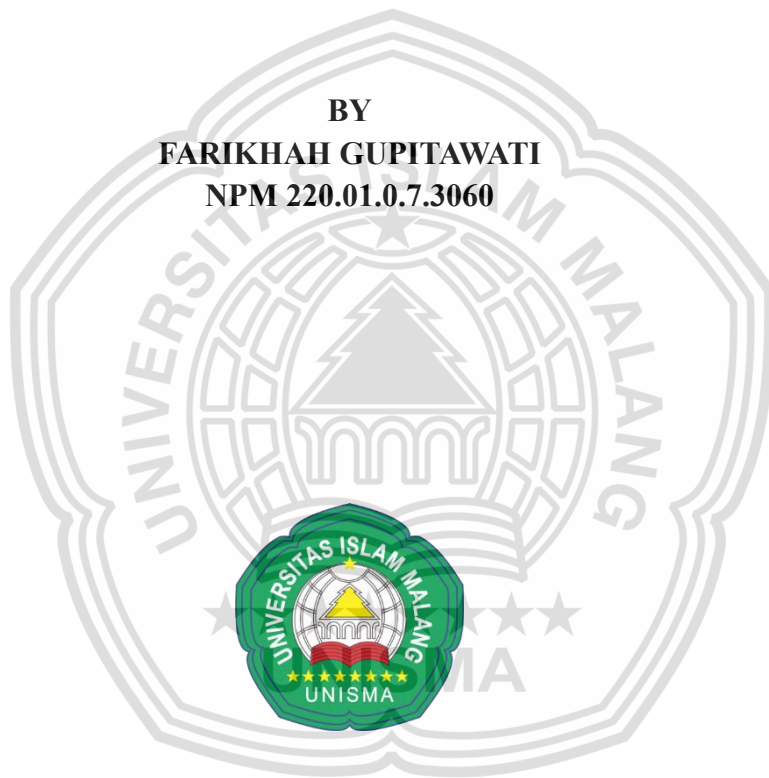# THE INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE TEST ANXIETY ON STUDENTS TEST OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (TEP): A COMPARATIVE STUDY

SKRIPSI

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THE INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE TEST ANXIETY ON STUDENTS TEST OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (TEP): A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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BY

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ABSTRACT

Gupitawati, Farikhah. 2023. *The Influence of Cognitive Test Anxiety on Students Test of English Proficiency (TEP): A Comparative Study*. Skripsi, English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Islam Malang. Advisor I: Kurniasih, M.A.; Advisor II: Hamiddin, S.Pd., M.Pd.

Keywords: cognitive test anxiety, Test of English Proficiency, Second language

One indicator of successful foreign language competency is the TOEFL score exam. Taking the TOEFL exam is a challenging task. To get the best outcomes a lot of preparation is required. Learning a foreign language frequently causes mental obstacles for many people. Anxiety is one of the many challenges that students face when taking the TOEFL exam. In this study, TEP is a TOEFL prediction simulation using PBT. Test of English proficiency, abbreviated as TEP, is an English test explicitly used for an institution or as academic or non-academic needs with a certificate issued by the institution. This study focused on the influence of cognitive test anxiety on students when facing the Test of English Proficiency. The study aims to determine how much influence cognitive test anxiety has on the Test of English Proficiency.

The methodology for this study is quantitative. Descriptive quantitative and causal-comparative research designs are employed by the investigator. There are 85 students in the 7th semester of the English Education Department at Universitas Islam Malan participated as respondents in this study. Participants answer the questionnaire on Google Forms using a purposive sampling technique. This research uses the instrument Cognitive Test Anxiety Scale (CTAS). Quantitative data from the questionnaire were examined utilizing SPSS version 26.

