

**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF
COMPETENCE AND COGNITIVE LEVEL ON WRITING IN
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY
PROGRAM AT UNIVERSITAS
LANCANG KUNING**

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Nur Halimah, 2026: The Correlation Between Students' Perception of Competence and Cognitive Level on Writing in the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

In higher education, writing is not merely a productive language skill but also a medium through which students construct knowledge, organize reasoning, and demonstrate higher-order thinking. Within the context of English as a Foreign Language, writing performance reflects both perceived competence and cognitive processing. Although several theoretical perspectives suggest that students who perceive themselves as competent tend to engage more deeply in complex cognitive tasks, empirical findings regarding the relationship between perceived writing competence and cognitive level remain inconsistent, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context. This study aimed to determine whether there is a significant correlation between students' perception of writing competence and their cognitive level on writing in the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The research employed a quantitative correlational design involving 91 students. Perceived writing competence was measured using a 10-item Likert-scale questionnaire. Meanwhile, cognitive level on writing was assessed through a 40-item test consisting of 30 multiple-choice questions and 10 essay questions developed based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, with emphasis on higher-order thinking skills. The data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation after fulfilling the required statistical assumptions. The findings revealed a positive but weak and statistically non-significant relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.136$, $p = 0.200$). Although students who perceived themselves as more competent in writing tended to demonstrate slightly higher cognitive levels, the strength of the association was minimal. The coefficient of determination indicated that perceived writing competence contributed only 1.8% to the variance in students' cognitive level on writing. The study concludes that students' perceived writing competence alone does not significantly predict their cognitive performance in writing tasks. These findings suggest that higher-order cognitive achievement in academic writing is likely shaped by multiple interacting factors beyond self-perception, including metacognitive strategies, instructional design, academic exposure, and learning support systems within the EFL environment.

Keywords: competence on writing, students' perception, cognitive level

ABSTRAK

Nur Halimah, 2026: Hubungan antara Persepsi Mahasiswa terhadap Kompetensi Bahasa Inggris dan Tingkat Kognitif Mahasiswa pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Lancang Kuning

Dalam pendidikan tinggi, menulis bukan sekadar keterampilan bahasa yang bersifat produktif, tetapi juga menjadi sarana bagi mahasiswa untuk membangun pengetahuan, menyusun alur penalaran, serta menunjukkan kemampuan berpikir tingkat tinggi. Dalam konteks Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing, performa menulis mencerminkan persepsi kompetensi sekaligus proses kognitif yang terlibat. Meskipun berbagai perspektif teoretis menyatakan bahwa mahasiswa yang memiliki persepsi diri yang positif terhadap kompetensinya cenderung lebih terlibat dalam tugas-tugas kognitif yang kompleks, temuan empiris mengenai hubungan antara persepsi kompetensi menulis dan tingkat kognitif masih menunjukkan hasil yang beragam, khususnya dalam konteks EFL di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara persepsi mahasiswa terhadap kompetensi menulis dengan tingkat kognitif mereka dalam menulis pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Lancang Kuning. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif korelasional dengan melibatkan 91 mahasiswa. Persepsi kompetensi menulis diukur melalui angket skala Likert yang terdiri atas 10 butir pernyataan. Sementara itu, tingkat kognitif dalam menulis diukur melalui tes berjumlah 40 soal, yang terdiri atas 30 soal pilihan ganda dan 10 soal esai yang disusun berdasarkan Taksonomi Bloom Revisi dengan penekanan pada keterampilan berpikir tingkat tinggi. Data dianalisis menggunakan Korelasi Product Moment Pearson setelah memenuhi asumsi statistik yang dipersyaratkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif namun lemah dan tidak signifikan secara statistik antara kedua variabel ($r = 0,136$; $p = 0,200$). Meskipun mahasiswa yang memandang dirinya lebih kompeten dalam menulis cenderung menunjukkan tingkat kognitif yang sedikit lebih tinggi, kekuatan hubungan tersebut sangat rendah. Koefisien determinasi menunjukkan bahwa persepsi kompetensi menulis hanya memberikan kontribusi sebesar 1,8% terhadap variasi tingkat kognitif mahasiswa dalam menulis. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa persepsi kompetensi menulis semata tidak secara signifikan memprediksi performa kognitif mahasiswa dalam tugas menulis. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa pencapaian kognitif tingkat tinggi dalam penulisan akademik kemungkinan dipengaruhi oleh berbagai faktor yang saling berinteraksi di luar persepsi diri, seperti strategi metakognitif, desain pembelajaran, pengalaman akademik, serta sistem dukungan belajar dalam lingkungan EFL.

