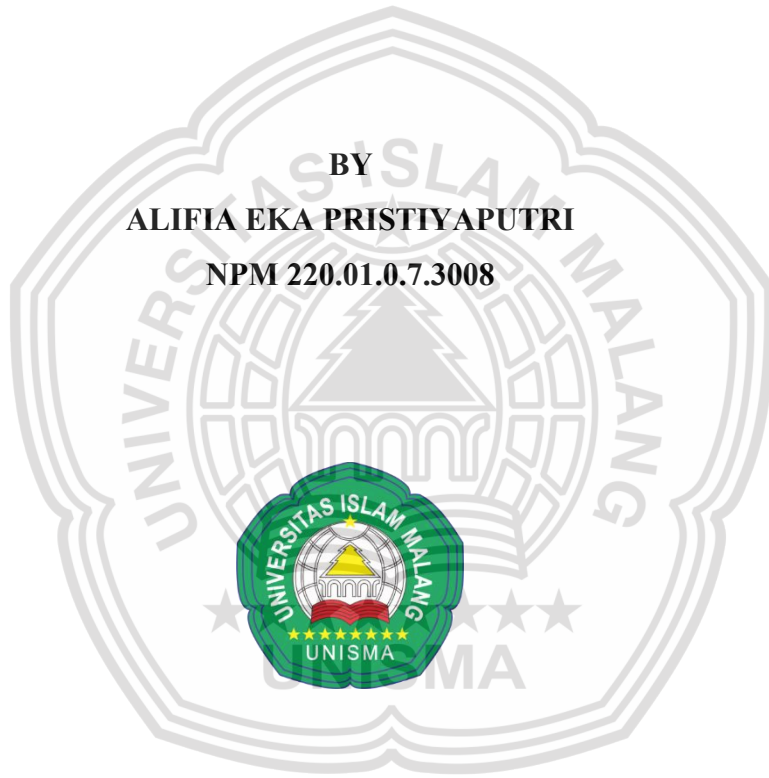




**A MIXED METHODS STUDY: INVESTIGATION OF
ACADEMIC WRITING ANXIETY AMONG EFL STUDENTS
BASED ON GENDER AND THEIR STRATEGIES FOR
OVERCOMING THEIR ANXIETY**

SKRIPSI

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FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
APRIL 2024**



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SKRIPSI
Presented to
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
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In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
Sarjana in English Language Education

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ABSTRACT

Pristiyaputri, Alifia Eka. 2024. *A Mixed Methods Study: Investigation of Academic Writing Anxiety Among EFL Students Based on Gender and Their Strategies for Overcoming Their Anxiety*. Skripsi, English Education Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education University of Islam Malang. Advisor I: Dr. Kurniasih, S.Pd., M.A; Advisor II : Henny Rahmawati, S.Pd. M.Pd

Keywords: coping strategies, factors, gender differences, writing anxiety.

Writing skills are crucial for students in higher education, especially those studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Completing final assignments such as undergraduate thesis at the end of their studies can cause anxiety. So, it is essential to investigate students' writing anxiety. In addition, gender plays an important role in language learning. So, gender analysis is needed to understand differences in language use between female and male students.

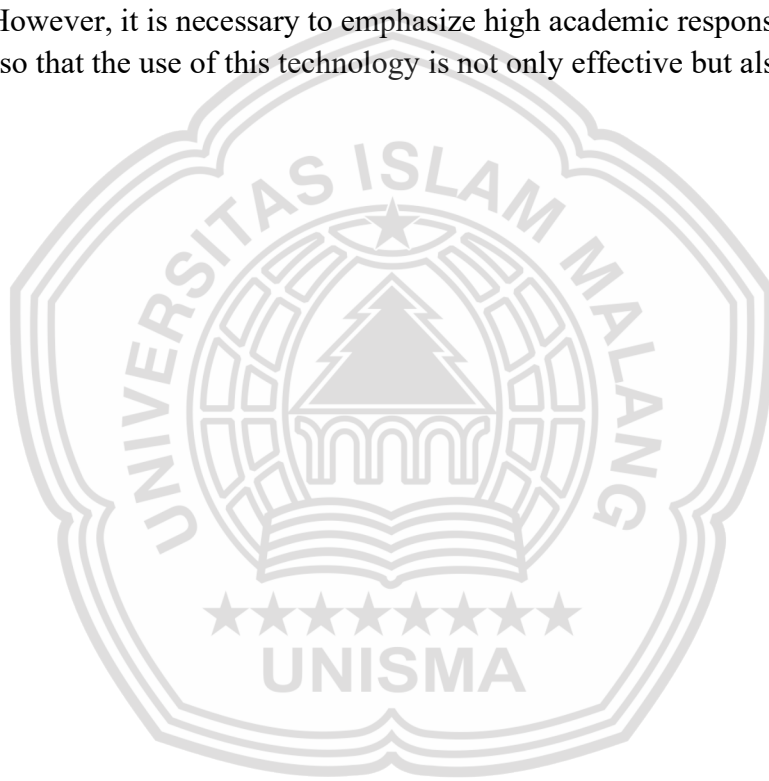
Therefore, this study used a mixed-method design to analyze students' levels of writing anxiety based on gender, types of anxiety, causal factors, and strategies used to overcome it. The participants in this research were 95 seventh-semester English students at Universitas Islam Malang, comprising 61 female and 34 male students. Data collection tools utilized in this research were the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) developed by Cheng (2004), the Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) developed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014), and interview guidelines regarding strategies for dealing with anxiety. Independent t-test analysis was used to evaluate differences in writing anxiety between gender and type of anxiety. Also, descriptive analysis was conducted to identify the main factors contributing to academic writing anxiety. In addition, content analysis was used to explore the various strategies students used to overcome their anxiety.

The results showed several interesting points. In the first finding, there was a significant difference in anxiety levels between female and male students. Female students obtained a mean score of (69.92), indicating a high level of anxiety. In contrast, male students obtained a mean score of (62.44), indicating a moderate level. The second finding showed the dominance of cognitive anxiety, with a significant difference between female students, with an average score of (25.23) and male students, with an average score of (22.62). Somatic anxiety also differed significantly between female students, with an average score of (23.49), and male students, with an average score of (20.18). However, there was no significant difference in anxiety avoidance behavior between female students,

with an average score of (20.97) and male students, with an average score of (19.97).

The third finding showed that linguistic difficulties were the main cause of anxiety in both genders. Also, time pressure was a factor that caused anxiety in female students. In addition, students used various strategies to overcome writing anxiety. They used artificial intelligence to overcome linguistic difficulties, set deadlines as motivation to overcome time pressure and read mentor texts to overcome anxiety due to insufficient writing techniques.

This research implies that diverse approaches to support students in overcoming writing anxiety are essential. One way is through the use of artificial intelligence. However, it is necessary to emphasize high academic responsibility and authority so that the use of this technology is not only effective but also ethical.



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses eight essential topics associated to this research. These eight topics include the research background that provides context, the research problem as the main focus, the objectives, research hypotheses, research significance, and definitions of key terms. This brief overview provides an initial understanding of chapter one and directs the reader to the topics that will be discussed further.

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing is the prioritized skills after speaking skills. It one of the productive skills that utilized to articulate thoughts in written form that reflects language and emotions. As stated by Alharthi (2021), writing involves a thinking process in nurturing ideas and process on how to convey them in writing effectively. Budjalemba and Listyani (2020) also recognized the crucial aspect of writing skills in learning English as a foreign language.

