

**EXPLORING ANXIETY AND SELF-EFFICACY IN WRITING: A CASE OF
AN ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM**



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**EXPLORING ANXIETY AND SELF-EFFICACY IN WRITING: A CASE OF
AN ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM**

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SELEN GÖNCÜ

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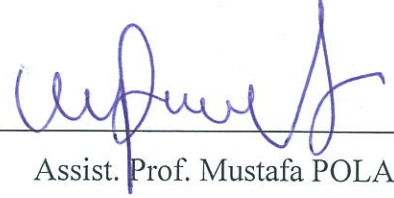
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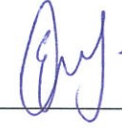
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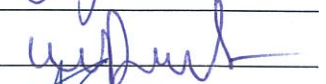
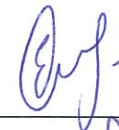
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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING ANXIETY AND SELF-EFFICACY IN WRITING: A CASE OF AN ENGLISH PREPARATORY PROGRAM

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The purpose of the present research study was to investigate the level and type of writing anxiety among Turkish EFL students. In addition, the causes of this anxiety perceived by the students and the instructors were also inspected. Moreover, EFL writing self-efficacy level of the students was inquired, and with the obtained findings, the relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy in EFL classes was researched. To this end, 176 pre-intermediate (A2 level) Turkish EFL students and 6 writing skill instructors in a language preparatory program offered by a state university in Istanbul, Turkey participated in the study. The data were gathered both quantitatively and qualitatively through Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), Self-efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS), and Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI), and semi-structured interviews. The results revealed that the students have high or moderate level of writing anxiety in English, and most of them suffer from cognitive anxiety. Also, the students and instructors mentioned various difficulties experienced in EFL writing classes and possible causes of writing anxiety. Besides, the level of writing self-efficacy among most of the students was detected as moderate. Finally, the self-efficacy and writing anxiety were found negatively correlated at a moderate level. The results of this study suggested implications and recommendations about coping with high level of writing anxiety and low level of writing self-efficacy in English language preparatory programs.

Keywords: Writing, Writing Anxiety, Writing Self-Efficacy, Causes of Anxiety, EFL Learners

ÖZ

YAZMA BECERİSİNDE KAYGI VE ÖZ YETERLİLİK İNCELEMESİ: BİR İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK PROGRAMI ÖRNEĞİ

Göncü, Selen

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Bu araştırma çalışmasının amacı, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen Türk öğrenciler arasında yazma kaygısının düzeyini ve türünü araştırmaktır. Ayrıca, öğrenciler ve öğretmenler tarafından bu kaygının algılanan nedenleri de incelenmiştir. Öğrencilerin İngilizce yazma dersindeki yazma öz yeterlilik düzeyi sorgulanmış, elde edilen bulgular ile İngilizce yazma derslerindeki yazma kaygısı ile öz yeterlilik yazma kavramları arasındaki ilişki araştırılmıştır. Bu amaçla, İstanbul'da bir devlet üniversitesi tarafından sunulan bir dil hazırlık programında öğrenim gören, alt orta (A2) İngilizce seviyesine sahip 176 öğrenci ve yazma becerisi dersi veren 6 öğretim görevlisi çalışmaya katılmıştır. Nicel ve nitel veriler, anketler ve yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Sonuçlar, öğrencilerde çoğunlukla yüksek ve orta düzeyde İngilizce yazma kaygısı olduğunu ve öğrencilerin çoğunun bilişsel kaygı yaşadığını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, öğrenciler ve öğretmenler yazma derslerinde deneyimledikleri zorluklar ve yazma kaygısının olası sebeplerinden bahsetmiştir. Öğrencilerin çoğunun yazma öz-yeterlik düzeyi orta düzey olarak tespit edilmiştir. İngilizce yazma becerisindeki öz yeterlilik ve yazma kaygısı seviyesi arasındaki ilişki orta düzeyde negatif korelasyon olarak bulunmuştur. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları İngilizce hazırlık programlarında yüksek düzeyde yazma kaygısı ve düşük düzeyde yazma öz yeterliği ile başa çıkabilmek için çıkarımlar ve öneriler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yazma Becerisi, Yazma Kaygısı, Yazma Öz yeterliliği, Kaygının Sebepleri, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce öğrenen Öğrenciler



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
SLWA	Second Language Writing Anxiety
SLWAI	Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory
CWAI	Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory
L1	First language
L2	Second language
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
A2 level	The language level according to CEFR (the Common European Framework of Reference), it refers to the levels of basic or pre-intermediate level users of the language.

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the research study and the key terms which are going to be issued throughout the study. Firstly, anxiety in foreign language learning, writing anxiety in EFL preparatory classes, the causes of writing anxiety, and writing self-efficacy are defined and explained concisely to provide an overview regarding the main concepts of the study. Furthermore, the aim of the study, research questions, and the significance of the study are also stated. Lastly, the definitions of the key terms are listed at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Theoretical Overview

Learning a new language is a complex process which can get affected by several aspects such as cognitive, metacognitive, demographic, and affective factors (Brown, 1973; Sparks & Ganschow, 1996; Olivares-Cuhat, 2010; Arnold, 2011). Among those factors, owing to its crucial role in learning, affective variables can be considered as one of the most appealing factors to pay attention for researchers, instructors, and language learners. The affective factors include attitudes, motivation, and apprehension level of language learners.

As one of the affective factors, anxiety can affect the course of language learning, thus this phenomenon should be defined and explained properly. In the dictionary definitions of anxiety, it is associated with emotions such as worry, fear, uneasiness, nervousness, and excessive apprehension. These feelings can devastate learner's state of mind by harming the emotional stability and ideal conditions for learning and a great number of studies emphasized the devastating effects of anxiety on language learning process (e.g., Horwitz et al., 1986). Essentially, while some learners might tend to experience apprehension in any language class, some might be vulnerable to suffer from apprehension in a condition which requires use of a specific language skill mainly (Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999). At that point, it is possible to mention the skill-specific foreign language anxiety.

Writing anxiety was explained in the study of Daly and Miller (1975) as the situation of being prone to stay away from the writing process specifically if the writing is supposed to be evaluated. It is possible to state that, writing anxiety has been defined and investigated in several studies for so many years in the field of ELT.

Writing in a foreign language is comparatively much more complicated when the difficulty level of writing in the mother tongue is considered. Language learners may experience difficulty in comprehending linguistic knowledge of the target language and they may not be able to develop the ability of utilizing writing strategies as much as it can be achieved in L1 writing (Cheng, 2002). Mastering the writing skill is complex even in the mother tongue, and it should be accepted that this is harder for second or foreign language learners (Gil, 2002). Blasco (2016) claimed that the major challenge of learning language is considered as mastering in the productive skills referring to writing and speaking skills. Writing is a vital productive language skill which can be demanding for both native and foreign language users. To summarize, both in mother tongue and foreign languages, language users encounter various challenges throughout the process of learning to write while trying to improve the target language knowledge and their skills to express themselves better. Learners usually have better vocabulary knowledge to express themselves while using their L1 and natural tendency to use their mother tongues' grammatical structures in a better way compared to the use of the target language. According to Erkan and Saban (2011), due to their low competence in the target language, learners are scared to handle writing tasks, and thus they tend to think it is hard to learn writing in the target language. Also, they perceive writing as a skill which they have to be competent not to be able to fail in the exams. This situation can create a base for writing anxiety. Writing anxiety means distressing and damaging emotions (related to the learners himself or herself as writers, the situation which requires writing, or the writing activity) which hinder the flow of the writing process according to Rankin-Brown (2006).

The other crucial aspect to consider is the underlying causes of the apprehension that language learners experience while writing in the target language. The anxiety can be triggered by variety of reasons such as the past experiences about writing both in the mother tongue of the learner and the foreign language, the effect

of teacher evaluation especially done in a negative way, the writing tests to measure writing performance, the learner's level of English, beliefs of the learner about English language, insufficient use of writing techniques, insufficient knowledge about the given topic for the writing assignment, frequently assigned writing homework, time constraint for the writing task or assignment, and low self-esteem in writing. Detecting the main causes of writing anxiety can provide a better understanding regarding the issue.

Self-efficacy is a significant affective variable which has a huge impact on learning of writing skill and writing performance. Bandura (1995) explained self-efficacy as the presumptions of individuals related to their success in fulfilling a task which can influence their lives. In the light of this definition, self-efficacy can be related to being successful in language learning and so with the development of writing skill. Furthermore, self-efficacy has been proven to be related to anxiety in language learning. The studies conducted until now have indicated that language learners who possess a higher level of writing self-efficacy are able to show a better performance in writing with a lower level of writing anxiety in contrast to ones with low level writing self-efficacy (McCarthy, Meier & Rinderer, 1985; Pajares & Valiante, 2006). Hence, the aim of this study is to shed light on the relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy in writing.

Based on the synopsis provided above, this study investigates the level and type of writing anxiety in EFL writing classes. Besides, the writing self-efficacy levels of the learners and the relationship between writing anxiety and self-efficacy are researched. The perception of the students and the instructors about the causes of writing anxiety is also examined to be able to comprehend the writing anxiety of foreign language learners.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As a significant affective factor, apprehension or anxiety has caught the attention of researchers and practitioners in language teaching and learning in recent times (Atay & Kurt, 2006). Since anxiety can influence the language learning process, identifying foreign language anxiety is a crucial issue. More specifically, it is also

possible to point out that some language learners might be prone to experience anxiety in all areas of language use while some of them may get anxious in a specific situation when it is required to use a particular language skill. It was highlighted in some studies (Blanton, 1987; Phinney, 1991) that narrative studies revealed that writing in a foreign language was a cause of great anxiety for most of the language learners which can turn into a more severe one compared to L1 writers.

In the light of these findings, conducting a research on the language anxiety experienced while using a particular language skill such as speaking, listening or writing can provide a better explanation for language skill-specific anxiety and the relationship between these two concepts can be illuminating for language instructors, researchers and also language learners. Moreover, looking into the perceptions of the EFL students and their writing instructors on the possible sources of writing anxiety in a foreign language and the beliefs held by language learners related to their own efficacy in learning should be taken into consideration as an important variable impacting the quality of learning and affective condition of the language learners.

When the existing research literature in the field is considered, there is no adequate number of studies inquiring into the issue of writing anxiety specifically. With the help of more studies issuing this problem in language learning, writing classes can be transformed into ideal places to improve writing of the language learners by utilizing the findings of these valuable studies. As Cheng (2002) suggested that the atmosphere in the place where learning happens should be non-threatening and collaborative for language learners whose imperfect writing is valued in order to provide a stress-free writing experience in the target language which can help the development of their self-esteem. This study attempts to address the problem with the writing anxiety arising in language learning and teaching by examining its perceived causes.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to reveal the level and type of writing anxiety among Turkish EFL students by conducting research on A2 level (pre-intermediate) English preparatory school students of a state university in Istanbul, Turkey.

Moreover, the level of writing self-efficacy, and the relationship between writing apprehension and writing self-efficacy of EFL learners are investigated. In addition, this study seeks to find out the perceptions of the students and writing instructors related to causes of anxiety in EFL writing courses. The data collection is accomplished via three different questionnaires administered to the participating students and semi-structured interviews conducted both on the students and the instructors. In the light of the findings, the present study attempts to provide educational researchers and practitioners with real evidence from the field by putting the emphasis on the impact of self-efficacy and the anxiety occurring during the use of this productive language skill.

1.4 Research Questions

To meet the objectives of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the level of writing anxiety of Turkish EFL students (pre-intermediate, A2 level) enrolled in a preparatory program of a state university?
2. What type of writing anxiety do the participating students experience in the writing course of the existing program?
3. What is the level of writing self-efficacy of the participants?
4. Is there a significant relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy of the students in EFL classrooms?
5. What are the perceptions of the students about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes?
6. What are the perceptions of the instructors about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The anxiety experienced by language learners has always been regarded as hazardous for writing production (Faigley, Daly & Witte, 1981). For this reason, the detection of its level on the learners and the other affective variables related to writing anxiety is quite vital to improve teaching and learning of writing skills. From this point

of view, this study can be beneficial to the English language instructors to act upon this problematic area by developing new and suitable instructional strategies to minimize the level of writing anxiety of the students in their class by regarding the findings and implications for EFL classrooms. The study can also inform administration and other academic staff working with the students studying at language preparatory school about the affective factors which should be considered while designing the learning process of the students and the curriculum.

In the field of education and language teaching, the research on the relationship between anxiety and writing skill is scarce in Turkish EFL context (Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Genç; 2017; Ekmekçi, 2018). In addition, correlational studies conducted on the relationship between writing anxiety and among other affective or instructional variables are limited in number when the existing literature around the world is considered (Hassan, 2001; Nazzal, 2008; Martinez, Kock & Cass, 2011; Blasco, 2016; Khelalfa, 2018). Furthermore, the relationship between writing anxiety with its causes and the impact of language learners' writing self-efficacy has remained unclear in the literature. Therefore, the present study aims to find out the level and type of writing anxiety experienced by pre-intermediate (A2) level Turkish ELF students enrolled in an English preparatory program of a state university in Istanbul, Turkey. The study also attempts to examine if there is any relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy of the participating students. Besides, this study tries to find out the perceptions of the students and instructors about the causes of writing anxiety in an A2 level English preparatory classroom.

Language teachers, teacher educators, syllabus designers, and material developers should be informed on the existence of writing anxiety and take action on the basis of the research findings regarding this issue. Despite several studies conducted on writing anxiety, the number of studies issuing the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety is insufficient to make inferences and comments. As Ho (2016) suggested that there is a need for longitudinal studies to be able to make a closer and dependable observations on the ways to decrease the writing anxiety level and increase writing self-efficacy level in time. Also, in the same study, it was noted that while writing self-efficacy in L1 has always focused on by the researchers, just a few studies investigated the writing self-efficacy of EFL students.

When the existing literature is scrutinized, the studies dealing with writing anxiety do not question the underlying reasons of the problem. At that point, finding the causes of a problem in learning language can provide insight to solve it. With this aim, more instruments examining the causes of writing anxiety should be developed by the researchers. Moreover, in the existing literature, the studies have never conducted interviews to obtain data from language teachers related to their experiences and ideas on the issue to enhance the study by offering a broader perspective.



Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literature review presents detailed data related to the existing literature on writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy. First, writing is issued as a language skill, and anxiety is discussed with all aspects. Next, comprehensive information on anxiety in foreign language learning and writing anxiety is provided with the causes of this anxiety. As another dimension of the study, writing self-efficacy is introduced. Lastly, the previous research studies on the main concepts of the study are presented.

2.1. Introduction

In the field of education, affective variables have a crucial impact on the perception of the learners towards the learning process (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992). As one of the affective factors, the concept of anxiety has always been an issue to be discussed in foreign language teaching. Until now, the concept of anxiety experienced while learning a foreign language, in general, has been investigated several times by the researchers. However, recently, there has been a new approach which examines the concept of anxiety by relating it with each language skill such as reading, speaking, listening or writing. A number of research conducted on language learners highlighted that learners frequently feel apprehensive in their language learning process when it comes to writing and speaking as productive skills (Zhang, 2011). Especially writing skill can be more challenging for a foreign language learner because writing in a foreign language requires creative thinking, sufficient knowledge of language mechanics and some other important abilities which are cognitively demanding (MacIntyre & Cardner, 1994). Additionally, self-efficacy as another factor can be considered as a powerful indicator of success in the learning process of the writing skill. Therefore, the present study seeks to uncover the issue of writing anxiety with its possible reasons and the impact of writing self-efficacy which can shape language learners' learning experience and writing competence in the target language. Here in this chapter, it has been aimed at introducing the key points and terms and presenting the existing literature related to the issue of the study. The research gaps in the literature are also identified and mentioned at the end of the chapter.

2.2 The Role of Affective Factors in Language Learning

The language teaching and learning approaches evolved in time with the impact of changing perspectives in psychology, sociology, and surely education. As widely known, the theories of learning have been shaped mainly by the psychological theories. For instance, Behaviorism was one of them for the early years of the 20th century with the contributions of the psychologists Watson, Pavlov, Thorndike and Skinner (Jabbarifar, 2011, p. 117). They advocated that learning happens when the connection between stimulus and response is provided like in the training of animals and conditioning the minds of the learners. When it was understood that this mechanical approach cannot be sufficient to explain complex human behaviors, the psychologists began to consider other factors as well. By the middle of the 20th century, it had not been noticed that affective factors play a vital role as much as cognitive factors in language learning (Kralova & Tanistrakova, 2017).

The concept of “affect” is considered as an expression for the feeling, emotion or attitude of an individual towards a situation (Brown, 1973). Language learning is closely related to human psychology, affect, and the social factors which shape the way they perceive the language itself and the process of learning. Although this is a well-known and accepted fact in educational sciences today, the emphasis on the function of affective factors in learning theories was relatively new for foreign language learning and teaching. The first attempts to explain the effects of “affect” on language learning were in the late 1950s and 1960s presented by Gardner and Lambert (1972) at McGill University as Schumann (1975) reported in his study. Hilgard (1963) declared that approaching the issue of learning with cognitive theories entirely should be abandoned as long as the role of affectivity is not regarded. The cognition and affect should not be considered separately. Examining the concepts related to the personality of human is a key to find out solutions for difficult situations in language learning.

