

## MAPPING UNDERGRADUATE EFL STUDENTS' WRITING ANXIETY: TRAJECTORIES FROM RESPONSES, REASONS, AND STRATEGIES

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### ABSTRACTS

Concerning the various responses of students' anxiety on writing throughout the years, this sequential explanatory study aims to deeply explore the students' writing anxiety and their reasons and strategies how to deal with it. The adapted questionnaire of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory and semi-structured interview were applied to examine students' writing anxiety. Twenty five fourth semester students were sampled purposively, then they volunteered in the questionnaire and five of them were invited in the interview. The investigations revealed that among all types of anxiety, the students experienced most cognitive anxiety. The reasons for anxiety are linguistic difficulties, inadequate writing technique and practice, being afraid of tests, time pressure, and negative evaluation. The students' strategies used for dealing with anxiety involve cognitive and affective aspects. These results can be a map in aiding students to cope with anxiety and suggests the important practical implications for teachers/lecturers and learners. Further, this study also discusses limitations and recommendations.

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### INTRODUCTION

Bringing the various results from many studies, writing anxiety still gets high attention in current research. Writing anxiety or writing apprehension is considered the crucial aspect that might influence the students' success in writing. Writing apprehension is defined as the common evasion perceived by students to write because of the fear of writing evaluation (Daly, 1979). Apprehensive students are fearful of teaching and only participate in writing exercises in the classroom. In classroom circumstances, they would be the people who regularly struggle to write, besides, outside the classroom we will not expect to see them involved in extracurricular activities that include writing (Daly & Miller, 1975).

Writing apprehension can be defined as the writing anxiety possessed by the students which bothers the writing process and then affects the writing result. Studies by Selfe (1984) and Latif (2012) revealed that highly apprehensive writers tend to be anxious in composing activities, writing fewer drafts, preparing fewer ideas, and spending few time in writing than low-apprehensive ones. Apprehensive students tend to avoid the learning activities that require writing, be afraid of being evaluated, and tend to have negative perceptions toward the writing activity. Moreover, in recent years, the problem of this anxiety as the affective variable become the main concern in second and foreign language acquisition and learning (Atay & Kurt, 2006).

Writing anxiety is a critical issue that teachers have to learn how to address (Smith, 1984). Writing apprehension or anxiety was delineated as a worry or nervousness of the writing process due to the writing capability (Thompson, 1981). Bloom (1981) uses the term “writing anxiety” to describe people who demonstrate one or integration of feelings, beliefs, or behaviors that intrude on their ability to accomplish a writing task in which they are actually capable of doing so. Empirical studies concerning anxiety on foreign language learning confirmed that it does have a strong relationship with students’ language mastery (Abdullah et al., 2018; Alnufaie & Grenfell, 2013; Badrasawi et al., 2016; Balta, 2018; Blasco, 2016; Cheng, 2002; Cocuk et al., 2016; Erkan & Saban, 2011; Gkonou, 2011; Jalili & Shahrokhi, 2017; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Nodoushan, 2015; Sabti et al., 2019; Sawalha et al., 2012; Singh & Rajalingam, 2012; Stewart et al., 2015). Besides, every student has their own level of anxiety they struggle with; high apprehensive students, average apprehensive students, and low apprehensive students (Alnufaie & Grenfell, 2013; Aloairdhi, 2019; Blasco, 2016; Ekmekçi, 2018; Machida & Dalsky, 2014; Stewart et al., 2015).

According to Öztürk and Çeçen (2007), the issue of anxiety in EFL education is faced in multiple language domains, including in writing skills. It is commonly understood that writing anxiety means a burden, nervous feelings experienced by the writer about writing situations and writing activities that may disturb the writing process (Rankin-Brown, 2006). From the aforementioned definitions, it can be said that apprehensive writers tend to be more anxious, struggle in writing composition, and even avoid writing activities. Introduced by Daly and Miller (1975), writing anxiety was deduced from research on apprehension of communication. Latif (2012) acknowledges that the anxiety of writing represents the propensity of writers to elude the condition in which they are expected to write or their writing may be assessed. Horwitz et al. (1986) add that anxiety is the psychological distinct of self-perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and actions correlated with language learning in the classroom. Anxiety can be a possible factor causing students’ difficulties in writing such as in comprehending the learning material, avoiding writing activities, and burdening the progress of their writing development (Cheng, 2002).