This study found that the level of cognitive test anxiety among students is moderate. In addition, researchers also found that the higher the level of cognitive test anxiety among students, the lower the students' TEP scores. This study also revealed a considerable influence of cognitive test anxiety on TEP. For further research analyze several factors or reasons that can lead to low anxiety levels among students.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this section, the researcher will discuss the background of the study, research question, objective of the study, hypothesis, assumption, scope and limitation, significance of the study, and definition of key terms. A more complete explanation is below:

1.1. Background of the Study

Test of English as a Foreign Language, called TOEFL, is an international standardized exam accustomed to measuring the speaker`s proficiency in English. This exam was first developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in 1964. Since then, TOEFL has significantly changed (Rahman & Purwaningtyas, 2023). The world widely accepts TOEFL as proof of English proficiency for students. This exam has become one of the standards in college entrance selection and the assessment of English proficiency in the global work environment. Since then, many governments and academic institutions have required a TOEFL certificate to prove English proficiency. Some skills tested on TOEFL are Listening Comprehension, English Structure, Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Writing Ability (Raimes,1990). In addition, by taking the TOEFL test, a person will be assessed as capable or not in English (Hidayanti et al., 2021)

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In another case, TOEFL is also a requirement to continue education abroad. Several campuses apply the TOEFL test as a condition for receiving scholarships. Even some foreign scholarships also require sufficient TOEFL test scores to be accepted for the scholarship. Because TOEFL dramatically influences the world of education, many people strive to achieve satisfactory TOEFL scores. TOEFL is divided into two types: TOEFL Paper-Based Test (PBT) and TOEFL Computer-Based Test (CBT). But at the end of 2005, TOEFL CBT was changed to TOEFL iBT (internet-based Test), first released in the USA, Canada, France, Germany, and Italy. Then until now, TOEFL has been divided into TOEFL iBT and TOEFL PBT (Alderson, 2009).

The total score for the TOEFL iBT score, on a scale of 0-30 for Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing, is 120. TOEFL iBT has various types of questions and the duration of work. In the reading skill, the duration of doing questions is 60-100 minutes, with an average of 39 questions. On listening problems, there is a deadline of about 2-3 minutes per 500–800 words. The speaking test consists of 6 tasks, where in 2 tasks, participants will explain opinions on pretty common topics. In the other four tasks, participants said based on what participants heard and participants read. In writing skills, participants will do two tasks. In the first task, participants were given 30 minutes to write an essay about their opinions. In the second task, participants will be given 20 minutes to summarize a short text of 200-300 words. The brief text is about academic topics; participants will also listen to speakers on the same topic (Alderson, 2009).

Paper Based Testing is a test that uses paper for the exam. The duration of TOEFL PBT is 2 hours and consists of 3 skill exams: Listening comprehension, Structure and Written Expression, and Reading Comprehension. The first section is listening comprehension, with 40 minutes to do 50 questions. Listening comprehension is divided into three sections. Participants will listen to a short conversation in the first section with 30 questions. The

second section consists of 8 questions, and participants will listen to a rather lengthy conversation. The last section has 12 questions; participants will hear seminars or discussions between lectures and students. The following skills tested on TOEFL PBT are Structure and Written Expression. Participants will be given 25 minutes to answer 40 questions. In the first type of question, participants will work on incomplete sentences, and in the second question type, participants will work on error analysis. The following skill tested on TOEFL PBT is reading comprehension. Participants will be given 55 minutes to answer 50 questions in this skill. There are about 250-300 words in each text script that participants must read and understand (Heriansyah, 2016).

The TOEFL test is one measure of successful proficiency in foreign languages. Facing the TOEFL test is a challenging matter. It takes a lot of preparation to produce maximum results. Many people experience mental barriers when learning a foreign language. There are various obstacles encountered by students when facing the TOEFL test, one of which is anxiety. Study has consistently shown that anxiety is a significant obstacle for TOEFL test-takers (Muliawati, 2020; Ramadhiyah, 2018). Halim (2018) identifies personal traits such as lack of basic skills, practice, and motivation as key difficulties in answering test questions. Some of these hurdles can make students anxious. People with this disorder find it challenging to succeed in a foreign language. The most common disorder is anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). Muliawati et al., (2020) mention someone who experiences anxiety starts from feelings of excessive nervousness and that people who experience high anxiety will feel symptoms such as threats, stress, and burden. Ramadhiyah & Sukyadi, (2018) mentioned in his research that feeling anxious is akin to the terror of failure and incompetence towards oneself.