Through the end of the 1970s, thanks to the emerging studies confirming the impacts of affect in language learning with its variables such as anxiety, attitude, and motivation, the individual differences among language learners and the reasons of these differences became an attractive topic for the researchers of the field. The

famous psychologist Gardner (1985) put forward the profound effects of affect in learning for the first time, and Krashen (1988) was the pioneer of the researchers in terms of issuing the affective variables in language acquisition process. The factors related to affect in learning can be listed as motivation, attitude, anxiety, self-esteem, and self-perception (Krashen, 1988). He focused on the relationship between these factors and the success of language learning. For instance, according to the Affective Filter Hypothesis developed by Krashen (1988), if the apprehension of the learner is high in a debilitating way along with low motivation and low self-confidence, input cannot be transferred to the processing system of the brain no matter how well the information has been understood. On the contrary, if the affective filter, namely the anxiety, is low, more input can be received via the processor of the brain by paying more attention to the information instead of dealing with the anxiety and negative feelings arising during the learning process.

In the 1980s, another psychologist, Bandura (1986) brought a new point of view which was called Social Learning Theory. Pajares (2003) highlighted that Social Learning Theory put forward the significant role of cognition on human as a social being and also it tried to explain the impacts of cognition on human behavior. With this approach, the perspective was broadened towards human cognition and social experiences. It also caused a paradigm shift in language teaching in the world. He proposed valuable concepts such as self-efficacy which is also a frequently discussed issue about its effects on learners in language learning.

In the last quarter of this century, the number of studies issuing the affective variables and the relationship between these variables and learning process has increased considerably (Brown, 1973; Schumann, 1975; Scovel, 1978; Arnold, 2011). It was emphasized that the affective factors are able to determine not only the competence in mother tongue but also language learning achievement (Sparks & Ganschow, 1996). Regarding this paradigm shift, affective domain was added to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as existential competence which is based on the affective factors such as attitude, motivation beliefs, self-esteem, and anxiety. According to the CEFR, this competence has a prominent impact on learning ability and communication skills (Arnold, 2011). Thanks to this

advancement, the role of affect in foreign language learning has been confirmed by an internationally accepted language competence framework.

In brief, for the reasons aforementioned, it is important to know the vitality of the affective factors in learning, and more specifically in language learning. As the recent language teaching methods have taken the affect into consideration, future studies and developments must be accomplished by regarding various affective variables and their impact on learning process in this field.

2.3 Anxiety

The term of anxiety has been defined several times to be able to describe this concept better in the field of psychology (Hilgard, Atkinson & Atkinson, 1971; Barratt, 1972; Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Weiner & Craighead, 2010). It was defined by some psychologists as an apprehensive state of mind, an obscure worry which is incidentally linked to a matter (Hilgard et al., 1971). Furthermore, Spielberger and Barratt (1972) remarked that anxiety is the displeasing stress which can be discerned consciously and the apprehension activating and triggering the autonomic nervous system. Eysenck (1979) claimed that it affects memory and cognition in a negative way. The people with high anxiety tend to underestimate themselves along with the other common symptoms (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). On the other hand, in their book, Weiner and Craighead (2010) highlighted the occurrence of physical stimulation caused by apprehension. In addition to the nervousness and worry in terms of emotional state and cognition, one can experience the consequences of anxiety physically as faster heartbeat, trembling or sweating more than usual (MacIntyre, 1999).

Anxiety, as a complex phenomenon involving different aspects, requires a broad exploration from different perspectives to be able to comprehend and comment on it. With this aim, the types of anxiety were categorized under three headings: state, trait and specific situation anxiety by Horwitz (2001). According to this classification, trait anxiety is a characteristic of an individual coming from one's nature as being prone to be apprehensive in different contexts. The individuals suffering from high level trait anxiety experience nervousness and emotional instability. On the other

hand, state anxiety is a form of anxiety which arises as a reaction to a specific situation such as exams, tests, etc. which makes people anxious about. The intensity and duration of state anxiety may change and it is generally not permanent.

The other anxiety type named as situation-specific anxiety occurs in case of specific incidents or situations like test-taking, public speech, classroom activities, and having a conversation with somebody in another language. Unlike trait anxiety, situation-specific anxiety does not ignore the temporary context or situation-dependent factors for anxiety. Situation-specific anxiety is supposed to refer to the language anxiety according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) and Horwitz et al. (1986). When situation-specific anxiety occurs, one can experience stress, discomfort, and worry which may cause retreating from the environment where this uneasy feeling occurs. Consequently, it may cause failure in learning a foreign language because of this avoidance behavior.

Apart from trait, state and situational anxiety, another explanation and measurement for the concept of anxiety were proposed by Alpert and Haber (1960). They called the types that they found out as debilitating and facilitating anxiety. As their names suggest, debilitating anxiety impedes the development of learners while facilitating anxiety promotes the achievement of learners (Scovel, 1978). These types of anxieties represent the working style of nervous system. There are two cooperative components called the parasympathetic and sympathetic serving as balance providers by depressing and cheering depending on the environmental factors to make the individuals compatible with the changing contexts. This means that facilitating and debilitating anxiety serve like this system by stimulating and motivating throughout the learning process depending on the learning experiences (Scovel, 1978). In other words, facilitating anxiety helps learning process by motivating learners to follow the route to success, debilitating anxiety shows a negative relationship with language performance and it can decrease linguistic competence. MacIntyre (1995) highlighted the importance of the difficulty level of the task as indicative of debilitating or facilitating anxiety. If the task is too demanding for the learner's cognition, it raises debilitating anxiety and this situation creates a barrier for learning. Wong (2005) noted the significance of facilitating and debilitating anxiety in language learning because of their impact on the relationship between the anxiety and performance of language

learners. Facilitating anxiety promotes the motivation of the learner to cope with the given task and the learner can accept the challenge more easily. On the contrary, debilitating anxiety causes the feeling of refusal of the learner against the given task, and eventually one can avoid completing or even starting the task. As a result, this situation can detriment the learning and development.

To conclude, in an environment where learning happens, the ideal one is to have a moderate level of anxiety which can provide motivation and facilitative effect on learners because it can boost success by increasing alertness and effort exerted for the task if it is suitable for the cognitive level of learners to deal with it (Brown, 1994). For this reason, it is possible to take advantage of the anxiety arising while learning a foreign language by teaching the language learners required strategies to cope with the negative impacts of this anxiety.

2.4 Anxiety in Foreign Language Education

Since the 60s, the relationship between anxiety and language learning process has been discussed several times and it has been explained by many researchers to provide a deeper insight on the issue (Alpert & Haber, 1960; Brown, 1973; Daly & Miller, 1975; Daly, 1978). Anxiety is one of the affective variables which can influence learning process, especially in foreign language learning (Daly, 1978). Horwitz et al. (1986) defined language anxiety as a phenomenon which occurs because of the unique nature of the language learning with its ingredients such as beliefs, self-perception, attitude, and feelings. According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), language anxiety is the stress and apprehension which can be connected with the context by regarding specific language skills such as reading, speaking, listening, and writing. It should be taken into consideration which one may not have anxiety related to other areas can feel anxious when it comes to language learning. On the other side, one may feel anxious in other subject areas like math, and physics. may not have anxiety in foreign language classrooms. Liu and Huang (2011) claimed that among the other factors, anxiety can be admitted as the most influential indicator of foreign language learning performance in comparison with the other affective factors. Further, Mutlu (2016) asserted that language anxiety is related to the personal characteristics of the learners in some ways and the teacher, teaching style, cultural

elements, classroom experiences, and skill-specific abilities or disabilities can cause language anxiety as other factors in language learning.

In order to comprehend the phenomenon of language anxiety, it is vital to know the reasons for the occurrence of it. For this reason, Nitko (2001) compiled the possible underlying reasons for language anxiety and pointed out the insufficiency in language skills as the most important reason. Additionally, the second most important reason was the absence of useful strategies to study. The misconceptions of individuals related to their competence were stated as the third reason. All these reasons are commonly observed problems of language learners and it is vital to be aware of them to avoid as a learner or prevent as a language teacher in language learning process.

Another key point is test-taking and its relationship with language anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) detected a connection between test-taking and foreign language anxiety on the basis of language learners' reports after the exams and they claimed that they forget a specific use of language because of the stressful situation in spite of their tacit knowledge about this language use. Related to test-taking anxiety in language learning, Young (1991) remarked that giving a speech in front of a group and speaking tests and presentations are the biggest anxiety triggering examinations for language classes along with the summative and product-oriented evaluations including unknown and ambiguous items and questions.

Furthermore, Young (1991) listed six possible causes for language anxiety as "personal and interpersonal anxieties, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interaction, classroom procedures, language testing" (p. 427). Teacher authority, controlling the class by creating teacher-centered environment without implementing pair or group work and making students stressed out to be able to keep them under control can be other causes of language anxiety. In addition to these sources of anxiety, the error treatment style of teachers may influence the students in a negative way by scaring them to speak up in the classroom.

Bailey (1983) brought out the issue of over-ambition of language learners in the class and proposed that it can distress the other learners while ambitious ones try to overachieve and get the attention of the teacher with praises. Actually, this situation can turn into a vicious circle owing to the fact that anxiety in a language classroom can have a detrimental impact on the performance of the learners during the task and activities. In another study conducted by Price (1991), student interviews were carried out with the ones who experience a high level of anxiety to find out the possible sources of anxiety in a language classes. The findings indicated that talent for language learning, individual factors, negative experiences in language class, and the language level of the class can be the main reasons for foreign language anxiety. In a similar study, Aydın (1999) proposed the causes of anxiety in productive language skills, writing and speaking, by gathering them under three basic categories as individual factors, the attitude of a language teacher, and classroom implementations. As an interesting finding, in the study of Kitano (2001), university students learning Japanese language, it was found out that students with an advanced level of English experience apprehension at higher levels when they are compared with language learners with a low level of language proficiency. Therefore, it can be inferred that the language level can influence the anxiety level of the language learners. In contrast, another study conducted by Ipek (2009), different proficiency levels and their relationship with anxiety in EFL reading skills were examined, and the findings revealed that intermediate level students experience less anxiety compared to lower level language learners in reading classes. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of anxiety in language learners may not directly related to the language proficiency level and it can be regarded as a context-dependent and individual issue.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) tried to explain the development of anxiety and they stated that students with high level anxiety are also exposed to the consequences of their negative apprehensive feelings along with the hardship of the task requirements which makes the process much more difficult for them. Their performance on a task can be damaged by their negative self-perception, and thus their anxiety level goes up. This situation is specifically common in language learning which differs from other anxiety types. Besides, MacIntyre (1999) remarked that language learners may have to cope with a lot of hardships such as grammar or pronunciation and if they start to feel apprehensive while they are coping with them,

it can turn out state anxiety. When it continues, situation-specific anxiety occurs and this anxiety is the root of language anxiety.

To wrap up, foreign language anxiety is a specific type of anxiety and it has different characteristics. For this reason, it is a noteworthy issue which has been researched and discussed in several studies with its different aspect mentioned above. It was figured out that there are a variety of reasons causing this anxiety which are mostly specific to the learners or learning context. Thus, being aware of foreign language anxiety in classes and detecting them is highly important to develop techniques to cope with this anxiety.

2.5 Writing Anxiety

It should be noted that emotional states of language learners including their motivation, self-perception, anxiety, and attitude play a vital role in learning process of the target language. Some researchers have paid attention to those affective factors in writing skills by identifying the complicated relationship between cognition, feelings, and writing (e.g., Brand, 1989; Hayes, 1996; McLeod, 1991).

Until the 1970s, there were not many research studies on writing anxiety in L1 and as one of the most valuable studies, Daly and Miller (1975) found the term of writing apprehension and they also created a tool as Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) which measures the level of this anxiety. Later, Daly (1978) identified this concept as a personal inclination which can be subject or situation-specific to engage in or stay away from the writing tasks followed by an evaluation process. Moreover, Bloom (1976) stated that writing anxiety is “highly situation-specific, seems to be self-limiting, is relatively visible, and importantly appears to be relatively easily overcome by rational instruction”. Another definition was offered for the writing anxiety by Bloom (1985) by putting emphasis on the hindrance against a good performance in completing a writing task caused by the negative feelings in spite of the writer’s intellectual capability to complete the task. Writing anxiety can reveal itself both in the form of an attitude arising in time and for a specific situation while completing a particular writing task (Riffe & Stacks, 1992). Also, Hassan (2001) supported that experiencing anxiety while writing in a foreign language is situational.

Writing anxiety had still remained rather underestimated and rarely studied topic by the 2000s. In another extensive research, Cheng et al. (1999) revealed that writing anxiety can be differentiated from foreign language classroom anxiety easily. Cheng et al. (1999) tried to identify anxieties of each foreign language skills by using factors analysis for the first time in the field. The studies including the opinions and learning stories of the participants (Blanton, 1987; Phinney, 1991) revealed that most of the language learners experienced apprehension related to writing skill and it was generally more noteworthy than the one in L1 writing. Another significant attempt to distinguish anxieties related to different skills was made by Cheng et al. (1999) and it was found that while they are sharing some similar features, writing anxiety differs from anxiety arising during the use of verbal communication. According to Al-Sawalha and Chow (2012), the definition of anxiety can be stated as the extreme fear stimulated by the attitudes, self-perception and emotional state of the learners while handling a writing task.

Writing is a complex skill which demands competence in the use of several components of writing to create a meaningful message (Byrne, 1988). McLeod (1987) suggested that affective factors have a direct and profound effect on the process of writing because writing should be accepted as both cognitive and emotional activity. It requires putting effort both cognitively and emotionally (Pajares & Valiante, 1997). Moreover, writing is also a crucial productive skill not just for their language learning success but also to become successful in academic life and career throughout their life (Tuan, 2010).

To have an aptitude to write successfully can provide better production in the mother tongue of a language learner. However, having an innate talent in mother tongue may not bring the same success to the target language and the foreign language learners should equip themselves with good tools to improve their writing skills in the target language (Byrne, 1988, p. 5-6). Celce-Murcia (1991) pointed out that in foreign language learning, having a good command of writing skills with sufficient level accurate language use and producing coherent writings should be considered as a huge success in the target language. According to Deane (2011), writing skill is not an isolated ability, contrarily; it is closely connected with critical thinking abilities and

literacy abilities to be able to tackle with the struggles of the language. Because of its ever-growing and dynamic nature, foreign language learners should also overcome different struggles (Bobanović, 2016).

Cheng (2004a) offered three main types of anxiety which are somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and avoidance behavior. It can be claimed that cognitive anxiety is connected to the reflection of anxiety on the cognition along with pessimistic assumptions and concern about the performance and the ideas of other people. It was highlighted that the cognitive factors are the main determiners of the relationship between anxiety and writing performance in the target language while somatic or behavioral factors cannot have a more powerful impact on this issue. In addition, most of the studies (e.g. Kara, 2013; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Jebreil, Azizifar & Gowhary, 2015; Kırmızı, 2015) accepted cognitive anxiety as the most powerful one compared to other two subtypes of anxiety namely somatic anxiety and avoidance behavior. On the other hand, somatic anxiety was associated with the perception of the individuals on the psychological impact of anxiety which can arise when negative feelings such as stress and apprehension were experienced. Moreover, avoidance behavior is the reflection of anxiety on behaviors of individuals which causes avoiding writing tasks (Cheng, 2004a). Writing anxiety, like the other affective factors, causes avoidance behavior by creating somatic anxiety (Blasco, 2016). Cheng (2004a) also remarked that the learner's somatic and cognitive anxiety together hamper the emotional state and it causes the behavior of avoidance, and, in consequence, this behavior can turn into the habit of procrastination after a certain time, which may turn the situation a vicious circle.

Daly (1978) found that short writings with low quality without complex language use and sentence structures can be a consequence of writing anxiety of the language learners. The hindrance impact of writing anxiety on language learners results in less writing production (Onwuegbuzie, 1997; Boice & Johnson, 1984). Lee and Krashen (1997) also put forward that if a student is susceptible to get bad marks from writing lessons, s/he may get bad marks from standardized tests on writing, and evaluated with lower marks. Martinez et al. (2011) supported this idea and asserted that writing anxiety can cause poor performance in writing tests besides avoidance

and procrastination behavior. To sum up, this finding shows that the three conceptualizations related to anxiety are interconnected.

As another point of view, with the help of the findings of some case studies, Barwick (1995) classified the learners under three categories as non-starters, non-completers, and non-exhibitors. Non-starters try to keep themselves away from the stress caused by losing or refusal while showing judgmental ideas, disapproval and the behavior of confirming themselves. According to this classification, non-completers suppress their negative feelings in order to keep themselves away from losing or refusal. On the other hand, non-exhibitors compensate for their negative feelings with depending on intellect or obsession while composing or breaking their essay into parts again. The findings of the study of Barwick (1995) also claimed that the experiences gained in the early years of learning process determine the occurrence of anxiety and it is reflected by their way of avoidance, reorganizing or finishing the writing tasks.

