

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of this research, research questions, research purposes, the significances of this research, the conceptual framework, and previous studies.

A. Background

Several academic researchers report that lack of confidence, motivation for achievement, self-efficiency, and a sense of anxiety negatively influence EFL performance (Sabti & Rashid, 2019). The study by Sabti & Rashid (2019b) found that 54.0% of 100 EFL students English Education Department in Iraq had a high level of writing anxiety, and 63.0% of them have a low motivation for writing. Therefore, the reports raise the question of whether this issue arises in various writing classes around the world, including Indonesia.

Moreover, writing is seen by many ESL and EFL writers as a complex task because of its intricate character combined with a lack of vocabulary in their repertoire of writers and a handicap with their grammatical knowledge of the English language (Sabti & Rashid, 2019). Meanwhile, Jennifer (2017) notes that writing is a cognitive linguistic activity involving higher comprehension of thinking so that concepts can be organized and thoughts can be articulated in a more comprehensible way. Thus, EFL students can have difficult, anxious, or even stressful writing experiences that vary between students (Alico, 2016).

Furthermore, writing anxiety is defined as an emotional type of fear, self-confidence loss, and people's motivation to write (Suryoputro et al. 2020). It is because, writing is perceived as a tough ability (Umam, 2017). On the other hand, Ariyanti (2017) says that anxiety is like a virus that affects the students' learning performance. This is harmful to the improvement of students and imposes a clear barrier to thinking.

Following the announcement of the pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, educational institute closures were immediately considered (Mahmood, 2021). For this reason, teaching and learning activities are moving from traditional face-to-face education to emergency remote learning to reduce the spread of the

virus. Furthermore, writing during pandemics becomes more difficult. The field view is reduced because the media and everyday conversation focus on the effects of the pandemic.

Related to writing anxiety issues and the COVID-19 pandemic situation, a preliminary observation found that 84.3% of 70 fourth semester students English Education Department of Islamic State University in Bandung felt anxieties during online writing classes. They begin to learn online writing courses since the first time they become students of English Education Department. Thus, those are the reasons behind the construction of this study.

There are some previous studies relates to writing anxiety. The first study is conducted by Miri & Joia (2018) explores students' undergraduate experiences with writing anxiety. Then, Balta (2018) investigates the relationships among students' argumentative text writing skills, writing anxiety, and metacognitive awareness. The next study by Aloairdhi (2019) focuses on revealing the types of writing anxiety among participants which are female students of the English Department at some Saudi universities. The last study is by Suryoputro et al (2020) which surveys 219 Indonesian EFL students of secondary school, high school, and university levels to examine the types and levels of writing anxiety.

However, the current study is different from the previous studies. Those studies discussed the experiences with writing anxiety, the relationship between writing anxiety and writing skill, and types and levels of EFL students of secondary school, high school, and university levels. Meanwhile, the current study focus on finding out which types and levels of EFL students' writing anxiety in online Creative Writing class during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then the current study chooses students of the fourth semester of English Education Department at a State Islamic University in Bandung to become the participants of this research.

B. Research Questions

According to the problems discussed in the background of the research above, the study formulates them into the following questions:

1. What are the types of writing anxiety experienced by the fourth-semester students of English Education Department in online Creative Writing class?

2. What is the level of writing anxiety experienced by the fourth-semester students of English Education Department in online Creative Writing class?

C. Research Purposes

Regarding the research problem above, this study aims:

1. To find out which types of writing anxiety experienced by the fourth-semester students of English Education Department in online Creative Writing class.
2. To find out the level of writing anxiety experienced by the fourth-semester students of English Education Department in online Creative Writing class.

D. Research Significances

Theoretically, this study is expected to help the practitioners in this field with implications that provided and contribute to improving EFL students' motivation and their writing skills. Also, this study is expected to be a useful source of information. This study could give a lot of information, idea, and understanding to the readers about types and levels of students' writing anxiety in creative writing.

Practically, this study is expected to help English teachers to know students' types and levels of writing anxiety so that they can help students to deal with their writing anxiety. Besides, it is recommended that students develop a positive understanding of their writing anxiety and also help them to develop their motivation to increase their writing skills.

E. Conceptual Framework

Writing is a transcription of the language that converts thought into a symbolic form, which needs several processes (Rudiyanto, 2017). The difficulty of writing as a skill to master may increase EFL students' anxiety and discourage them from completing a specific writing task, resulting in poor performance (Sabti & Rashid, 2019). This can be derived from the statement that writing anxiety is a serious problem that must be tackled because it has a negative effect on student achievement.