Hence, writing skills have become highly significant for students undergoing higher education in various universities. English Foreign Language (EFL) students should have good writing skills to pass the writing courses during their studies, as emphasized by Kurniasih et al. (2023), including writing paragraphs, essays, academic papers, and theses in English, which they can learn in writing-related courses such as Intensive Course class, Essay Writing class,

Extended Essay class, Research on ELT 1 and 2 class, Seminar on ELT class, and Thesis Writing Seminar class.

Nonetheless, EFL students often face considerable challenges in their attempts to master writing skills in English. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), mastering writing skills requires a thorough understanding of writing conventions, grammar, vocabulary usage, and rhetorical and strategic skills. These challenges can be even more complicated when compared to the use of the native language in writing (Altukruni, 2019).

Therefore, encouraging EFL students to develop skills in academic writing is considered a worthwhile investment. Raimes (1983) noted that improving writing skills has positively impacted students' understanding of grammatical structures, idioms, and new words they have just learned. In addition, in academic writing courses, students can learn to paraphrase, summarize, cite, and make references (Jordan, 2010). It aligned with Ratnawati et al. (2018) that academic writing is necessary for higher-education EFL students to meet academic requirements and meet a degree. Also, writing activities enrich students' intellectual growth, broaden the scope of their cognitive understanding, and improve their language competence (Jamoom, 2021). Thus, academic writing skills have the potential to provide long-term benefits by enriching students' thinking, communication, and academic performance at the university level.

However, academic writing skills in English are often considered difficult because of their complexity. For instance, EFL students face several issues in writing, such as difficulties in finding ideas, errors in grammar, and mechanical

problems (Toba et al., 2019). In addition, Umamah et al. (2019) identified difficulties in writing among Indonesian students studying English as a foreign language, mainly related to grammar, mechanics, organization, content, and writing style.

In line with that, Oshima and Hogue (2007) argued that academic writing is characterized by a formal style, which significantly distinguishes it from personal writing and creative writing. Yanti and Hidayanti (2021) also argued that academic writing often tends to avoid using informal elements such as slang, contractions, and incomplete sentences. Similarly, Kurniasih (2018) emphasized that to create quality written works, students must understand and master various linguistic aspects. In addition, it is necessary to apply correct punctuation, correct spelling, proper mechanics and formulate exciting ideas in their writing. In this process, mastering these aspects plays a crucial role in developing better academic writing skills.

According to Zerubavel (1999), as cited in Khairah and Fatimah (2022), writing should be an embedded routine. Therefore, students should grasp that writing is a process that involves habituation and awareness, and it is more challenging than just having an idea and writing it perfectly. Students who want to write must understand that thinking and writing are two things that are closely related. This situation can cause anxiety in writing, especially in those who lack writing skills and self-confidence. It was proven by Hartono and Arjanggi (2020) that grammar is often the primary source of anxiety in writing, followed by vocabulary problems and a lack of writing practice.

Writing apprehension, as stated by Daly (1978), includes understanding the situation and individual differences in the way people approach or avoid situations that demand to write and evaluate the results of their writing. In addition, as explained by Horwitz et al. (1986), anxiety in foreign languages is a specific form of anxiety limited to specific language-learning situations. Similarly, writing anxiety, as explained by Hassan (2001), is a situation that occurs when a person tends to avoid writing in general and avoid situations that require writing skills for fear of judgment of their writing. Based on Cheng (2002), anxiety in writing is considered a specific anxiety related to language skills.

The above statement is proven by research conducted by Rohmah and Muslim (2021), which found that students generally experience anxiety in writing, an emotion that is difficult to avoid and significantly impacts the learning process. This emotion plays a vital role in determining students' educational success. Therefore, research on anxiety in foreign language learning is essential because it aligns with the findings of Dewaele et al. (2019) that a deep understanding of this anxiety can help improve student learning outcomes.

Meanwhile, according to Cheng (2004), the concept of anxiety in writing includes three main aspects. The first type is somatic anxiety, it involves tension and nervousness about how individuals perceive their bodily reactions in apprehensive situations. The second type is cognitive anxiety that involves negative expectations and worries about the judgment of others, such as teacher expectations in the context of a writing class. The last type is avoidance behavior

anxiety that occurs when individuals deliberately seek ways to avoid writing tasks. These elements are interrelated and can impact students' writing ability and participation in writing activities.

Within the scope of writing anxiety research, researchers have explored various aspects, including variations in the types of writing anxiety, differences in writing anxiety levels derived from factors such as grade level and gender, and efforts to overcome this anxiety. Research on types of writing anxiety is conducted to understand its impact on writing ability and how strategies can be developed to overcome such anxiety. Previous research by Masriani and Wahyuni (2018) revealed moderate writing anxiety levels, with cognitive anxiety becoming the prevalent among third-year students majoring in English at Universitas Negeri Padang. Meanwhile, Putrimiati (2021) research showed lower anxiety levels with cognitive anxiety dominating, focusing on Academic Writing classes in the same department. Another finding by Ramadhanti (2022) showed that English as a foreign language students experienced cognitive and somatic anxiety in academic writing classes.

Furthermore, research on gender about writing anxiety helps us understand whether there are significant differences between female and male students. Previous research has provided mixed results regarding the impact of gender on students' writing anxiety. Some findings indicate that gender has no significant influence on students' writing anxiety, while other studies show that gender significantly impacts students' writing anxiety.

First, research by Al-Kubaisy et al. (2019) showed significant differences in anxiety levels between male and female students in the context of writing anxiety, with female students experiencing higher anxiety levels than male students. In contrast, research by Mulyono et al. (2020) showed that although gender and academic level were recognized, they had an insignificant impact on students' level of writing anxiety. Also, a study carried out by Abdullah et al. (2022), involving postgraduate students from Libya who were studying at various universities in Malaysia, showed that male and female students did not show significant differences in anxiety levels related to written communication.

In addition, research by Kurniasih et al. (2023) compared writing achievement and writing anxiety in relation to gender and examined the relationship between age, writing anxiety, and writing achievement. From the results of the study, it appears that there is no significant difference in the level of writing anxiety between students. Nonetheless, students' writing achievement is still correlated with gender aspects and is not affected by the level of writing anxiety.

The following variable is element factors and coping strategies. Research on the factors that cause writing anxiety helps with coping strategies to improve students' writing ability. Research by Wahyuni et al. (2019) also Rohmah and Muslim (2021) revealed that topic selection problems, linguistic difficulties, and lack of writing practice cause students' writing anxiety. Students adopt various coping strategies, such as preparation, positive thinking, relaxation, seeking peer support, and acceptance.

Moreover, a recent investigation carried out by Afdalia et al. (2023) reported that students used positive self-suggestion, sought credible references, and developed a daily writing habit in simple English to cope with writing anxiety. Also, research by Kurniasih and Saukah (2021) that focused on overcoming EFL students' writing anxiety in Indonesian university contexts through the implementation of teaching strategies by lecturers found that teachers in Indonesian universities responded to students' writing anxiety with various strategies tailored to students' characteristics, such as addressing linguistic difficulties, providing topic knowledge, providing feedback, and conducting writing tests. Teachers also consider students' learning conditions to implement appropriate strategies.

A recent study by Kurniasih et al. (2023a) examined the approaches employed by teachers to alleviate students' writing anxiety, as well as how students perceive these strategies. The findings their analysis indicated various strategies that have been employed by teachers, which include motivating students, creating a pleasing classroom situation, allowing flexibility in topic selection, implementing a writing process approach, utilizing automated feedback tools, and delivering oral and written feedback. Additionally, this study confirmed that students hold a positive perception of teachers' endeavors in reducing online writing anxiety.

