguistics difficulties, lack of peer interaction in online courses, lack of student-lecturer communication in online learning, the heavy load of the task in online courses, and the difficulties with online consultation. The first cause of every student's writing anxiety in online learning is centered around linguistic difficulties. Students from the Low Anxiety (LA) group mentioned that they found linguistics difficulties especially in finding the synonyms of the advanced vocabulary that they wanted to use and the construction of complex sentences. However, on the same issues in linguistics, most students of Moderate Anxiety (MA) and High Anxiety (HA) group were having difficulties in specifying what part of linguistics they had trouble with. When inquired further about their linguistic problems, most of them said that generally, they were still lacking both in grammar and vocabulary mastery. What was unforeseen was, in spite of the Avoidance Behavior subscale being the least subscale experienced by the participants, that some of the students from MA group admitted that the linguistics difficulties they found along the way often made them pretty unmotivated to continue. Other than linguistic problems explained above, the other four causes mentioned by the students as what indicated them experiencing writing anxiety in online learning are all the situations happening in the context of online learning. It was already accomplished from the observation done and what the participants said during the interview that the assignments from Article Writing class was a collaborative work to make an academic article. Derived from this situation, almost every student from each level group brought up their concern regarding the lack of peer interaction in online learning. Some students stated some common problems in collaborative work environment such as the insufficiency of participation of some group members. Some students also indicated the ineffectiveness of

the communication in online learning became one of the key points in the lack of peer interaction in online learning context. The next cause with every participant minus one student mentioning it is correlated to the previous issue, lack of peer interaction, which is lack of student-lecturer communication in online learning. A few students explained further that the problem usually arose due to technical issues. Some students also mentioned that the lecturer had some other business that sometimes the class was postponed or the lecturer asked the students to study or continue the writing by themselves. However, some students also admitted that part of the lack of communication also laid on the students' weak engagement in the lesson. The next cause explained by the students in the interview is the heavy load of assignments in online learning. Some of the issues elaborated above and other problems listed in the questionnaire on Table 2 were touched on when the participants talked about what made the load of the assignments heavier in this online context. Furthermore, several students also added that what made the assignments of Article Writing class heavier was the fact that the other subjects also demanded the same load and it arguably made them a little jumbled in finishing the online assignments. Another reason for the heavy load brought up by almost all of the students during the interview is the last common cause of their writing anxiety in online learning which is the difficulties with online consultation. They presumed that having a consultation with the lecturer in person would lessen the load of assignments as they could consult the progress and the difficulties more effectively.

It is also worth mentioning that although the majority of the students in the questionnaire claimed that they had no problem working with computers and technology, the researcher was curious about this matter as during the observation, the researcher noticed that the students often reported that they had difficulties in accessing or operating the platform used, which is manuscripts.io, and that brought the researcher to raise the topic during the interview. It came to as no surprise that it was not once or twice the participants mentioned their issues with the problems to different extent respectively. Some students from the HA and MA group admitted that they rarely, if not never, opened the platform and relied on their friends who had no problems accessing manuscripts.io. Nevertheless, most of them also said that their problems were due to their unfamiliarity with the platform and they claimed their experience with the platform got better the more they used it. Some of them also listed what they found beneficial from the platform such as many features to support their writing progress, easy to track who made the progress, and the automatic citation system.

The Strategies to Overcome Writing Anxiety in Online Learning

Generally, the interview focused on finding out what the participants do to overcome the writing difficulties that cause their writing anxiety and the stress-coping strategies.

Strategies on Writing Difficulties

The reason of the researcher to inquire the students' strategies in overcoming their writing difficulties is because the said difficulties were partly what caused the students to experience their writing anxiety in online learning. Taking the result of the questionnaire into consideration, the main focuses on the writing difficulties are those that were picked by most of the students. It is mainly about the strategies they used to face writing difficulties that were naturally and mostly brought up during the interview such as linguistics difficulties, technological problems, and communication issues. In overcoming the linguistic difficulties that the students found along the way of finishing their writing, the most employed strategies when they found linguistics difficulties were not only utilizing online tools like Grammarly and QuillBot, but also seeking more examples in existing writing materials like articles and journals. Meanwhile, to anticipate the possible technological issue they might encounter while using the platform, almost all of the students agreed that they should do preventative strategies by writing their progress or making a back-up on a different, more familiar platform like Google Docs. By doing so, the students suggested that they could work a little more comfortably in the platform they were familiar with. They also could prepare a back-up file just in case the platform was in trouble during their time using it. Lastly, in dealing with communication problems, Indonesian EFL students preferred having a discussion in a video conference platform to simply chatting in a group room chat to have a better discussion and avoid misunderstanding. They also divided the task for each group member to make things more efficient and have a group discussion and evaluation later.

