

Level of Students Writing Apprehension of the English Department at Muhammadiyah Sidrap University

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine students' writing apprehension levels with a Descriptive Quantitative Design. The researchers used a questionnaire to ascertain the degree of students' writing apprehension. The study's target population was the Muhammadiyah Sidrap University's English Department. In addition, cluster sampling was employed by the researchers to choose the representative sample to represent the population. To conduct the analysis, the researchers chose one class as a sample. A total of 35 students from the third semester made up the sample. In this research, out of 35 students enrolled in the English Department's third semester, 0 (or 0%) were identified as having a high degree of writing apprehension, 28 (or 80%) as having an average level, and 7 (20%) as having a high level.

Keywords: *Level, Students, Writing Apprehension.*

1. Introduction

In Indonesia, the use of English in daily life is increasing. Humans require a language to communicate with others. Additionally, language is the ability to communicate with another person both orally and in writing. Crystal (2003) stated that English is for international science, advertising, commerce, broadcast engineering, and diplomacy. It means that English has also become the most widely spoken language among speakers who speak a dialect that cannot be understood. According to Lester et al. (2009), nowadays, the nation creates utility for a global language, and there is no better language than English. Also, English should be the second language spoken in Indonesia.

Brown (2004) stated that writing involves punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing.

According to Fareed et al. (2016), writing is a difficult and purposeful act of communication done in a range of locations, linguistic resources, and time restrictions. Writing is more challenging than reading, speaking, and listening, therefore pupils are often unsure how to begin (Nunan, 2003). Writing requires more effort and care. Daly & Miller (1985) are the ones who first used the term "apprehension" Daly and Miller distinguish apprehension and anxiety. Apprehension is a dispositional feeling, while anxiety is situational.

When it comes to writing, almost all students experience writing apprehension. Fear of writing is to be one of the students' writing problems. This worry shows up as apprehension about whether or not the writing is worth seeing, as well as apprehension about whether or not the writing would be laughed at, ridiculed, or thought of as bad writing.

Students who have a high level of apprehension tend to have fewer words in their vocabulary compared to students who have low levels of apprehension. For instance, they use fewer varieties of vocabulary in their writing. They make fewer statements and use fewer words in general.

Considering the problems above, this study aims at knowing the level of students' writing apprehension. The study is guided by a research question; "What is the level of students' writing apprehension at the English Department at Muhammadiyah Sidrap University?"

2. Literature Review

2.1. Writing Apprehension

The word apprehension is created by Daly and Miller (1975), who defined it as the tendency to avoid writing when writing tasks are required and to feel anxious when evaluated by a teacher. The concept of "Writing Apprehension" encompasses the feeling of fear and is connected to the notion that some people find the act of writing to be more natural and enjoyable, whereas other people struggle with it and do not enjoy it. Larson (1985) asserts that writing apprehension (WA) may be associated with the arousal of certain emotions, especially when written products are to be evaluated.

Daly and Wilson (1983) stated that writing apprehension is linked to academic success, choosing a career, self-esteem, and personality traits. Daly and Miller in Grenfell (2013) classify writers' perceptions and feelings into two main categories: the first is dispositional feelings, and the second is situational feelings.

Dispositional feelings are consistent feelings, such as attitudes related to a writer's avoidance, which stems from the writer's negative attitude, causing the writer to feel blocked or otherwise distressed while writing. Moreover, situational feelings refer to like a feeling of discomfort while writing. Daly and Miller in Grenfell (2013) distinguished between apprehension and anxiety. He thought that apprehension was

a dispositional feeling, and that anxiety was a situational feeling.

2.2. Levels of Writing Apprehension

Daly & Miller (1985), in measuring the level of understanding of writing apprehension to determine the level of writing apprehension, the score ranges from 26 -130.

a. For Low-Level Apprehension, there are three ranges to be determined. This level indicates that students have a high level of writing apprehension with a range of 26-59.

b. Most students at this level experience less writing apprehension than those in the 60-96 range. That is, they are in the middle. They are in the middle or safe zone as writers with a standard score of 78.

c. High-Level in this level range is 97-130. Scores in this range indicate that students have a high level of writing apprehension

2.3. Causes of Writing Apprehension

Causes of writing apprehension Several studies have been conducted on writing apprehension cases. Sometimes, writing apprehension is experienced by students when writing English, both ESL and EFL learners. Tighe in Huwari (2015) mentioned that there are only two main causes of students' writing apprehension: critical comments and fear of evaluation."

Al-Shboul & Huwari (2015) conducted a study on cases of writing apprehension among Jordanian Ph. D. students at the University Utara Malaysia, and four main themes emerged regarding the causes of writing apprehension: lack of knowledge of English structures, negative attitudes towards writing, negative past writing experiences, and inadequate knowledge of academic writing.