Moreover, four features of the highly anxious language learners in writing anxiety were listed by Holladay (1981) as follows: a) having a fright related to requirements of writing competency, b) the fear of the negative evaluation, c) refusing writing, d) showing destructive behaviors in the situation of being forced to write. A language learner who tends to avoid the requirements of writing such as having a good command of target language's grammatical or vocabulary knowledge can be afraid of writing tasks which turns into anxiety in writing. Besides, language learners who are highly concerned about the evaluation of the teacher on their written production can experience writing anxiety. Further, they can refuse to get involved in a situation which requires writing. The last feature that highly anxious language learners in writing is to show undesirable behaviors which can have devastating effects. In all cases, anxiety can be the cause of these features or the features of the learners can lead to high level of anxiety in writing. The studies of Daly and Miller (1975), and Daly (1978) have shown that the learners experienced a higher level of anxiety in writing are not eager to take part in writing tasks and complete their writing assignments which later leads to choosing a job demanding less writing tasks. On the contrary, the students with low anxiety levels can have more self-esteem related to writing and it is

not a big challenge to be assigned more writing tasks whereas the students with higher level of writing anxiety perceive writing tasks as overwhelming and displeasing.

Further studies showed that the students with high level anxiety got worse grades from essay assignments, writing exams, and standardized tests for the writing skill (Daly, 1978; Lee & Krashen, 1997). As widely accepted, high anxiety level is not a desirable state in language learning. The academic performance and cognition can get destructed owing to the harmful impacts of the high level of writing anxiety. As a good example of this situation, it was pointed out that writing anxiety causes trouble in cognition and unpredictability of emotional state. Also, this finding was supported by stating that a decrease in the efficiency of cognition, memory, language performance and abilities in literacy can be observed as a result of high writing anxiety (Grupe and Nitschke, 2013; Karadağ, 2015). In contrast, Negari and Rezabaadi (2012) drew the attention to the positive impact of writing anxiety on EFL learners' writing performance and it is stated that a moderate level of anxiety can trigger the students to focus on and be careful about the accurate language use in their writings.

The study of Lee and Krashen (1997) on L1 writing anxiety in the Chinese found out that there is a significant relationship between writing anxiety and leisure writing and writing frequency and habits of the students. It was claimed that the more students read, the less they become anxious in writing tasks. As Lee and Krashen (1997) emphasized reading and writing are closely related because if one cannot get sufficient written language input through reading, s/he cannot manage to produce a well-written output. For this reason, it can be asserted that two basic underlying reasons can lead students to writing anxiety; scarcity of written input and confusion about writing process which makes one think that the writing should be perfect in the first draft. Similar findings were presented in some other studies (Pajares, 2003; Pajares, Hartley & Valiante, 2001) which also highlight the issue of unwilling, anxious, and less confident students' low proficiency in composition writing abilities.

The anxiety level can be perceived by checking the written products of the learners because they reflect their feelings on them (Faigley et al., 1981). To overcome writing anxiety in foreign language learning, Grabe and Kaplan (1998) reminded that firstly the difficulty level of the writing task ought to be appropriate for the level of

the learners so that they can deal with it. The learners with low level of writing anxiety are inclined to feel more engaged and confident in writing and they actually like writing. It should not be forgotten that also starter level language learners can do writing tasks unless the task was not constructed above their language level. Furthermore, group work should be promoted regularly in order to provide them a more relaxing ambiance to write and check the works of other students. Besides, writing activities should be various to increase the choices that they can choose for the exploration of their ideas. Also, these tasks must offer new language forms and uses which may lead them to be aware of the efficient language use in different writing contexts.

2.5.1 The Causes of Writing Anxiety

Writing in the second language is social, cultural and context-dependent. It is also a personal issue involving the demands of institutions, expectations of the family and society, implementations related to teaching and evaluation, self-esteem, beliefs of the learner, motivation, language competence, and gender (Cheng, 2002). In other words, there can be several reasons caused by the issues related to personal problems or procedural implementations for language learners to feel apprehensive while performing the target language.

The earliest studies conducted on L1 writing anxiety to find out the causes of this problem proposed several different reasons as too many writing assignments given to the language learners (Claypool, 1980), perfectionism of the learner, and topic choice which may cause pressure on a person (Bloom, 1981), insufficient time required for planning, writing, and checking the writing, lack of writing skills and strategies, poor language knowledge (Heaton & Pray, 1982), learners' concerns about being criticized negatively (Horwitz et al., 1986). Furthermore, Masny and Foxall (1992) remarked that the process of measurement for writing anxiety may show differences depending on the context, and thus the causes of writing anxiety in a foreign language can be different from the sources of L1 writing anxiety. Language level, previous learning experiences related to writing skill, motivation, the reason for learning the foreign language, teaching implementations, and the content of the

writing lessons can be counted as the probable causes affecting writing skill and triggering writing anxiety.

Furthermore, Cheng (2004b) conducted research on EFL learners in China by applying a questionnaire with open-ended questions and interviews administered to participants to dig deeper into the issue. The results showed that classroom implementations, beliefs of the learners about the writing skill, how learners perceive themselves, and the feeling of intimidation caused by others were the reasons for their writing anxiety.

In addition, Abdel-Latif (2007) conducted a study on 57 university students' writing anxiety by applying two scales and administering interviews with 31 students. As the findings suggested, evaluation of learners' writings and negative comments made by the teacher along with low level of language competence, unsuccessful writing experiences, and self-perception about writing can be regarded as important reasons of writing anxiety in foreign language learning.

Similarly, in another study conducted by Lin and Ho (2009), the aim was to explore the reasons behind Taiwanese tertiary level students' anxiety in writing by conducting interviews with 16 students. As the findings indicated, it was remarkable that the negative evaluation of the teacher and getting bad grades were the main causes of writing anxiety for the subjects of the study, in particular for those who study in the most successful universities. Different from the previous studies, it was claimed that requesting the students to write in a given format can be another major cause of anxiety.

The study of Erkan and Saban (2011) aimed at identifying the relationship between writing anxiety and other variables such as writing performance and self-efficacy. To this end, 188 university students took three different questionnaires, and also they were asked to write a composition in a limited time to mark their productions and compare their grades with their scores on the questionnaires. The findings revealed that the reason why the learners hesitate to deal with writing tasks is mostly related to their lack of language skills.

In his study, Zhang (2011) made an investigation on the underlying reasons of writing anxiety of Chinese majors. The study was designed as a quantitative study and three different questionnaires were utilized to collect data. The findings suggested that anxiety related to test-taking, poor self-confidence in writing, given topic for the writing task, insufficient linguistic competence, and time limitation were significant as anxiety triggering factors in writing. These findings provided new insight into the issue by emphasizing the relationship between test-taking anxiety and writing anxiety.

Regarding this relationship, Kara (2013) aimed to investigate the reasons of writing anxiety to develop a scale which can be used to detect the reasons of writing anxiety. With this aim, 150 students wrote about their attitude and possible reasons of their anxiety for 14 weeks. This data was transformed into a scale and the scale was applied to another group of students. The findings showed that the reasons may arise from the concept of writing, writing as a language skill, instructors, and coursebooks. It was noted that writing anxiety is another version of test-taking anxiety caused by insufficient experience in writing. The students tend to think that they would fail and they were anxious because they had insufficient experience in writing while they were experienced in test-taking throughout their previous education life.

As another study developed a scale on the reasons of writing anxiety, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) carried out a study on writing anxiety and its level, types, and also reasons behind it. As a valuable contribution to the literature, they created a brand new scale, Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI), and it was applied on 120 Iranian EFL learners. The most outstanding causes detected in the study were the insufficient competence in the target language, lack of self-esteem in writing, the fear of negative evaluation of teachers about the writing production.

In addition, in the study of Kırmızı and Kırmızı (2015), the aim was to investigate tertiary level students' level of writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy besides the causes of this anxiety. To achieve this aim, three different questionnaires (SLWAI, CWAI, SWS) were administered to 172 students. As a result, it was detected that the most serious cause was the time pressure for the writing anxiety. Secondly, the negative evaluation of the teacher was one of the reasons. Next, insufficient writing practice in English, the feeling of stress caused by perfect writing expectations,

the number and frequency of given writing assignments, problems about topic choice, low self-esteem, the concerns about exams were the other influential causes of writing anxiety in order.

According to the study of Liu and Ni (2015), the interviews with EFL students revealed that difficulty of writing in another language, the efforts to write properly, their concerns about the results of the exams, lack of vocabulary knowledge, insufficient practice in writing, encountering with unfamiliar genres for the writing task, being slow are the identified causes for the writing anxiety. In the study, it was also stated that these were context-dependent universal and specific causes for the study and it was recommended that learners from other contexts should be asked for their ideas and language teachers should adjust their instructions to get over the writing anxiety in their own context by regarding the identified causes.

Furthermore, Bobanović (2016) researched Croatian tertiary level students' writing anxiety by checking the impact of other variables such as gender and academic level. The students took the adapted questionnaire WAT (Writing Apprehension Test) both at the beginning and end of the year. The findings pointed out that academic level can predict writing anxiety rather than the gender of the students. Another significant finding was that the writing anxiety is the result of negative experiences and feelings related to writing skill. It was also claimed that complicated writing tasks can elevate the level of writing anxiety of the learners.

In brief, there are numerous factors mentioned above as the possible causes of writing anxiety experienced in EFL classes. All the studies conducted to explore the causes can provide a great amount of data for future studies and the practitioners who attempt to gain a broader perspective on writing anxiety-related problems in their EFL writing classes. It is obvious that being informed about the underlying reasons of a problem can pave the way to provide solutions to this problem more effectively

2.6 Writing Self-efficacy

The first introduction of the concept of self-efficacy was made in the social cognitive theory by Bandura (1986), and later explained by Bandura (1994) as the

awareness of a person related to his or her skills to be able to complete a specific level task. The psychologists Heslin and Klehe (2006, p.705) also defined the term of self-efficacy as the major individual factor which has a profound impact on the performance of the person in task achievement by supporting the skills of organization and strategy use. Moreover, Jones (2008) described self-efficacy as having self-esteem related to the capacity to complete given task successfully and taking action by using required abilities. Self-efficacy also influences the capacity of the learners with respect to be successful at reaching their goals both in their daily life and academic works. Additionally, it is closely connected with mindset and affective reactions of the learners (Pajares, 2003).

Self-efficacy involves both internal and external variables such as environmental, cognitive, and emotional issues which should be taken into consideration as a part of a context in which individuals shape themselves through their learning process (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1997), there are four sources of self-efficacy beliefs which are mastery experience, social persuasion, vicarious experience, and physiological state. When one struggles with difficult situations and achieves, she or he can gain experiences called mastery experiences. Vicarious experience comes from observing and imitating a role model. If one has a good example model who has positive self-efficacy beliefs, she or he is more likely to have positive beliefs. As another source, verbal persuasion refers to the impact of the words of others on individuals' self-efficacy. It can be claimed that if a person is encouraged and his or her motivation is boosted, she or he can become more capable of having positive beliefs about herself or himself. The last but not least, emotional and physiological states should be taken into consideration in terms of mental health and prosperity to retain positive self-efficacy beliefs. A person experiencing anxiety or depression cannot maintain having realistic self-efficacy beliefs. When all the sources are regarded, it is possible to say that these factors can have a vital function in learning, specifically foreign language learning process. As an example, a research study was carried out on the impact of four main sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1997) on writing self-efficacy of the learners with regard to the participants' academic level (Pajares, Johnson & Usher, 2007). It was presented that mastery experience was a great influencer for writing self-efficacy beliefs of all the academic levels (elementary, middle, high school).

Furthermore, as Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003) proposed that behavioral engagement (endeavor, determination, endurance, seeking for help effectively), cognitive engagement (metacognition, use of strategy), motivational engagement (value, impact, attention) compose the essential elements of self-efficacy. Engagement is crucial because it is the first requirement of learning, and if they learn better, they can perform in a better way. Consequently, their self-efficacy level will be increased. The learners who have high level of self-efficacy are susceptible to engage in more challenging and compelling tasks. They also have plans and aims for the future, thus they use some strategies to achieve them. Making an effort, adjusting their cognitive development, enduring despite the struggles, and feeling less apprehensive about the task are the other qualifications of people with high self-efficacy (Jones, 2008). The students can have different attitudes towards tasks in accordance with their level of self-efficacy as Schunk (1984) pointed out. In terms of obtaining cognitive abilities, low level of self-efficacy can cause avoidance while high level of self-efficacy provides willing participation of the students to the tasks. According to Bandura (1994), personal satisfaction and feeling of success can be boosted while completing tasks thanks to self-efficacy. It has been assumed that the extent of efforts in language learning is determined by the self-efficacy beliefs (Lavelle, 2006). In other words, provided that language learners have satisfying level of writing self-efficacy and positive perception related to their writing abilities, they search for chance to write more and invest on writing process by putting more effort into it. For instance, a person with high level of self-efficacy perceives the challenging tasks as a chance for improvement while low level of self-efficacy may cause the feeling of threat against difficult tasks. This perception promotes determination, endurance, engagement, and intrinsic motivation for learning which keep one away from giving up even if there is a possibility of failure. Furthermore, having the ability to keep the situations under control by diminishing apprehension and stress is another key asset.

Self-efficacy is supposed to be an indicator of competence. In that case, teachers ought to notice the importance of the perceptions of the learners on their own competence besides their competence in real (Erkan & Saban, 2011). In accordance with their self-efficacy beliefs, the performance of the same level learners may change

(Bandura, 1986, 1997). It means that if a person believes in her or his abilities, they can perform better in given tasks. Low self-efficacy make the learners discouraged and they become inclined to give up more easily.

Different from general perception and explanations about self-efficacy, this study examines the concept of self-efficacy in the context of language learning, and specifically for writing skill. The self-efficacy was redefined by considering the components of writing skill. Writing self-efficacy can be defined as the beliefs related to the writing abilities (Bandura, 1986). If a person feels confident about his or her writing skills, it is the indicator of high level of writing self-efficacy. It was explained in the study of Pajares and Johnson (1994), and it was asserted that writing self-efficacy is the understanding of the learners regarding their writing competence, and especially their ability of fulfil variety of writing tasks, using language appropriately, knowing about the mechanics of writing, and composing skills for different tasks. Lavelle (2006) emphasized that writing self-efficacy provides motivation for language learners in terms of problem solving when they encounter with hard writing tasks. Bandura (2006) differentiated self-efficacy from other factors such as self-confidence, outcome expectancies, self-esteem, etc. by emphasizing the uniqueness of it in the way of its active role unlike other personal features. For this reason, writing self-efficacy is accepted situation or field specific while its level may vary depending upon the context where the teaching and learning happen.

Several research studies unveiled that writing self-efficacy can determine the performance in writing skill (Pajares & Johnson, 1994; Shah, Mahmud, Din, Yusof & Pardi, 2011; Shehzadi & Krishnasamy, 2018). Pajares and Johnson (1994) pointed out the important predictive role of writing self-efficacy on writing performance not only at the end but also at the beginning the term. In their study, Shah et al. (2011) also spotted that the correlation between self-efficacy and writing performance is significantly positive. Moreover, the apprehension related to writing, absence of self-esteem in writing skills, reluctance to write lead to be less proficient at writing tasks (Pajares, 2003). In brief, the writing production is influenced profoundly by the writing self-efficacy of individuals (Shehzadi & Krishnasamy, 2018).

2.7 Previous Research on Writing Anxiety and Writing Self-efficacy

Around the world, there has been a growing interest on writing research in ELT context and especially the role of affect such as the phenomenon of writing anxiety, writing attitude, and writing self-efficacy can be considered as trend topics (Rechtien & Dizinno, 1998; Abdel-Latif, 2007; Woodrow, 2011; Martinez et al., 2011; Ho, 2016; Blasco, 2016; Khelalfa, 2018).

To begin with, Rechtien and Dizinno (1998) contributed to the field by conducting a longitudinal study on 149 students from English Department to be able to see whether there is a change related to writing anxiety and self-efficacy in time. The data were collected through the questionnaire developed by Riffe and Stacks (1992), and it was detected that the students who showed avoidance attitude towards writing tasks were prone to experience higher writing anxiety as time passed by. On the contrary, the learners with high self-efficacy had lower level of writing anxiety in this process, and they were better at managing their writing, being aware of mechanics of writing, and facing the comments of others more tolerantly. Therefore, the relationship between those two affective factors was negative as expected in the study.

The study of Abdel-Latif (2007) issued negative writing affect by examining Egyptian English majors' high English writing apprehension and low level of English writing self-efficacy by applying two questionnaires measuring their writing apprehension and writing self-efficacy on 57 participants. The participants were pre-service English language teachers. The data collection instruments were English Writing Apprehension Scale (EWAS) which was designed by the researcher and Cheng's (2004b) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). Besides, three language tests were administered to be able to measure the English grammar and vocabulary knowledge of the students and the scores were compared with findings of two scales. The results of the questionnaires and tests revealed that linguistic knowledge is negatively correlated with writing anxiety. Also, writing self-efficacy of the students is in an inverse relationship with writing anxiety. To obtain qualitative data, interviews were conducted with 31 EFL students with high and low level of writing anxiety. During the interviews, the students declared the reasons behind high level of English writing anxiety low level writing self-efficacy as insufficient

proficiency and writing practice in English, low level of self-confidence, previous experiences and achievement in writing, instructional applications in language classes, fear of negative criticism, and being afraid of test-taking and assessment.