Kata kunci: kompetensi menulis, persepsi mahasiswa, tingkat kognitif

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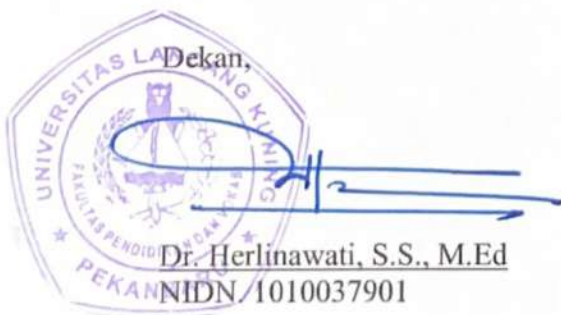
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PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN TULISAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa :

- a. Karya tulis ini, dengan judul : *The Correlation Between Students' Perception of Competence and Cognitive Level on Writing in the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning* adalah karya asli saya sendiri dan belum pernah diajukan untuk mendapatkan gelar Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd) di Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Pendidikan dan Vokasi Universitas Lancang Kuning.
- b. Karya tulis ini tidak terdapat hasil karya atau pendapat yang telah ditulis atau dipublikasikan oleh orang lain kecuali dikutip secara tertulis dengan jelas sesuai dengan aturan pengutipan dan dicantumkan sebagai referensi pada halaman daftar pustaka.

Demikianlah pernyataan ini saya buat, apabila ditemukan penyimpangan dan ketidakbenaran dari pernyataan ini, saya bersedia menerima sanksi akademik berupa pencabutan gelar yang telah saya peroleh, serta sanksi lainnya sesuai dengan norma dan ketentuan hukum yang berlaku.



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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In the context of higher education, writing is a crucial academic skill that enables students to demonstrate understanding, construct knowledge, and participate in scholarly discourse. Writing involves not only language ability but also cognitive processes such as organizing ideas, applying reasoning, and presenting arguments logically. Therefore, writing ability is often considered an indicator of students' academic development and intellectual engagement, making it important to examine the factors that influence students' cognitive levels in writing.

In English Language Education programs, writing plays a central role because students use English as a medium for academic thinking. However, classroom practices reveal variations in students' engagement and performance in writing tasks. Some students display confidence and active participation, while others tend to hesitate and struggle to develop ideas. This situation suggests that, beyond linguistic ability, psychological factors such as students' perceptions of their writing competence may influence how they approach academic tasks.

Theoretically, perceived competence is related to individuals' beliefs about their abilities, which can affect motivation, effort, and cognitive engagement in learning. Students with positive perceptions tend to be more active and persistent in completing tasks, whereas negative perceptions may reduce engagement and performance. In this study, students' perception of writing competence is defined as their self-assessment of their ability to express ideas, organize arguments, and communicate effectively in written English. Meanwhile, cognitive level in writing refers to students' ability to understand, process, and respond to tasks requiring reasoning and analytical thinking.

Although many studies have examined writing instruction, research specifically investigating the relationship between students' perceptions of writing competence and cognitive level measured through structured tests remains limited, particularly in the Indonesian higher education context. Most previous studies have

focused on writing performance or instructional strategies without directly linking students' perceptions to their cognitive outcomes. Moreover, no study has specifically explored this relationship among students of the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning, indicating a research gap that needs to be addressed.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to determine the correlation between students' perceptions of writing competence and their cognitive level in writing. Students' perceptions are measured using a questionnaire consisting of ten items, while cognitive level is assessed through a test comprising forty questions, including thirty multiple-choice items and ten essay questions. This study is expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of psychological factors in writing development and to provide a basis for improving more effective instructional practices.

B. Identification of the Research

Based on the background presented, the main issues identified in this study are as follows:

- a. Students of the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning demonstrate variations in their perceptions' of writing competence, where some students hold positive views about their writing ability while others still doubt their competence. These differences in perception may influence students' engagement in the academic writing process.
- b. Students' cognitive levels in writing also vary, particularly in their ability to understand, analyze, and respond to writing tasks that require analytical thinking. In addition, empirical research examining the relationship between students' perception of competence and cognitive level in writing remains limited, especially among English Language Education students at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

There is still a lack of empirical research that specifically examines the correlation between students' perception of writing competence and their cognitive level in writing within the context of the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

C. Limitation of the Research

This study is limited to examining the correlation between students' perception of competence in writing and cognitive level in writing in the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The investigation focuses specifically on how students perceive their own abilities in generating ideas, organizing arguments, using appropriate vocabulary and grammar in written texts, and expressing meaning clearly, and how these perceived competencies relate to their cognitive level as measured through the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (C1-C6).

The scope of the study does not extend to the assessment of actual writing performance through standardized or high-stakes tests. Instead, the research relies on self-reported perceptions, which may be influenced by individual confidence, self-awareness, and subjective judgment. Moreover, the study does not examine other potential variables that could affect cognitive performance, such as learning motivation, prior academic achievement, instructional strategies, learning environment, or socio-economic background.

This research is further restricted to undergraduate students enrolled in the English Language Education Study Program and does not include learners from other departments, academic levels, or institutions. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable beyond this specific population.