Numerous research suggests that anxiety has a deleterious impact on language performance. Writing anxiety is one of the critical factors affecting the quality of writing in ESL/EFL (Erkan & Saban, 2011; Kara, 2013; Latif, 2012). Anxiety at a high level has a negative impact on students’ writing ability and achievement (Daly & Miller, 1975; Nausheen & Richardson, 2013). Some studies reported that high apprehensive level students generate less qualified writing than the low and moderate level ones (Daly & Miller, 1975; Liu & Ni, 2015). Besides, the severity of anxiety might sap students’ motivation to improve their writing skills (Thevasigamoney & Yunus, 2014). Further, numerous factors contribute to writing anxiety, including teacher’s perceptions of students and teacher-student interactions (Karakaya & Ülper, 2011); time limit in writing test (İnceçay, 2015); test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Related to writing achievement, writing anxiety has been widely used to be an indicator to writing ability, and many research studied the relationship between writing anxiety and writing performance. It can both positively and negatively on students’ writing performance. Studies about writing apprehensions conducted by some researchers in the last one decade supported the previous studies. Most of studies confirmed that writing anxiety affects the writing disposition which means the students with writing apprehension face difficulties in writing and tend to have low performance in writing (Williams & Andrade, 2008; Latif, 2012; Sultan, 2012; Badrasawi et al., 2016; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Liu & Ni, 2015; Nodoushan, 2015). However, some studies admit that there is no relation between writing apprehension and writing performance. The apprehensive students do not always have difficulties and perform

low achievement in writing, even the higher apprehension level the better students can perform their writing (Sabti et al., 2019; Singh & Rajalingam, 2012).

Many researchers see anxiety differently as unidimensional which does not contain any subscales and dimensional components which consist of different subscales. Meanwhile, Craft et al. (2003) anxiety consists of two components: cognitive and somatic anxiety. Cognitive anxiety concerns the mental dimension of anxiety experience, including negative expectations of writing outcomes, preoccupation with performance, and impressions of others; whereas physiological anxiety deals with one's understanding of the physical anxiety, As reflected in the increased autonomous and stressful state of feeling such as fear and pressure; whilst, behavioral anxiety carries the effects of being afraid of writing (Morris et al., 1981). On the other hand, Bishop et al. (2001) confirms that anxiety consists of four components: cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, fear, and escape/avoidance. Meanwhile, Lang et al. (1970) and Cheng (2004) declare in their frameworks that anxiety consists of three different and relatively independent components: cognitive, physiological, and behavioral anxiety which are respectively described; somatic/physiological anxiety is when the students feel (e.g., stomach disturbed, heart rushing, sweating heavily, and numbness), cognitive anxiety (e.g., fear, preoccupation, and negative perceptions), and behavioral anxiety (e.g., procrastination, pullback, and cop-out). This study adapted the three dimensions of writing apprehension from Lang et al. (1970) and Cheng (2004); they are cognitive, somatic/physiological, and behavioral responses.

Several studies examined the subscales of anxiety which were then categorized into three types of anxiety; cognitive, physiological, and behavioral. Wahyuni and Umam (2017) investigated in their study that cognitive writing anxiety was the dominant type of writing anxiety, which is based on the highest mean among the other two types of writing anxiety. Similarly, Kusumaningputri et al. (2018) explored in their study that cognitive anxiety was found to be the most experienced form of writing anxiety by the sophomores and freshmen. Further, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) Iranian EFL students have a high degree of cognitive writing anxiety.

