

## TOLERANCE OF AMBIGUITY AND EFL STUDENTS' ANXIETY IN WRITING MINI RESEARCH REPORTS AT FKIP UNIVERSITAS HKBP NOMMENSEN PEMATANGSIANTAR

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki peran toleransi ambiguitas (ToA) dan sumber kecemasan pembelajar EFL dalam menulis. Objek penelitian ini adalah tulisan pembelajar dalam menyusun mini penelitian sebagai proyek perkuliahan. Nilai penelitian ditunjukkan dengan mempertimbangkan kriteria penulisan akademik. Observasi peneliti menunjukkan bahwa tulisan pembelajar tidak optimal karena adanya kecemasan. Kecemasan menulis menghambat pembelajar untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran. Kecemasan harus dihindari agar pembelajar dapat aktif dan menikmati pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Kemampuan individu dalam menghambat kecemasan adalah dengan mengoptimalkan ToA yang membuat stimulus ambigu diinterpretasikan berdasarkan makna kontekstual. Lebih jauh lagi, kecemasan dapat dihambat oleh interpretasi informasi karena gaya kognitif mengacu pada ToA. Kecemasan menulis pembelajar akan diselidiki melalui wawancara dan kuesioner skala kecemasan kelas bahasa asing (FLCAS). Data akan diambil dari pembelajar satu kelompok investigasi sebagai subjek penelitian pada seminar kelas ELT. Kecemasan adalah ketidaknyamanan psikologis, yang membuat pembelajar kurang percaya diri dalam menulis. Hal ini memengaruhi pencapaian tujuan pembelajaran, sehingga perlu dipertimbangkan secara serius. Kondisi ini mendorong peneliti untuk menyelidiki dan meminimalkan kecemasan dalam menulis. Kecemasan dalam menulis bahasa Inggris mungkin terjadi karena bahasa asing dengan berbagai aspek baru yang dipelajari. Penelitian mini tentang kecemasan siswa dalam menulis akan digunakan sebagai evaluasi dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian akan digunakan untuk mengevaluasi dan meningkatkan proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran di jurusan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat

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menjadi referensi berharga untuk menghindari kecemasan dalam belajar. Hasil penelitian ini akan disusun dalam sebuah artikel dan diterbitkan di jurnal Sinta 4 yang bereputasi baik..

**Kata Kunci:** ToA; sumber; EFL; Menulis; Kecemasan

#### ABSTRACT

*This research aims to investigate the role of tolerance of ambiguity (ToA) and EFL learners' anxiety sources in writing. The object of this research is the learners' writing on composing mini research as the project of the lecture. The valuable is indicated by considering the criteria of academic writing. The researcher's observation indicates that the learners' writing is not optimal caused by the anxiety. The writing anxiety hinder the learners to achieve the learning objective. Anxiety has to be avoid in order to treat the learners to be active and enjoy in English learning. The individual ability in hindering anxiety is the optimizing of ToA which make the ambiguous stimuli to be interpreted based on the contextual meaning. More over anxiety can be hinder by interpretation of information as the cognitive style refers to ToA. Learners' writing anxiety will be investigated by interview and questionnaires of foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS). The data will be taken from the learners of one group investigation as the research subject at seminar on ELT class. Anxiety is psychological discomfort, which makes the learners to be lack of confidence in writing. It affects the learning objective achievement, so it is needed to be to be considered seriously. This condition encourages the researcher to investigate and minimize anxiety in writing. The anxiety in English writing is possible happened as foreign language with new various aspect learnt. The learners' anxiety in writing mini research will be use as evaluation in teaching and learning English. The research result will be used to evaluate and improve the teaching and learning process at English department of FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The result of this research is hoped to be valuable refers to the learning anxiety avoiding. The result of this research will composing in an article and publish in journal sinta 4 indexed reputation.*

