

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers background of the study, research questions, objectives of the research, significance of the research, and operational definition of main variables. This chapter is closed by thesis organization.

1.1 Background of the Research

Writing in a foreign or second language is more challenging rather than writing in a first language. Oftentimes, the students experience writing anxiety. One of the challenges is related to writing as a process. There are three main processes that should be followed in writing, they are pre-writing, including the process of thinking; while-writing, including the process of making a draft; and post-writing, including the process of editing or revising (Brown, 2000; Petric & Czarl, 2003). These processes of writing may overlap or occur twice or depend more on the written product that are produced after the revising stage. If the product is not qualified yet and need some revision, the process can be repeated. Therefore, it can be said that the process of writing are interconnected each other and they are non-linear (Manchon & Roca de Larios, 2007). This kind of requirements and also challenges in writing surely will bring the learners and also the language users into a kind of anxiety in writing which will also give an effect on their performance in writing.

Furthermore, the writing processes are related to the issue of translation. The ideas in the learners' mind might be in their first language. Then, in order to produce a good and acceptable written text in a foreign or second language, the learners should translate it by considering the grammar rules. Richards and Renandya (2002) had noted that the difficulties faced by the learners in a foreign

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STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

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or second language are not only in generating and organizing the ideas, but also in translating these ideas into a readable foreign or second language text.

Writing anxiety have been studied by some researchers as it affects the students' writing and gives some serious problems for the students in writing. It is in line with the statement from Rezaei and Jafari (2014) that said that the problems related to the writing anxiety in a writing test have long been recognized as the main obstacle in a second and foreign language learning by researchers, teachers, and students. The problems that could appear caused by the anxiety of the students in writing such as they will try to avoid writing; take longer time to start writing; lack of vocabulary, expressions, and mature ideas, get low marks; worry about their writing being evaluated; afraid of what others would say about their writing, not willing to share their writing, can not organize or express ideas properly; have negative predisposition on their own ability, and the most common effect is they will keep silent most of the time in the class (Badrasawi et al., 2016).

There are some reasons why the students have writing anxiety. First is because in writing class the students usually have to work alone. In writing, especially in academic writing in the university, the students are required to write their own writing in order to complete their task in academic writing or paper thesis writing class. It is hoped that the skill that they have got in this class can help them in writing their thesis before graduating from the university. Another reason is the teacher tends to assess the final writing of the students. For example, in writing test, the students are required to write in limited time. Then, the teacher will give a grade on their writing, not in the process of writing itself. Indirectly, it will lead the students to a high level of anxiety. It is supported by the statement from Tsui (in Kurt & Atay, 2007) who believed that the students will have a high

HONESTY YONANDA AYUDHIA, 2018

STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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level of anxiety in writing rather than other skills since writing is predominantly product oriented. It is also one of the reasons why this present study choose anxiety in writing as the main topic.

Anxiety is one of the internal factors that will affect the student's performance in writing besides other internal and external factors. The external factors may come from the outside of the students, such as the environment, the teacher, and socio-cultural status. While the internal factors are the factors within the students, such as students' belief, self-confident, and anxiety (Ghania, 2013). However, the focus of this research is only on the writing anxiety and its relation with the students' performance in writing.

As one of the internal factors, writing anxiety can be the most crucial thing that can affect the students' performance and the students' attitude towards writing. It does not only give short term effect, but also long term effect. Once the students feel anxious, they will be influenced by the negative attitude toward writing and find that writing as a frustrating skill to be mastered (Tola & Sree, 2016). This situation surely can also bring a negative effect on the students' performance and in a serious case, it will affect students' future career. The students with high level of anxiety in writing prefer professions or academic fields that they think it will not require their skill in writing (Ucgun, 2011).

Another effect of writing anxiety is the students will be left behind in writing caused by the distraction of their anxiety. In this kind of situation, the level of the students' anxiety will be increased. As a result, it will be hard for them to recall memory (Hopko et al., 2005). It also means that the students who have bad performance in writing cannot be judged as students who do not master the theory and material. Sometimes the students have mastered the materials, but their high level of anxiety give them problems to perform well in writing.

HONESTY YONANDA AYUDHIA, 2018

STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

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Besides, the task of anxious students in writing will be doubled because they should control their anxiety, on the other hand, they should also push themselves to finish the task and give their best performance in writing. The students who cannot control their anxiety will have their performance affected by their own anxiety. Simply, they will have more effort to perform well since they are dealing with the writing task and also controlling their anxiety (Owens et al., 2008). So, due to the fact, it can be said that anxiety also plays an important role in determining the students' performance in writing.