On the contrary, some studies showed different results that cognitive anxiety was not the most dominant type of anxiety among the students. Kırımı and Kırımı (2015) figured out that female students appeared to deteriorate more from somatic anxiety with the major causes of students' writing anxiety were due to time burdens, negative evaluation from the teacher, and lack of sufficient English writing practice. Similarly, Min and Rahmat (2014) pinpointed in their study that somatic anxiety was reported as the highest anxiety sub-scale endured by most of the participants. In addition, a study by Mulyono et al. (2020) argued in the Indonesian context that all students from different levels of education were experiencing somatic anxiety, avoidance behavior, and cognitive anxiety, with the most common type of anxiety being avoidance behavior.

Besides the type of anxiety, some studies also investigated the factors causing writing anxiety and the strategies to deal with it. Jawas (2019) admits that the essay assignment that must be completed in the classroom is the most powerful cause of writing anxiety. Liu and Ni (2015) state that the causes of students' anxiety when writing in English are the difficulty of English writing, the desire to write better, fear about exam grades, a lack of vocabulary, a lack of EFL writing practice, and unfamiliarity with the writing genre. Other causes of anxiety were also explored by other studies, for example, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) confirming the reasons are due to teacher's negative feedback, low self-confidence, and poor linguistic knowledge. Similarly, Wahyuni and Umam (2017) utter that the main factors leading to anxiety are linguistic difficulties, fear of a teacher's negative comment, lack of writing practice, and pressure of time. Besides, Wicaksono (2015) adds apprehensive writers are affected by lecturer, self-belief, knowledge, and skill.

Furthermore, Kusumaningputri et al. (2018) emphasize the causal factors of anxiety between freshman and sophomores. The causative factors of freshmen writing anxiety are difficulty with language, time constraints, and inadequate writing practice. Meanwhile, inadequate learning practice, language problems and poor learning technique are the contributing factors of sophomores. Then, the common strategies adopted to mitigate the anxiety are collaborative works in pairs or small groups for idea development and construction of essay as investigated by (Jawas, 2019). At the same idea, Wu and Lin (2016) has precisely revealed in their study that compensation, psychological, memory, and mixed strategies are common learning strategies used by participants.

Several studies above yielded various different results on writing anxiety as well as its types, factors, and strategies. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore more on what types of writing anxiety, the reasons behind, and also the students' strategies in coping their anxiety. This present study attempts to measure the students' writing anxiety using framework that the anxiety is categorized into three subscales; they are cognitive, physiological, and behavioral responses (Cheng, 2004). The measurement is assumed to be an ideal approach to explore what the most types of anxiety the students struggle with. Besides the adapted questionnaire, semi-structured interview was also administered to support the data whether the results on writing apprehension consistent with the students' reasons of being anxious and their individual strategy how to cope their anxiety.

Due to the importance of understanding students' writing anxiety, the following study questions were formulated: What type of writing anxiety is most experienced by the students? What are the reasons behind students' writing anxiety? and What strategies are applied by students to cope writing anxiety?

## RESEARCH METHOD

Since this study explores the undergraduate students' writing anxiety examined from the types of anxiety, the reasons causing anxiety, and what the students' strategies to deal with anxiety, mix-method research was used to gain an in-dept understanding of the issue.

### Research Design

This study employed the sequential explanatory mix-method design. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered respectively to strengthen the result (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel et al. 2012). The types of anxiety were gathered quantitatively, while the reason causing anxiety and the strategies to cope anxiety were gathered qualitatively.

### Subject

Altogether 25 fourth semester students of English major at a private university were purposively selected. They were eight males and seventeen females whose age ranged from 20 to 22 years old. All of them have learned English as a foreign language for at least eight years and currently taking Essay Writing Course as one of the compulsory subjects. Before administering the data collection, the students have fulfilled the consent form to be the participants to admit the ethical issue of the research.