**Keyword:** Toa; Sources; EFL; Writing; Anxiety

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English as foreign language considering various aspects. The aspects such as grammar, spelling, lexical meaning, and skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (Hardacre & Guvendir, 2020). Learning all the aspects as the new for the learners possible to experience anxiety. It is possible occurred at English as foreign language, which commonly known as foreign language anxiety. English learning anxiety is the lack of confidence caused by the ambiguity aspects. Anxiety is personality psychology that hinder the learning objective

achievement. Anxiety is personal negative emotion that react to context or situation (Cheng, 2024). Learning anxiety is personal negative emotion which influence the learners' performance ability. It can be determined the success or failure in learning English as foreign language. The anxiety influences English learning successful in achieving the learning objective (Hendrikus, 2018). It means that the anxiety is possible to impede the learners' proficiency. The learners with anxiety feel fear and confuse in English learning performance (Wang, 2020). Learners are fear to speak with the anxiety of the error of pronunciation. The failure in reading is caused by anxiety in understanding the context and the meaning of vocabulary. In writing, the anxiety will be on the grammar and vocabulary that giving significant effect into the meaning and ways of sentences composing (Hartono & Maharani, 2020).

Learning anxiety is the feeling of being worried in performance, which affect nervous system. It makes the learners being lack of confidence that affect minimal achievement. It is personality psychology which gives significant obstacle in learning achievement (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 2019). So anxiety has to be minimized in English learning in order to have good proficiency. In minimizing anxiety, tolerance of ambiguity (ToA) take the important role which help EFL to have joyful learning with the ambiguous stimuli. ToA is "*an individual capability at emotional control and cognitive function which tendency to perceive or interpretation all ambiguity stimuli rationally and calmly*" (Mohammed, 2022). This research aims to investigate ToA and EFL anxiety in writing mini research as the lecture project. To guide the data collection and analysis systematically, this research formulate the research question as: (1) how is ToA of the EFL in writing mini research report?; (2) what are the sources of anxiety in writing mini research report?". This research question will be described based on the learners' response through questionnaires and interview for the EFL learners at FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar.

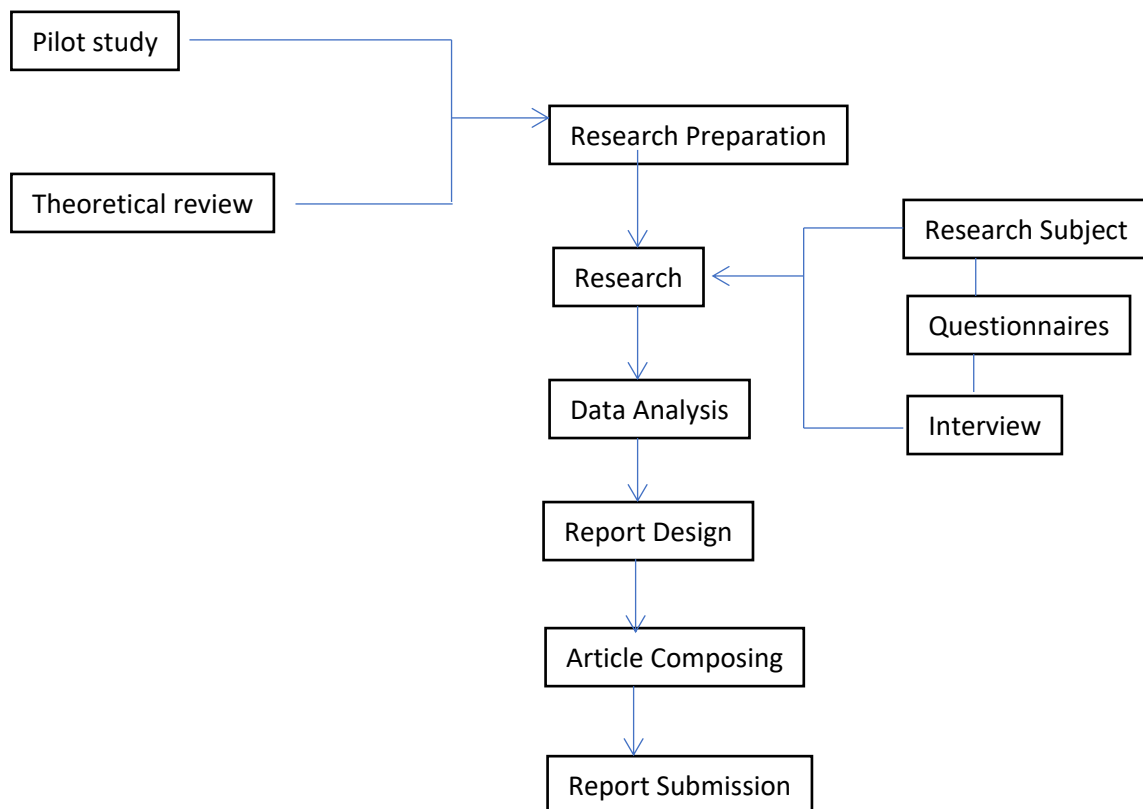
The phenomena in this research is the learners' anxiety in writing mini research as the project of seminar on ELT class. The mini research is the outcome of the lecture, which agreed among lecturer and the learners as the course outcome. This phenomenon is crucial considered because anxiety is one of personality trait, which hinder learning achievement (Lize, 2023). The approach to overcome this phenomenon is depth analysis on learners' anxiety and optimizing tolerance of ambiguity (ToA) as the cognitive capacity and emotional control in facing ambiguous stimuli. Anxiety analysis will be done through observation the learners' writing on mini research report. Meanwhile ToA will be investigate through the implementation of cognitive style in interpreting ambiguous stimuli. The learners' anxiety is will be valuable to implement the approach, techniques and strategy on English teaching (Abdessalami, 2022).

