

THE STRUGGLE WITH WRITING ANXIETY: ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AND THESIS PROPOSAL COMPLETION

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ABSTRAK

Proposal skripsi diwajibkan bagi mahasiswa sebelum mereka dapat mulai menulis skripsi. Latar belakang penelitian, teori, dan teknik adalah tiga bab yang membentuk proposal skripsi, berbeda dengan skripsi yang terdiri dari lima bab. Namun, mahasiswa dapat mengalami masalah seperti kecemasan saat mereka mempersiapkan proposal tesis karena beberapa alasan yang berbeda. Analisis kecemasan yang dirasakan oleh mahasiswa Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris adalah fokus dari penelitian ini. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk: (1) mengidentifikasi berbagai jenis kecemasan dalam menulis yang dialami mahasiswa ketika menyelesaikan rancangan proposal skripsi; (2) mengkarakterisasi faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap kecemasan menulis pada mahasiswa; dan (3) untuk mengetahui solusi yang dapat dilakukan oleh mahasiswa untuk menyelesaikan rancangan proposal skripsi. Peneliti menggunakan desain penelitian yang dikenal sebagai Narrative Inquiry dengan menggunakan kerangka kerja naratif dan wawancara untuk mengumpulkan data. Metode analisis naratif diterapkan pada data yang terkumpul. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa para responden memiliki dua jenis kecemasan yang berbeda: kecemasan somatik dan kognitif. Mereka melaporkan mengalami berbagai faktor pemicu kecemasan, termasuk pengalaman atau latihan menulis yang tidak memadai, kurangnya keahlian dalam bidang tertentu, tekanan untuk menghasilkan karya yang sempurna, keterbatasan waktu, volume tugas yang tinggi, metode penulisan yang tidak memadai, dan rasa percaya diri yang buruk. Untuk mengurangi kekhawatiran mereka, para peserta juga mencoba berbagai strategi, termasuk membuat perencanaan, bersantai, berbicara dengan orang lain, dan berhenti sejenak.

Kata kunci : Tadris Bahasa Inggris, Pergulatan, Penyelesaian Proposal Skripsi, Kecemasan Menulis

ABSTRACT

A thesis proposal is required of students before they can begin writing a thesis. Research background, theory, and technique are the only three chapters that make up the thesis proposal, as opposed to the thesis's five chapters. However, students can run into issues like anxiety when they are preparing a thesis proposal for several different reasons. Analysis of the anxiety felt by participants in the English Language Education Department is the goal of this study. This study sought to: (1) identify the different kinds of writing anxiety that students experienced when completing draft thesis proposals; (2) characterize the factors that contribute to writing anxiety in students; and (3) to learn about potential fixes that students came up with to finish the thesis proposal draft. Researchers employed the study design known as Narrative Inquiry by using narrative frameworks and interviews to gather data. The method of narrative analysis was applied to the collected data. The findings demonstrated that the participants had two different kinds of anxiety: somatic and cognitive anxiety. They reported experiencing a variety of anxiety-inducing factors, including insufficient writing experience or practice, a lack of subject-matter expertise, pressure to produce flawless work, time constraints, a high volume of assignments, inadequate writing methods, and poor self-confidence. To lessen their worry, the participants also tried a variety of strategies, including planning, unwinding, talking to others, and pausing.

Keywords : English Language Education, Struggle, Thesis Proposal Completion, Writing Anxiety,



INTRODUCTION

Formulating a thesis proposal is the initial stage in writing a thesis. The document's first section, the introduction, should come first because it contains all the guidelines outlining the tasks and outputs that a researcher would produce when conducting research (Harahap, 2022). This section sets the foundation for the entire thesis, providing a clear roadmap for the research process and highlighting the significance and objectives of the study. It is essential to articulate the research questions and hypotheses clearly in this section, as they will guide the subsequent stages of the research project.

Students must first write a study or thesis proposal before they can begin writing a research paper or dissertation. Nasution (2009) states that the goal of research and research proposals is to ascertain how well time, money, and effort are spent. If not, the thesis proposal will be outright turned down. To facilitate research, students doing research activities must first construct a study design (Nasution, 2009).