D. Formulation of the Research

The formulation of this research can be formulated as follows, "Is there any correlation between students' perception of competence and cognitive level on writing in the English Language Education study program at Universitas Lancang Kuning?"

E. The Purpose of the Research

The primary purpose of this research is to determine whether there is a significant correlation between students' perception of competence and cognitive level on writing in the English Language Education Study Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

F. Significance of the Research

Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the enrichment of knowledge in the fields of English language education and cognitive studies, particularly in understanding the psychological dimension of writing. By providing empirical evidence regarding the correlation between students' perception of competence and cognitive level on writing, this research may strengthen theoretical perspectives related to self-perception, cognitive engagement, and academic writing development. The findings are also anticipated to support the application of cognitive frameworks such as the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy in analyzing university students' cognitive development within EFL writing contexts. Practically, the study is expected to provide several meaningful contributions:

- a. For Lecturers: The results of this study may serve as a reference for designing instructional strategies that effectively support students with different levels of perceived writing competence. The findings can help lecturers create learning activities that foster higher-order thinking skills, such as analyzing, evaluating, and creating, while also strengthening students' confidence in writing abilities.
- b. For Students: This research may help students understand the importance of perceptions of writing competence in shaping cognitive performance. Awareness of this relationship can encourage students to develop more positive self-beliefs and engage more actively in writing tasks, which may support the improvement of analytical and critical thinking skills.
- c. For Future Researchers: The findings of this study may serve as a foundational reference for future research examining students' perceptions in writing from different perspectives, such as writing strategies, self-

regulation, or academic writing achievement. Future studies may also explore how perceived competence in writing relates to other variables, including motivation, writing anxiety, or learning environments across different educational contexts.

G. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and to ensure conceptual clarity, several key terms used in this research are defined as follows:

- a. Students' Perception of Competence in Writing refers to students' self-evaluation of ability to generate ideas, organize arguments, use appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and express meaning clearly in written English. This perception reflects the extent to which students feel confident and capable when engaging in academic writing tasks. Perceived competence in writing is considered a psychological factor that can influence engagement, effort, and persistence in completing writing activities, which in turn may relate to cognitive performance in academic contexts.
- b. Cognitive level in writing refers to the stages of thinking demonstrated by students when understanding, processing, and responding to writing tasks. This study adopts the framework of the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy proposed by Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl (2001), which classifies cognitive processes into six levels: Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. In this research, cognitive level is reflected in students' ability to comprehend writing prompts, apply knowledge, analyze information, and produce responses that require reasoning and analytical thinking.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

This correlational study concludes that students' competence on writing has a positive but weak and statistically non-significant relationship with cognitive level on writing among English Language Education students at Universitas Lancang Kuning. Although students with higher writing competence tend to demonstrate slightly higher cognitive levels on writing, the Pearson correlation coefficient indicates that this association is very low and not statistically significant.

The findings suggest that competence on writing alone does not significantly predict or determine higher-order cognitive processes in writing, such as analysis, evaluation, and creation. In other words, possessing adequate writing competence does not automatically lead to higher cognitive performance in writing tasks.

Therefore, cognitive development in EFL writing contexts appears to be influenced by multiple factors beyond writing competence, including metacognitive awareness, learning strategies, motivation, and instructional design. These results imply that improving students' cognitive level on writing requires not only strengthening linguistic competence but also providing structured cognitive support and pedagogical strategies that explicitly foster higher-order thinking skills.

B. Suggestion

For future researchers, it is recommended to re-examine the correlation between students' competence on writing and cognitive level on writing using a larger and more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Future studies may also refine the research instruments to ensure stronger validity and reliability, particularly in aligning writing competence assessments with cognitive level indicators based on the Revised Bloom's Taxonomy. Employing longitudinal designs or mixed-method approaches could provide deeper insight into how students' writing competence relates to the development of their cognitive level over time. Additionally, future researchers are encouraged to investigate other contributing variables such as metacognitive awareness, learning strategies,

motivation, or instructional methods that may influence students' cognitive performance in writing.

For lecturers, it is suggested to design writing instruction that not only improves students' technical writing competence but also explicitly promotes higher-order thinking skills. Integrating analytical writing tasks, argumentative essays, reflective writing, and problem-based learning activities may help foster analysis, evaluation, and creation in writing. Providing structured feedback and cognitive scaffolding can also support students in moving beyond surface-level writing toward deeper cognitive engagement.

For Universitas Lancang Kuning, particularly the English Language Education Study Program, it is recommended to strengthen curriculum alignment between writing competence outcomes and cognitive level objectives. Continuous evaluation of instructional strategies, writing assessment models, and classroom practices may assist students in achieving both improved writing competence and higher cognitive development. Emphasizing cognitive-oriented writing tasks within the curriculum could help bridge the gap identified in this study.

Overall, these suggestions are expected to contribute to improving the quality of writing instruction and to provide a stronger empirical basis for future research on the relationship between competence on writing and cognitive level on writing in EFL higher education contexts.

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