Related to the previous explanation, although various previous research studies have investigated some aspects of writing anxiety, this topic is still interesting to discuss because the current research will focus on anxiety towards

academic writing for undergraduate thesis, which certainly has differences in participants, regions, and methods used. This research is targeted to investigate significant correlations between gender, type with the highest level, and certain factors that might lead to students experiencing the anxiety in academic writing, and will find out by exploring more about EFL students' strategies in overcoming anxiety in writing academic writing.

1.2 Research Questions

This study aims to investigate several aspects relevant to academic writing anxiety among EFL student at the Universitas Islam Malang. Four main research questions were addressed in this study.

1. Are there any significant differences in the levels of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang?
2. Are there any significant differences in the types of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang?
3. What are the causing factors of academic writing anxiety among EFL students at Universitas Islam Malang?
4. What are the strategies used by students at Universitas Islam Malang in coping with academic writing anxiety?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In accordance with research questions in the previous section, the researcher wants to identify:

1. the differences in the levels of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang;

2. the differences in the types of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang;
3. the causing factors of academic writing anxiety among EFL students at Universitas Islam Malang; and
4. the strategies used by students at Universitas Islam Malang in coping with academic writing anxiety.

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

Two hypotheses were proposed to address the two main research questions. For research question number 1, which relates to the level of academic writing anxiety, the hypotheses are as follows:

1. null hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant difference in the levels of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at the Universitas Islam Malang.
2. alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is a significant difference in the levels of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at the Universitas Islam Malang.

Meanwhile, for Research Question 2, which relates to differences in types of academic writing anxiety, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

1. null hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant difference in the types of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at the Universitas Islam Malang.

2. alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a significant difference in the types of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at the Universitas Islam Malang.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study has theoretical significance. It can contribute to our understanding of the factors influencing academic writing anxiety and coping strategies among EFL students. Thus, this study can enrich the academic literature on writing anxiety, especially in the gender context. The outcomes of this study can be an additional reference for researchers who will conduct research in the same field, as well as expand the theoretical knowledge in it.

Practically, this research also has significant benefits. The findings also can furnish valuable guidance for English teachers at the Universitas Islam Malang or other educational institutions. They can use the findings to develop more effective learning strategies for addressing academic writing anxiety among English Education majors. Also, by knowing the highest types of academic writing anxiety among EFL students, teachers can design more focused learning programs to help students overcome the specific barriers they face in academic writing. Thus, this study has a direct impact on improving the excellence of education in this environment and enabling students to achieve their better academic potential.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

This investigation furnishes definitions for key terms, so that readers can easily understand the concepts mentioned earlier.

1. *Mixed methods* study is a research approach that integrates the use of qualitative and quantitative methods in one study to gain a more comprehensive or thorough understanding of a research question.
2. *Academic writing* is a type of writing that is formal, objective, and based on in-depth research or analysis. This study intends to understand and overcome anxiety in academic writing faced by final-year students who are in the process of writing an undergraduate thesis at the Universitas Islam Malang.
3. *Writing anxiety* refer to the unfavorable feelings that can affect individuals when attempting to write. In this study, writing anxiety is emphasized in the academic context and divided into three types, namely somatic, cognitive, and avoidance behavior.
4. *Anxiety factors* refer to various elements or conditions that can potentially contribute to the level of academic writing anxiety in EFL students.
5. *Coping strategies* refer to approaches or actions taken by students to cope with or manage the anxiety that arises during the academic writing process.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the research analysis and its discussion. The findings of this study are based on the results of the data that has been collected in accordance with the procedures described in the previous chapter. The results of the analysis are interpreted to provide a deeper understanding.

4.1 Research Findings

The results of this study are based on the analysis of data obtained through the use of questionnaires and interviews with EFL students at the Universitas Islam Malang. The focus of the study includes four main aspects. First, this study aims to identify differences in the level of anxiety in academic writing between male and female EFL students.

Secondly, the study also aimed to identify the differences in the types of anxiety in academic writing between male and female EFL students. Next, the study also analyzed the factors causing academic writing anxiety among EFL students. Lastly, the study investigated the strategies used by EFL students to overcome academic writing anxiety.

1. The differences in the levels of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang

To address the first research question, 95 students from the Universitas Islam Malang, including both male and female students, completed an SLWAI

questionnaire. The tables below provide a detailed explanation of the differences in the level of anxiety in academic writing between male and female EFL students. Moreover, the researcher analyzed and categorized based on indicators of anxiety by Cheng (2004). Independent t-test statistical tools were used to analyze the data, and the results obtained using IBM SPSS 25 are presented in the tables below.

Table 4.1 Levels of Writing Anxiety

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Writing Anxiety	Female	61	69.92	9.807	1.256
	Male	34	62.44	11.848	2.032

The table above provides an overview of the level of writing anxiety based on gender. Data from 61 female and 34 male students were analyzed. From the results of the statistical table above, it can be seen that the average level of writing anxiety for female students is (69.92), while for male students, the average is (62.44). Thus, it can be concluded that female students tend to experience higher levels of writing anxiety compared to male students. The level of writing anxiety for female students is indicated at a high level, while for male students, it is at a moderate level.

Table 4.2 The Difference in Levels of Writing Anxiety

		Independent Samples Test		
			t-test for Equality of Means	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Writing Anxiety Score	Equal variances assumed	.001	7.477	2.264
	Equal variances not assumed	.003	7.477	2.389

The table above presents the results of the analysis regarding the differences in writing anxiety levels between male and female students. From the table, it can be seen that the significance values (Sig.) in both t-test scenarios are very low (0.001) and (0.003), which are smaller than the conventional significance level of (0.05). It means that the analysis results reject the null hypothesis (Ho) that there is no significant difference. In other words, there is a significant difference in the level of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang.

2. The differences in the types of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang

Regarding the second question, the tables below provide a detailed explanation of the differences in the types of anxiety in academic writing between male and female EFL students. Also, the independent t-test statistical tools were used to analyze the data. The results from SLWAI by Cheng (2004) obtained using IBM SPSS 25 are presented in the tables below.

Table 4.3 Types of Writing Anxiety

Type	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean
Cognitive	Female	61	25.23	3.964	.508
	Male	34	22.62	3.726	.639
Somatic	Female	61	23.49	5.464	.700
	Male	34	20.18	6.594	1.131
Avoidance Behavior	Female	61	20.97	2.966	.380
	Male	34	19.79	4.066	.697

The table above analyzes writing anxiety based on gender. First, in the aspect of cognitive anxiety, female students have an average score of (25.23), while male students have an average score of (22.62). Then, in the somatic anxiety aspect, female students also showed a higher average anxiety score of

(23.49), compared to the average score of (20.18) for male students. In addition, in the avoidance behavior anxiety aspect, female students have an average score of (20.97), while male students have an average score of (19.79). Thus, overall, the high average scores on the three aspects of writing anxiety indicate that female students at the Universitas Islam Malang experience higher levels of writing anxiety than male students.