When drafting their thesis proposals, many students are anxious because they feel misled, under pressure to meet deadlines, and because their lecturers are extremely critical of the quality of their work. Parents' pressure to approve thesis proposals as quickly as feasible was also felt by the students. Students should comprehend and learn how to write a compelling thesis proposal because doing so will enable them to research more successfully and with fewer mistakes (hanh, 2020). The researcher must, at minimum, clarify to the readers in the thesis proposal what the author (student or researcher) hopes to accomplish in the research and how they intend to do it.

The thesis proposal ought to be well-written and credible to readers. In addition to readers believing the author's claims are true, the writer (students or researcher) must be capable of conducting the study (Karjono, 2020). In an academic or educational setting, writing a thesis proposal is a challenging process that incorporates many different components. Additionally, students must conduct a pre-observation to identify the issue before writing a thesis proposal. Therefore, the researchers need to become knowledgeable about the intricate details from the introduction to the data analysis parts of reliable journal articles to produce a strong and plausible thesis proposal through analysis (Arifani, 2016).

The ability to write is essential for success in school or the classroom. The English Language Education Department requires the students to present their theses since writing is important. Students must pass required writing classes to enroll in the subsequent course, which is writing proposals. Students had, however, unintentionally become experts at drafting thesis proposals while taking other writing classes the previous semester, like academic writing and paragraph writing. After six semesters, the students need to learn more about writing a thesis proposal, so they have to participate in the proposal writing course. That said, this does not mean that they are experts at writing proposals. Based on the initial observations in the English Language Education Department, a lot of students seem nervous when it comes to preparing their thesis proposals.

Anxiety, defined as a condition of extreme apprehension and suspicion, is linked to language skills such as speaking, listening, writing, and learning (Wahyuni & Umam, 2017). According to this study, anxiety is characterized as a paranoid and overthinking feeling that impedes the drafting of a thesis proposal draft.

Research, as defined by Angelsen et al. (2011), is the process of carefully examining all the gain pertinent evidence to а thorough understanding of a subject. After all the data had been reviewed, the research findings would be determined. A thesis proposal is a written, comprehensive justification of the researcher's suggested course of study (Jabir, 2016). It gives the reader an overview of the information covered in a project, much like an outline of the whole research process. The creation of a research proposal is crucial because it improves the efficiency of the many research activities, producing research that is as productive as it can be and that yields the most knowledge for the least amount of effort, money, and time.

Writing in an academic context needs to be well planned out with clear objectives to accomplish the aims of the study. Follow the topic's concepts and be methodical in your writing. For instance, when writing a paragraph, students must choose a subject that meets the standards and has the appropriate structure (Samaya, 2019).

The main purpose of writing, according to Abbas (2015), is for authors to express what they are thinking on paper. Writing essays, scientific papers, and research proposals are all necessary skills for university students to have, therefore it



could be difficult for them to learn. To express their ideas, students must organize them into a compelling story, essay, or paper (Susanti, 2022).

Before writing their real thesis, students must meet the prerequisites for their undergraduate degree by taking the course "Writing Thesis Proposal" in their last semester at any level of their school (Arafani, 2016). Submitted by a college student before earning their undergraduate degree, a research proposal or thesis proposal is an academic document. Students are required to follow the guidelines set forth by their faculty when composing their thesis proposals (Abbas, 2015).

The reason for the fear is that their project was given a low mark in an academic context. After that, the students struggled to come up with a fresh thesis topic for their submission. Languagelearning students were placed in scenarios that assessed their proficiency in speaking a foreign language. Students' anxiety levels rise as a result of this exercise. More information regarding how people deal with hidden emotions like stress and worry is of interest to the researcher. Given the reasoning above, the researcher would try looking into other issues from the study mentioned above. This study looked at the stress that students felt when writing research proposals, breaking them down into their component sections.