Stress-coping Strategies

What is important to remember is the idea that this section is closely related to the personal approach of each individual so what is going to be reported is the strategies endorsed by the participants of this interview.

The first question given to the participants was:

"How do you cope with all the pressure during your writing process?"

Expectedly, the responses to the question differed from one student to another. However, if the researcher is to conclude the answers collected, most of them fall under two big umbrellas which are emotional strategies and technical strategies. Emotional strategies covered all the coping mechanisms the students applied by taking their time off the assignments and projects and sparing some time to refresh themselves. On the other hand, the question underlying this section also summoned some technical strategies which in this case included all approaches done by the participants to cope with their stress by doing something in the light of academic and practical sense such as brainstorming with friends

and managing their time better. All the responses from the participants above lead to the next questions asked during the interview. It deals with what motivates Indonesian EFL students to keep writing when they are feeling stuck.

"When you feel unmotivated to write due to all the things we've discussed, what drives you to keep writing?"

After sorting through all the findings, it is safe to say that almost every participant is on the same boat in regards to the drive they have in writing. They told the researcher that the main and the biggest drive they had was to finish the assignment as best as they could.

DISCUSSION

Although stress-coping strategies are very personal and distinctive from one student to another, two big themes can be concluded from all of the responses. The first one is emotional strategies that include taking a break or inserting small breaks among all the assignments. The other one is technical strategies that cover how to cope with stress in a more academic and practical sense. Technical strategies include discussing with presumably more knowledgeable friends and setting a clear timeline and targets. The conversation ends up with what motivates the students to keep writing. Most of the participants stated that what drove them to continue writing was the responsibility to finish the assignment. However, the results are arguably still at surface level since the researcher is fully aware of the fact that motivation is a complex, multifaceted matter that should be further explored.

CONCLUSION

Concerning the first research question, from the questionnaire filled by the participants, the findings show that Indonesian EFL students have a moderate level of writing anxiety with cognitive anxiety being the most common subscale.

To answer the second research question, a set of questionnaires and an interview were conducted to obtain information needed. The results reveal that the most experienced cause by Indonesian EFL students is linguistic difficulties such as complex grammar rules and advanced vocabulary. The other common causes picked the most on the questionnaire and mentioned by the participants during the interview are factors that occur in online learning context like the lack of peer interaction and insufficient student-lecturer communication, the heavy load of online assignments, and the difficulties with online consultation.

The last research question attempts to explore the strategies performed by Indonesian EFL students to overcome the writing anxiety in online learning. The focuses are the strategies when they encounter linguistics difficulties and stress-coping strategies from all the pressure discussed in the previous research questions. The findings report that Indonesian EFL students utilize online tools like Grammarly, QuillBot, and online dictionaries when they find linguistic difficulties. Meanwhile, in anticipating technological problems specifically in the new platform, manuscripts.io, Indonesian EFL students

perform a smart move to write the progress and make a back-up in a platform they are more familiar with like Google Docs before transferring it in manuscripts.io. By doing so, they can be more comfortable while working on their assignments but, at the same time, learning a new platform. As for solving communication issues, Indonesian EFL students use video conference platforms like Google Meet to discuss rather than chatting in a group chat room to have more effective communication and avoid miscommunication. They also tend to divide the task for each member of the group to work on to make the process of finishing the assignments more efficient. In exploring the strategies for the pressures during the writing process, the results present the fact that each participant has a different approach to cope with it, rightfully so, considering the fact that stress-coping strategies are more personal. However, a conclusion can still be drawn into two big categories, emotional strategies and technical strategies. Emotional strategies are the activities like taking a break from doing the assignments to refresh themselves or inserting small breaks in between study. On the other hand, technical strategies cover approaches like discussing things with presumably more knowledge peers and making a clear target-filled timeline. The findings also show that what drives Indonesian EFL students to keep writing is mostly out of responsibility to finish the assignment. This result suggests that further research is needed.

However, due to the circumstances where the pandemic is still going on when this research is conducted, there may be a few aspects of this study that cannot be conducted properly. One of the limitations is the very few related studies about writing anxiety in online learning context that can be taken as the references. Another major issue is that the observation cannot be done optimally considering the students usually turn off their camera during video conference. A full discussion of writing anxiety in online learning is beyond this study and is to be further explored.

This research may inspire other researchers to study further and more in-depth about the said topic in different contexts. It is also noteworthy to note that related studies about writing anxiety conducted in online learning are still very few and have many more layers to unfold. Furthermore, the researcher suggests that other researchers conduct a more thorough and comprehensive investigation into the students' strategies for overcoming writing anxiety, particularly what motivates them to write despite all the pressure and stress.

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