Table 4.4 The Difference in Types of Writing Anxiety

Type	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Cognitive	3.144	93	.002	2.612
Somatic	2.630	93	.010	3.315
Avoidance Behavior	1.613	93	.110	1.173

The table above reveals the results of the analysis of differences in types of academic writing anxiety between male and female students at Universitas Islam Malang. The three types of anxiety measured, namely cognitive, somatic, and avoidance behavior, can be seen that there are significant differences in the first two aspects. A p-value that is smaller than the predetermined significance level (0.05) indicates strong enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

It can be seen that the t-test results for cognitive has a very low p-value of (0.002). It indicates that the difference between male and female students in cognitive anxiety is significantly different. Likewise, the somatic aspect, where the p-value was (0.010), confirmed a significant difference between the two groups in somatic anxiety. However, on the avoidance behavior aspect, the p-value was (0.110), which is greater than the conventional significance level of (0.05). It indicated that the difference in anxiety levels related to avoidance

behavior between male and female students did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected for cognitive and somatic anxiety types but cannot be rejected for avoidance behavior anxiety types. It means that there is a significant difference in cognitive and somatic writing anxiety between male and female students. However, there is no significant difference in anxiety levels related to avoidance behavior.

3. *The causing factors of academic writing anxiety among EFL students at Universitas Islam Malang*

To answer the third question, the tables below explain the factors causing academic writing anxiety among EFL students. The researcher used descriptive statistical tools to analyze the results of the CWAI questionnaire adapted from Rezaei and Jafari (2014) and used criteria based on Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) to measure factors. The results obtained using IBM SPSS 25 are presented in the tables below.

Table 4.5 The Results of CWAI Questionnaire

Descriptive Statistics						
	Items	N	Mean	Total Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Item 1	Fear of teacher's negative comments	95	3.20	3.20	1.293	Moderate
Item 2	Fear of writing tests	95	3.21	3.21	1.193	Moderate
Item 3	Insufficient writing practice	95	3.28	3.28	1.117	Moderate
Item 4		95	3.33		1.125	Moderate
Item 5	Insufficient writing technique	95	3.01	2.98	1.116	Moderate
Item 6		95	2.61		1.17	Moderate
Item 7		95	2.94		1.165	
Item 8	Problems with topic choice	95	3.23	3.09	1.143	Moderate
Item 9	Linguistic difficulties	95	3.71	3.71	0.955	High
Item 10		95	3.28		1.217	Moderate
Item 11	Pressure for perfect work	95	2.77	3.03	1.096	Moderate

Item 12	High frequency of writing assignments	95	3.09	3.09	1.102	Moderate
Item 13	Time pressure	95	3.47	3.47	1.165	Moderate
Item 14	Low self-confidence in	95	3.2	3.06	1.107	Moderate
Item 15	writing	95	2.91		1.247	Moderate

Based on the analysis of the CWAI questionnaire in the table above, it can be concluded that the respondents showed a generally moderate level of anxiety related to several factors of academic writing anxiety. The average level of anxiety, identified from the total mean column, ranges from (2.98) to (3.71). The most striking factor was “Linguistic difficulties” (Item 9), with a mean score of (3.71), which can be categorized as a “High” anxiety level.

Table 4.6 The Results of CWAI Questionnaire Based on Gender Variables

Items	Female	Total Mean	Male	Total Mean
Item 1 Fear of teacher's negative comments	3.49	3.49	2.68	2.68
Item 2 Fear of writing tests	3.41	3.41	2.85	2.85
Item 3 Insufficient writing practice	3.39	3.39	3.09	3.09
Item 4	3.28		3.41	
Item 5 Insufficient writing technique	3.07	3.04	2.91	3.21
Item 6	2.77		2.32	
Item 7	2.93	3.11	2.94	3.03
Item 8 Problems with topic choice	3.30		3.12	
Item 9 Linguistic difficulties	3.75	3.75	3.62	3.62
Item 10	3.44	3.20	3.00	2.70
Item 11 Pressure for perfect work	2.97		2.41	
Item 12 High frequency of writing assignments	3.34	3.34	2.65	2.65
Item 13 Time pressure	3.64	3.64	3.18	3.18
Item 14	3.34		2.94	
Item 15 Low self-confidence in writing	3.02	3.18	2.71	2.82

Table 4.1.6 illustrates the results of the CWAI questionnaire based on gender variables, showing differences in anxiety levels between female and male students. In general, female students showed higher levels of anxiety than male students. For example, in Item 1, “Fear of negative comments,” female students have a mean score of (3.49), while male students have a mean score of (2.68).

Similarly, in Item 2, “Fear of writing tests,” female students had a mean score of (3.41), and male students had a mean score of (2.85). It can be seen from the table above that female students' anxiety levels tend to be higher on Item 9 with a mean score of (3.64) and Item 13 with a mean score of (3.64), while male students show higher anxiety levels on Item 9 with a mean score of (3.62) and the highest moderate level is on the insufficient writing technique items with a mean score of (3.21).

4. The strategies used by students at Universitas Islam Malang in coping with academic writing anxiety

To address the last research question, the researcher conducted interviews with several participants who were selected based on gender and anxiety level. The selection of participants was based on the highest, medium and lowest anxiety levels identified from the quantitative data analysis. The selection criteria also based on gender to ensure balanced representation. The results of the interviews were analyzed using content analysis techniques, in accordance with the method described by Renz et al. (2018). This approach enabled the study to gain an in-depth understanding of the causal factors and coping strategies of academic writing anxiety in EFL students.

Table 4.7 Selected Participants

Participant	Gender	Total Score	Anxiety
MDO	Male	36	Low
DR	Male	55	Moderate
FEA	Male	80	High
UCF	Female	49	Low
DFP	Female	64	Moderate
TDS	Female	87	High

Table 4.8 Summary of Strategies Used to Deal with Writing Anxiety

Factors	Strategies
Fear of teacher's negative comments	Receiving feedback with openness
	Self-calming
	Understanding the lecturer's character
Fear of writing tests	Understanding the research
	Consulting the theory
Insufficient writing practice	Reading books and taking note some vocabulary obtained from social media
	Reading the article comprehensively
	Maximizing writing practice by taking related courses
Insufficient writing technique	Reading many references
	Reading texts mentor
	Integrating technology in writing
Problems with topic choice	Setting the best time for writing
	Adding mood boosters for emotional approach
	Getting access to reputable platform
Linguistic difficulties	Making use of artificial intelligence
Pressure for perfect work	Considering evaluation as an opportunity for improvement
High frequency of writing assignments	Getting relevant articles from lecturers
	Applying reading techniques
	Maintaining a balance between reading and relaxing
Time pressure	Setting deadlines as motivation
	Asking for help from another lecturer
Low self-confidence in writing	Not comparing themselves with peers
	Learning from motivational content
	Doing self-preparation before meeting with advisors

a. Fear of negative comments

In the anxiety factor analysis session, item 1 received a mean score of (3.20), which is at a moderate level. In exploring the understanding of the fear of negative comments, the researcher has found a variety of strategies used by six students with different levels of anxiety.

Receiving feedback with openness

The researcher found an approach that emphasized processing feedback with openness. It incorporates aspects of emotion processing and a focus on improvement. They stated that:

UCF : *“I realized that there might be mistakes in my undergraduate thesis, and I chose to accept the evaluation with an openness. I see it as an opportunity to improve and enhance my undergraduate thesis. ...”*

TDS : *“... Even though her criticism was harsh, I try to see the positive side. Maybe there are things that I can learn from the criticism and evaluation. So, I focus more on learning rather than thinking about what makes me down.”*

DR : *“...I see comments and evaluations as helpful learning, and have gotten used to what may seem like a stern response from the lecturer.”*

MDO : *“... I focus on accepting their feedback, without looking at it too negatively.”*

So, this approach allows individuals to see every comment as an opportunity for learning and improvement, creating a solid foundation to better refine their academic work.