A continuous sense of not knowing how to start writing something or not having the necessary skills to finish it, like a thesis proposal, is known as writing anxiety (Jawas, 2019). An individual's anxiety under various conditions is referred to as trait anxiety. For example, some students become anxious about writing their theses because so many are written and continuously rejected. Comparable to situational anxiety, but more focused, trait anxiety is persistent but also unstable in a variety of circumstances. It is possible that students who were answering questions from the lecturer during the presenting and response period ran into this situation (Oryza, 2021).

Other types of anxiety related to learning a foreign language; include cognitive anxiety, somantic anxiety, and avoidance anxiety (Wahyuni and Umam, 2017). To identify the underlying cause of writing anxiety, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) created the Cause of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI), a simple diagnostic instrument. According to a previous study, insufficient writing practice, lack of experience, lack of topical knowledge, language barriers, pressure to produce flawless work, time constraints, low self-confidence, and a high frequency of assignments are some possible causes of writing anxiety.

Subsequently, the researchers will try to identify both possible explanations and solutions for the anxiety that students experience while submitting research projects. Unlike other colleges or universities in South Kalimantan, this campus upholds Islamic principles and insights from the study of Islamic studies. The researcher chose UIN Antasari Banjarmasin because the students gained a great deal of experience and knowledge about the study of Islamic studies there. Students can conduct a lot of research on anything related to the subject of Islam, and it is likely to add some new advancement and enlightenment. Students were able to save money by conducting their research and studying off-campus without having to go far from UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

Many English language learners reported that they were still unclear about their goals and the elements that their research proposal needed to have. One step in the learning process is drafting a thesis proposal. While searching for references, we also learn new information from the online or printed references we come across. Furthermore, if new endeavors lead to virtue, Allah will make our path easier, therefore we shouldn't be afraid to try them.

Three goals make up this research: to identify potential causes of writing anxiety that students experience when completing a draft of their thesis proposal; to investigate various forms of writing anxiety experienced by students during this process; and to identify potential solutions that students implemented during this process.

The researcher hypothesizes that this work will further our knowledge of anxiety management strategies and facilitate the writing of thesis proposals. This study is beneficial for students who are still struggling with their thesis ideas. The information from this study will likely have practical applications for other students who wish to submit thesis proposals, according to the researcher. It is predicted that this study will be helpful as a source of further information and as a guide for future researchers who wish to do the same case study.

RESEARCH METHODS

A qualitative narrative approach was used for this research. Learning to comprehend people's stories about their lives, cultures, and societies is the aim of narrative study (Wolgemoth and Agosto, 2019). In addition, Ntinda (2018) asserts that narrative research facilitates the comprehension,



characterization, and visualization of the stories that people tell as being our own. The instruments used in this study are a narrative framework and interviews. The causes and manifestations of students' writing anxiety are then investigated using the two tools. This study was carried out in the English Language Education Department at Antasari State Islamic University in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. Concerning the title of their thesis for English Language Education degrees, many students are still working on their thesis proposals.

There are two students from the English Language Education Department at Antasari State Islamic University in Banjarmasin are taking part in the activity. They are producing papers and leading proposal seminars. The two individuals involved were members of the 2019 and 2020 classes. Researchers spoke with two students who had experienced anxiety while working on their thesis proposals. After that, participants were invited to complete the researchers' narrative framework. If something is unclear to participants, they are free to ask questions.

Interview questions were designed using previous research on a topic that students must address in their bachelor's degree proposal. The researchers conducted just one section of the interview for this study.

According to Sadeghi and Sarkhosh (2014), the responders are expected to construct a cohesive narrative by completing the gaps with their personal experiences and thoughts on those experiences. The story outline may help the researchers record the experiences they want to be documented since it provides a comprehensive and educational view of the students' writing anxiety while writing draft proposal proposals and provides guidance and support in both the form and content of the tale.

Qualitative data may be derived through interviews and narrative framing. Thus, to evaluate the data, the researcher employed the interactive model created by Miles and Huberman (1994).

The data analysis employed the following three techniques: Data reduction is the process of reducing and describing the information gleaned from field notes in a way that makes sense for the topic under study. In this study, students' nervousness during the thesis proposal writing process was the issue they were facing.