### Instruments

There were two kinds of instruments utilized in this study. The first was questionnaire adapted from Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (Cheng, 2004) to obtain the students' type anxiety toward essay writing as the quantitative data which were distributed through web-based questionnaire via google form. The questions in the questionnaire were categorized into three subscales; they were cognitive, somatic/physiological, and behavioral responses. It examined the degree to which the students feel anxious when writing an English composition and consisted of 15 items all of which were measured using a five-point Likert



Scale, ranging 'strongly agree' which scored (5), 'agree' scored (4), 'uncertain' scored (3), 'disagree' scored (2) to 'strongly disagree' which scored (1). The SLWAI has a high degree of internal consistency, with a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.91 (Cheng, 2004). By adapting the SLWAI questionnaire, there were 15 items selected to be the most representative of the three domains: physiological, behavioral, and cognitive. All statements in the questionnaire were written equally in both affirmative and negative sentences showing the state of anxious, so there was no item which needed reversed scale.

The second instrument was semi-structured interview to figure out the students' reasons of being anxious and to check the consistency between the dominant type of anxiety and also to dig the students' reasons of being anxious as well as students' strategies to overcome their anxieties. In the semi-structure interview, there are three questions which were designed by the researcher covering the type of anxiety, the reason, and the strategy used.

### Data Analysis

Responses on types of anxiety from participants were processed statistically using descriptive statistics consisting of frequency, mean, and standard deviation aided by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) – Version 20. Meanwhile, the result from the interview consisting the students' reasons why being anxious and what strategies they used to deal with it were then recorded, transcribed, coded, analyzed, and presented in the form of an in-depth description (Widodo, 2014).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

#### Finding on Types of Anxiety

The items in questionnaire of SLWAI cover statements that indicate students' anxiety which categorized as Somatic/Physiological Anxiety, Avoidance Behavior, and Cognitive Anxiety that the results of the questionnaire were measured further in those three subscales to have in depth discussion what they are anxious for most. There are five items on the Physiological/Somatic Anxiety subscale (Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5), five items on the Avoidance Behavior subscale (Statements 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10), and five items on the Cognitive Anxiety subscale (Statements 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15). Before collecting the data from the participants, piloting study was administered to retest the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The statistical analysis proves that all items in the questionnaire are valid based on 0.05 significant level so there was no item removed or deleted from all 15 statements. Additionally, the value of Cronbach's Alfa of reliability analysis is 0.765 which means it has a high reliability.

Table 1  
Result of Somatic Anxiety Towards Writing

Item	SA(%)	A(%)	U(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	St.D
S1	4 (n=1)	44 (n=11)	20 (n=5)	24 (n=6)	8 (n=2)	3.12	1.09
S2	4 (n=1)	48 (n=12)	16 (n=4)	24 (n=6)	8 (n=2)	3.16	1.10
S3	4 (n=1)	52 (n=13)	28 (n=7)	8 (n=2)	8 (n=2)	3.36	0.99
S4	8 (n=2)	52 (n=13)	12 (n=3)	24 (n=6)	4 (n=1)	3.36	1.07
S5	4 (n=1)	36 (n=9)	16 (n=4)	36 (n=9)	8 (n=2)	2.92	1.11
<b>Total mean of %</b>	4.8	46.4	18.4	23.2	7.2		

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis of statement S1-S5 which were designed to measure Somatic Anxiety. The percentage of S1 admits almost the small difference of numbers between the students who agreed (44% agree, 4% strongly agree, n=12) and disagreed (32% in total, n=8) that they feel heart pounding when they write under time constrain. S2 indicates mostly the students' minds goes blank when they start to write an English composition (48% agreed, 4% strongly agree, n=13). Similarly, the percentages of S3 reveal most of the students' thoughts become jumbled when they write English compositions under time constraint with 56% in total students agreed (n=14), also they often feel panic when they write English compositions under time constraint as indicated by S4 (52% agreed, 8% strongly agree, n=15). Whilst S5 shows most of students did not freeze up when they were unexpectedly asked to write English composition (44% disagree, n=11) with the fewer students who agreed with the statement (40%, n=10).