Self-calming

The focus of physical activity to relax is carried out by male student with high anxiety. FEA stated:

FEA : *“Indeed, sometimes there is comments that makes me feel down, but I try to calm myself down by riding a motorcycle while going around to relax myself and restore my spirit. ...”*

FEA used this approach to manage the stress and worry that arise in response to academic criticism. FEA created the necessary pause to calm down and regain enthusiasm by engaging in enjoyable and relaxing activities.

Understanding the lecturer's character

Similarities between DR and DFP in dealing with negative comments and evaluations from their lecturers can be found in their approach to understanding lecturers' characters and having a favorite lecturer as a strategy. DR and DFP share that:

DR : *“So understanding the lecturer’s character is necessary. I am used to her being a detailed and fierce in evaluating my undergraduate thesis. As a result, every detailed guidance became what I was looking for, ...”*

On the other hand, DFP revealed that considering her advisor as her favorite lecturer would make her more welcoming to comments and evaluations.

DFP : *“One of the steps is to choose courses related to my thesis and get guidance from my favorite lecturer... I am more receptive to his comments and evaluation....”*

b. Fear of writing test

In factor analysis, item 2, which discusses the fear of writing tests, gets a mean score of (3.21). Fear of writing tests in this study focuses more on exploring student strategies for overcoming anxiety when asked by lecturers to explain the theories they use.

Understanding the research

Some students focused on understanding the substance of the theory and preparing in advance. They mentioned that the key to success is to prepare before consulting:

MDO : *“Usually by increasing my preparation, one of them is by reading and understanding the theory that I use... it is more important to understand the essence of the theory than just remembering the text in detail.”*

DR : *“Before guidance, I reread my draft to ensure my understanding, and sometimes translate the theory to better understand and not make mistakes.”*

UCF : *“... the key to my success is to really understand what I am writing, so that I understand the meaning and substance of the theory rather than just memorizing the text....”*

TDS : *“Before meeting the lecturer, I usually review the contents of my thesis again and prepare answers to questions that he might ask....”*

DFP : *“... I diligently attended the Thesis Writing Seminar course with guidance from my favorite lecturer to understand more about my research before I meet with my advisor.”*

By understanding the concepts in depth, they are more confident in maintaining their understanding in the long term. It can help them in answering complex or unexpected questions from their advisors.

Consulting the theory

FEA emphasized asking his lecturers for help in understanding the theories he has used. He shared:

FEA : *“For me, I mostly ask my lecturers for advice directly... I feel that I am helped and directed well by my lecturers.”*

FEA chose the strategy of asking for help directly from his lecturers because when asked, he felt that he tended to be blank and could not provide answers independently. In such a situation, asking his lecturers for help can be an effective way to overcome uncertainty.

c. Insufficient writing practice

On the anxiety factor in writing, item 3 is categorized as moderate, with a mean score of (3.28). Researcher found that each student has a various approach because of Insufficient writing practice.

Reading books and taking note some vocabulary obtains from social media

Male student with low writing anxiety emphasized increasing vocabulary by note-taking new vocabulary from various sources. MDO shared:

MDO : *“I focus more on increasing my vocabulary by reading English books and from social media. I like reading novels, that’s why I always note down new vocabulary that I found.”*

Reading the article comprehensively

Reading and understanding articles in depth is a strategy used to improve writing skills in English. When they read an article in depth, they are reading and trying to understand the content thoroughly. FEA and UCF shared:

FEA : *“I always read articles, do reviews, and try to understand the content deeply as an exercise to strengthen my writing skills in English.”*

UCF : *“I also improve my practice by reading relevant journals and utilizing articles from lecturers as inspiration.”*

Maximizing writing practice by taking related courses

Some students were helped by classes related to thesis writing. Research on ELT and Thesis Writing Seminar classes may offer materials and exercises relevant to their research. It can help them deepen their understanding of appropriate research methods and acquire the necessary skills in writing and analyzing data in English. They stated:

TDS : “.... *To overcome the anxiety, I maximize my writing practice for research by joining the Research on ELT course.*”

DR : “.... *I was also helped by studying in the Research on ELT class and Thesis Writing Seminar.*”

UCF : “*To overcome the anxiety caused by the lack of practice in writing in English, I maximized the learning experience in Research on ELT 1 and Thesis Writing Seminar classes....*”

d. Insufficient writing technique

In this context, the results of the analysis of the six respondents showed that certain aspects of their thesis research, such as difficulties in understanding the technique of writing proposals (with a mean score of item number 4 of 3.33), difficulties in paraphrasing and making conclusions (with a mean score of item number 5 of 3.01), as well as concerns in using reference managers (with a mean score of item number 6 of 2.61), were all at a moderate level.

Reading many references

Almost all respondents encountered difficulties finding references and identifying research gaps in writing Chapter 2. TDS commonly used strategies

involved intensive reference reading to overcome uncertainty in preparing thesis proposals. TDS shared:

TDS : *“I had difficulties, especially in chapter 2 of the thesis, like finding references and finding research gaps. So, I read a lot of relevant articles.”*

Reading texts mentor

Respondents also noted the importance of high-quality guidance or references when writing their undergraduate thesis. They used a variety of strategies to find relevant and high-quality references. It helps them find the necessary information to support their thesis arguments and analysis. They shared:

MDO : *“... I also use examples of articles or thesis from seniors with good quality as a benchmark....”*

DFP : *“... My strategy is to be more diligent in finding references, especially by reading articles from lecturers who have similar research areas, because it helps me find references that are relevant to my research topic.”*

Integrating technology in writing

They generally utilize technology and artificial intelligence, such as QuillBot, Chat GPT, and DeepL. However, additional approaches, such as using Indonesian first to develop sentences and manual adjustments, are needed to ensure optimal results in paraphrasing and making inferences. As they expressed:

DR : *“I often use Quillbot as a tool to paraphrase certain sentences. Sometimes I start by writing sentences in Bahasa Indonesia to organize ideas, then I develop them and translate them back into English using*

DeepL. If I'm having trouble, especially when I'm stuck, I utilize Chat GPT to assist in the paraphrasing process.”

MDO : *“I use artificial intelligence like QuillBot. But I still make adjustments by adding words that may not be appropriate or varying my writing style.”*

They generally have no worries when using the reference manager. It was because they were used to using it. As stated by DFP:

DFP : *“I feel no difficulty because I have learned and used to use Mendeley since semester 4 in the writing course.”*

e. Problems with topic choice

In this theme, item 7, which shows the anxiety factor of not knowing what to write, obtained a mean score of (2.94). Also, Item number 8, concerning finding references relevant to the research topic, obtained a mean score of (3.23).

Setting the best time for writing

In the interviews, the researcher found that male respondent with low writing anxiety tended to deal with frustration. MDO emphasized the importance of staying focused, especially in the morning, to ensure optimal writing time.