Having feelings of anxiety will certainly be very disturbing to the sufferer. Anxiety can also occur for students who will take tests or exams (Muliawati et al., 2020). Anxiety is a

feeling that includes nervousness and worry that occurs in the autonomic nervous system (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). So that someone who experiences anxiety feels uncomfortable with all the circumstances that arise. Someone who shares anxiety will feel several symptoms. Some symptoms include empty thoughts that cause sufferers to have difficulty concentrating and negative thoughts. When someone is blank in their mind and has difficulty focusing during exams, it also has an impact on the student's ability to answer questions, such as being nervous when going to respond and afraid of being ng (Sunarti et al., 2019). Anxiety can also occur in students who write, as mentioned by Kurniasih (2018) revealed that there is a significant correlation between students' writing anxiety and writing performance.

Spielberger (in Fattahi & Cuocci, 2022) revealed that trait anxiety has stable characteristics over a long period. Then, state anxiety is anxiety that persists for a temporary time and under certain circumstances. This state of anxiety can occur when a person is about to speak or take an exam. Trait anxiety has several effects, such as disrupting a person's cognitive function, disrupting one's memory, and several other effects (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989 in Eysenk, 1979). MacIntyre & Gardner, (1991) Mention in their research on trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. In the study, in testing situation-specific anxiety, researchers tested respondents by trying anxiety reactions when speaking in public, writing exams, doing math exams, and participating in French language classes. Based on this, it states that according to the first perspective, anxiety is a generalized personality feature that applies to a variety of circumstances. The experience of worry as an emotional state in the present moment has relevance to the second perspective. The third perspective looks at specific types of worry that often reappear occasionally in particular circumstances. Several previous studies also mentioned the effect of anxiety on TOEFL test students. Such as research conducted by Muliawati et al., (2020) stated that 80% of students experience moderate anxiety levels before and when facing the TOEFL test. Another study by

Ramadhiyah & Sukyadi, (2018)noted that high-achiever test takers are better at solving their problem of test anxiety. In addition, another study revealed that TOEFL anxiety and TOEFL test performance had a high correlation (Sunarti et al., 2019)

Another study comparing two genders (male and female) revealed that females had higher cognitive test anxiety than males when facing the secondary school examination. Then, cognitive test anxiety has a moderate relationship with secondary school examination student's performance. Then, there is a negative impact of cognitive test anxiety on student execution during exams. The negative impact of cognitive test anxiety on students' performance on exams, and that 10% of the variation in students' exam performance was attributable to their cognitive test anxiety. It can be concluded that there is a considerable connection between cognitive test anxiety and the total score on secondary school examinations (Ali et al., 2021). A study conducted by Woldeab & Brothen, (2019) revealed that students who have the high-trait anxiety test had a low score, and this also applies to students who have high test anxiety when facing the Proctored Assessments online exam.

Another study conducted Kurniasih, Hidayanti, et al., (2023) explains there was no significant difference in writing anxiety between boys and girls. In addition, this research also showed that gender significantly affects students' writing achievement greater than anxiety. Further research Kurniasih, Cahyono, et al., (2023) revealed that in terms of types of anxiety, second and third-year students face three types of anxiety, namely avoidance, somatic anxiety, and cognitive anxiety. This study shows learners' writing anxiety in English writing is determined by their concerns about other people's perceptions of their writing. Another study conducted Hidayanti & Azami, (2022) regarding strategies to alleviate student anxiety when learning listening shows that EFL students experience high anxiety when listening to native speakers.

Previous research has demonstrated that anxiety is widespread among students who will face exams and has an impact on student achievement. Some studies also mention that anxiety can occur in English writing. From previous research that discussed the influence of anxiety on the Test of English proficiency, there are still a few or rare publications that examine the influence of cognitive test anxiety on a test of English proficiency. This study focused on cognitive test anxiety students when facing the Test of English Proficiency because there are still few studies that use cognitive test anxiety to ascertain the level of cognitive test anxiety of students when facing the Test of English proficiency.