This study is used the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) developed by Cheng (2004) to assess the levels and types of writing

anxiety. This scale is applied to this study because of some reason. First, according to Umam (2017), the SLWAI was the first reliable instrument for assessing writing anxiety, particularly in a second or foreign language. This inventory has been chosen as an instrument of writing anxiety because correlation and factor analysis have been established to be extremely trustworthy and valid. Then, Cheng (2004) as the inventor of the SLWAI claimed that anxiety was a multilateral phenomenon; thus, the third-dimensional measurement of anxiety analysis like SLWAI was qualified to create a fuller image of the writing anxiety (level and types) among EFL students.

The SLWAI includes 22 items of questions. It consists of three components of writing anxiety, such as Cognitive Anxiety (including negatives on performance), Somatic Anxiety (including negative feelings such as stress, nervously moving), and Avoidance Behavior (as reflected in avoidance in writing). Cheng (2004) also divided writing anxiety levels into three levels: low writing anxiety, moderate writing anxiety, and high writing anxiety.

SLWAI has a Likert response scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for negative statements and 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). There are 8 positive statements and 14 negative statements. The elements in the subcategory are as follows: Somatic Anxiety (1,2,3,4,5,6,7) Avoidance Behavior (8,9,10,11,12,13,14), and Cognitive Anxiety (15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22). A higher score reflects the high level of EFL writing anxiety. A total score above 65 points implies a high level of anxiety in writing, a total value less than 50 points shows a low level of anxiety in writing, and a total score in between shows a moderate level of anxiety in writing.

F. Previous Study

Several researchers have investigated writing anxiety before. The first study is by Miri & Joia (2018). The study includes five Afghan undergraduate students who are major English students at Afghan universities. The data was collected by using semi-structured interviews. The results show both positive and negative effects of anxiety on students. If students strive to resolve and use their anxiety as a method to complete a mission, it can act as a controller to prevent them from

making mistakes. On the other hand, the detrimental impact of writing anxiety is students' fear of failing. Even students with very low anxiety levels earned low scores if they were unable to improve their anxiety levels. The low exposure of participants to writing activities is the main reason behind their anxiety to write. The main strategies used to overcome their writing anxiety is also the reception of teachers' feedback, extensive reading, development of their vocabulary, and written practice.

The second study is by Balta (2018). This study reveals the connections between students' argumentative text writing skills, writing anxiety, and metacognitive awareness. The participants of this study involve 375 students in eighth grades at six middle schools in Sivas are. Several data collection tools have been employed; (a) a writing anxiety scale developed by Yaman (2010), (b) a metacognitive conscientiousness scale (Jr. MAI) A and B Forms were created by Karakelle & Saraç (2007) and adapted by Sperling, Howard, Miller, and Murphy (2002), and seven topics were chosen to collect argumentative texts from the student population. Then, he results showed a slightly positive relationship between the skills of argumentative text writing and metacognitive awareness and a significant relation between writing anxiety and metacognitive awareness. In the study, less student anxiety about writing and more metacognitive awareness will have a positive effect on their argumentative skills in writing.

The next study is by Aloairdhi (2019). This study aims to investigate writing anxiety among Saudi female students of English Department at some Saudi universities. Two distinct statistical procedures which are the Social Science Statistics Package (SPSS) and a specific formulation suggested in 1997 by Daly and Miller were implemented for data analysis. The results reveal a moderate level of writing anxiety among participants (N = 105). Also, assessment, ideas creation, grammar, time pressure, and lack of trust are the main sources of writing anxiety.

The last study is the study by Suryoputro, et al (2020) which surveys 221 Indonesian EFL students of secondary school, high school, and university levels. This study used a Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) questionnaire as an instrument to collect the data. There have been two statistical analyses to evaluate quantitative results, Rasch Analysis and ANOVA. The results

showed that all students encountered anxiety writing while studying a foreign language, many of whom were moderate level anxiety. Moreover, the students' writing anxiety was not affected by the levels of gender and educational levels. In fact, students at all levels of education experience Somatic Anxiety, Avoidance Behavior, and Cognitive Anxiety. Avoidance Behavior is the most common type of anxiety.

From the previous studies, the researcher gets the idea to conduct the current study. Nevertheless, the current study is different from the previous studies. The previous studies discussed the experiences with writing anxiety, the relationship between writing anxiety and writing skill, and types and level of EFL students' gender and educational levels. Meanwhile, the current study aims to investigate the levels and types of writing anxiety the English Department students experience in the online Creative Writing class during the COVID-19 pandemic.