In another study, Woodrow (2011) studied on writing self-efficacy, writing performance, and writing anxiety. 738 participants from four Chinese universities participated in the study. After implementing a writing task, a Likert-scale questionnaire on writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety designed by the researcher was applied. It also included open-ended questions about their effort and perception on parental pressure. As the results suggested, the students with higher level of writing anxiety felt more pressure and they could not perform well in English writing task. In terms of writing self-efficacy, low self-efficacy led to a negative perception on perceived and actual effort while high level of self-efficacy provided motivation for the students to exert more effort to study on writing for longer hours. This study emphasized the importance of self-efficacy and anxiety on second language writing skill and it was concluded that there is a need for further research on these variables.

Ho (2016) investigated graduate EFL learners' research writing anxiety and perception on self-efficacy. The focus was on the relationship between two concepts. 218 participants from Taiwanese universities participated in the study and they took a survey. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews provided qualitative data. With this purpose, open-ended questions were addressed to the participants. After the analysis of the data, it was concluded that their level of research writing anxiety was not perceived as high by them. On the other hand, they did not believe that they have high level of writing self-efficacy in terms of writing research articles in English. When the correlation between two variables was examined, it was found that high level of writing self-efficacy decreased the level of writing anxiety. According to their self-reports, the causes of their research writing anxiety in English were low level of writing proficiency, writing under time constraint, being afraid of getting negative comments, and erroneous language use as a foreign language learner. Another major finding of the study was the participants' negative perception on their writing proficiency in English and it was the most profound reason of writing anxiety.

Furthermore, Blasco (2016) investigated the relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy by adding the variable of the participants' use of metacognitive writing strategies. Six participants who were B1 (upper-intermediate) level EFL learner high school students from Spain took part in the action research. Unlike the other studies, this study utilized the think-aloud protocol and the students were asked to articulate their feelings and thoughts while they were writing in English. Additionally, the students completed a questionnaire which was designed by reviewing the previous studies related to the topic (Cheng 2004a; Jones 2008; Stewart, Seifert & Rolheiser, 2015; Ho 2016). The data obtained by two different tools showed similar results and the writing metacognition and writing self-efficacy were found positively correlated. In contrast, these two variables were found negatively correlated with writing anxiety.

The study conducted by Khelalfa (2018) put an emphasis on the importance of writing self-efficacy as a crucial factor which influences the course of the learning process. The researcher obtained the data from 148 tertiary level EFL students by getting their self-reports in Algeria. Besides, the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) developed by Cheng (2004a) was adapted for the study as a data collection tool. Academic Writing Motivation Questionnaire (AWMQ) was adapted and applied for the measurement of the effort put by students into writing and writing self-efficacy. Besides, the average scores of three writing tests that students had taken were taken into consideration to add their writing achievement as another variable. As the results suggested, it was supported that writing self-efficacy has a vital role in terms of the anxiety level and amount of effort exerted by the learners.

In Turkey, there has been a focus on writing affect, and the researchers have been investigating the relationship between affective variables in terms of language skills in foreign language learning especially (Yavuz-Erkan, 2004; Erkan & Saban, 2011; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Kırmızı Kırmızı, 2015). First, Erkan and Saban (2011) carried out a research with the aim of finding out the relationship among writing performance, writing self-efficacy, writing anxiety, and attitudes of the EFL learners towards writing. 118 Turkish tertiary-level students were the participants of the study. The data collection tools were a writing self-efficacy scale (SWS), a writing anxiety test (WAT), and a writing attitude questionnaire (WAQ). The findings pointed out that

a negative correlation was detected between writing anxiety and writing performance. Moreover, writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety were negatively correlated. On the contrary, a positive correlation was detected between attitude towards writing and writing anxiety.

In the study of Öztürk and Saydam (2014), writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety were examined in the context of Turkish EFL learning. The subjects of the study were 240 tertiary-level students whose language level varies from elementary to intermediate from eight different universities in Turkey. The research was designed by utilizing mixed research method to investigate the level of EFL writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy of the participants. Two instruments were applied for the quantitative data collection process as The Second Language Writing Anxiety Instrument (SLWAI, Cheng, 2004b) and Self-efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS, Yavuz-Erkan, 2004). The results of the questionnaire showed that the students had a moderate level of writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety. Therefore, it can be stated that EFL writing anxiety is an issue which should be researched and acted upon in the tertiary level EFL context of Turkey.

Besides, Kırmızı and Kırmızı (2015) made an investigation on the writing anxiety, writing self-efficacy, and the causes of writing anxiety in Turkish tertiary level EFL learning context. The subjects of the research were 172 Turkish state university students from English Language and Literature Department. Self-Efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS) developed by Yavuz-Erkan (2004), the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), developed by Cheng, (2004b), and the Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) were conducted as the data collection instruments of the study. As the results revealed, the subjects had a moderate level of writing self-efficacy when the components of self-efficacy such as design, accuracy, content, and unity were considered. Moreover, the participants stated that they experienced a moderate level of writing anxiety. It was found that negative evaluation made by the teacher and time pressure were the main reasons of writing anxiety for the participants. Furthermore, there was a strong negative correlation between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy. Namely, as the level of writing anxiety increases, the level of writing self-efficacy decreases. The study also aimed at finding out the differences among grades with regard to writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy. As

a result, there was no crucial difference in cognitive anxiety while their somatic anxiety and avoidance behavior showed differences statistically.

To summarize, the studies conducted on the relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy in Turkey and around the world found out similar findings. It was concluded that writing self-efficacy is usually negatively correlated with writing anxiety. When the self-efficacy level of language learners is moderate or low, their anxiety level rises. As a consequence, this situation can affect their performance and achievement in writing skill.



Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter introduces the methodology of the present study including the purpose of the study, research design, setting and participants, data collection tools which were applied, the process of data collection, and the procedures about data analysis are presented. Furthermore, the information about the reliability, validity, and limitations of the study are provided at the end of the chapter. Preliminarily, this study seeks answers for the following research questions:

1. What is the level of writing anxiety of Turkish EFL students (pre-intermediate, A2 level) enrolled in a preparatory program of a state university?
2. What type of writing anxiety do the participating students experience in the writing course of the existing program?
3. What is the level of writing self-efficacy of the participants?
4. Is there a significant relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy of the students in EFL classroom?
5. What are the perceptions of the students about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes?
6. What are the perceptions of the instructors about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes?

3.1 Research Design

In accordance with the purpose of the study, a mixed methods research design was administered to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data. It also provided a more detailed, reliable and comprehensive data set related to the tertiary level EFL students' writing anxiety, the causes of writing anxiety, the writing self-efficacy, and the relationship among these variables in the context of the study.

When the existing literature is taken into consideration, it is possible to claim that many researchers have preferred mixed methods research design due to its ability to offer a chance to cross-check the information and broader perspective about the research topic. Creswell (2003) highlighted the benefit of utilizing mixed research

methods by stating that “well-validated and substantiated findings” can be gathered by using both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools. Greene (2007) also defined mixed method as an ideal way of making an inquiry for social issues because it uses multiple techniques to obtain information and gain a deeper insight thanks to more credible and valid findings on the topic of the research. Moreover, Pajares et al. (2007) remarked that mixed methods research design can provide links between possibilities of incidents and verified answers to the researcher. There are 3 main types of mixed methods research design which are sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, and convergent (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Among these three designs, sequential explanatory design is frequently used by the researchers, and it includes two subtypes as quantitative strand, and qualitative strand. In the present study, sequential explanatory design with qualitative strand was utilized to achieve the aims of the study. Accordingly, the administration of the questionnaires was followed up with the interviews conducted with the students and the instructors to be able to make more comprehensive interpretation on the findings.

To accomplish the purposes of the study, quantitative research method was used in order to gather descriptive numerical data related to the writing anxiety level of A2 level preparatory class students in tertiary level and perceived causes of this anxiety by them which formed the first research question. Furthermore, the descriptive data on writing self-efficacy level of the participants was obtained by following the same method. For this purpose, three different questionnaires for the level and types of writing anxiety of the EFL students, the causes of writing anxiety, and their writing self-efficacy levels were administered on the students.

The qualitative data collection methods allow the participants to convey their own ideas without the restrictions of quantitative data collection tools such as questionnaires, surveys or other types of tests. Thus, it enables researchers to reach more information about the issues which were neglected or not taken into account. With this aim, in this study, the qualitative data were obtained via semi-structured interviews with 21 students and 6 instructors to gather further and in-depth information related to the perception and ideas of the participants on EFL writing anxiety with its perceived causes, writing self-efficacy, and their experiences and ways to cope with this anxiety.

3.2 Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at an English language preparatory school of a state university in Istanbul, Turkey. The participants were native Turkish speakers and they were expected to learn English language throughout an academic year and become at least B1 (intermediate) level English language users to be able to continue their education in this university and become competent enough to perform their future professions which require a good command of English. There were 222 students aged between 18 to 20 years old in preparatory classes of the university and 218 of those were male while just 4 of them were female. The following year they were expected to study in the departments such as Aerospace Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electronics Engineering or Industrial Engineering if they can be successful in the English preparatory proficiency exam and continue their undergraduate study. At the beginning of the academic year, they took a placement test for their English language level assessment and their level was determined according to the CEFR scale. The classes were listed by considering the language level of the students. 33 out of 222 students were B1 (pre-intermediate) level English language learners while the rest of the students, 189 students, were A2 (elementary) level. For this reason, this study was conducted on A2 level students at the beginning of the second semester to be able to detect the existing condition and tendencies of the majority and make an intact generalization related to the writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy levels of A2 level EFL students in the context of the study.

Regardless of their language levels, all the students get 30 hours of English lessons every week including main course, reading and writing, listening and speaking lessons with three different instructors. In the first semester, they get 8 hours of integrated skills lessons while they get 7 hours of lessons designed just for reading and writing skills in the second semester. For the writing skill, the students start by learning how to write a paragraph and through the end of the year they start to learn different essay types. The assessment and evaluation process of the students is rather complicated when the number and percentage of each assessment type are considered. They take different kinds of quizzes including writing parts, four performance tests, and two proficiency exams which assess four language skills as listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the beginning and end of the year. The writing parts of the

exams aim at assessing knowledge of the students on cohesion and coherence of the text, grammar rules, use of vocabulary, being relevant to the given topic, punctuation, the elements of writing such as topic sentence and supporting sentences. On the condition that they cannot pass the proficiency exam which they take at the end of the year, they will be expelled from the university. For this reason, the students must be successful in both the exams that they take throughout the year and at the end of the year.

In the present study, apart from the preparatory students, 6 EFL instructors participated in this study as well. To this end, 6 EFL instructors who were reading and writing skill course instructors throughout the year took part in the interviews and reflected their ideas on the research topic. For English writing skill course, they teach 16 hours a week. There were two male and four female language writing skill instructors whose ages range from 25 to 29 years old and they all have 2 years of experience in the preparatory classes of this university. Furthermore, currently, they are also MA students in the departments of English Language Teaching, Curriculum and Instruction, and Educational Administration in different universities. The aim of the interviews was to utilize their real experiences and valuable thoughts related to writing anxiety in their EFL classes and the relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy in the target language while investigating the causes of this anxiety.

All of the participants, the participants were informed about the data collection procedures and their consent was taken via consent forms by ensuring that their personal privacy will be kept confidential. Their questions about the questionnaire statements were answered to clarify the statements and help them to make the data collection process more reliable and valid without causing any confusion or misconception.

3.3 Procedures

In this part, an elaborate description of sampling type, data collection procedures, and the analysis process of collected data were presented respectively. Moreover, the details about reliability and validity of the study were delivered in the

following pages of this chapter. In the conclusion part, limitations and delimitations of the study were discussed as a critical reflection.

3.3.1 Sampling

Sampling procedures are categorized under two different types as probability sampling and the non-probability sampling. The probability sampling method aims at choosing the sample haphazardly from a community to be able to ensure the same chance to be selected for each person in that population. On the contrary, the samples are expected to be chosen on purpose specifically with an aim in non-probability sampling method by offering three different sub-types as purposive, quota, convenience sampling (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2013). Convenience sampling works well when the target population's members have certain characteristics such as availability and accessibility in terms of time and place or being eager to take part in the study. (Dörnyei, 2007). When the context of the present research study is considered, the majority of the students in the preparatory classes of the university are readily available A2 (pre-intermediate) level English learners, and the aim of the study is to detect writing self-efficacy levels, writing anxiety levels and types, and the causes of this anxiety of A2 level English language learners by examining the relationship between their writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy levels. To this end, convenience sampling type of non-probability sampling was applied owing to the availability of the students and instructors in the workplace in which the researcher works as a preparatory class EFL instructor. 189 Pre-intermediate (A2) level students were expected to take the questionnaires. On the other hand, the interviews were conducted with 20 students who were willing to take part in and contribute to the study. For the sampling process of the participant EFL instructors for the interviews, the course which they give in the English preparatory classes was taken into consideration. To this end, all of the writing and reading integrated skills instructors were chosen for the interviews. Furthermore, 6 instructors contributed to the study via the teacher interviews. These instructors were chosen by considering their experiences in teaching writing skills.

3.3.2 Data Collection Instruments

The study utilized the following quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments. As quantitative data collection instruments, The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), The Causes of Writing Anxiety (CWAI), and Self-Efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS) were used. On the other hand, qualitative data collection instruments were the interviews which were semi-structured. They were prepared separately for the students and instructors. The following part explains each data collection instrument in detail.

3.3.2.1 Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI)

With the purpose of answering the first research question of the study, to obtain data related to the writing anxiety level of the participants in EFL writing, Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) was administered. This inventory which includes 22 items was developed by Cheng (2004b) and its 5-point Likert-scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Due to the negatively worded statements (1, 4, 7, 17, 18, 21, and 22), they were calculated reversely in order to get the total score. To illustrate, statement 17 says “I do not worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions”. If the participants choose 5 from the scale, it means that she or he strongly agrees with the statement and it is an indicator of low writing anxiety. Thus, one point was given instead of five points while scoring.

SLWAI has three sub-categories as cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior. The statements 1,3,7,9,14,17,20 and 21 are related to Cognitive Anxiety. As Cheng (2004b) stated that this type of anxiety is linked with damages in the mental condition of language learners caused by fears and apprehension about writing performance, judgments of people such as language instructors or other language learners. As an example, item 3 “While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated” relates to cognitive anxiety and its subcomponent as the feeling of being afraid of negative evaluation and comments. On the other hand, statements 2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, and 19 are related to Somatic Anxiety. Somatic Anxiety is defined by Cheng (2004b) as the impacts of anxiety on physiology

of individuals who experience anxiety while writing in target foreign language and it reveals itself with an increase in heart rate, perspiration, feeling of tenseness or trembling. The 8th item “I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure” refers to somatic anxiety which can deteriorate physiological stability. Lastly, the statements 4, 5, 10, 12, 16, 18, and 22 aims to detect Avoidance Behavior and this sub-category refers to the situation of abstaining from writing in target foreign language (Zhang, 2011) (see Appendix A). For instance, item 12 “Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write compositions.” aims at detecting the tendency for avoidance behavior of the participants.

The categories of anxiety level were determined by Cheng (2004b) as low, moderate, and high writing anxiety. If a participant gets a score above 65 from SLWAI, it means that this person experiences high level of anxiety while writing in the target language. If the total score is between 50 and 65, the level of writing anxiety is moderate while a participant has low anxiety in foreign language writing if she or he gets a total score under 50 points. In the light of this information, the participants will be categorized under their writing anxiety levels and the data will be correlated with their writing self-efficacy level in English language to be able to reveal the relationship between these two concepts. In the present study, Turkish version of the questionnaire was administered and its alpha coefficient reliability value is 0.87 according to the SPSS analysis of the pilot study which was conducted on 30 students.

3.3.2.2 Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI)

This questionnaire on the causes of writing anxiety was developed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014). It is a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire composed of 10 items (see Appendix C). The points of Likert-scale ranges from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Each statement is related to one perceived cause of writing anxiety which can be listed as being afraid of negative comments of the teacher, fears related to test-taking for writing skill, lack of practice in writing, lack of techniques for writing, having difficulty in choosing a topic, problems related to proper use of the target language, expectation about producing a flawless writing, writing assignments given too frequently, limited time for the writing task, and having insufficient self-esteem in writing. As asserted by the researchers who developed this tool, the causes

stated in the questionnaire are based on previous research findings (Bloom, 1981; Horwitz et al., 1986; Cheng, 2002). The questionnaire was administered in Turkish language after it was translated by doing a constant revision of the original version. Here the aim was to prevent the findings from the possible impact of misunderstanding because of foreign language use and insufficient language competence of the participants in English to comprehend the statements in the questionnaire. One of the colleagues of the researcher proofread the tool. Its reliability was analyzed through SPSS and its Cronbach's alpha score was calculated as 0.92 according to the findings of the pilot study of the present research which was administered on A2 (pre-intermediate) level randomly selected 30 students.

3.3.2.3 Self-Efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS)

Yavuz-Erkan (2004) developed Self-Efficacy in Writing Scale to measure the level of writing self-efficacy of the language learners. The items of the scale are built on Bandura's (1977) construct of self-efficacy. However, different from the original version which includes 21 items, the questionnaire including 28 items which was applied in the research study of Erkan and Saban (2011) was used in the present study. This scale is originally a 4-point Likert-scale ranging from "I do it very well" to "I do not do it very well at all" without the option of "neutral". For this study, the option of "neutral" was added to the questionnaire in the present study. Each statement starts with the phrase "I can..." which aims at obtaining data regarding the perception of the participants on their strengths and ability in foreign language writing skill (See Appendix E). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha reliability value for the pilot study of the present research conducted on 30 students is 0.71 based on the measurement of SPSS program version 23.