The data in this study were presented more as descriptions, which aligned with the findings of the investigation. The third phase was to look for significance. Important criteria were looked for to

comprehend the data that had been analyzed. This conclusion was developed about the research objectives in the form of an understandable summary statement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Anxiety Faced by English Education Department

A range of anxiety disorders was reported by students majoring in English Language Education in the interviews and narrative frames. The various forms of anxiety that students experience include depression, sadness. exhaustion. headaches. nightmares, overanalyzing, wanting to be busy before working on a thesis proposal, feeling inadequate, difficulty focusing, and difficulty making decisions. Through interviews and the first participant's narrative framing.

a. Cognitive Anxiety

The English Language Education department's cognitive anxiety was discovered. P1 reported experiencing the following anxiety.

"While working on the thesis proposal, I often feel pressured, sad, and tired because of the pressure from the targets that must be achieved while preparing the thesis proposal and what must be done."

"I have problems concentrating or writing a thesis proposal because I am personally a person who is indecisive, so things that make me confused always disturb my concentration."

"Disruption of concentration in writing such as being sick, depressed and not focused because I am still actively using social media."

P1 reports that during the thesis proposal writing process, she had cognitive anxiety related to feelings of hopelessness, melancholy, tiredness, difficulty focusing, and overthinking. Participants 2 and P2 described their respective feelings of worry during the thesis proposal writing process.

"When I was working on my thesis proposal, I felt something was missing. It feels like you are uninformed or don't know how to go about it. Need more research and information and because of this I also did not work on a thesis proposal."

"When I was working on a thesis proposal, I felt confused about how to do it, even when I checked the notes, I still felt confused and, in the end, I didn't do it."



In the interview, P2 mentioned that she struggled with feeling helpless and making decisions. The two participants' cognitive anxiety symptoms, which included feelings of melancholy, depression, fatigue, difficulty focusing, overanalyzing, feelings of inadequacy, and difficulty making decisions, were reported in the interview sessions.

Participant 1 complained of cognitive anxiety. The interview and Participant 1's narrative framing both suggest that Participant 1 experiences cognitive anxiety, which manifests as feelings of depression, tiredness, and inability to concentrate or make decisions when working on a thesis proposal. The target that needed to be met and overthinking, which frequently left Participant 1 confused and unable to make decisions, were the causes of Participant 1's worry. This is related to Wahyuni and Umam's (2017) finding that participants' experiences of cognitive anxiety take place in a cognitive or mental environment.

Both participant 1 and participant 2 reported having cognitive anxiety. Participant 2's cognitive worry was a sense of inadequacy and difficulty making choices. Because participant 2 felt incompetent and unsure of how to proceed, participant 2 struggled with anxiety while completing a thesis proposal.

b. Somantic Anxiety

Interviews with participants 1 and 2 revealed the somantic anxiety that the English education department faces. According to the findings of the interview, P1 described experiencing bodily symptoms of somantic anxiety. *"I only have a headache."*

"just a bad dream, if the insomnia has been a long time."

From the story of P1, the anxiety experienced by P1 physically included headaches and nightmares.

Meanwhile, P2 describes the somantic anxiety experienced as below.

"I just have a headache."

"Not insomnia but short sleeper. Even if I am disturbed while sleeping it is because of the new house."

From P2's story, the somantic anxiety experienced by P2 includes headaches and sleep disturbances.

Participants reported feeling anxious. According to the participants' narratives and interviews, headaches and sleep problems were symptoms of their worry. While working on a thesis proposal, participant 1 had headaches and sleep difficulties. Participant 2 had the same level of anxiousness. When completing a thesis proposal at home, participant 2 experienced headaches and sleep problems.

This is related to Wahyuni and Umam's (2017) finding that somantic anxiety happens in a somantic or physical context that the participants are aware of. There is only one type of anxiety that no one participant experienced. Only avoidance anxiety was not experienced by the subjects out of all the different types of anxiety.

