JORDANIAN PhD STUDENTS’ EFL WRITING APPREHENSION

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2014
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Abstrak


Kata kunci: Kebimbangan menulis, Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa asing, Teori Afektif, Teori Sosio-kognitif.
Abstract

Although studies on writing apprehension on native learners of English have been done extensively, studies on English as a foreign language (EFL) learners are scant. In fact, limited studies have examined writing apprehension experienced by EFL postgraduate learners, in particular written academic discourse. Therefore, the study focused on writing apprehension experienced by Jordanian EFL learners when writing their PhD thesis in Malaysia. The objectives of the study were to explore the causes of writing apprehension, to explain the effects of writing apprehension, and to identify the strategies that the Jordanian PhD students used to reduce writing apprehension. Two theories were used in this study, namely Affective theory and socio-cognitive theory. In this qualitative case study, three techniques of data collection were used: interviewing 21 Jordanian PhD students, interviewing nine supervisors, and also analysing nine PhD proposals. Four main themes emerged pertaining to causes of writing apprehension which are Lack of knowledge in English structure, Negative attitude toward writing, Negative writing experience in the past, and Inadequate knowledge in academic writing. Three main themes which emerged in relation to the effects of writing apprehension were Personal effects, Social effects, and Academic effects. In relation to the strategies employed to reduce writing apprehension, four main strategies were found. They are Behavior strategy, Expert review and feedback strategy, Cognitive strategy, and Affective strategy. The study concluded that writing apprehension was a prevalent phenomenon among the students. All the students admitted experiencing a certain level of writing apprehension either low, moderate or high level. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on writing apprehension related to causes, effects and coping strategies. It highlights internal and external factors which contribute to writing apprehension.

Keywords: Writing apprehension, English as a Foreign Language, Affective Theory, Socio-cognitive Theory
Acknowledgement

By the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor, DR. NOOR HASHIMA ABD AZIZ, who read copies of my drafts, listened to my anxieties and whose stimulating suggestions and encouragement helped me throughout the time I was researching and writing this thesis.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my father, mother, family members, nephews, nieces and friends wherever they are at the moment. Their wishes were a source of inspiration, encouragement and motivation for me when I was in the process of completing this thesis.

Finally, I am extremely thankful to all the participants who were willing to take part in this study.

MAY ALLAH BLESS ALL OF THEM
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### List of Abbreviations

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Writing Apprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Communication Apprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAT</td>
<td>Writing Apprehension Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLWAT</td>
<td>Second Language Writing Apprehension Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>Native Speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS</td>
<td>Non-Native Speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUM</td>
<td>Universiti Utara Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUMCAS</td>
<td>UUM College of Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUMCOB</td>
<td>UUM College of Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UUMCOLGIS</td>
<td>UUM College Of Law, Government and International Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoHE</td>
<td>Ministry of Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOI</td>
<td>Digital Objective Identifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is a vital language. It plays an important role in two ways: education and business. Nowadays, most universities in the world use English language as the medium of instruction. Learning English language may help students to perform well in their academic studies (Kirkpatrick, 2011). English language involves four language skills: writing, reading, listening, and speaking. It has been found in many studies that most second language learners believe that writing is one of the most difficult language skills to master (Kurk & Atay, 2007; Latif, 2007; and MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). In addition, writing is not an easy task to do because it is a sophisticated skill compared with other skills (Abu Shawish & Atea, 2010; Daud, Daud & Abu Kassim, 2005).

English as a Second Language (ESL)/English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners face problems when writing in English such as writing their ideas clearly, organizing the writing, making grammatical mistakes, and having fear of writing itself. In other words, writing is an activity that needs mental effort to think out, combine and arrange sentences to produce meaningful ideas. It is not a skill to be learned in isolation from the other language skills: listening, speaking and reading (Al-Sobh & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2012). A person has to go through a few stages before he or she can produce a final piece of writing. According to Hughey, Wormuth, Hartfiel & Jacobs (1983), there are three stages of writing: pre-writing, free-writing, and re-
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REFERENCES


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