3.3.2.4 Semi-structured Interviews

Interviewing which is a widely utilized data collection tool for qualitative research design has been considered as an efficient tool to obtain data by constructing interlocution between the researcher and the participant(s) of the study to get a better comprehension and extensive information which cannot be provided by the data gathered via quantitative data tools such as questionnaires, tests, surveys on the research topic. As Freeman (1996) offered, interviews take research participants "at

their word". To this end, the interviewee is supposed to convey his or her ideas, experiences, beliefs, and perception through the addressed questions or prompts (Walker, 1985).

In the present study, the qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviewing. The interviews started with broader and more general questions about the main topics and then more detailed questions about the subtopics concerning the research questions were directed to the interviewee in compliance with the rationale of semi-structured interviews (Pathak & Intratat, 2016). The questions aimed at encouraging the interviewees to be able to make them feel free and open while sharing their ideas.

In the student interviews, there were 4 questions which attempt to obtain further information on the perception of the participant students on writing in a foreign language, their attitude towards writing process in English, their experiences with feeling of writing anxiety, the possible causes of this anxiety perceived by them, their level of self-efficacy in English language writing skills, and their strategies to cope with the apprehension felt while writing in the target language. The questions were developed or adopted, and sometimes adapted, and then logically sequenced as the main topic to sub-topics. Question 1 and 3 (see Appendix G) was adopted from the study of Al-Shboul and Huwari (2015). Similarly, question number 2 was taken from the study of Ekmekçi (2018) on writing anxiety of Turkish EFL students. The last interview question investigating the causes of writing anxiety was adopted and adapted from the study of Atay and Kurt (2006) by adding follow-up questions to extend the scope of the interview. These questions addressed the neglected or missed out points and issues related to the research topic in the quantitative data collection process.

The teacher interview including 3 questions aimed at getting the ideas of the language instructors in order to add another dimension and broaden the perspective of the study. The first question aimed to find out the opinions of the instructors related to the difficulties of language skills and the causes of this difficulty. Next, the second interview question was addressed to learn about the main causes of writing anxiety from the instructors' perspective. Lastly, the third question intended to put forward

the difficulties that instructors face in their EFL writing classes. The questions were chosen and adopted from the teacher interview questions of the study of El Shimi (2017). El Shimi developed 16 questions in the study for teacher interviews by adapting the statements of SLWAI (Cheng, 2004b) and adopting interview questions from the study of Attia (2015) on the perception and attitudes on foreign language anxiety in ESL classes in Egypt. The questions successfully reached the aim of discovering the ideas and experiences of the writing skill course instructors related to writing anxiety.

3.3.3 Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected at the beginning of the spring semester of 2018-2019 academic year at the preparatory school of a state university in Istanbul, Turkey. At the very beginning of the process, the research proposal was approved by the thesis advisor, and the required permission for the data collection phase of the research study was granted from the administration of the university. The permission was taken from the administration of the university with a written petition which states the aim and procedure of the present research study. After getting permission from the study, the first step of the data collection process was piloting the data collection instruments on a small group. With this purpose, 30 students from 2 sections took part in the piloting phase. The data collection instruments were found valid and reliable by utilizing Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics of IBM SPSS software version 23. The administration of the questionnaires on all of the A2 level preparatory class students was accomplished in 2 weeks with the help of the instructor of each class.

Before the data collection process, the students and their instructors were informed about the research topic and the data collection process verbally. The names and other personal information of the participants were kept confidential for the sake of their privacy, and thus they felt more comfortable to answer the questions honestly without the fear of being judged. The consent from participants was obtained by consent forms. In this way, they were provided with information about the purpose of the present research study and the protection of their privacy. Three questionnaires (SLWAI, CWAI, SWS) were administered in order via an online questionnaire form prepared by using Google Forms and the participants completed the questionnaires

online from their laptops within the provided time in their classrooms. In the end, out of 189 students, 176 of them completed questionnaires in total because of several reasons such as the absence of the students in the class, unwilling students to take part in the research or incomplete answers given to the questionnaires.

The interviewing process with participant students and instructors was more detailed and complex part of the data collection procedure. The interview sessions with the volunteer student participants were planned by considered their availability. The interview questions were in English language; however, the questions were also translated into Turkish to make them more comprehensible without any confusion which can arise because of the language barrier. The interviewees were allowed to make their choice on the language which they can use to answer the questions. Both Turkish and English answers were accepted to be able to provide them a chance of expressing themselves more clearly. The interview questions encouraged the interviewees to convey their ideas. For the interviews with the instructors, the same steps were followed. The answers of the participants were recorded while they were answering with their consent. The recordings were transcribed and translated into English for the data analysis.

To sum up, the data collection process which involves the administration of the questionnaires and interviews with both students and instructors took almost two months to complete in total. In the end, both quantitative and qualitative data sets were ready for the data analysis process.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

To analyze the quantitative data obtained via questionnaires, the computer program Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was utilized. With the help of the program, the type and level of writing anxiety, the level of writing self-efficacy of the participants in EFL preparatory classes, and the correlation between the level of this anxiety and self-efficacy were found out through the analysis of the collected data.

To this end, the data sets obtained through the administration of three different questionnaires turned into a table in SPSS were computed the descriptive statistics which include frequencies, percentages, means scores, and standard deviation were provided. The analysis process of the findings of each instrument is delivered in detail in the following paragraphs.

The analysis of the first questionnaire, Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), demonstrated the level and types of second language writing anxiety of the A2 tertiary level EFL students after the calculation of the rating done by the participants for each item. The negatively worded statements which should be scored reversely were also taken into consideration for accurate results. In this way, the total score of the participants determined their writing anxiety level category as low, medium, and high. Moreover, the type of their writing anxiety was detected and placed under the subcategories as cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior. To achieve this, the ratings of the students with regard to the related items of SLWAI for each subcategory of writing anxiety were computed. In this way, the most prevalent kind of writing anxiety among the participants was detected as well.

Similarly, the level of their writing self-efficacy in the target language was revealed by analyzing the ratings of the students on Self-Efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS). Each rating on 5-item Likert-scale was calculated, and the total score of a student showed their writing self-efficacy level. Depending on the numerical descriptive findings, inferences related to the findings were made to be able to answer the first, second, and third research questions.

As an attempt to answer the fourth research question, the relationship between EFL writing anxiety level and writing self-efficacy level of the students was examined via the Pearson correlation coefficient calculation and the association between these two variables was clarified. To begin with, the normality of the data should be assessed to be able to get an accurate Pearson correlation calculation by checking the distribution of the variables (Kalaycı, 2010). To this end, normality test was conducted on the program for the variables. The Sig p values which were higher than 0.05 on Shapiro-Wilks Normality Test proved that the variables show normal distributions. Consequently, to reveal whether there is a relationship between two variables, writing

anxiety and writing self-efficacy, Pearson correlation analysis was applied to the students' mean scores on these variables.

Moreover, to be able to answer the fifth research question regarding the possible causes of writing anxiety, the findings gathered through the administration of CWAI were analyzed on SPSS. To accomplish it, the ratings of the students for each item of the questionnaire were calculated and the most rated items were detected as the main causes of writing anxiety from the perspective of the students.

In the present research study, the quantitative data were triangulated by the qualitative data to provide a deeper and broader perspective related to the research topic. As Creswell (2003) highlighted that the theme identification process is crucial in qualitative data analysis to have a better understanding of the experiences of individuals. To analyze the qualitative data, the responses given by the participants during the interview sessions were examined through the pattern coding as Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested. As the first step of this method, the transcription of the interviews was completed and the answers given in Turkish were translated into English. To begin with, the themes were detected. The main focus of the interview questions was designated as the themes. Then, the statements were reduced into smaller pattern units by eliminating the redundant, and the points emphasized by the majority were determined. Next, the data were re-organized, and overlapping parts (including use of synonyms or exactly the same words) of the speeches were identified and the most recurring and emergent concepts in the interviews made up the categories. After that, the codes were grouped under the categories and for each question, and the frequency of them was calculated by dividing the number of the repetitions for each code into the total number of the codes for the theme. These codes can be accepted as beneficial hints for the researcher in terms of tracing the key points proposed by the interviewees. At last, some excerpts from the responses of the participants were chosen and put under the results of each interview question in order to support the findings.

3.3.5 Reliability and Validity

By considering the reliability and validity for the sake of the credibility of the study, the questionnaires which were proved as reliable and valid tools to collect data by previous research studies were administered in this study. Moreover, to be able to minimize the threats which can alter or deteriorate the results of the study; the clarity of the Turkish translations of the data collection instruments, the internal validity of these instruments, and the comprehensibility of the questionnaire statements were checked by administering a pilot study on 30 students. After proving them highly reliable and valid, the tools were applied to all of the subjects. It was reminded the participants that their identity will be kept confidential and the data cannot be for any other purposes so that the participants can feel free to give honest responses to the questions addressed to them.

In this study, the piloting of SLWAI on 30 students revealed that the reliability score is 0.87 which refers to a high and acceptable reliability level. The latest findings which were gathered by applying the questionnaire on 176 participants pointed out that the Cronbach-alpha reliability score of SLWAI is 0.92. With regards to external validity, the findings of the present study can remain limited due to the use of convenience sampling while it is still possible to make the findings general for similar groups with similar qualifications.

In addition, Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI) was the tool to determine the most common causes of writing anxiety among the participants. To be able to ensure the suitability and appropriateness of the scale, a pilot study was designed at the beginning. After the administration and analysis of the pilot study, it was found that the alpha coefficient for this 10-item scale was .92, revealing that the items show quite high internal consistency. The final analysis of the scale after the data collection showed that the reliability score is .91 for CWAI.

The scale, Self-Efficacy in Writing Scale (SWS) which aims at measuring the level of the writing self-efficacy of the participants was applied by adopting the version used in Erkan and Saban (2011). The previous studies applied SWS (Erkan & Saban, 2011; Sarkhoush, 2013; Kırmızı, 2015) asserted that the tool can be regarded

as both valid and reliable. In the present study, the reliability score of the scale was found as .96 by SPSS program. To sum up, all of the quantitative data collection instruments were proved to be reliable tools to obtain valid and reliable results.

To triangulate the data, there was a need for more information from the participants, and thus semi-structured interviews were administered to the students and instructors. During the interviews, the researcher as an interviewer did not interfere in or make comment on the answer of the interviewees. The analysis process was carried out as neatly as possible in order not to cause any threat in terms of reliability and validity. This process was more demanding and relatively elaborate compared to the analysis process of the quantitative data. While analyzing the answers of one group, the analysis of the instructors was not done before the analysis of the students' data was finished so that the analysis of the other group's responses were not affected. The responses of each group were analyzed within their own group and divided into categories. Moreover, the reliability of the data analysis of qualitative data was increased by providing intra-rater reliability. All the transcribed data were analyzed also by a colleague of the researcher, and the inter-rater reliability score was found to be .82 which referred to a consensus on the themes between two raters (Creswell, 2012).

3.4 Limitations

Because of the insufficient number of B1 level students in English language preparatory classes, there was no chance to compare writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy in different English language levels, as well. Moreover, the present study conducted the study just on preparatory classes of the university, and thus, the differences or similarities between different academic levels cannot be found out in the context of the research. Furthermore, the number of participants of this study is insufficient to make generalizations for other EFL learners or contexts in terms of writing anxiety, the perceived causes of this writing anxiety, and writing self-efficacy level. Still, this small-scaled group of participants in the present study can be accepted as a decent representative of EFL learners in Turkey, and especially for tertiary level English preparatory class students.

Chapter 4

Findings

4.1. Overview

This chapter presents the findings of this research study which attempted to investigate the phenomenon of level and type of writing anxiety of A2 level English preparatory class students with the possible causes of this anxiety and writing self-efficacy levels of the participant by examining the relationship between these two variables as well. The data were collected by applying an explanatory mixed method research design which combined quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques including administration of three different questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The obtained findings for each research question are provided with tables and figures in detail respectively.

4.2 Findings

As stated previously in this study, the aim of this research was to make an investigation on writing anxiety level and types of tertiary level A2 EFL students who study in English Language Preparation Department of a Turkish state university as well as the perceived causes of their writing anxiety. Furthermore, their writing self-efficacy level in the target language was detected and the relationship between their EFL writing self-efficacy level and writing anxiety was analyzed. The following part reports and summarizes the obtained results related to each research question addressed in this study.

4.2.1 The Level of Writing Anxiety of the Students

In order to answer the first research question regarding the level of writing anxiety among A2 level English preparatory students, the data were obtained via SLWAI which was administered to 176 participants. To this end, the total writing anxiety scores were calculated regarding students' ratings to the scale. Before this calculation, the statements which should be reverse coded were scored again by the program.

Table 1

Overview of the Descriptive Statistics of the SLWAI

	M	Min.	Max.	SD
Writing Anxiety	66.73	25	110	17.53

Primarily, Table 1 presents the overview of the finding related to writing anxiety level of EFL students measured with the help of the scale SLWAI. There is no missing participant and all answers were accepted as valid by the program. The maximum score got by the participants was 110 while the minimum one was 25. The mean score of the participants was 66.73 which refers to “moderate to high level of writing anxiety” among the participants.

Regarding the participants’ level of writing anxiety, the method suggested by Cheng (2004b) was implemented for each writing anxiety level. According to this categorization, if a participant gets a score below 50 points, it means that she or he has low level of writing anxiety. The score for moderate level of writing anxiety is considered between 50 and 65 while the participant has a high level of writing anxiety in English if this score is more than 65.

Table 2

The Descriptive Statistics about the Levels of Writing Anxiety of the Students

Level	N	%	Min.	Max.	SD	M
High	91	51.70	65	110	5.86	80.46 \geq 65
Moderate	55	31.25	50	64	4.68	57.14 \leq 65
Low	30	17.05	25	49	11.58	42.7 \leq 50
Total	176	100				

As Table 2 presents, 30 students had a low level of writing anxiety as their mean score was below 50. Moreover, 55 students whose mean score was between 50 and 65 had moderate anxiety, while 91 students got a mean score higher than 60 indicating high level of writing anxiety. In other words, the obtained findings revealed that the majority of the participants (%52) suffered from high level of writing anxiety while

%31 of them had a moderate level of writing anxiety. Finally, only %17 of them experienced low level of writing anxiety in their courses. Based on the categorization of Cheng (2004b), it can be concluded that more than half of the A2 level English preparatory students experienced high level of writing anxiety in the existing program.

4.2.2 The Type of Writing Anxiety of the Students

To detect the type of writing anxiety experienced by the participant students of the study, SLWAI composed of three subtypes of writing anxiety categorized as cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior was analyzed by calculating the ratings of the students for the related items for each subtype. To determine the number of the participants who experience cognitive anxiety, which refers to the mental situation triggered by fear and apprehension, related questionnaire items (1, 3, 7, 9, 14, 17, 20 and 21) were analyzed together. The same steps were followed for somatic anxiety which is related to negative impacts of anxiety on the physiology by analyzing the related items (2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15, and 19). Finally, the level of avoidance behavior, which can be defined as abstaining from foreign language writing, the related items (4, 5, 10, 12, 16, 18, and 22) were analyzed. The mean scores of each type of writing anxiety are presented in Figure 1 below:

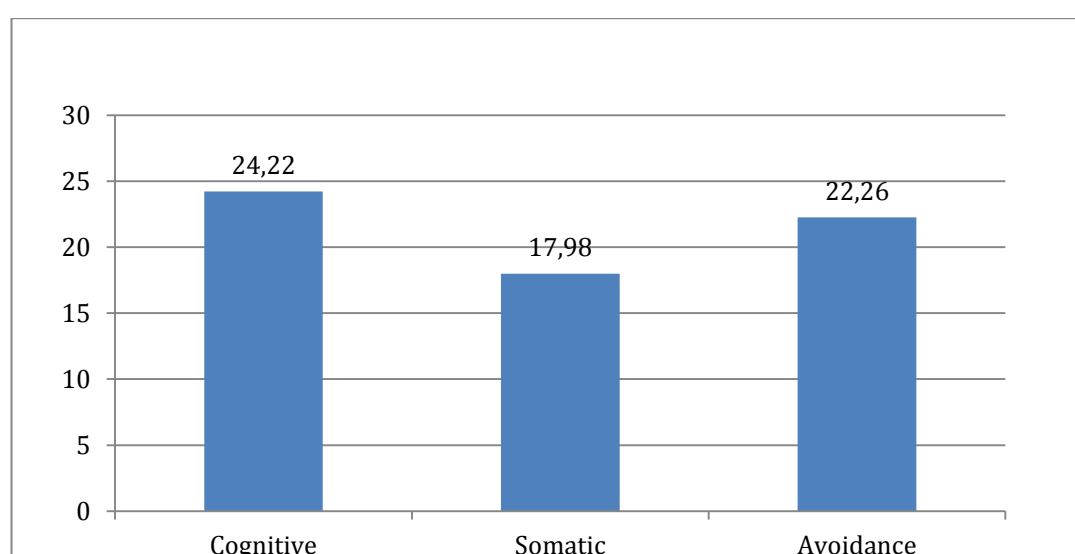


Figure 1. The Mean Scores of the Sub-types of EFL Writing Anxiety among the Students

As displayed in Figure 1 above, cognitive anxiety had the highest mean score ($M=24.22$) compared to the other types of writing anxiety. This finding showed that the Cognitive Anxiety was the most common writing anxiety type experienced by the EFL students took part in the study. In addition, according to these results, the second prevalent type of writing anxiety was Avoidance Behavior ($M=22.26$) while the least common type of writing anxiety was Somatic Anxiety experienced by the participating students ($M=17.98$).