1.2 Research Question

1. What are the levels of cognitive test anxiety of the students?

2. Does student cognitive test anxiety have any significant effect on TEP scores?

3. Is there any significant difference in the TEP scores of students with different levels of cognitive test anxiety?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:

1.1 To find out the level of cognitive test anxiety students

1.2 To find out the effect of cognitive test anxiety on the TEP test

1.3 To analyze the significant difference in TEP scores of students who had low, medium, and high cognitive test anxiety.

1.4 Hypothesis

Researchers formulated the hypothesis in this study as follows:

1. Alternative Hypothesis

There is a significant effect of anxiety in the TEP scores, and there is a significant difference in students who had low, medium, and high cognitive test anxiety.

2. Null Hypothesis (H^0)

There is no significant effect of anxiety in the TEP scores, and there is no significant difference in students who had low, medium, or high cognitive test anxiety.

1.5 Assumption

In this study, researchers assume that cognitive test anxiety is linked to TEP. Researchers assume that there is a significant effect of anxiety on students' TEP scores. Students who have high cognitive test anxiety scores have low TEP scores, and students who have low cognitive test anxiety scores have high TEP scores.

1.6 Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical

For the researchers who also researched the same topic, this study can add more literature about the influence of cognitive test anxiety on student English proficiency tests.

2. Practical

This study is expected to give references for English educators in general about the influence of cognitive test anxiety on student tests of English proficiency. In addition, for English learners, the result of this study can give insight into the effect of cognitive test anxiety on students' English proficiency tests so that students can know the impact of cognitive test anxiety on students' English proficiency tests.
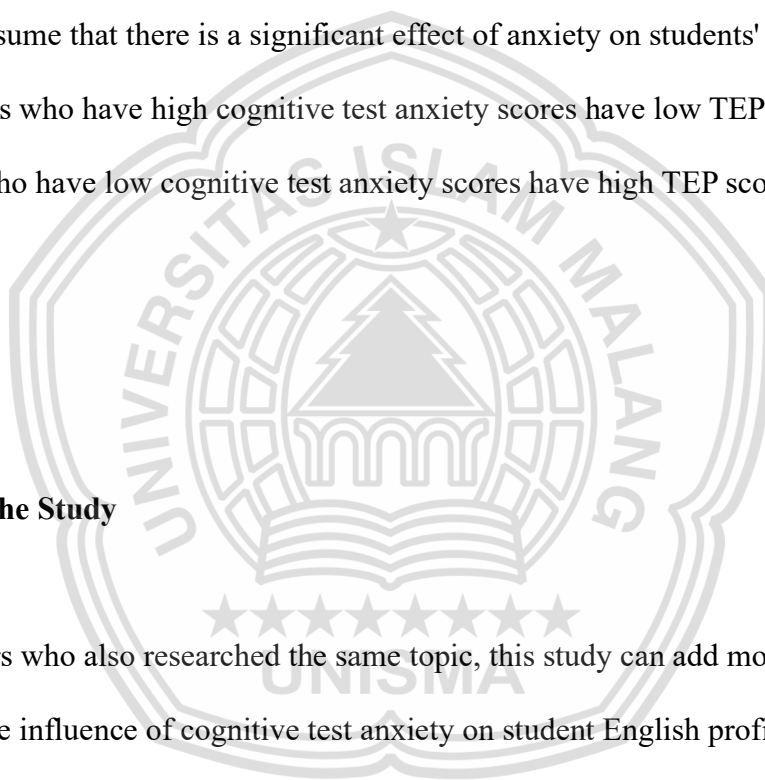
1.7 Scope and Limitation

The researcher emphasizes several points for the data and research topics to be more specific. In this research, researchers discussed the Test of English Proficiency (TEP) using a sample of English language education students of the Universitas Islam Malang 7th semester. In the 7th semester, students have been assessed as capable of facing the TEP test, and at the Universitas Islam Malang, 7th-semester students need to take the TEP test as a graduation requirement.

The research is focused on analyzing the level of cognitive test anxiety and students' TEP scores in the 7th semester of the English Education Department of Universitas Islam Malang. This study has several shortcomings, such as researchers distributing questionnaires online and not accompanying participants, which affects the questionnaire results. Researchers used the Cognitive Test Anxiety Scale (CTAS) questionnaire, and researchers have not conducted reliability and validity on the questionnaire, which may have an impact on the questionnaire results.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Several key terms are explained in this study to facilitate understanding.