Table 2  
Result of Behavioral Anxiety Towards Writing

Item	SA(%)	A(%)	U(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	St.D
<b>S6</b>	4 (n=1)	52 (n=13)	16 (n=4)	20 (n=5)	8 (n=2)	3.24	1.09
<b>S7</b>	0	36 (n=9)	12 (n=3)	48 (n=12)	4 (n=1)	2.80	1.00
<b>S8</b>	0	44 (n=11)	4 (n=1)	52 (n=11)	0	2.92	0.99
<b>S9</b>	0	52 (n=13)	4 (n=1)	44 (n=11)	0	3.08	0.99
<b>S10</b>	0	40 (n=10)	12 (n=3)	48 (n=12)	0	2.92	0.95
<b>Total mean of %</b>	0,8	44,8	9,6	42,4	2,4		

Table 2 addresses the sequel of the analysis of avoidance behavior as the parameter of Behavioral anxiety. Item S6 points out the majority of the students (52% agree and 4% strongly agree, n=14) preferred to write down their thoughts in native language rather than in target language. In contrast, S7 shows most students (48% disagree, 4% strongly disagree n=13) disagreed with the statement that they usually do the best to avoid writing English composition. Besides, in S8, 52% students, (n=13) did not excuse themselves when being asked to write in English although the rest of the students (44% agree, n=11) had different opinion. The percentage of S9 notes the students' responses were mostly agreed (52%, n=13) that they do not usually look for opportunities to create English compositions outside of class, with a few numbers of gap with the students who opposed the statement (44% disagree, n=11). Otherwise, S10 reveals 48% of students (n=12) disagreed with the statement that they would not use English to write compositions whenever possible, while the rest (40% agree, n=10) did not do the same experience.

Table 3  
Result of Cognitive Anxiety Towards Writing

Item	SA(%)	A(%)	U(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	St.D
S11	4 (n=1)	48 (n=12)	24 (n=6)	16 (n=4)	8 (n=2)	3.24	1.05
S12	0	52 (n=13)	20 (n=5)	24 (n=6)	4 (n=1)	3.20	0.95
S13	4 (n=1)	56 (n=14)	16 (n=4)	20 (n=5)	4 (n=1)	3.36	0.99
S14	4 (n=1)	48 (n=12)	24 (n=6)	20 (n=5)	4 (n=1)	3.36	1.03
S15	4 (n=1)	56 (n=14)	16 (n=4)	16 (n=4)	8 (n=2)	3.32	1.06
<b>Total mean of %</b>	3,2	52	20	19,2	5,6		

Table 3 figures out the exploration of the students' cognitive anxiety towards writing. Item S11 proves (52% agreed, 4% strongly agree, n=14) the students felt nervous while writing in English. On the other hand, the other students (24% disagreed, n=6) did not face the same condition. The percentages of S12 show the large number of students (48% agreed, 4% strongly agreed, n=13) were worried that their English compositions were a lot worse than others, however, the number of students who denied the statement only in small percentage (28% disagree, n=6). Moreover, in S13, nearly entire students (60% agreed, 4% strongly agree, n=16) confirmed that If their English compositions are to be evaluated, they would worry about getting a very poor grade. Similarly, most students (48% agreed, 8% strongly agree, n=14) stated that they worry at all about what other people would think of their English compositions as noted in S14. Further, in S15, the vast majority of the students (56% agreed, 4% strongly agree, n=15) corresponded that they were terrified that their English composition would be rated as very poor, while the lower numbers of students (16% disagreed, 8% strongly disagreed, n=6) did not have the same opinion.