Cause of anxiety faced by English education department

This section contains narrative frameworks and interview data presented by the researcher. The primary instrument in this investigation was interviews. In this study, the researchers' supplementary tool is the narrative frame. According to the narrative frame and interview, students worry a lot about writing a thesis proposal because of several factors such as not enough planning, difficulty finding references, pressure from parents and lecturers, deadlines, and other obligations outside of producing a thesis proposal.

a. Fear of negative evaluation and fear of test

"Wrote my thesis proposal properly and correctly to meet the supervisor's expectations because my thesis proposal was rejected once."

According to P2s' narrative frame, P2 worried about write thesis proposal properly. It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that P2 fear of negative evaluation. It is because P2s' thesis proposal ever rejected once.

b. Lack of experience or insufficient writing practice

"There is no plan, just flow. Maybe just following tips from ELT and academic writing lecturers."

According to P1's interview, P1 has no plan when writing a thesis proposal and only follows some tips from the lecturer.

"There must be a plan, but the plan details are lacking. I wanted to write this and that but there were no detailed steps that caused me to get confused myself."



"I don't type thesis proposals too often because the laptop usually has problems, such as when booting it takes 30 minutes."

Based on P2's interview and narrative frame, P2 has a plan, but lack of detail and P2 rarely writes thesis proposal because the laptop needs to booting 30 minutes.

It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that writing, especially writing a thesis proposal needs practice and experience preparation is important before starting to write something. Related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) P2 has insufficient writing practice because P2's laptop is booting too long which makes P2 cannot prepare well for writing a thesis proposal.

c. Insufficient writing technique

"..... the trouble in understanding the concepts of writing and terms in scientific writing."

Based on P2's narrative frame P2 had trouble understanding the concept of writing and terms in scientific writing. It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that P2 is an insufficient writing technique and it makes P2 feel anxiety.

d. Lack of topical knowledge

"The difficulty lies in the reference source which was released under 2010 and there is no theoretical discussion that is specific to chapter 2 with the topic of the proposal that I made."

"... Then it's difficult to determine the right method and reference that fits the criteria that should be."

From the interview and narrative frame of P1, hard to look for references and no specific theoretical discussion for Chapter 2 are cause of P1 anxiety in writing a thesis proposal.

"Search for the title and problem that I will research because I am too focused"

"Difficulties in finding references for my thesis proposal..."

From P2s' narrative frame, trouble in creating the title, determine the problem, and hard-to-find references are the cause of P2 anxiety in writing a thesis proposal.

From the interview and narrative frame of P1, it is hard to look for references because P1 felt anxious. Not only that but also no specific

theoretical discussion for chapter 2 is the cause of P1 anxiety in writing a thesis proposal. It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that P1 lacks knowledge related to the topic in P1's thesis proposal. From P2's narrative frame, three causes of anxiety experienced by P2. Trouble in creating the title, determining the problem, and hard to finding references are the causes of P2 anxiety in writing a thesis proposal. It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that caused P2's lack of topical knowledge, P2 was confused in determining the title, the problem, and references related to P2's thesis proposal.

e. Pressure for perfect work

"the results were not by the expectations of the supervising lecturer, so he had to repeat himself in writing a thesis proposal"

According to P1s' narrative frame, P1s' thesis proposal cannot reach lecturers' expectations so P1 has to rewrite again. It related to Rezaei and Jafari (2014) that P1 felt pressure for lecturers' expectations in writing thesis proposals.

f. Time pressure

"My parents often ask me when I have a proposal seminar."

".... Then I need quite a lot of time so that my thesis proposal meets the expectations of the supervisor."

"Not much time to finish my writing because I'm worried about using more rest time."

Based on P1s' interview and narrative frame, P1s' parent often ask P1 about thesis proposal and P1 need more time to reach lecturers' expectations.

"My parents only told me to hurry up so I wouldn't be too busy in the future and the lecturers also didn't put pressure on me. But the pressure came from the new regulation which required students to conduct a proposal seminar before participating in KKN."

Based on P2's interview, P2's parents wanted P2 to immediately complete the thesis proposal so that in the future it will not be too busy. Also, new regulations that require students to conduct proposal seminars before participating in



KKN if P2 wants to complete education as soon as possible.