In addition, Table 3 presents the number of participants for each writing anxiety subtype with detailed information related to the number of participants with low, moderate and high level of writing anxiety. To be able to provide this information, the cut-off points were detected first. Then, the maximum points which can be scored for each sub-component of the scale were calculated and divided into three categories as low, moderate, and high. As suggested by Cheng (2004b), these cut-off points for the types of writing anxiety were categorized as following: cognitive anxiety (low=1-13, medium=13-26, high=26-40), somatic anxiety (low=1-12, medium=12-24, high=24-35), and avoidance behavior (low=1-12, medium=13-26, high=26-40).

According to the results included in the table below, the great majority of the students faced writing anxiety ranging from medium to high level for each sub-type. Specifically, the number of participants with high level of cognitive anxiety was 69 (%39.20) while 30 (%17) of them had high level of somatic anxiety. Besides, 70 (%39.70) of the participating students experienced high level of avoidance behavior.

Table 3
The Number of Students for Each Level of Writing Anxiety Sub-type

Type of Writing anxiety	Low		Moderate		High	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Cognitive Anxiety	11	6.25	96	54.54	69	39.20
Somatic Anxiety	27	15.30	118	67	30	17
Avoidance Behavior	6	3.40	100	56.80	70	39.70

To summarize, as stated in the results above the most common type of writing anxiety was cognitive anxiety followed by avoidance behavior. Finally, somatic anxiety was the least prevalent type of writing anxiety among the A2 level preparatory students in the study.

4.2.3 The Level of Writing Self-efficacy of the Students

The third research question attempted to investigate the level of writing self-efficacy of the A2 level English preparatory class students. The data gathered via SWS revealed that the writing-self efficacy the students ranged from moderate to high level in the writing course. The following table displays the general descriptive statistics.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of SWS

	Mean	Min	Max	SD
Writing Self-efficacy	87.67	28	140	21.23

Provided in Table 4, the mean score for SWS among 176 participants was found as 87.67. The lowest and highest scores were recorded as 28 and 140 respectively. In addition, the standard deviation for the writing self-efficacy scores of the participants was recorded as 21.13. This finding demonstrates that most of the students tend to have moderate or high level of writing self-efficacy in English.

Subsequently, this result was supported by the analysis of the number of students in terms of each level of writing self-efficacy which is displayed in Figure 2 below. In order to determine the range scores of each level, the detection of the categories was adapted from the study of KIRMIZI and KIRMIZI (2015), and the cut-off points were calculated by dividing the maximum point which is 140 in total into three to be able to put the students under certain categories as low, medium, and high level of writing self-efficacy.

According to the findings of this study, the participants who got a score between 93 and 140 had high level of EFL writing self-efficacy. On the contrary, if they scored less than 45, they experienced low level of writing self-efficacy in English. The ones with a score between 46 and 92 can be stated as the language learners with moderate level of writing self-efficacy in English. As demonstrated in Figure 2, 71 participants experienced high level of writing self-efficacy while only 5 had low level of writing self-efficacy. Largely, most of the participants (97) were at a moderate level of writing self-efficacy in English.

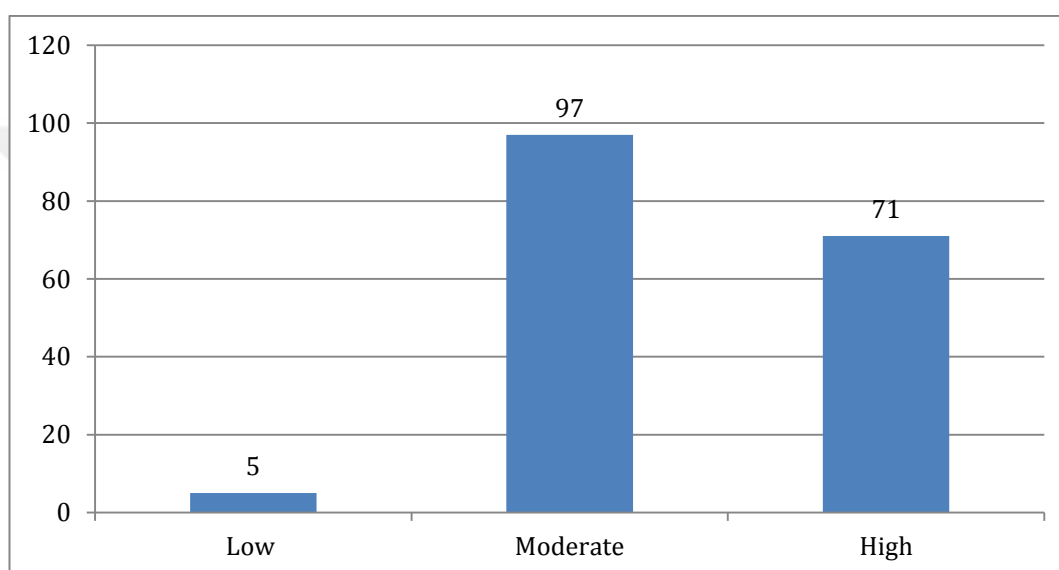


Figure 2. The Frequency of the Students for Each Level of Writing Self-efficacy

4.2.4 The Relationship between Writing Anxiety and Writing Self-efficacy

The fourth research question attempted to ascertain the relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy on each other as two crucial affective variables in writing skill in the context of the current study. To analyze the data and find out whether there is a relationship between the level of EFL writing anxiety and EFL writing self-efficacy, Pearson correlation coefficient value was calculated on SPSS program by utilizing mean scores of the participants obtained via SLWAI and SWS for these two affective variables.

Table 5

The Relationship between EFL Writing Anxiety and Writing Self-efficacy of the Students

		Writing Anxiety	Writing Self-efficacy
Writing Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-,637**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N		176
Writing Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	-,637**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	176	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy ($p < 0.01$), and specifically the value $r = -0.637$ is an indicator of a significant moderate level inverse correlation between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy levels of the students as displayed on Table 5.

According to these findings, it can be concluded that the students with low level of writing self-efficacy tend to experience higher level of writing anxiety in their English language learning process. In other words, writing anxiety in writing decreases as writing self-efficacy increases considerably in A2 level EFL learners or vice versa.

4.2.5 The Perception of the Students on the Causes of Writing Anxiety

To answer the fifth research question which attempted to investigate the perception of the students about the causes of writing anxiety in EFL classes, both quantitative (Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory) and qualitative (semi-structured interviews) data collection instruments were administered on the students participated in this study. To begin with, CWAI was analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The following figure displays the results of the analysis:

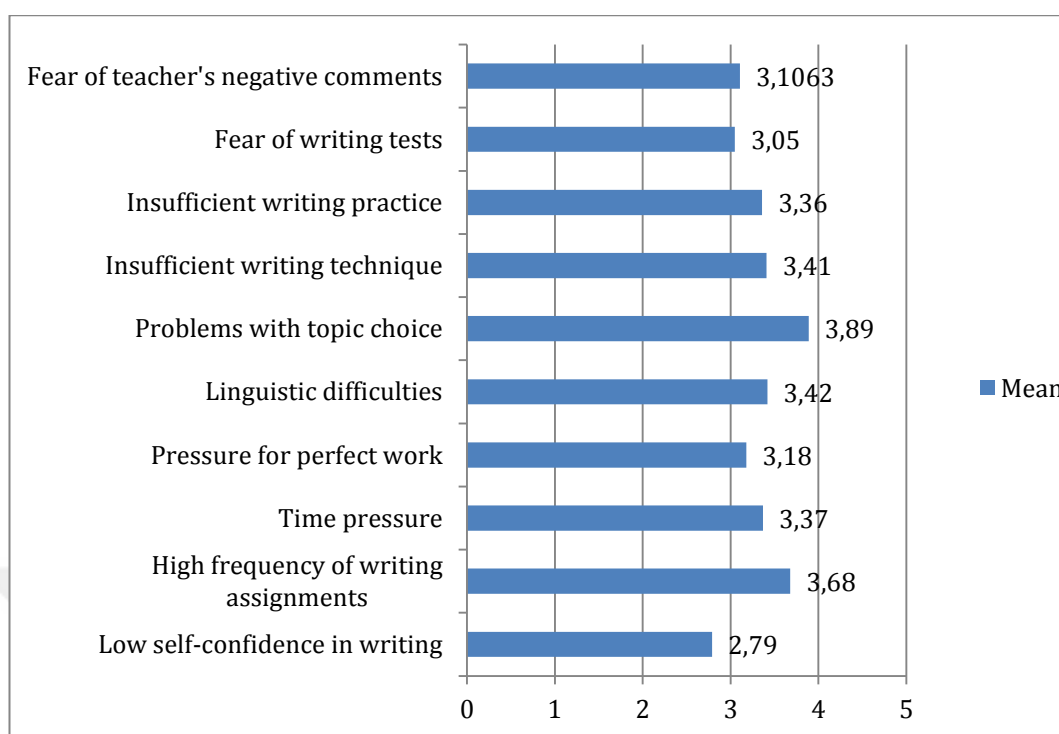


Figure 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory- The mean Scores of CWAI Items

Figure 3 illustrated that the main factor causing writing anxiety among EFL students was “problems with topic choice” with the highest mean score ($M=3.89$) among 10 possible causes perceived by language learners. It means that the students experienced apprehension when they had a problem with the topic of the assigned writing. Furthermore, high frequency of writing assignments ($M=3.68$), linguistic difficulties ($M=3.42$), insufficient writing technique ($M=3.41$), and time pressure ($M=3.37$) seemed as the secondary factors causing writing anxiety on EFL learners. On the other hand, the least scored causal factor was “low confidence in writing” ($M=2.79$) which should be evaluated with the results of the SWS revealing that the majority of the students had moderate level writing self-efficacy in writing.

Furthermore, to complement the data obtained from SWS, the qualitative data related to the possible causes of writing anxiety of A2 level preparatory class EFL learners were gathered via semi-structured interviews with 20 students also supports the results of CWAI and provides more in-depth information related to the experiences and perception of the students on EFL writing anxiety and the perceived sources of it.

There are 4 interview questions addressed to the students. The responses of the students to the interview questions were analyzed thoroughly and emerging themes, categories, and codes were detected and demonstrated on tables. The findings are presented with their findings under 4 main themes in the following part of the study.

4.2.5.1 The Hardest Language Skill for the Students. To begin with, the first interview question aimed to find out the most difficult language skill for the participating students in the interviews among four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) and the possible reasons behind it according to the participants' perception. The following table reports the perceptions of the students about the hardest language skill among four skills and the causes of these hardships.

Table 6

<i>The Hardest Language Skill for the Participants with the Causes (N=20)</i>		<i>(f)</i>
Writing		5
	Length of time	
	Effortful	
	Difficulty of production	
Reading		5
	Time-taking	
	Unknown words	
Listening		6
	Insufficient practice	
	Comprehension difficulty (Accent, pronunciation, sound quality)	
Speaking		4
	Difficulty of production	
	Insufficient practice	

As displayed on Table 6, when the students were asked about their opinion related to the most difficult of language skills for them compared to other language skills, 5 out of 20 students mentioned writing skill and the challenging aspects of this skill such as difficulty of production in English, giving effort to write, and length of time to produce while writing in English. The quotes given below are some exemplary statements regarding the responses of the students:

[...] Writing is the hardest for me. It is very boring and long. (Student 4, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] Personally, it is hard to write well in English because I need too much time and effort to write. (Student 6, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] Writing and speaking, of course. You need to produce. You need knowledge in language. Too stressful for me. (Student 19, Interview Data, 26.04.2019)

As it can be seen clearly, some of the students perceive speaking and writing skills as a challenge in language learning due to various reasons. The causes of the challenges are briefly stress arising during production, requirements of writing skill, length of time given for the writing task, etc.

4.2.5.2 The Adjectives Describing Writing in English. When the students were expected to choose 3 adjectives about their experiences in writing, the majority of the participant students reported that they experience negative feelings by choosing adjectives such as “difficult, boring, time-taking” to describe writing process in a foreign language.

Table 7

<i>The Adjectives Describing Writing in English (N=20)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
Difficult	7
Boring	4
Time-taking	4
Long	2
Tiring	2
Terrible	2
Stressful	1
Confusing	1
Thrilling	1
Complicated	1
Creative	1
Joyful	1

As can be seen on the table 7, the students find writing difficult ($f=7$), boring ($f=4$), and time taking ($f=4$) while just 2 positive adjectives “creative, joyful” ($f=1$) were chosen to describe writing process. The other adjectives that the students

reported were “long, tiring, terrible, stressful, thrilling, and complicated”. To illustrate, here are some excerpts from the statements of the students supporting the results:

[...] difficult, tiring, boring (Student 2, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] difficult, stressful and depressive (Student 6, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] difficult, long, time taking (Student 17, Interview Data, 26.04.2019)

4.2.5.3 Difficulties Experienced by the Students in EFL Writing. When the students were questioned about the difficulties that they experience while writing in English, it was found out that the majority of the students claim that the major problem is about language use, specifically insufficient vocabulary knowledge. The difficulties about writing among the participants were mostly related to the content of the writing task, language use, and time management in general.

Table 8

<i>Difficulties in EFL Writing (N=20)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
Content	
unfamiliar or misunderstood topic	4
difficulty in generating idea	2
Language use	
insufficient vocabulary knowledge	11
making grammatical and punctuation mistakes	5
repetition of vocabulary	4
Time management	
insufficient time in the exams	2
time constraint for assignments	1

The problems concerning the content of the writing are unfamiliar or misunderstood topic of the task, and difficulty in generating idea for the given topic. On the other hand, language use is considered as the main problem by the students due to their insufficient vocabulary knowledge, repetition of the same words, and

making grammatical and punctuation mistakes while writing. Furthermore, time management is another challenging aspect when insufficient time in the exams, and time constraint for writing assignments are regarded.

The statements below exemplify the answers of the students given to the interview question related to difficulties of writing process:

[...] I cannot understand the topic. I mean I misunderstand. When I find an idea, I cannot find good examples to write. (Student 2, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] Sometimes I cannot find correct words or correct sentence structure. (Student 10, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] I cannot finish on time. I forget what I know. I am like a blank page. (Student 20, Interview Data, 26.04.2019)

When the statements above are taken into account, it can be inferred that the lack of vocabulary knowledge and problems related to idea generation composed the biggest part of the list of difficulties in writing based on the students' experiences.

4.2.5.4 Perceived Causes of EFL Writing Anxiety. Another interview question addressed to the students sought answers about the probable causes of writing anxiety of EFL learners in writing from the perspective of the students.

Table 9

<i>Perceived Causes of EFL Writing Anxiety (N=20)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
Time constraint	6
Grading of the teacher	5
Unfamiliar topic	4
Lack of vocabulary knowledge	3
Insufficient language competence	2

Table 9 (cont'd)	(f)
Word limit	1
Lack of self-esteem	1
Strict rules of writing	1
Expectations of the teachers	1

According to the students participated in semi-structured interviews, there are various reasons of writing anxiety apart from the ones mentioned in the questionnaire CWAI. To begin with, great number of the students claimed that the biggest reason of the anxiety experienced in writing is time constraint for the writing assignments and writing exams, which was found as the fifth crucial reason in the results of CWAI ($M=3,37$). Moreover, they reported that grading of the teacher is the second major reason behind their writing anxiety. Compared to results of CWAI related to pressure caused by teacher grading or comments ($M=3,10$) was found more influential on their emotional state by the participants who took part in the interviews. As it can be seen in Table 9, unfamiliar topic and lack of vocabulary knowledge were the other important sources of writing anxiety. In contrast to the results of the interviews with the students, the problem with the topic of a writing task was found as the most important source of writing anxiety when the results of CWAI are considered ($M=3,89$). However, it can be claimed that the students are generally afraid of being stuck and not being able to continue produce more while writing because of the given unfamiliar topic for writing.

The other reasons stated by the students were writing exams, insufficient language competence which can be attributed to language learners with low level of language proficiency, especially for the A2 (pre-intermediate) level EFL learner participants, word limit for writing tasks determined by the instructors, lack of self-esteem of the students in terms of writing skill, expectations of the instructors related to the success of written production of low level language learners, and strict rules of writing which can bother language learners and make them avoid produce in target language. The following statements are quoted from the responses of the students:

[...] It's probably about limitation of the subject and time. (Student 9, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...]The grades are always problem. If my task will be graded, I feel a bit apprehensive. As a result, I get bad grades most of the time. (Student 19, Interview Data, 26.04.2019)

[...] Besides the concerns about the exam, the stress caused by trying to find something to write on an unknown topic makes me anxious. (Student 20, Interview Data, 26.04.2019)

As it can be inferred from the statements of the students that they put forward variety of sources causing triggering their writing anxiety. Their biggest concern is time constraint for writing tasks, and they feel apprehensive if their writing is graded. Other factors that they suggested are mainly related to their low proficiency in the target language and the content of the writing tasks.