MDO : *“For me, I try to stay focused. Despite being upset and emotional, I try to use the ideal time to write, especially in the morning. It is because writing at night is sometimes less effective, and that time is better used for rest.”*

Adding mood boosters for emotional approach

The respondents had various strategies for dealing with stress when they did not know what they were going to write, and they improved their mood when

writing their undergraduate thesis. They do fun activities, stopping to write to calm down. They shared:

DR : *“I gave myself a break to release stress by doing fun activities, After feeling calmer and refreshed, I refocused on working on my thesis with a clearer mind.”*

FEA : *“When I do not know what else to write, I stop it. So, I try to calm myself down first before continuing.”*

DFP : *“I increase my enthusiasm by adding mood boosters. I usually buy my favorite food and drinks to enjoy writing my thesis.”*

TDS : *“To add a mood booster, I like to distract myself by watching YouTube or having a little snack, so I can refresh.”*

UCF : *“So I try to calm myself down first before continuing to add my mood boosters.”*

Getting access to reputable platform

In this case, male and female students agreed to rely on reputable platforms such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, Taylor and Francis, and Publish and Perish to find references relevant to their research topics. UCF chooses reliable sources. She mentioned:

UCF : *“In searching for references relevant to my research topic, I use several reliable sources such as ScienceDirect, Taylor and Francis, and Publish and Perish. If I still don't find the desired reference there, I also utilize Google Scholar....”*

f. Linguistic difficulties

The anxiety factor related to linguistic difficulties in this theme showed a high level of anxiety, reaching a mean score of (3.71). To better understand the strategies used to overcome this problem, the researcher highlighted the various approaches recognized by students. In the face of linguistic constraints, students tended to rely on various strategies that included the use of artificial intelligence tools and built-in software features.

Making use of artificial intelligence

In dealing with this problem, the respondents implemented various strategies. UCF, TDS, DFP, and DR mentioned using Grammarly as the main tool. They shared:

UCF : *"I utilize Grammarly and Ginger as tools...."*

In addition, MDO and TDS revealed that besides utilizing Grammarly as a grammar-checking tool, they also used the built-in features of Microsoft Word.

They stated:

TDS : *"...I often use Microsoft Word's built-in tools to check grammar...."*

MDO : *"I use Grammarly and the auto detect grammar feature in Microsoft Word to correct language structures and grammatical errors."*

Some students also use artificial intelligence in the form of translators.

They shared:

DFP : *"... I also utilize DeepL to help translate...."*

FEA : *"... communicating with tools such as ChatGPT to help in translating."*

So, respondents faced linguistic difficulties by applying various strategies, including using tools such as Grammarly, Ginger, Microsoft Word's grammar feature, and artificial intelligence such as DeepL and ChatGPT to check grammar and assist with translation.

g. Pressure for perfect work

Two items represent the theme of the pressure for perfect work factor. Item number 10 discusses the pressure to produce a perfect thesis proposal, getting a mean score of (3.28). In addition, item number 11, about the pressure that arises when the advisor asks to revise the thesis proposal, gets a mean score of (2.77).

Considering evaluation as an opportunity for improvement

In this case, the researcher revealed the similarity of strategies used by students to deal with this pressure. All respondents demonstrated an awareness of the value of critique and revision as an effort to improve the quality of their research. They stated:

FEA : *"I always go with the flow and view comments as constructive. I try not to respond too emotionally but rather focus on the improvement efforts the lecturer desires."*

UCF : *"... I let everything flow and accept whatever comments from the advisor...."*

TDS : *"... I accept suggestions from the advisor gracefully...."*

DR : *"I see revision as an opportunity to improve the quality of my thesis."*

MDO : *“I always try to accept all feedback because I realize that revision can build and improve the quality of my research.”*

DFP : *“When asked by my advisor to revise my thesis proposal, I responded optimally by making revisions with openness to receiving input from the lecturer.”*

h. High frequency of writing assignment

This theme is found in item number 12, which discusses anxiety due to the high frequency of reading articles. The item received a mean score of (3.09). In this session, the researcher has explored the strategies students use to overcome this anxiety.

Applying of reading techniques

There is a tendency to use speed reading techniques, such as skimming and scanning, to streamline reading time effectively. MDO and DFP stated:

MDO : *“I use fast reading techniques such as skimming and scanning. Instead of searching manually, I also utilize the feature in Chrome by pressing CTRL + F to instantly search for the words I need.”*

DFP : *“To overcome anxiety due to the high frequency of reading articles, I implemented a speed-reading technique strategy.”*

Getting relevant articles from lecturers

There is also those who choose to ask her lecturers or seek reference advice directly from them. As expressed by UCF:

UCF : *“...if I have difficulty finding references, I directly ask the lecturer for references or suggestions....”*

Reading relevant articles according to the needs of the thesis context can be an effective strategy in overcoming anxiety. As stated by FEA:

FEA : *“I diligently read articles that are relevant to my undergraduate thesis.”*

Maintaining a balance between reading and relaxing

In addition, there is an effort to maintain a balance between reading and resting. As expressed by TDS and DFP:

TDS : *“... I try to balance between reading articles and taking time to relax. I think it's really important to keep a balance so that I don't get too stressed and stay focused on finding references.”*

DFP : *“When I feel tired, I give myself a short break to refresh my mind before continuing to read”*

DR : *“Because I have poor eyesight and reading continuously can cause fatigue, I took a short break to relax my eyes.”*

i. Time pressure

Item number 13, the anxiety factor due to time pressure in working on thesis proposals, is also the highest factor after item number 9, especially for female students, with a mean score of (3.64). While overall, this factor gets a mean score of (3.47). However, it turns out that deadlines are considered an important motivation.

Setting deadlines as motivation

They realize that tight deadlines can be a driver to increase productivity and focus. They expressed:

MDO : *“With the deadline, it actually makes me more able to get inspiration and be encouraged to immediately work on my undergraduate thesis....”*

UCF : *“I like time pressure because it provides encouragement....”*

Meanwhile, one of the strategies they also used was to set their own deadlines and always follow the schedule provided by the study program. They stated:

TDS : *“... first, I usually make my own deadlines and make a list of tasks that need to be completed. Then, from the campus there is also a schedule for meeting with the advisor, so I always follow that.”*

Asking for help from another lecturers

Also, if she faced difficulties with time constraints due to the advisor's limited availability, she contacts other lecturers for help. As expressed by UCF:

UCF : *“... when facing obstacles, such as the difficulty of meeting with my advisor, especially because of the limited time for the proposal seminar, I took the initiative to ask for help from other lecturers who could provide guidance.”*

j. Low self-confidence in writing

In the theme “Low self-confidence in writing,” there are two statements, namely number 14 regarding low confidence in writing English and number 15, which states that they feel afraid when they must consult the advisor about the thesis proposal. Statement number 14 obtained an average score of (3.20). Meanwhile, item 15, which states that they feel afraid when they have to consult with the advisor about the thesis proposal, gets an average score of (2.91).