It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that P1 felt time pressure from P1s' parent often asked about the thesis proposal. Pressure also came from time to finish the thesis proposal to reach the lecturers' expectations. It related to Rezaei & Jafari (2014) that P2 felt time pressure from P2's parent who wanted to finish the thesis proposal and from new regulations that require students to conduct proposal seminars before participating in KKN if P2 wants to complete education as soon as possible.

g. High frequency of assignment

"... preparing practice questions for a comprehensive document requirement such as the TOEFL test with a target score of 500, studying general religious knowledge and others to prepare for taking a comprehensive exam."

According to P1's narrative frames P1 have to prepare for comprehensive document such 500 score on TOEFL, studying general religious knowledge and others.

"There were a lot of college assignments that hindered me from working on a thesis proposal."

"I have activities outside of writing, such as cooking, sweeping, and other household activities."

Based on P2s' interview and narrative frame, a lot of assignment and activities outside writing writing proposals such as cooking, sweeping and other household activities that hindered P2 working on thesis proposal.

Based on Rezaei & Jafari (2014), writing anxiety happens because of some causes, there are; 1) Fear of negative evaluation and fear of tests, 2) Lack of experience or insufficient writing practice, 3) Insufficient writing technique, 4) Lack of topical knowledge, 5) Language difficulties, 6) Pressure for perfect work, 7) Time pressure, 8) Low self-confidence, 9) High frequency of assignments.

Not all cause of anxiety was felt by the participants as the theory predicted. There are two theory that not included. There are no language difficulties and low self confidence that cause of anxiety. In this section, the researchers present interview data and narrative frames. Interviews were used as the main instrument in this study. The researcher used the narrative frame as a complementary instrument in this study. The researcher used the narrative frame as a complementary instrument in this study. According to the data, there are: a. Preparation

"I studied the terms again and did another search."

"pre-observation to various places until I get the title of the problem for my thesis proposal."

From P2s' narrative frame that preobservation and re-learn about related study before writing thesis proposal.

b. Relaxation

"When I tired of writing, I do entertainment like going out, drinking coffee and looking for a new atmosphere like studying at a cafe or library."

According to narrative frame, P1 did something entertainment such as going out, drinking coffee and change atmosphere.

c. Peer-seeking

"..... often consulting friends and lecturers."

"To overcome this anxiety, I consult again with friends or lecturers who are in charge of academic thesis writing courses."

"..... teaching some of my friends to work on or consulting a thesis proposal together at the time we have scheduled."

Based on the results of P1's interviews and narrative frame, before consults to lecturer P1 consults with friends first

d. Take a pause

"Move to a new, quieter place and give yourself a break for a while."

From P1's narrative frame P1 also took a break while writing thesis proposal process.

"By giving sufficient free time to rest."

Solution to overcome anxiety



"Take a break while watching YouTube videos and reading manga."

Based on the results of P2's interviews and narrative frame, P2 take some free time while writing a thesis proposal and watching YouTube video or reading manga to reduce anxiety

Not all solutions by participants matched the theory's prediction. There is one theory that is not included. Positive thinking was not used by participants to implement all of the ideas provided in theory.

CONCLUSION

The persistent belief that are unprepared or unworthy of writing something, such as a thesis proposal, is known as writing anxiety. Writing anxiety can become a serious problem if it is not managed. Anxiety comes in many forms, and there are a lot of things that can cause anxiety when writing. Thus, getting the right treatment is necessary to overcome the causes of worry. Participants in the English education department reported two different forms of anxiety related to writing thesis proposals. They suffer from somatic cognitive and anxiety. The participants' experiences with the English education department's causes of anxiety included: insufficient writing practice or experience; lack of topical knowledge; pressure to produce flawless work; tight deadlines; a high volume of assignments; and inadequate writing technique. Language barriers and low self-esteem are not mentioned. Potential ways to get over anxiousness Furthermore, the participants came up with potential ways to get over their nervousness. They concluded that the best course of action was to prepare, unwind, seek out peer support, and take a break.

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