4.2.6 The Perception of the Instructors on the Causes of Writing Anxiety

In order to gain a wider perspective on the research topic and to gain in-depth knowledge, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain the opinion and experiences of EFL instructors of the state university. For this purpose, 6 instructors who are teaching reading and writing skills to the students were asked 3 interview questions on the difficulty of language skills for the students, the difficulties encountered in writing classes and the possible causes of the students' writing anxiety.

4.2.6.1 The Most Anxiety Triggering Language Skill for the Students with the Reasons. The first interview question addressed to the instructors aimed at inquiring the perception of the instructors on the language skills which causes the feeling of apprehension for EFL learners throughout their learning process with the probable reasons behind.

Table 10

<i>The Most Anxiety Triggering Language Skill for the Students with the Reasons (N=6)</i>		(f)
Writing		6
	Linguistic competence (3)	
	Difficulty of content generation (2)	
	Negative experiences (1)	
Speaking		6
	Self-confidence (3)	
	Time constraint (1)	
	Language demands (1)	
	Interactional demands (1)	

Table 10 demonstrates that instructors agreed on two language skills as the most challenging skills for the students: writing and speaking. None of the instructors chose other language skills except these two productive skills. Concerning the writing skill, instructors mentioned the difficulty students experience while generating idea for the content of the writing task, insufficient linguistic competence, and previous negative experiences related to writing in English. When the responses of the interviewed students and instructors, it can be inferred that both groups agreed on difficulty of production when it comes to write in English. Below are the responses of the instructors to illustrate:

[...] Writing, as a productive skill, can cause anxiety as it necessitates proper language use within generative novelty of sentences. (Instructor 2, Interview Data, 24.04.2019)

[...] I witnessed many cases about negative experiences of the students with writing. Once one of my students left the writing exam without completing it. He was so concerned about his mistakes all the time. I think they are so obsessed with their mistakes which are quite natural in the process. Also, they cannot produce the target language because of their lack of vocabulary knowledge. (Instructor 4, Interview Data, 17.05.2019)

[...] The students show reluctance and negative attitude towards writing. I assume that it can be about their past experiences or unsuccessful attempts in writing. (Instructor 5, Interview Data, 23.05.2019)

In conclusion, the most anxiety triggering language skills were determined as productive skills which are writing and speaking. All instructors emphasized similar points related to writing such as difficulty of content generation, insufficient linguistic competence, and negative experiences regarding previous writing attempts.

4.2.6.2 The Main Causes of Writing Anxiety. The same interview question asked to the students related to the main causes of writing anxiety was also addressed to their instructors in order to provide another perspective to the issue and compare the answers of these two groups regarding the causal factor related to the problem.

Table 11

<i>The Main Causes of Writing Anxiety (N=6)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
Linguistic competence	5
Time constraint	3
Teacher feedback	3
Insufficient input	2
Previous experiences	2
Difficulty of idea generation	2
Exam anxiety	2

The analysis of the responses coming from the instructors which is presented on Table 11 points out that poor linguistic competence of the A2 (pre-intermediate) level EFL students can be the most influential cause of writing anxiety. The instructors also emphasized that when the time is limited for the students to write in the target language, they can feel apprehensive. Moreover, the feedback that they give to the students' written production in English may be related with the existence and level of writing anxiety. Consequently, insufficient input taken by the language learners, learners' previous experiences in writing, the difficulties that learners experience

while generating idea for the writing task, and the type of anxiety stemming from exams were pointed out as the other possible causes of writing anxiety of the students.

The following excerpts from their responses of the instructors can provide a clear understanding related to their perspective:

[...] I guess it is all about individual reasons. Because I treat all my students same and just some of them experience anxiety. They may feel incompetent. Maybe they have problems with grammar or vocabulary. (Instructor 5, Interview Data, 17.08.2019)

[...] Time management can play role on writing anxiety. I observe some of my students cannot finish their writing assignments on time. In the exams, the same problem causes failure for them. (Instructor ,6 Interview Data, 13.05.2019)

[...] The perspective towards writing is the first aspect to consider. We as teachers should not perceive it as a time filler or just homework to give feedback with our red pen. I would be irritated if I saw red marks on my writing that I worked on it for 2 days. (Instructor 3, Interview Data, 15.05.2019)

In conclusion, the instructors agreed on that the students have problems about the linguistic competence in the target language which can cause writing anxiety as expected. Besides, as the students emphasized, time constraint is another major source of writing anxiety for the students. When the responses of the instructors and the students were compared, it can be seen that they pointed out same factors related to the main causes of writing anxiety. On the other hand, the instructors do not perceive “the grading of the teacher” as a primary source of whereas the students believe that it is the leading problem causing writing anxiety.

4.2.6.3 The Difficulties Faced by the Instructors in Writing Classes In the third interview question, the difficulties and challenges that the instructors encounter in writing classes in terms of the students and the lessons were asked.

Table 12

<i>The Difficulties Faced with in Writing Classes (N=6)</i>	<i>(f)</i>
Lack of motivation	3
Negative attitude and feelings	3
Inability to organize writing	3
Avoidance and resistance	3
L1 transfer	2
Late or no assignment submission	2
Violation of language rules	1
Poor time management	1

As table 12 demonstrates, the most frequently stated difficulties are the students' lack of motivation, negative attitudes and feelings of the students towards writing anxiety, students' inability to organize their writings, and showing avoidance behavior and resistance when the students are expected to write in English. Also, the effects of L1 transfer on the students can be observed by the instructors. In addition to the problems mentioned above, the instructors deal with the students who submit the writing assignments late, or even never submit, violation the rules of the target language, and have poor time management skills which turns into a problem in writing exams.

When the answers of the students and instructors to the interview question regarding the difficulties of writing classes, both groups mentioned two main problems: language use and time management. Nevertheless, during the interviews, while the students expressed that they cope with the content of the writing task, the instructors did not indicate any problems related to the topic or content of the writing task. The excerpts given below provide some examples of the responses:

[...] Their motivation is a big problem for writing classes. They do not want to write or share their writings. They always find excuses for their late or missing homework submission. I try to give constructive feedbacks to their writings but I think they do not read them to get better in writing. (Instructor 5, Interview Data, 17.08.2019)

[...] There is always a resistance. Sometimes I come up with great activities for writing but it can fail in the class. It is because of writing anxiety of the students I guess. Also, they do not want to face with their mistakes even if I give constructive feedbacks. (Instructor 4, Interview Data, 17.05.2019)

[...] Students aren't able to organize their ideas and put them forward clearly. Brainstorming, drafting, editing, rewriting cycles may help. This may be the result of being a poor reader, likewise. L1 transfer is clearly seen. They don't seek out the alternatives. Some students tend to think too much and don't manage to write in the given time. (Instructor 2, Interview Data, 13.05.2019)

To sum up, in the light of the statements of the instructors, there are several difficulties to mention when they talk about the challenges of writing classes including motivation problems of the students, their negative attitude, and non-submission of writing assignments.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this chapter is to present the discussion and final remarks pertaining to the findings of the present research study. There are 6 research questions of the study, and the discussion on them is presented for each of the research questions in detail. The findings of the previous related research studies in the field were referred to in order to display similar and different results and inferences. The pedagogical implications for the language classes and teachers and some guiding suggestions for further studies are also provided on the following pages of the chapter.

5.1 Discussion of Findings for Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to carry out an investigation on writing anxiety level and types of tertiary level A2 EFL students who study in English Language Preparation Department of a Turkish state university as well as the perceived causes of their writing anxiety in EFL classes. Furthermore, it was aimed at searching on their writing self-efficacy level in the target language and the relationship between their EFL writing self-efficacy level and writing anxiety. With this purpose, the study was conducted on 176 English preparatory class students and 6 EFL instructors of a state university in Istanbul, Turkey by administering mixed methods research design including both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments which are SLWAI (Cheng, 2004b), CWAI (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014), SWS (Yavuz-Erkan, 2004), and semi-structured interviews conducted both on the students and the instructors. The following part aims at discussing on obtained findings relevant to each research question in detail by referencing previous studies.

5.1.1. Discussion of the findings of RQ 1: What is the level of writing anxiety of Turkish EFL students (pre-intermediate, A2 level) enrolled in a preparatory program of a state university?

The aim of the first research question was to find out writing anxiety of the EFL students who participated in the present study via the questionnaire SLWAI gauging the level of writing anxiety of the participants. The findings of SLWAI demonstrated

that the great majority of the students suffered from high level of writing anxiety and some of the students have moderate level of writing anxiety in English language. This finding revealed that writing anxiety is a critical factor which affects most of the EFL learners to a great extent. When the findings of some other studies such as Atay and Kurt (2006), Erkan and Saban (2011), Rezaei and Jafari (2014), Kırmızı and Kırmızı (2015), and Genç (2017) are taken into consideration, it is obvious that tertiary level Turkish EFL learners experience writing anxiety in their foreign language classes.

In the context of the present study, the language proficiency level of the participants (pre-intermediate, A2 level) can be regarded as a variable affecting the level of writing anxiety of the language learners. There are some studies supporting this idea that the language proficiency level of the language learners can increase or decrease the writing anxiety level of the learners (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989; Cheng, 2002; Jebreil et al., 2014) while the study of Genç (2017) revealed that most of the B2 level EFL learners can suffer from high level of writing anxiety. However, it should also be considered that there can be different challenges for different language proficiency levels in terms of the writing skills. For instance, B2 level EFL learners are expected to deal with lengthy and well-structured essays whereas A2 level EFL learners are just to write short paragraphs.

5.1.2. Discussion of the findings of RQ 2: What type of writing anxiety do the participating students experience in the writing course of the existing program?

The findings obtained to answer the second research question indicated that the most common type of writing anxiety experienced by the participants was cognitive anxiety, compared to the other types as somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavior. Moreover, highly anxious EFL learners suffered from cognitive anxiety and avoidance behavior. Similarly, recent studies conducted around the world on writing anxiety by utilizing SLWAI have indicated cognitive anxiety as the most common type of writing anxiety among language learners (Cheng, 2004; Zhang, 2011; Ateş, 2013; Kara, 2013; Rezaei and Jafari, 2014; Jebreil et. al, 2014; Golda, 2015; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Kusumaningputri, Ningsih & Wisasongko, 2018). Cognitive anxiety refers that the learners pay too much attention to the factors externally affect their mental state while learning writing skill (Cheng, 2004a). These factors can be the

apprehension caused by the negative evaluation of the instructors, concern about peers' perception on their writing performance, test related anxiety, the expectations or negative experiences of the learners about their writing performance. This means that the students who experience cognitive anxiety get easily affected by external factors. It was also stated that the students with high level of cognitive anxiety in writing suffer from concentration problems when they are dealing with a writing task. For this reason, Kusumaningputri et al. (2018) suggested that the students should train themselves to keep the control of their mind in order not to get distracted and also to be able to lessen their writing anxiety level.

Besides cognitive anxiety, avoidance behavior is also another major problem encountered among language learners with high level of writing anxiety as the findings pointed out. The reason why highly anxious students also showed avoidance behavior is that they tend to avoid situations requiring writing not to feel apprehensive (Cheng, 2004a). This type of writing anxiety can lead to bigger problems by causing lack of practice in writing skill, incomplete, late or undelivered assignments.

To conclude, the findings emphasized the significance of being aware of types of the writing anxiety and the features of each type to comprehend the experiences and challenges of EFL learners who experience high level of writing anxiety. In the present study, cognitive anxiety was detected as the most common type of writing anxiety among the participants while the least common one was somatic anxiety.

5.1.3. Discussion of the findings of RQ 3: What is the level of writing self-efficacy of the participants?

Self-efficacy should be considered as an influential affective variable which has a relationship with writing skills and writing anxiety of language learners (Cheng, 2002). Accordingly, Pajares et al. (2007) asserted that the beliefs of language learners about their self-efficacy in writing have been the focus of researchers conducting research studies on writing skill and self-efficacy beliefs. It has been widely known that high level of self-efficacy in writing contributes to the writing performance of language learners and helps them to minimize their writing anxiety (Erkan & Saban, 2011). However, limited amount of research has been conducted on writing self-

efficacy level of EFL students with different level of proficiency (Jones, 2008; Singh & Rajalingam, 2012; Ho, 2016)

When the findings of the present study related to the writing self-efficacy level of the participants were examined, it can be clearly seen that over half of the participants claimed that they had moderate level of writing self-efficacy in writing. Furthermore, less than half of them stated that they had high level of writing self-efficacy in writing. These results reflect that most of the students believed that they were capable of fulfilling the requirements of writing in the target language. Strikingly, just few of the students reflected that their writing self-efficacy level in English is low. This result is consistent with the results of KIRMIZI and KIRMIZI (2015). In that study, it was also found that the great majority of the students had moderate level writing self-efficacy in English language as it was found in the present research study.

Furthermore, there are a lot of factors affecting the level of self-efficacy of the language learners in writing and linguistic knowledge is one of them as Abdel-Latif (2007) stated. Magogwe (2015) supported that idea by emphasizing the role of self-efficacy in L1 writing and it was remarked that L1 writing self-efficacy should also be examined as a precursor of writing self-efficacy. In their study, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) found out that EFL students had moderate or low level of writing self-efficacy in English, and they associated this situation with the quality of low motivation, writing instruction, teachers' feedback, low level of language proficiency, L1 interference, and other affective variables including anxiety. Moreover, competence in writing and the attitude of the instructor have a huge impact on writing self-efficacy (Öztürk&Saydam, 2014). In addition to the attitude, also the feedback of the instructors is supposed to affect self-efficacy in writing (Nazzal, 2008). The feedbacks given to the written production of the students should be constructive and informative. Last but not least, as a vital issue in language teaching, assessment is another point which has a direct influence on the perception of the students towards writing skill in foreign language learning process. To elevate the level of writing self-efficacy, self and peer assessment should be promoted (Magogwe, 2015). Al-Ahmad (2003) and Zhang (2011) supported self and peer evaluation by emphasizing the advantages of this collaboration on raising positive feelings. As suggested by Bandura (1986),

“enactive attainment” of the students can be provided in this way, and also their self-confidence can be boosted while the students can see their achievements.

5.1.4. Discussion of the findings of RQ 4: Is there a significant relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy of the students in EFL classroom?

To find out the relationship between EFL anxiety writing and EFL writing self-efficacy of A2 (pre-intermediate) level Turkish university preparatory class students was another crucial aim of the present study. Actually, there was already an expectation for an inverse relationship between these two variables, and the findings confirmed this assumption. As the findings revealed, a moderate level negative correlation between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy existed. This means that the students with moderate or low level of writing self-efficacy suffered from moderate or high level of writing anxiety. Thus, the aim of the language teachers should be finding ways to increase writing self-efficacy of EFL learners to decrease the level of writing anxiety, and avoid the negative effects of this anxiety on language learning.

The gathered results of the present study can be supported with similar results of the previous studies conducted on the relationship between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy level for a different group of EFL learners at a different stage of education. Several studies found out a negative correlation between writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy (Hassan, 2001; Cheng, 2004; Latif, 2007; Nazzal, 2008; Erkan & Saban, 2011; Singh & Rajalingam, 2012; Sanders-Reio, Alexander, Reio & Newman, 2014; Kırmızı & Kırmızı 2015; Doğan, 2016; Öztürk & Saydam, 2017; Khelalfa, 2018). As one of the earliest studies, Pajares and Valiante (1996) highlighted that the impact of beliefs regarding self-efficacy anticipates the performance in writing which influences writing apprehension level of the learners in a direct way. Also, it was suggested that writing anxiety can be lessened by high level of writing self-efficacy if the learning atmosphere is convenient (Cheng, 2002). Further, another study on this relationship conducted by Öztürk and Saydam (2014) asserted that these variables may have a causal relationship rather than a correlational relationship which ought to be inspected statistically in detail via further research studies.

5.1.5. Discussion of the findings of RQ 5: What are the perceptions of the students about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes?

To investigate the perceptions of the students about the foreign language writing anxiety and causes of it, both a questionnaire on the perceived causes of writing anxiety, CWAI, and semi-structured interviews were carried out. The results of CWAI revealed that the major causes of the anxiety experienced by the participants were the problems with the topic choice, frequently given writing assignments, and linguistic difficulties. Furthermore, the analysis of the findings obtained via semi-structured interviews administered to 20 students demonstrated that the students had negative feelings and attitudes towards writing, and they mainly experienced difficulty in content, language use, and time management while writing in the target language.

Several research studies have been carried out to inquire the sources of writing anxiety in EFL context. For instance, a similar study conducted by Abdel-Latif (2007) put forward various elements causing anxiety in writing. These are low level of language proficiency, lack of self-confidence, failures in writing tasks, lack of writing self-efficacy, insecurities about being assessed and evaluated. Surprisingly, in the present study, the students did not choose lack of self-confidence as the most influential source of writing anxiety in writing.