Not comparing themselves with peers

In finding strategies, the researcher found a tendency for the answers from the respondents to show some similarities in efforts to increase confidence in writing English. Most respondents, such as FEA, UCF and MDO, try not to compare themselves with peers. They realize that such comparisons can reduce confidence and prefer to focus on personal development. They revealed:

FEA : *“I try to remain consistent in my efforts to improve my own writing skills, without comparing myself with others.”*

DR : *“I am not worried about seeing my friends’ progress. I am quite fast because of consistent guidance support from the lecturer.”*

Learning from motivational content

Many respondents, such as TDS and DR, took steps to learn from trusted sources. It includes reading articles, watching content on social media presented by lecturers who have become content creators on social media, and participating in mentorship to get direct guidance. As expressed by TDS:

TDS : *“... I often read previous articles, and watch content on social media, especially from lecturers who are content creators. They like to share tips, tricks, and motivation in writing a thesis, it really helps to increase my confidence.”*

Doing self-preparation before meeting with advisors

In this session, researchers generally found that preparation, good communication, a positive attitude, and maintaining calmness helped respondents overcome fears when consulting with an advisor. They shared:

TDS : *“When I wanted to consult for the first time, I was really nervous. I was really scared, especially since I wasn't sure about my undergraduate thesis. But now, I overcome it with careful preparation before consultation, being open to criticism from lecturers, and thinking positively.”*

MDO : *“I think fear is natural, but I try not to panic and stay calm. Of course, with preparation before conduct consultation, I also try to understand the preferences and expectations of the lecturer, such as taking notes and paying close attention to what the lecturer explains during the consultation.”*

DR : *“... The key is to build good communication with the advisor, and make sure to always prepare yourself before the consultation.”*

4.2 Discussion

In this section, the researcher discusses the answers to the research problems based on the findings described in the previous section. This section is divided into four parts that discuss specific aspects related to the findings. There are differences in anxiety levels in academic writing based on gender, differences in anxiety on the type of academic writing based on gender, factors that influence writing anxiety, and strategies used by students to overcome anxiety in academic writing.

The findings from the first research question demonstrate that the EFL students at the Universitas Islam Malang have a significant difference in anxiety levels between female students and male students. It has been proven in Table

4.1.1 that the anxiety level of female students is at a high level, with a total score of (69.92). At the same time, a moderate level of anxiety is obtained by male students with a total score of (62.44).

The results of the independent t-test calculation also show a significance level with a calculated p-value of (.001), which is smaller than the set significance level of (0.05). From these findings, in this study, the analysis rejects the null hypothesis (H_0), which stated that there is no significant difference. Instead, this study supports the alternative hypothesis (H_a), indicating a significant difference in the level of academic writing anxiety across genders at the Universitas Islam Malang.

The results of the first research question in this study are supported by the findings of previous studies that show significant differences between genders in the level of writing anxiety. For example, research conducted by Al-Kubaisy et al. (2019) found that there is a significant difference between genders, where female students tend to have higher anxiety levels than male students. Similar findings were also found in a study by Salikin (2019), which stated that female students tend to have higher anxiety levels than male students.

Although the findings of this study support the existence of significant differences between genders in writing anxiety levels, some previous studies show the opposite or insignificant results. For example, a study by Kurniasih et al. (2023) and Rasool et.al (2023) found that there was no significant difference between female and male students in writing anxiety levels. Similarly, research by

Mulyono et al. (2020), Abdullah et al. (2022), Hartono and Arjanggi (2020) and Quvanch and Na (2022) noted that their results showed moderate levels of anxiety with no significance in writing anxiety levels between the two genders.

Furthermore, the findings of the second research problem showed that female students consistently showed higher average scores in the aspects of cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior anxiety compared to male students. The results also indicated that the type of anxiety in writing was dominated by cognitive, followed by somatic, and with a low score belonging to avoidance behavior anxiety.

In addition, the findings of the second research problem indicate that there are significant and insignificant differences in writing anxiety based on gender. Significant differences were found in cognitive anxiety type with p-value (.002) and somatic with p-value (.010). In contrast, the insignificant difference lies in the behavioral avoidance type with a p-value of (.110).

The findings from previous research also support the findings of the second research question of this study. For example, the study from Rezaei and Jafari (2014), Salikin (2019), Rabadi and Rabadi (2020), Quvanch and Na (2022), Khairah and Fatimah (2022), Kurniasih et al. (2023b), Rasool et.al (2023) and Afdalia et al. (2023) showed that cognitive anxiety also being the most influenced anxiety among students followed by somatic and avoidance behavior. However, this study is contrast with several studies that have proven that somatic anxiety and avoidance behavior anxiety are the most common types of writing anxiety among

students (Al-Kubaisy et al., 2019; Mulyono et al., 2020; Prasetyaningrum et al., 2021).

Further to this, regarding the third research problem, the researcher found that linguistic factors were the leading cause of anxiety experienced by both female and male students, with a total mean score of (3.71), which was categorized as the most dominant factor. In addition, the results also noted that the time pressure factor was the second-highest anxiety factor for female students, with a total mean score of (3.64). It is also the second-highest factor with a moderate level of (3.47) for both female and male students.

This finding is supported by several studies which also found that linguistics is the main factor causing anxiety in writing. As seen in studies by Wahyuni et al. (2019), Puspita (2019), Rabadi and Rabadi (2020), Khairah and Fatimah (2022), and Kurniasih et al. (2022). The linguistic difficulties that cause writing anxiety can be attributed to the influence of their first language and the differences in grammatical structures between their native language and English. Rohmah and Muslim's (2021) research has proven that a lack of understanding of grammar rules and limited vocabulary are the main factors that make learners feel anxious about writing. It can complicate the writing process and increase anxiety levels when expressing themselves in a different language.

Also, several studies have found that time pressure is a triggering factor for writing anxiety, such as studies by Prasetyaningrum et al. (2021) and Kurniasih et al. (2022). However, to overcome writing anxiety caused by time

pressure, teachers can implement a 'semi sit-in' writing test, which has been shown to help students improve writing speed and write better, as shown in the study by Kurniasih et al. (2018). In addition, teachers can also implement a process approach to writing that involves providing treatment according to the stages of writing, from planning to publishing. It has significant effect on students' writing anxiety and their performance (Kurniasih et al., 2020).

Moreover, in the last research question, the interviews with six participants, which included both male and female students with low, medium, and high levels of anxiety, provided an overview of the different strategies they employed. As found in the previous section, the highest anxiety factors are linguistic difficulties and time pressure. Then, after recognizing that the primary anxiety factor in writing is linguistic difficulty, the researcher found from the interviews that the standard approach used by the participants involved artificial intelligence tools such as Grammarly, Ginger, and Microsoft Word's built-in features. Some participants also utilized artificial intelligence as translators, such as DeepL and ChatGPT, for tasks such as expanding and paraphrasing.

Thus, the variety of approaches taken by participants in overcoming linguistic difficulties highlights the critical role of artificial intelligence tools. This finding is supported by several studies that also found that artificial intelligence is a strategy for overcoming problems in writing anxiety. For example, the study conducted by Setyani et al. (2023) showed that the use of the Grammarly application positively affected students' confidence in writing a thesis. The findings are also supported by Alam et al. (2023), who stated that Grammarly can

be a worthwhile tool to increase students' writing abilities. Also, the findings from research by Kurniasih and Saukah (2021) stated that students were permitted by the lecturers to use online dictionaries and Grammarly to cope with their linguistic challenges.

Besides, applying DeepL, especially in formal writing activities, significantly improved students' language skills, demonstrating its positive potential in learning English as foreign language (Polakova et al., 2023). Also, the results from Hawanti and Zubayduloevna (2023) showed that the use of AI chatbot-based instruction, specifically with ChatGPT, in learning to write can reduce students' anxiety as it can provide instant feedback and provide flexibility in learning time.

Furthermore, in the interview results, the researcher found that the second-highest anxiety factor experienced by female students when facing time pressure was revealed through various facts revealed by the participants. One of the strategies expressed was setting deadlines as motivation, including following the schedule provided by the study program and setting their own deadlines. In addition, if they experience difficulties with time pressure due to the difficulty of meeting with the advisor, they actively seek help by contacting other lecturers who can provide guidance. The importance of deadlines is recognized as a driver to get inspiration and improve performance, as expressed by some students with low writing anxiety. Thus, although time pressure can be a factor that causes anxiety, it is considered an essential motivator in completing academic tasks.