This research is about Tolerance of ambiguity and English learning anxiety, which is focus on writing. This research is categorized novel as focus on the investigation on the source and implication of anxiety on writing mini research report which need the accuracy data by several procedures as academic paper (Dauba, 2024). The novelty of this research on the role of tolerance of ambiguity (ToA) and source of anxiety as the indicator of evaluation for English teaching and learning process at English department of FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen

Pematangsiantar (Baepler, 2021). It focuses on ToA and sources of anxiety in writing academic paper containing mini research report. Writing anxiety is one of personality trait, which has to be seriously considered to be minimized (Sidabutar, 2021).

## 2. METHOD

This research is qualitative research design that focus on description the phenomenon on English learning. It focus on the role of tolerance ambiguity (ToA) and writing anxiety sources at the mini research report. This research will describe data analysis in form of utterances. It is on the explanation and description of EFL ToA and writing anxiety sources at English department of FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar (Anabel & Simanjuntak, 2022). Qualitative research design is the approach of research which focus on the social phenomena. Qualitative research design express data analysis in the form of words and sentences rather than using statistic measurement [9], [10]. This research occurred in the classroom as the education of social phenomenon. The research is conducted by the syntax of research as following:



**Figure 2. Conceptual Framework**

This research is conducted systematically with the intention to complete efficiently and effectively based the planning and method which have been designed. The research syntax is done collaboratively by the team based on the specific task as can be seen in the table below:

**Table 1. The Research Syntax Is Done Collaboratively By The Team**

No.	Steps	Implementation
1.	Preparation	In this step the team will prepare the research through the case based on pilot study and review of related literature
2.	Research	Research is done into the EFL learners based on purposive subject in order to get the specific information needed to answer the research question. Then the project is given to the subjects which are guided to complete.
3.	Data Analysis	The data will be analysed based on the project of the subjects. It will be analysed based the instrument of project completion refers to the instrument assessment seminar on ELT lecture
4.	Report Design	In this phase the team conduct the report of this research based on the objective of this research which is gain from research finding as the novelty of this research
5.	Article Composing	The team compose research article in order to publish the novelty of this research as the problem solving of English teaching phenomena
6.	Report Submission	This research novelty will be publish in national journal index 3

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Data Analysis on EFL Learners' Tolerance of Ambiguity (ToA)

##### Hard to use English grammar in speaking and writing.

In speaking and writing she has difficulty to use English grammar. It because the elements of English grammar are different used in each type of sentences. It is based on the tense involving in the sentence. It can influence the meaning of sentence. She gets the information of English grammar which will be used in speaking and grammar from *internet sources*. She *writes the sentence first the check the grammar by using electronic grammar checking*. She has *effective and efficient ways when finding the source of English grammar from internet* because it is complete and getting in short time. She can get correct English grammar which relevant into her topic in speaking and writing from internet references. She does *matching* strategy (Sholeh, 2021).