Although several studies have been conducted on writing apprehension and have similarities with this study, the results are different because the subjects are different. From the above studies, it can be summarized that some

of the causes of writing apprehension are: History of teaching in the traditional classroom, especially confidence instruction, Time constraints, Teacher evaluation (negative comments from the teacher), Peer rivalry (peer comments: attitude competition), Inadequate writing skills, Low foreign language skills, Poor record of writing achievement and lack of perception of writing improvement, Low confidence in English, Language application and lastly Critical comments.

3. Research Methodology

3. 1. Research Design

The design in this research is a quantitative research method which was a descriptive quantitative design. The researchers want to find the level of students' writing apprehension of the English Department at Muhammadiyah Sidrap University.

3. 2. Variables and Operational Definition

There were two variables of this research, predictor and criterion variable. The predictor variable is students' writing apprehension, writing apprehension refers to the student's fear, anxiety, and avoidance of writing in an academic and professional setting. The criterion variable is students' writing skills. The writing skill is the students' achievement in writing the descriptive text

3. 3. Research Setting

The research takes place at Muhammadiyah Sidrap University, Maccorawalie, Kec. Panca Rijang, Sulawesi Selatan. The research had been done since November 26th, 2022 until the data were fully collected.

3. 4. Population and Sample

The students of the English Education Study Program of Muhammadiyah Sidrap University are the population in this research. There are four classes in the English study program year intake 2022. Each class consists of 35 students,

a total population of 140 students. The researchers take a sample with a cluster random sampling technique. The total sample was 35 students in the third semester as a sample for the research.

3. 5. Research Instrument

In this research, the researchers used the instrument as a tool to collect the data. In this research, the researchers used a questionnaire and writing test.

3. 6. Technique of Collecting Data

The researchers conducting research uses data collection techniques. In this study, the researchers gave a written test to the respondents by writing descriptive text. The researchers used a scoring rubric of writing by Brown & Abeywickrama, (2010) to get the data on students' writing skills. The Writing Apprehension Test was distributed to the students (WAT). There are 26 items, each with a Likert-type self-report scale and a range of five possible responses, from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree.

3. 7. Technique for analyzing data

To find out the results of students' writing apprehension levels, some steps to calculate and read the scores from the Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) by Daly and Miller (1985) are as follows:

- a. Determine each score in each item.
- b. Add up all point values for positive statements (PSV) only and all for negative comments (NSV) only.
PSV questions = 1; 4; 5; 7; 8; 13; 16; 18; 21; 22; 24; 25; 26
NSV questions = 2; 3; 6; 9; 10; 11; 12; 14; 15; 17; 19; 20; 23
- c. Enter these scores into the following formula to find the Writing Apprehension (WA) score:
 $WA = 78 + PSV - NSV$

After all the scores were calculated, the researchers categorized them into three levels. They are low, unusual, average, and high apprehension. The Writing Apprehension score ranges from 26 to 130.

a. For Low-Level apprehension, there are three ranges to determine. This level indicates students have a low level of writing apprehension, ranging from 26 to 59.

b. Most students at this level experience less writing apprehension than those in the 60-96 range. That is, they are in the middle. As writers, they are in the middle or safe zone, with a standard score of 78.

c. High Level in this level range is 97-130. Scores in this range indicate that students have a high level of writing apprehension.

4. Findings and Discussions

Table 1. Level of students writing apprehension

No	Criteria Level of WAT	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low Level	0	0%
2	Average	28	80%
3	High Level	7	20%
Total		35	100%

The questions of this study are: what are the levels of writing apprehension? The results in the findings section showed that students in writing most often experienced low and average levels, the researchers saw a range of writing apprehension between 26 to 130, a standard score of 78, and an average score of 88.91. The researchers found that 35 students in the English Department at Sidrap Muhammadiyah University were in their third semester. The researchers found that 35 students in the English Department of Sidrap Muhammadiyah University are in their third semester. It was found that 0 students (0%) were classified as having a high level of writing apprehension, 28 students (80%) were classified as having an average level, and 7 students (20%) were classified as having a high level.

At the average level, the score ranges from 60-96. They are in the middle position of the writing apprehension level. This means that their scores are around the standard score, which is a score of 78. From the calculation

and analysis results, one student scored 78, six students scored 60-78, and twenty-one students scored 78-96; they belong to the average level. This means that the average sometimes needs help performing writing, such as writing tasks and writing for different purposes and audiences.

At the high-level, score range (97-130) seven students belonged to the high level. It was different when we saw some average levels. They are very worried about evaluating their writing, and students need more motivation to write, so their writing skills need to be improved.

Some research on writing apprehension levels related to other aspects, such as EFL writing by Grenfell (2013), Writing performance by Badrasawi et al. (2016), and many others. The results of this study summarize that the findings for the first question are average and low. Based on the average score of students' writing apprehension level (88.91), the most

experienced students is an average level of writing apprehension.

5. Conclusion

The students' level of writing apprehension. Based on the theory, Daly and Miller stated that there are three levels of writing apprehension. They are at high, average, and low levels. Based on the result of the finding, after calculating the students' final score in the Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) and categorizing it based on the range of the WAT, it showed low and average levels.

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