Comparing the results of three types of anxiety in Table 1, 2, and 3, it notes that most participants confirmed anxiety in cognitive aspect followed by the somatic and behavior anxieties in the second and third place. Since no item in the questionnaire was reversing scaled, each mean of percentage of agree and strongly agree responses can be compared equally. Cognitive anxiety points out the highest mean of percentage with the total responses of agreement 55.2%, while Somatic Anxiety is 51.2%, and Behavioral Anxiety is 45,6%. In short, among the three dimensions of anxiety, the vast majority of students experienced most cognitive anxiety.

### Finding on Reasons of Anxiety

Semi-structured interview was also conducted to five students randomly to strengthen the result of SLWAI Questionnaire. Students are asked about what they feel when writing compositions and the reasons why they were anxious. In details, the reasons are explained below:

Student 1 (Male): *Sometimes I am still confused how to use the tenses correctly. I can write some sentence examples for each tense, but when it comes to essay, I become confused.*

Student 2 (Female): *Because I feel difficult in generating my ideas into an essay, I often get stuck in writing. Choosing a topic sometimes takes time but developing the topic itself is challenging.*

Student 3 (Female): *I know it is mine although my lecturer didn't mention the name when picking a sample of writing to be evaluated and discussed in the classroom. I got many mistakes in grammar, sentence structure, and some vocabulary.*

Student 4 (Male): *My problems in writing are about the grammar and developing the topic. I feel insecure thinking about my grade in writing. I think I need more writing practice.*

Student 5 (Female): *I prefer a long due date for writing assignment because I feel chaotic if I write in hurry like in a writing test.*

From the result above, it indicates that student 1 and student 3 struggled with the linguistic knowledge that deals with grammar, sentence structure, fragments, vocabulary, etc. Student 2 responded to anxiety because of the lack of cognitive knowledge (background knowledge) and writing technique. The anxiousness of Students 4 was due to lack of cognitive and linguistic knowledge, negative evaluation, and less writing practice, while Student 5 was anxious because of being afraid of tests, time pressure and inadequate writing practice. Thus, the result of the interview points out that the reasons for students' writing anxiety are lack of cognitive and linguistic knowledge, inadequate writing practice and writing technique, being afraid of tests, time pressure, and negative evaluation.

### **Finding on Students' Strategies in Coping with the Anxiety**

Besides investigating the reasons why, the students were anxious, this study also explored the strategies how the students deal with their anxiety. Same as the investigation of the reasons of anxiety, semi-structured interview was used to dig the students' strategies. In details, the result of students' strategies was explained below:

Student 1 (Male): *Every time I face problem with the use of grammar in writing, I open my lecture notes, browsing the explanation and examples, and sometimes I ask my friends and my lecturer.*

Student 2 (Female): *After choosing a topic, I usually make an outline like what my lecturer taught us. With the outline, I can organize my ideas in more specific ways. I know what I should put in the topic sentence, supporting sentence, and concluding sentence. Sometimes I am still confused, but it really helps.*

Student 3 (Female): *When my lecturer picked my writing as sample to be discussed in the class, I tried to stay calm and focus. Although I got many corrections, I tried to note one by one the corrective feedback.*

Student 4 (Male): *Usually I browse some articles and examples that similar with the topic I have chosen to get new insight to what I am going to write in my essay. Also, I make a mind mapping before I write my essay.*

Student 5 (Female): *When I have a writing assignment, I spent several times to read some sources related to the topic, and then I make a mind mapping. After that, I will write my essay. During a writing test, I tried to stay focused and take some minutes to pause and reread what I have written.*

From the finding above, it proves that Student 1 reviewed the materials and discussed them with other peers and the lecturer. Student 2 applied the writing technique to smooth out the writing process. Student 3 enhanced concentration by staying calm and focused. Student 4 searched for models and related materials and utilized the writing technique. Student 5 enriched the cognitive and background knowledge by reading supporting sources, applying the writing technique, and taking some pauses to reread the draft.