“-Upaya yang saya lakukan itu mam, menyusun setiap kritikan-kritikannya itu mam, baru mencari dari internet bagaimana struktur grammar yang tepat untuk membuat proposal atau karya ilmiah yang saya tulis mam. -Yang biasa saya lakukan itu mam, saya tulis dulu mam baru saya liat ini sesuai tidak penempatan grammarnya mam, baru saya cek dari aplikasi grammarly gitu mam”.

##### Writing in English, the fact she cannot say what she wants.

In English writing she cannot write exactly what she want to write. To have English writing she *collect her ideas* then arrange the ideas in to sentences. She *does brainstorming* to get ideas to be written. When she gets stuck to write her idea, she *finds the information from internet references*.

She finds the relevance information from internet into her topic to be written. She has difficulty in writing English because she has lack of English vocabulary. The she *writes unknown words* in her mother tongue then *translate into English by using Google translator*.

“-Saya akan mencatat poin-poin penting dan mulai menerjemahkannya kedalam bahasa Inggris. -Biasanya saya melakukannya mengumpulkan ide-ide itu mam baru saya susun kembali mam seperti brainstorming tadi mam. -Kendala sih tidak mam memang internet satu-satunya ya mam, saya bisa juga mencarinya dari buku mungkin atau bertanya kepada teman mam tapi saya rasa itu cukup lama mam karena saya cuman butuh waktu yang simpel dan cepat jadi bisa lebih melihat dari internet mam. -Biasanya kosa kata yang tidak saya pahami mam saya tulis dulu di sele-sele mam, misalnya saya tulis kata-kata itu ke dalam bahasa Indonesia mam, baru saya terjemahkan. -Bisa dengan google translate mam”.

### **Cannot express ideas exactly in writing essay.**

In writing essay she has difficulty to express her ideas exactly. When she cannot express her idea exactly in writing an English essay she *tries to express what she thinks by writing* in frosted paper. She *writes the points*. She thinks that there is *a question to be answered*. The *answers are arranged become a paragraph*. It can be started from definition. Then she *introduces the subject* in the sentence. After that she can express the characteristics. There are two basic causes which make she cannot her ideas exactly. The first it is because she has difficulty in English grammar so she cannot write the sentence well. The second is limited English vocabulary she knows. Her ideas can still be express in her essay when she uses mix language between English and Indonesia. It means she knows what should be written but she cannot write because of limited English vocabulary knows and she has difficulty in using English grammar. She feels unsatisfied in to the condition then she *finds the solution from Google device*.

:-A...seperti kan mam a...ada pertanyaan pertama gitu kan mam, a...apa pengertian a...dari text ini gitu kan mam, a...saya akan menuliskan a...apa yang saya tahu aja gitu mam, seperti kan kalau di essay writingkan jarang gitu mam terdapat a...text nya gitu mam jadi apa yang kita tahu aja kita tulis kan mam. -Soal pertama yang sebelum nya tadi kan mam a...melakukan a...perkenalan gitu mam subject apa yang terdapat dalam paragraph itu mam terus, a...keparagraph ke-2 mam a...saya a...akan memperkenalkan a...apa yang akan di lakukan subject nya gitu mam terus baru yang terakhir mam conclusion nya mam. - A...misalnya mam kalau tidak tahu dari vocabularynya mam saya mencampur atau mix language gitu mam supaya apa yang ada dipikiran saya bisa tersampai kan mam. -No mam, a...English Indonesia mam. - A...pertama tadi yang saya bilang mam, a...apa yang saya pikiran itu saya tulis gitu mam jika kurang menurut saya mam saya akan cari di google mam

### **She does not understand completely English grammar.**

She does not understand completely English grammar. It is because there are many elements have to be considered in English grammar. It is found in kinds of tenses. Sometime she thinks that one verb can be used into the different tense like in past future and present future. It is also needed the appropriate use of to be in sentence. She thinks that both of the tenses are similar so they have the way in grammar but the fact they are different grammar. To

overcome this problem she *searches information from Google*. According to her, in Google she can find complete formula of each grammar needed. She will understand English grammar by *indentify its formula* (Kim, 2022).

“-Mencari di google mam. -Menurut saya iya mam, karena kan mencari di google itu kan mam langsung tertera gitu semua rumus sama contoh katanya mam jadi menurut saya mudah gitu mam”.