The study about students' anxiety in writing is abundant. Most of the researches try to find out the level of the students' anxiety in writing. From the research, it is known that the students' level of anxiety is high (Jebreil et al., 2015; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Qashoa, 2013). In Indonesia, the research about the level of EFL students' level of writing anxiety has been done by Katemba (2013) and Kurniasih (2017). The findings of these studies showed that the level of students' writing anxiety is high. From the research of Sulispriyanto, Handayani, and Sitoresmi (2015), it was known that Indonesian students tend to be high anxious in class, in the test, and also when they communicate each other (written and spoken) in English. While the causes of writing anxiety in Indonesian EFL students was found in the research from Ariyanti (2017). Several dominant causes of students writing anxiety are writing under time constraint, lack of self confidence since they have inadequate capability in English writing such as in composing grammar and comparing theories among experts to support their writing.

Another study offers some strategies for the students to decrease their level of anxiety. To reduce the learners' writing anxiety, the previous researchers suggested the peer feedback method that had already proved in their research can

HONESTY YONANDA AYUDHIA, 2018

STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

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reduce the students' writing anxiety since they have a perception that they only share their writing with their friend who has the same capability with them (Kurt & Atay, 2007; Yastibas & Yastibas, 2015). Besides that, the teachers can also help the students in reducing their writing anxiety in some ways, such as provide a stress-free atmosphere and help the students to build their self-confidence (Choi, 2013; Jebreil et al., 2015; Qashoa, 2014).

Although studies related to students' level of writing anxiety have been done, and some strategies to reduce students' writing anxiety have been offered, the study about the relationship between types of students' writing anxiety and students' writing performance is still needed. Moreover, the effective strategies used by the students to overcome their writing anxiety should also be addressed. So, this study explores types of the students' writing anxiety, students' strategies in reducing their writing anxiety, and the relationship between types of writing anxiety and students' performance in writing. This study is worth researching since the result will help the teachers and also the students in solving the problems related to the students' writing anxiety in a writing test. From the result of this study, the teachers, the students, and also the people who are interested in this field can determine the types of writing anxiety and strategies that can be used to reduce the students' anxiety. So that, the students can perform well in academic writing.

1.2 Research Questions

There are three research questions in this research, they are:

1. What are the types of writing anxiety among Indonesian EFL university students?
2. How do the students overcome their anxiety?

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STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

**RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN
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3. How do the types of writing anxiety relate to the students' performance in writing?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

Related to the research questions stated previously, the purposes of this research are:

1. To analyze the types of writing anxiety among Indonesian EFL university students.
2. To find out how the students overcome their anxiety.
3. To explore the effect of the types of writing anxiety towards the students' performance in writing.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The problems of the research are worth researching since the issue about writing anxiety had become an interesting issue in recent years. So, this research is supposed to give a contribution in this field by exploring the types, students' strategies to overcome their anxiety, and its relation with the students' performance in writing. It is hoped that this research can reveal both practical and theoretical significance.

Practically, the result of this research can be useful for both teachers and students to know what kind of writing anxiety the Indonesian students' suffer from and how the students' overcome their own anxiety in writing. And also, this research can give a picture of the teachers and also the researchers about the relationship between the types of students' writing anxiety and their writing performance. Theoretically, this research can be used as a reference for future writing about writing anxiety and writing performance for EFL (English as Foreign Language) context.

HONESTY YONANDA AYUDHIA, 2018

STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

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1.5 Operational Definition of Main Variables

1. Writing performance.

Writing performance is an act of process of carrying out or accomplish a writing task which the results can be measured and it can also imply the ability of the writers (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

2. Writing strategies to overcome writing anxiety

Strategies are defined as specific actions taken by the learner to make the activity easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable (Oxford, 1990). So, in this case is the strategies in reducing the feeling of anxiety in writing test that are divided into five categories, they are positive thinking, relaxation, preparation, resignation, and peer seeking (Kondo & Ling, 2004).

3. Writing Anxiety.

Writing anxiety can be defined as general avoidance of writing and of situation perceived by the individuals to potentially require some amount of writing accompanied by the potential for evaluation of that writing (Hassan, 2001) which is divided into three types, they are somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and avoidance behavior (Cheng, 2004).

1.6 Thesis Organization

This study is organized into five chapters, as follows:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

Chapter one gives a general description of the introduction to the topic of the research. This chapter consists of background of the research, research questions, objectives of the research,

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STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

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significance of the research, operational definition of main variables, and thesis organization.

CHAPTER II : LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two provides theories which are relevant to the objectives of this research. It includes the nature of writing, writing anxiety, writing strategies, types of writing anxiety, factors related to the students' anxiety in writing, previous research, and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the detail of the research methodology that is used in this research. The discussion includes research design, research site and participant, techniques of collecting data, and data analysis.

CHAPTER IV : FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter four elaborates the findings of the research and the discussion based on the data obtained from the questionnaires, interview, and writing test.

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Chapter five draws the conclusion of the research that had been done. This chapter also presents the recommendation for further research in the same area of interest.

HONESTY YONANDA AYUDHIA, 2018

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RELATING TO THE TYPES OF WRITING ANXIETY IN INDONESIAN

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