### **DISCUSSION**

The main purpose of this study was to map the undergraduate EFL students' writing anxiety investigated from the most dominant types, underlying reasons, and the strategies on how they cope with it. The number of students participating in this study was only twenty-five



students and five out of them were interviewed, so the findings of this study were not suitable for generalization. Also, with only five students invited in the interview, the underlying reasons and the occupied strategies may not wide and vary.

From the result of SLWAI questionnaire, this study proves that most students were apprehensive in cognitive anxiety, as illustrated in the findings, Cognitive anxiety has the high mean of frequency of participants' agreement with 55,2% followed by Somatic anxiety 51,2%, and Behavioral anxiety 45,6%. This finding may contribute to the most results of many studies that apprehensive writers tend to have low writing achievement because of experiencing from cognitive anxiety as indicated by the sequels of these previous studies. Latif (2012) and Liu and Ni (2015) confirm that the students become apprehensive writers due to their low language and writing ability self-perceptions, communication apprehension and poor writing achievement history, and Badrasawi et al. (2016) utter the apprehensive writers tried to avoid writing; took longer time to start writing, and could not organize ideas properly. Also, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) state that high degree of anxiety among Iranian EFL were mainly cognitive. Since the writing achievement is cognitively related to the students' ability, this study, therefore, add the blueprint data that can explain the tendency why high anxious students tend to have lower writing achievement because most of the students apprehend the cognitive anxiety.

Regarding the type of anxiety, this study shows different result from the studies by Kırılmaz and Kırılmaz (2015), Min and Rahmat (2014), and (Mulyono et al. (2020) with research findings founded that most common types of anxiety experienced by the students were somatic anxiety and avoidance behavior. However, this study braces some previous results dealing with the cognitive anxiety faced by the learners. This study corroborates the result of the study by which indicated the participants have high level of anxiety with the cognitive anxiety as the main sub-scale. In line with Wahyuni and Umam (2017), this study admits that from the three dimensions of anxiety; behavioral, physiological, and cognitive responses, most students struggled with the cognitive anxiety. Using the same research instruments, but different research methods and research participants, these two studies reveal the common type of anxiety experienced by the students was cognitive anxiety. Moreover, this study supports the result of study by Kusumaningputri et al. (2018), using the same instrument questionnaire SLWAI by Cheng (2004) but different level of research participants, their study confirm that cognitive anxiety was the most type experienced by the freshmen and sophomores.

Dealing with the causes of anxiety reported from the result of interview session, the students were being anxious because of the lack of cognitive and linguistic knowledge, inadequate writing practice and writing techniques, being burdened by writing test, time pressure, and negative evaluation. Cognitive knowledge deals with background knowledge and how they generate and develop their ideas. Besides, linguistic knowledge encompasses grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, fragments, run-on sentences etc. It indicates that the students who have problems with cognitive and linguistic knowledge tend to deal with cognitive anxiety because by having those problems, the process of writing will not run well. The result of interview on cause of anxiety, therefore, supported the result of with the questionnaire on types of anxiety that the students were anxious most in cognitive response. It means the results of questionnaire synchronize with the interview that the most reasons of students' anxieties were due to cognitive matters. These findings are also consistent with the inventions of previous studies in which the cognitive anxiety as the dominant type has provoking factors such as language difficulty, fear of teacher's feedback, negative evaluation, insufficient writing practice and technique, and time pressure (Aloairdhi, 2019; Kusumaningputri et al., 2018; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017).

Furthermore, the result of the interview on the students' strategies in dealing with anxiety, interestingly, also supports the previous results. The strategies used by the students have