#### **It is hard to use English grammar in speaking and writing for her.**

Grammar has many elements have to use appropriately based on its tenses. It has essential role in English speaking and writing to make the sentence perfectly. It can be influence the meaning conveyed. She has study English grammar buhe cannot use it in speaking and writing easily. She overcomes the difficulty by *finding the meaning of the words and formula of the grammar from Google*. According to her in Google she can find all related information she needs. In speaking she *tends to use one tense* (simple present tense) because she does not understand the other tenses. Then *she writes at note boo to be memorized*. She has difficulty in using passive sentence. It is because in passive has more grammar elements rather than in passive sentence (Cloonan & Fingeret, 2020).

“-Mengambil di google mam. -Rumus itu mam. -Kalau nanya ke kawan atau kedosen gitu mam, kayak butuh waktu mam, kalau langsung dicari di google gitu mam, langsung dapat gitu semua mam. -Kalau di speaking mam kalau tidak mengetahui semua maknanya saya lebih cendrung memakai simple preset tense mam. -A...mencatat di note book mam biar nanti di hapal-hapal mam biar tahu mam. -Sulitnya mam, menggunakan to be tadi mam, to be atau verb verbnya gitu mam, verb 1, verb 2, verb 3 nya mam”.

#### **Writing in English, the fact she cannot say what she want.**

In English writing she cannot write exactly what she want to write. It is happened when she cannot express her ideas into English. It means she has limited English vocabulary. In writing she always just *writes what she thinks* but she has difficulty to write it in English. She writes introduction, main idea, and conclusion. To have appropriate English vocabulary in writing what she wants, she finds the *meaning from Google* (Rohmah, 2018).

“-Di awal mam kayak menulis judul mam terus yang kedua mam kayak paragraph-paragraphnya mam kayak introduction mam terus main idea terus conclusion mam. -Kayak menulis apa yang di pikirkan mam. -A...kayak a...menulis paragraph itu mam a...karena kita mam menulis a...dari paragraphnya mam pertama itu a...introduction mam yang kedua main idea man terus yang ketiga conclusion nya mam. - Cari di google mam”.

#### **Data Analysis on Students' Writing anxiety**

Students' writing anxiety in this research were based on the students experience in writing mini research report. The information were taken from the students' responses at the questionnaires. The following is the students' response into the questionnaires. It can be seen in the table below:

**Table 1. Students' Writing Anxiety**

Source of Anxiety	Q. Item	SA%	A%	D%	SD%
Psychological	1	14.3	37.1	37.1	0.0
	2	14.3	37.1	37.1	0.0
	3	22.9	31.4	34.3	0.0
	4	20.0	37.1	31.4	0.0
	5	14.3	48.6	28.6	8.6
	6	22.9	40.0	20.0	17.1
Linguistic	7	11.4	34.3	51.4	2.9
	8	14.3	62.9	20.0	2.9
	9	31.4	40.0	22.9	5.7
	10	14.3	51.4	25.7	8.6
Pedagogical	11	14.3	48.6	28.6	8.6
	12	11.4	48.6	34.3	5.7
	13	11.4	48.6	31.4	8.6
	14	14.3	37.1	34.3	14.3
	15	20.0	40.0	28.6	11.4
	16	14.3	34.3	37.1	14.3
Sociocultural	17	22.9	54.3	17.1	5.7
	18	28.6	48.6	17.1	5.7
	19	17.1	48.6	28.6	5.7
	20	17.1	54.3	20.0	8.6
	21	17.1	45.7	25.7	11.4
	22	20.0	51.4	20.0	8.6
	23	22.9	40.0	25.7	11.4
	24	25.7	45.7	22.9	5.7
Environmental	25	20.0	34.3	31.4	14.3
	26	14.3	40.0	28.6	17.1
	27	22.9	37.1	25.7	14.3
	28	22.9	48.6	20.0	8.6
	29	31.4	48.6	17.1	2.9
	30	37.1	25.7	22.9	14.3

The information in the table indicates the source of students' anxiety in writing mini research report consist of psychological, Linguistic, pedagogical, Sociocultural, and Environmental aspects. The students' anxiety indicates by the feeling of nervous, afraid of making mistake, and loosing of confidence. These feeling make them to do the mini research report as the force activity to fulfil the task requirement. The students do not have learning meaningful and joyful. This give negative impact for the students psychologically to learning strategy and achievement.