The results from the interview of this study also supported the results from the research by Afdalia et al. (2023) that to reduce anxiety due to time pressure, students can make a schedule as a target to help overcome procrastination and time pressure when writing. Also, discussing with lecturers or seeking expert advice are valuable tips if students struggle under time pressure. Study by Rohmah and Muslim (2021) found that limited time can encourage students to complete tasks efficiently, as the pressure can increase their focus and productivity.

In the context of moderate levels of anxiety factors, some effective coping strategies can be considered that respondents are already implementing. Insufficient writing practice got the mean score of (3.28), the highest mean score at the moderate level. Some students emphasized reading the article comprehensively, while others chose to reading books and note some new vocabulary obtained from social media. Interestingly, classes that focused on academic writing, such as Research on ELT, proved to make a positive contribution to overcoming their writing anxiety. It aligned with a study by Kurniasih et al. (2023a), which showed that increasing the frequency of writing activities can reduce students' writing anxiety. Thus, an emphasis on writing activities, especially in academic writing, such as Research on ELT, make a positive contribution to overcoming writing anxiety.

The second highest mean score of the moderate writing anxiety factor was fear of writing tests, with a score of (3.21). The main focus was exploring ways to overcome anxiety when lecturers asked them to explain the theory they were

using. Some respondents directed attention to understanding the research and preparation before consulting, while others chose to consulting the theory with their advisors. It aligns with the findings of Kurniasih et al. (2023a), who emphasized the importance of positive support from lecturers and confidence-building learning in overcoming writing anxiety, especially concerning fear of evaluation and exams.

The third factor was fear of teachers' negative comments with the mean score of (3.20). Strategies for overcoming the fear of negative comments involved accepting evaluations as learning opportunities with openness. Interestingly, although with different levels of anxiety, it was agreed that seeing comments as a means of improvement was essential. Some also emphasized the importance of physical activity to relax, while others focused on understanding the lecturer's character and having the lecturer as a favorite lecturer as an approach to dealing with negative comments. It is in line with the findings by Kurniasih et al. (2023a) that teachers can help to encourage students to openly accept comments and feedback to increase their confidence and help reduce fear when writing.

The fourth factor was a problem with the topic choice and high frequency of writing assignments; both of them got a mean score of (3.09). In coping with the anxiety of not knowing what to write, strategies involved emotional approaches, such as morning focus, adding mood boosters by eating their favorite food, distracting the mind, or giving time to rest. Both male and female students agreed that finding relevant references involved relying on leading platforms such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, Taylor, Francis, and Publish and Perish.

Besides, trying to preserve a balance between reading and resting, using Chrome features, and consulting with lecturers can help alleviate their anxiety. It is in line with research by Kurniasih et al. (2023a), who showed that practical approaches and emotional strategies, such as relying on reliable reference sources and providing sufficient time, were associated with reducing writing anxiety. Apart from that, the strategies used by students to overcome anxiety due to the high frequency of reading articles involve fast reading techniques, namely skimming and scanning. It was proven that skimming and scanning strategies can efficiently reduce the time required when performing reading tasks (Fatmawan et al., 2023). Also, it was found that several respondents emphasized the importance of focusing on reading that is relevant to specific academic goals and paying attention to the balance between reading and resting, similar to suggestions from research conducted by Rahmawati and Dzulfikri (2022), which highlighted the importance of choosing reading material that suits the readers' interests and needs and ensuring that they enjoy the process read.

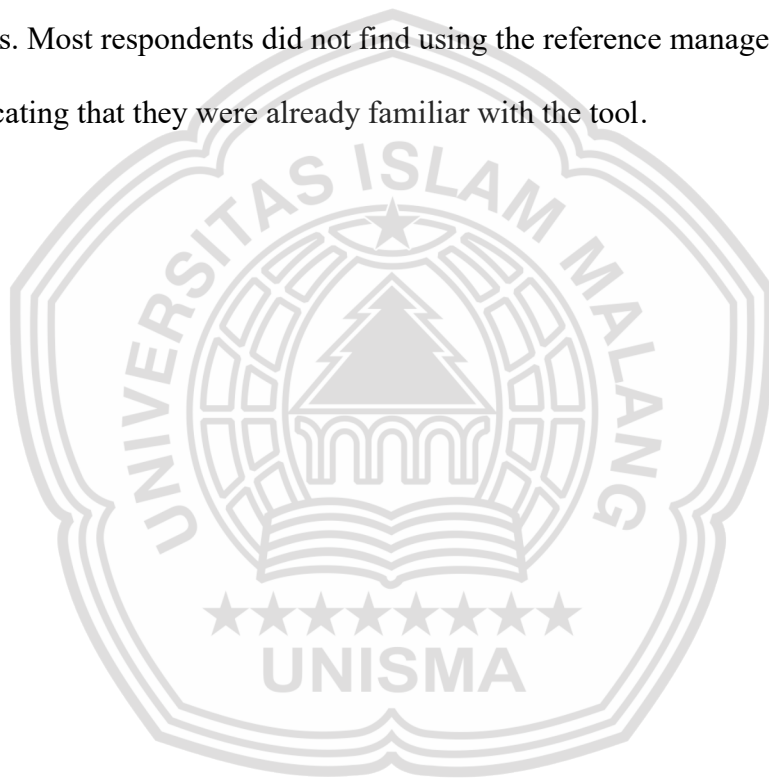
Then, the fifth factor was low self confidence in writing with the mean score of (3.06). Coping strategies for low self-confidence in English writing involve not comparing themselves with peers and focusing on self-development. It is aligned with study by Kurniasih et al. (2023a), which highlighted a focus on self-development as a similar step to the use of "positive self-talk" proposed by teachers. In addition, they reading more articles, getting direct guidance through advisors, and they also tend to learn from motivational content, such as following the social media content of content creators' lecturers. In addition, careful

preparation before consultation, good communication with lecturers, a positive attitude, and maintaining calm during undergraduate thesis consultation are strategies for overcoming this anxiety.

Furthermore, the pressure of perfect work factor got a mean score of (3.03). The strategy of dealing with the pressure to produce a perfect thesis proposal and coping with the pressure of revision is an awareness of the value of criticism and revision as opportunities to improve the quality of research. All respondents demonstrated openness and receptivity to suggestions from advisors, seeing revision as a positive opportunity to improve and refine their undergraduate thesis. This finding agree that teachers can encourage students to be open to comments and feedback to help overcome their anxiety or fears (Kurniasih et al., 2023a).

The last factor was insufficient writing technique, with a mean score of (2.98). Common strategy was intensive reading of references. Also, the use of examples of articles or theses from seniors who are considered to be of good quality becomes one of the benchmarks. This approach reflects their efforts to understand the quality standards and structures of writing that are considered successful so as to guide them in composing their undergraduate thesis proposal. It aligns with the results of the study by Kurniasih et al. (2023a) that teachers can ask students to compare writing characteristics, which can additionally assist or aid students in overcoming anxiety and improving their technical skills in writing.

In addition, there are findings from this study that are in line with the findings by Kurniasih et al. (2022) that students, when writing, start by writing sentences in Indonesian first organize ideas, then they develop and translate them back into English. Then, some respondents also relied on technology and artificial intelligence, such as QuillBot, GPT Chat, and DeepL, to help paraphrase and make inferences. Nonetheless, they still make manual adjustments to ensure optimal results. Most respondents did not find using the reference manager difficult, indicating that they were already familiar with the tool.



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