already concerned the cognitive and affective aspects. The first strategy is reviewing the materials. This strategy is used to recall short-term and long-term memory. The second strategy is discussing with other peers and the lecturer. It means that the students can also use cooperative and collaborative learning, in which they can elaborate with others freely and comfortably. This finding is somewhat similar with Jawas (2019) who confirms collaborative works are good for idea development. The first and second strategy also were also used by the participants in the study by Huwari and Al-Shboul, (2016) which was included in behavior strategy. The students do preparation by reading more books, articles and other sources and writing more by rewriting their draft and assignment. Besides, discussing with peers is similar with peer seeking; the term used by (Huwari & Al-Shboul, 2016). Similarly, Susanti and Wicaksono (2014) suggest that the implementation of proper peer-editing enrich the source of content organization, rhetorical issue, and group interrelatedness. In other words, peer-works encourage the students to consult with their peers and lecturers to get feedback and guidance. Moreover, regarding the negative evaluation and feedback, the teachers/lecturers may use the automated writing evaluation (AWE) to minimize the human subjective judgement as well as increase students' motivation in writing and revision (Karpova, 2020).

The third strategy is enhancing concentration by staying calm, focused and being well prepared. It is important to learn in comfortable situations and supportive circumstances where the student can get ready and engaged, concentrate, and accelerate the thinking process. The fourth strategy is finding the model and related materials. This strategy is crucially similar to the strategy number 1 in recalling the memory. The fifth strategy is reading supporting sources and references. This strategy is essential in enriching background knowledge, and the last strategy is using a writing technique, such as mind-mapping. This strategy helps the students to brainstorm and map their ideas into a piece of writing. These strategies, surprisingly, make the students more aware and increase their self-directed learning. This finding is in line with the result of the study by Choi et al. (2019) who reveal that improving self-directed learning can reduce the English anxiety. In other words, anxiety and self-directed learning are correlated which means by being anxious, the students are encouraged to use self-directed learning to diminish their anxiety. Therefore, it is reflected that having writing anxiety does not indicate poor writing ability because it may always occur in the writing process. Instead of being anxious, the students are creatively applied the strategies to deal with it. If the anxiety can be treated properly, it does not always have negative impacts on students' writing. Nevertheless, this study still has limitations, since this study does not discuss the level of students' cognitive or writing performance, so further studies on how cognitive anxiety influences writing achievement are necessary to be conducted.

## CONCLUSION

Cognitive anxiety appears as the dominant response shown by the students due to lack of cognitive and linguistic knowledge, being afraid of test, do not have sufficient writing practice and writing technique, time pressure, and negative evaluation, which all these reasons deal with the cognitive concern. In line with types and reasons, students occupied the strategies by reviewing the material, discussing with other peers and the lecturer, enhancing the concentration, finding the model and related materials, reading supporting sources and references, and using writing technique; mind-mapping in which all these strategies are related to both cognitive and physiological aspects. A map analysis yielded from this study, therefore, illustrates vivid portrayal of the proportional coherency among responses, reasons, and strategies of students' writing anxiety.

Knowing that vast majority of the students experience anxiety in the cognitive, followed by physiological and behavioral aspects, also the underlying reasons and their strategies to cope with, this study discusses pedagogical implications that helps the teachers/lecturers and foreign

language learners to understand a whole map of students' writing anxiety. In addition, it provides valuable data into the practices of EFL writing in the domain of English Language Teaching. The teachers/lecturers should engage them in meaningful writing activities by giving relevant materials and tasks, proper writing technique, such as collaborative writing, providing positive and effective feedback, and giving sufficient writing practice so that the students become competent writers. If the students as well as the teachers/lecturers know the cause and the best strategies on how to deal with the writing anxiety, it is possible the anxious students can be treated properly. Further, with the teacher's/lecturer's scaffoldings, the students can make anxiety as the motivation to have more writing practice instead of a burden to avoid writing activity.

This study has some limitations as the number of participants was limited to undergraduate students at a private university in Jember, Indonesia who enrolled Essay Writing Course. Besides, only a small number of participants were interviewed who may give in-depth exploration, yet more participants will deliver various and wider findings. Since the aim of the study does not generalize the findings, other researchers may use another research method to bring broader and more comprehensive results. Thus, constructive suggestions are needed to have further discussion as well as future-related research focusing on strategies to lessen the students' anxiety will provide practical contribution toward the issue.

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