The anxiety which is experienced by the students known as the psychological, linguistic, pedagogical, sociocultural, and environmental. These are the source of anxiety which influence the students performance in writing mini research report. The psychological source of anxiety

indicated by the activities of the students who admit feeling nervous, afraid of making mistakes, and losing self-confidence when they wrote the mini research report (Paratiwi, 2016).

The linguistic factor also emerged as a source of students' anxiety. Minimum competency in linguistic aspect such as in meaning of vocabulary, the role of lexical, and the structure of sentences become as the source of anxiety which impact the ability writing mini research report.

Then pedagogical is one of the source of students anxiety. It concerns into the pedagogical principle in providing teaching style, correction strategies, and task design also affected students' confidence. So pedagogical possibility as the source of anxiety when it is not organized well. Teaching prepare the students to good in doing task when the teacher give clear information and using joyful approach.

In line with, sociocultural factor turned out to be the most influential aspect. Most students expressed agreement that classroom atmosphere, peer pressure, and cultural expectations strongly contributed to their writing anxiety. They often felt embarrassed or worried about being judged by their classmates when making mistakes. This shows that social interaction and cultural norms create a strong pressure that shapes students' feelings and willingness in writing (Avila, 2019). Another source of anxiety in writing is environmental factor. It influence the students' concentration in elaboration their ideas in to their writing (Rehman, Silpachai, Levis, Zhao, & Gutierrez-Osuna, 2022). The things refers to environ are the situation such as classroom size, noise, seating arrangement. Moreover the limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom influenced their level of anxiety (Haerazi & Nunez, 2022). The students' response as the indication of anxiety. Some quotes of students' response through interview as the description of anxiety.

yeah, sometimes I worry but sometimes not because I know I can do it but sometimes because I feel nervous about my writing soon, I feel worry and afraid to fail in the class

This quotation describes that the students experienced psychological source of anxiety. It come from the students' inner feeling. It has serious for negative impact for the students motivation in learning. It should be minimize by persuading the students to think positively. It must be intends to be concerned. yeah of course I'll panic when I speak without preparation in class. Because I afraid I'll say the wrong sentence or the wrong answer.

This situation it can be identified that the students have anxiety which is caused by uncomprehensive knowledge of English linguistic. The students do not produce good aspect of linguistic which make them to have anxiety. They are afraid of making mistake with the limitation linguistic information refers to English as the language media in the case (Macaro, Hultgren, Kirkpatrick, & Lasagabaster, 2019).

the statement above is not quite right for me, because every time I am asked to speak in an ELT class seminar, I still feel nervous, except when the lecturer and my friends always make the class situation enjoyable so that it reduces my nervousness. This students' response indicate the anxiety can be happened as the effect of pedagogical setting. It means the pedagogical has the important rule to give the impact in reducing learning anxiety. It refers to the students response that the anxiety is reduced when teaching situation make the students feel enjoy. So

pedagogical has great impact in minimizing students learning anxiety (Winiharti & Herlina, 2017).

No, even though I feel anxious when the lecturer asks me to write English in my class, I still try to attend my class because I know that it will make me braver when writing in a foreign language and present it in front of many people later.

This situation indication the anxiety is happened by considering the situation based on the context. The situation can be influenced by the cultural. In this case the students have anxiety based on their situation which is stay on the local situation (Khansir, Dehkordi, & Mirzaei, 2021). So they realize that in future time must be communicate with many people so must have training a lot in order to accustom to be positive thinking (Arifin, 2020). I often experience not want to going to class because sometimes I feel tired, or even afraid when I am not prepared but the teacher asks me questions (Ningsih, Kurniasih, Puspitaningrum, Mahmudi, & Wardoyo, 2017). It indicate that anxiety can be happened when the situation or condition make the students to not ready for learning. It can the condition which make them to be tired. It can be also make them not doing the task because of many activities outside of the class. This condition make them to anxiety because they are not ready to learn. It indicates the environmental anxiety source

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The research result will be used to evaluate and improve the teaching and learning process at English department of FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The result of this research is hoped to be valuable refers to the learning anxiety avoiding. The result of this research will composing in an article and publish in journal *sinta 4* indexed reputation.

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