1) Anxiety

    Anxiety in this study is a negative feeling that can disturb a person by students when facing tests, especially tests of English proficiency at Universitas Islam Malang. Participants in this study were 7th-semester students who took the Test of English Proficiency.

2) Cognitive Test Anxiety

    Cognitive test anxiety This study examines the anxiety that students face before, during, and after facing the Test of English proficiency at Universitas Islam Malang. This study

had 24 question items to determine a person's cognitive test anxiety level. Participants in this study were 7th-semester students who took the Test of English Proficiency.

3) Test of English Proficiency (TEP)

In this study, the English test used the Test of English Proficiency managed by FLDC (Foreign Language Development Center) in one university in Malang. TOEFL is a trademark whose use cannot be used carelessly. Therefore, the term TEP is used in the Universitas Islam Malang. In this study, TEP is a TOEFL prediction simulation using PBT. Test of English proficiency, abbreviated as TEP, is an English test explicitly used for an institution or as academic or non-academic needs with a certificate issued by the institution. Some of the skills tested in TEP are listening comprehension, with a duration of 35 minutes and 50 multiple-choice questions; structure and writing expression, with a duration of 25 minutes and 40 points of multiple-choice questions; and reading comprehension, with a duration of 55 minutes and 50 multiple choice questions. TEP, managed by the foreign language development center of the Universitas Islam Malang, has several graduation assessment criteria. The passing score for English Language Education students is 525. Participants in this study were 7th-semester students who took the Test of English Proficiency. Thus, this study will use the term TEP.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter, the researcher presents the conclusion and suggestions for lecturers and future researchers about the influence of cognitive test anxiety students toward TEP.

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the results of the research about the influence of cognitive test anxiety students on Tests of English Proficiency, the existence of this large influence is because most students majoring in English Education who take the English proficiency test have a moderate level of anxiety caused by doubts and uncertainty in answering questions on the TEP. The researcher concludes that there is a significant difference in cognitive test anxiety among students toward the TEP and it has a considerable influence. Then there is a considerable influence of cognitive test anxiety on the TEP of students, this has an impact on the results of the TEP score. When the student's cognitive test anxiety level is low, the student's TEP score is high. When the student's cognitive test anxiety level is high, the student's TEP score is low. Furthermore, all three groups of cognitive level anxiety test students showed that there is a significant difference in the TEP.

5.2 Suggestions

5.2.1 Lecturers

Although The result of this study is the existence of a large influence of cognitive test anxiety on the TEP, the researcher suggests that English educator pay more attention to student conditions, especially in the aspect of cognitive test anxiety which is indicated to have a considerable influence on the TEP. Lecturers can focus on strategies for overcoming cognitive test anxiety experienced by students when facing TEP, lecturers can also provide

direction and advice to students in answering TEP. Lecturers can provide an overview and mechanism of TEP to students. This research can be an insight for English educators as a reference in recognizing the influence of cognitive test anxiety on the TEP.

5.2.2 Students

Students are expected to be more careful and confident in choosing answers when taking the English proficiency test. In addition, the results of this study reveal that the level of cognitive test anxiety in students is moderate and has a significant effect on sustainability when taking the English proficiency test, so researcher recommend that students be calmer and understand the mechanism of the English proficiency test to get maximum results.

5.2.3 Future Researchers

There are several recommendations for future research that can be continued based on the topic of this study. Based on the limitations of the problem in this study, future researchers can further develop research subjects in high school students or take participants who take the English proficiency test for the benefit of overseas scholarships. The research conducted focuses on investigating the impact of cognitive test anxiety on the TEP it is hoped that in the future, researchers can expand the scope of the relationship between cognitive test anxiety and the TEP. In addition, the study found that the lack of confidence among students when facing the exam greatly influenced the effect of cognitive test anxiety on TEP. Therefore, future researchers can explore the relationship between self-confidence, anxiety, and TEP more broadly, while analyzing several factors or reasons that can lead to low anxiety levels among students. This can help develop strategies to reduce cognitive test anxiety.

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