Moreover, the findings of similar studies revealed that the main reason of writing anxiety is being afraid of negative feedbacks from the teacher through the gathered via interviews with EFL students (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Lin & Ho, 2009). Also, poor vocabulary knowledge and low proficiency level were indicated as the main causes of writing anxiety (Genç, 2017; Öztürk & Saydam, 2017). It was asserted that the students experience apprehension while writing because of the linguistic incompetence which causes an inability to write what is intended to be expressed by the student. On the other hand, Cheng (2002) pointed out that the students can have high level of writing anxiety if they cannot produce or arrange ideas to write, and it was emphasized that developing the competence in writing skill is vital to help students in terms of getting over anxiety in writing. Moreover, other possible factors causing writing anxiety are time constraint, being afraid of making mistakes, and

unfamiliar topic given for the writing task (Dal, 2018). It is a widely accepted idea by the other researchers that giving an unfamiliar topic to the students for the writing tasks can cause writing anxiety (Zhang, 2011; Negari & Rezaabadi, 2012). The students need background knowledge to be able to write on the given topic, and if they do not have, they feel apprehensive while writing. Therefore, topic familiarity is a vital issue to lessen writing anxiety, and the instructors ought to determine the topics or contents which can be familiar to the target students and they can get the students to know about the given topic by providing warm-up activities. In this way, the anxiety level of the students can be decreased. As it can be obviously understood from the findings, EFL learners around the world share similar concerns in terms of developing writing skill which turn out to be writing anxiety.

5.1.6. Discussion of the findings of RQ 6: What are the perceptions of the instructors about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes?

The findings gathered through the semi-structured interviews administered to the EFL instructors to investigate the perceptions of them about the causes of writing anxiety in their EFL writing classes indicated that the instructors are aware of the existence of writing anxiety in EFL writing classes and they experience a variety of challenges in their classes. All of the instructors agreed that writing skill is more difficult as a productive skill compared to receptive skills. They argued that the probable source of writing anxiety and linguistic competence, time constraint, teacher feedback were detected as the primary causes of this anxiety among the students. Moreover, the instructors associate writing anxiety of the students with the insufficiency of the input. In addition, previous negative experiences related to writing both in L1 and L2, the difficulty experienced by the students while creating content for the writing task, and exam-related anxiety were the other possible causes of writing anxiety. When it comes to the challenges in writing classes, they stated that they have to cope with negative attitude of the students towards writing classes, students' lack of motivation, and their avoidance behavior regarding writing tasks.

In the existing literature, there has been a very scarce number of studies making inquiries about EFL instructors' perceptions and opinions on writing anxiety and its causes (El Shimi, 2017). As one of those studies, El Shimi (2017) investigated the perception of EFL teachers on writing anxiety by conducting interviews with them, and it was found that the educational background of the students and poor competence in writing skill were perceived as the major sources of writing anxiety by the instructors. This finding is consistent with the findings of the present study.

In brief, the findings showed that the instructors were highly aware of the problems related to anxiety, and it was possible to see the causes and effects of this anxiety in the EFL writing classes as an instructor. Thus, they had a great responsibility to detect the students with high level of writing anxiety and reduce the deteriorating impacts of this anxiety on language learning process.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

In the light of findings of the present study, some practical advice and ideas to implement in English writing courses are offered to the practitioners, instructors, and administrators to decrease the level of writing anxiety and increase the level of writing self-efficacy in English preparatory courses.

To begin with, the instructors should be aware of the abilities, beliefs, and the attitude of their students with regard to writing skill to be able to monitor their progress and solve the major problems such as high level of EFL writing anxiety or low level of writing self-efficacy of the students. Writing anxiety can be hazardous for their writing performance which can lead to various problems throughout language learning process. The suitable and efficient ways to deal with writing anxiety and make the learning environment less anxiety-triggering should be discovered.

As one of the possible sources of writing anxiety, L1 writing anxiety can affect the language learning process. If this situation is noticed by the instructor, some strategies should be employed to lessen the writing anxiety in both languages. For instance, the teacher can carry out an action research study to detect common points of the writing anxiety experienced in L1 and L2. The students can express their

opinions through free writings, diary or journals, group discussions which give an opportunity the students to express their apprehension. Besides, differentiating instruction in writing class or using alternative assessment techniques can be some effective solutions. Students can evaluate themselves or they can be evaluated by their peers to improve self-esteem in writing by supporting them with checklists and rubrics. It also makes it easier to reflect on the writing tasks and their concerns about their writing skills.

Having a better understanding of different types of writing anxiety can be helpful for teachers to be pro-active and solve problems effectively by treating the type of anxiety as they should be. To illustrate, if a teacher recognizes some physical reactions such as perspiration, increasing heartbeat, trembling in writing classes or during writing exams, this refers to somatic anxiety, and it requires to employ some special strategies to get over this type of anxiety. For instance, learning how to breathe and the other techniques for relaxation can help the students with high level of somatic anxiety in writing. On the other hand, the reactions given by highly anxious students does not have to be visible as in the somatic anxiety. The students who suffer from cognitive anxiety in writing are afraid of being evaluated and getting bad grades or negative comments from the teacher. In this case, these kind of students should be encouraged via constructive and non-judgmental feedbacks or writing tasks that will not be evaluated. As stated previously, negative evaluation and insufficient or unclear feedback can trigger negative attitude and lack of self-esteem. Therefore, the assessment of the writing should objective and clear for the instructors and students. Using a rubric can help in terms of setting the criteria for the expectations of the writing task.

As one of the primary causes of writing anxiety, the problem of unfamiliar topic for the writing task should be solved by providing background knowledge related to the topic via reading texts. High quality and sufficient input is vital to produce the target language, and getting input through extensive reading should be fostered among the students. If they get more input, they can produce more while writing in a better way. In the context of the current study, the students participated in were A2 (pre-intermediate) level university preparatory class students and they had insufficient linguistic knowledge which can cause more pressure on them. For this reason,

language learners with low proficiency level should learn how to use dictionaries, books, and online sources effectively while working on a writing task. It can reduce their anxiety by providing help for the vocabulary, grammar or content of the writing. Also, if possible, the students can determine the topics which are interesting or relatable for them. To achieve it, the EFL students and instructors should always have good communication with each other, and the teacher should build rapport with the students in the class to be able to understand their interests, tendencies, and needs.

Writing tasks often require a long time, and the language learners need sufficient time to learn to write and complete their writing tasks. The instructors can teach students how to manage time by setting time limits after some time in free writing. Besides, process writing should be promoted by working on staged writing with students. The instructors should not focus on the product solemnly. Pre-writing stage can reduce anxiety level of highly anxious students by preparing them to write on the given topic in given time. In this way, the students can learn the value of the process writing which enables them to be more creative and motivated rather than being obsessed with the final product.

To sum up, being aware of the relationship between the variables investigated in the study may enable EFL writing instructors to provide better learning experiences to their students and act upon the problems in their class proactively. For this reason, the findings of the studies conducted on writing skill and the impact of affective variables on this productive skill should be taken into consideration by the practitioners, material and testing offices, and the administration as well to work collaboratively.

5.3 Conclusion

The concept of writing anxiety should be approached as skill-specific anxiety in language learning. It should not be ignored that the feelings of the language learners get involved in language learning process, so it applies the same for developing writing skill. The affective variables can be highly influential throughout this writing skill learning experience. Thus, it entails further investigation through further research

to make the phenomenon more understandable and recognizable to deal with in a better way for the practitioners and also the language learners.

At this point, the present study contributes to the literature by examining the EFL students' level and type of writing anxiety, the causes of this anxiety perceived by the students and EFL instructors, and foreign language writing self-efficacy level of the students, and the relationship between these two affective variables. The findings obtained via both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments revealed that the A2 (pre-intermediate) level university preparatory class Turkish EFL students experience high or moderate level of writing anxiety in English, and most of them suffer from cognitive anxiety. The students and instructors pointed out variety of causes related to writing anxiety and difficulties that they face in English writing classes. Their writing self-efficacy level was found moderate, and it was also revealed that writing self-efficacy is negatively correlated with writing anxiety at a moderate level which refers to an increasing level of writing self-efficacy level as the writing anxiety level decreases. In the light of the findings of the current study, some practical implications are offered for EFL writing classes which can transform EFL writing classes, alleviate the writing anxiety caused by various reasons, and raise the level of writing self-efficacy of the students.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research Studies

The present study was carried out on A2 level preparatory class students, and it provided a limited context. Therefore, further studies can work on EFL students with different language levels to investigate writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy and reveal whether language proficiency level makes a difference in the level of writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy.

Another recommendation for future studies is that the other variables such as achievement in writing skill or motivation for writing in the target language and the relationship between them and writing anxiety can also be taken into consideration to broaden the perspective related to the nature of foreign language writing anxiety. Moreover, further studies can be conducted with larger groups of EFL learners to get more extensive and generalizable findings.

Additionally, further studies can investigate what kind of strategies and instruction work well to reduce writing anxiety and boost writing self-efficacy of the students. To this end, experimental studies can be designed to be able to see the impact of the implementations. With the help of the findings, language teachers and instructors can improve the quality of their writing classes by adapting or adopting the implementations of the study.

Finally, the current study could not investigate the beliefs of the students for a long time due to the restriction of the context of the study. Thus, a longitudinal study can be carried out to observe the changes in writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy level over time. In this way, more reliable results can be obtained.



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APPENDICES

A. SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY INVENTORY (SLWAI)

Name- Surname:

Date:

This questionnaire has been prepared to measure the anxiety you experience while writing in the foreign language. It consists of a total of 22 questions. We request you to give careful and sincere answers to the questions since the results will be used for research. Thanks for your participation.

After you read every statement put a tick (√) to the option which suits you best (Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Uncertain=U, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA)

		SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	While writing in English, I am not nervous at all.					
2.	I feel my heart pounding when I write English compositions under time constraint.					
3.	While writing English compositions, I feel worried and uneasy if I know they will be evaluated.					
4.	I often choose to write down my thoughts in English.					
5.	I usually do my best to avoid writing English compositions.					
6.	My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English composition.					
7.	I do not worry that my English compositions are a lot worse than others.					
8.	I tremble or perspire when I write English compositions under time pressure.					
9.	If my English composition is to be evaluated, I would					

	worry about getting a very poor grade.					
10.	I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English.					
11.	My thoughts become jumbled when I write English compositions under time constraint.					
12.	Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write compositions.					
13.	I often feel panic when I write English compositions under time constraint.					
14.	I am afraid that the other students would deride my English composition if they read it.					
15.	I freeze up when unexpectedly asked to write English compositions.					
16.	I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English compositions.					
17.	I do not worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions.					
18.	I usually seek every possible chance to write English compositions outside of class.					
19.	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write English compositions.					
20.	I am afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample for discussion in class.					
21.	I am not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor.					
22.	Whenever possible, I would use English to write compositions.					

B. TURKISH VERSION OF THE SLWAI

Ad-Soyad:

Tarih:

Bu anket yabancı dilde yazarken yaşadığınız kaygıyı ölçmek için hazırlanmıştır. Toplam 22 sorudan oluşmaktadır. Sonuçlar araştırma için kullanılacağından, sorulara dikkatli ve içten cevaplar vermenizi rica ediyoruz. Katılımınız için teşekkürler.

Her bir ifadeyi okuduktan sonra size en uygun gelen ifadeye bir tik işareti (√) koyunuz.

(1=Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum, 2=Katılmıyorum, 3=Kararsızım, 4=Katılıyorum, 5=Kesinlikle Katılıyorum)

	İfadeler	1	2	3	4	5
1.	İngilizce yazarken hiç kaygılanmıyorum.					
2.	Kısıtlı zamanda İngilizce kompozisyon yazarken kalbimin çarptığını hissediyorum.					
3.	Değerlendirileceğini/notlandırılacağını bildiğimde İngilizce kompozisyon yazarken kendimi endişeli ve rahatsız hissediyorum.					
4.	Düşüncelerimi sık sık İngilizce yazmayı tercih ediyorum.					
5.	İngilizce kompozisyon yazmaktan genelde elimden geldiğince kaçınmaya çalışıyorum.					
6.	İngilizce kompozisyon üzerinde çalışmaya başladığımda çoğu kez zihnimdeki bilgiler siliniyor.					
7.	İngilizce kompozisyonlarımdan diğer arkadaşlarımdan çok daha kötü olması beni endişelendirmiyor.					
8.	Kısıtlı zamanda İngilizce kompozisyon yazarken titriyorum veya terliyorum.					
9.	Eğer İngilizce kompozisyonlarım değerlendirilecekse çok düşük not almaktan endişeleniyorum.					
10.	İngilizce yazmam gereken durumlardan elimden geldiğince kaçınmaya çalışıyorum.					

11.	Kısıtlı zamanda İngilizce kompozisyon yazarken düşüncelerim birbirine giriyor.					
12.	Seçeneğim olsaydı kompozisyon yazarken İngilizce kullanmazdım.					
13.	Kısıtlı zamanda İngilizce kompozisyon yazarken çoğu kez panikleniyorum.					
14.	Diğer öğrencilerin İngilizce Kompozisyonumla okudukları zaman alay etmelerinden korkuyorum.					
15.	Beklenmedik bir zamanda İngilizce kompozisyon yazmam istendiğinde donup kalıyorum.					
16.	İngilizce kompozisyon yazmam istenseydi elimden geldiğince kendimi mazur gösterirdim.					
17.	Diğer insanların İngilizce kompozisyonlarım hakkında ne düşüneceğinden hiç endişelenmiyorum.					
18.	Sınıf dışında İngilizce kompozisyon yasmak için genelde mümkün olan her fırsatı elde etmeye çalışırım.					
19.	İngilizce kompozisyon yazarken genelde bütün vücudumun kaskatı ve gergin olduğunu hissediyorum.					
20.	İngilizce kompozisyonumun sınıfta tartışma örneği olarak seçilmesinden korkuyorum.					
21.	İngilizce kompozisyonlarımın çok başarısız olarak değerlendirilmesinden hiç korkmuyorum.					
22.	Kompozisyon yasmak için mümkün olduğunca her zaman İngilizce kullanırdım.					

C. CAUSES OF WRITING ANXIETY INVENTORY (CWAI)

D.

Name-Surname:

Date:

This questionnaire has been prepared to investigate the causes of anxiety in foreign language writing. It consists of 10 questions. We request you to give careful and sincere answers to the questions since the results will be used for research. Thanks for your participation.

After you read every statement put a tick (√) to the option which suits you best. (Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Uncertain=U, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA)

Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
When I write English essays: 1. I worry about the negative comments and evaluation of the teacher. 2. I'm afraid of writing tests. 3. I have lack of sufficient English writing practice which makes me feel anxious. 4. I don't have a good command of English writing techniques which makes me feel anxious. 5. I don't know what to write on the topic given by the teacher so I feel upset. 6. I often encounter some linguistic problems such as inadequate mastery of vocabulary, sentence structures, grammatical errors, etc. 7. I'm under pressure to offer a perfect work which makes me upset. 8. I feel anxious due to the high frequency of writing assignments. 9. I feel worry when I have to write under time constraints. 10. I have a low-confidence in English writing.					

E. TURKISH VERSION OF CWAI

Ad-Soyad:

Tarih:

Bu anket yabancı dilde yazarken yaşadığınız kaygının sebeplerini araştırmak için hazırlanmıştır. Toplam 10 sorudan oluşmaktadır. Sonuçlar araştırma için kullanılacağından, sorulara dikkatli ve içten cevaplar vermenizi rica ediyoruz. Katılımınız için teşekkürler.

HER BİR İFADEYİ OKUDUKTAN SONRA SİZE EN UYGUN GELEN İFADEYE BİR TİK İŞARETİ (√) KOYUNUZ. (1=Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum, 2=Katılmıyorum, 3=Kararsızım, 4=Katılıyorum, 5=Kesinlikle Katılıyorum)

İfadeler	1	2	3	4	5
1. Öğretmenin olumsuz yorumları ve değerlendirmeleri hakkında endişelenirim.					
2. Yazma sınavlarından korkarım.					
3. Beni endişelendiren yazma konusunda yetersiz pratik yapmış olmaktır.					
4. Yazmak için iyi tekniklere sahip olmamak beni strese sokar.					
5. Verilen konu hakkında ne yazacağımı bilmemek beni strese sokar.					
6. Yetersiz kelime dağarcığı, dilbilgisi hataları, cümle yapıları konusunda eksiklikleri sıklıkla yaşarım.					
7. Mükemmel bir yazı teslim etme baskısı beni strese sokar.					
8. Sıklıkla yazı ödevi verilmesi beni strese sokar.					
9. Zaman kısıtlaması altında yazı yazmak beni strese sokar.					
10. İngilizce yazı yazmada özgüvenim düşüktür.					

F. SELF-EFFICACY IN WRITING SCALE (SWS)

Name- Surname:

Date:

This questionnaire has been prepared to measure your self-efficacy level in foreign language writing. It consists of a total of 28 questions. We request you to give careful and sincere answers to the questions since the results will be used for research. Thanks for your participation.

After you read every statement put a tick (√) to the option which suits you best (Strongly Disagree=SD, Disagree=D, Uncertain=U, Agree=A, Strongly Agree=SA)

	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	I can write interesting and appropriate response to a given topic.					
2.	I can easily cover all the information that should be dealt within a given topic.					
3.	I can use appropriate style to the task.					
4.	I can easily match style with topic.					
5.	I can generate ideas to write about easily.					
6.	I can think of ideas rapidly when given a topic to write about.					
7.	I can write on an assigned topic without difficulty.					
8.	I can easily find examples to support my ideas.					
9.	I can justify my ideas in my compositions.					
10.	I can write grammatically correct sentences in my compositions.					
11.	I can use complex language in writing without difficulty.					
12.	I can produce error free structures.					

13.	I can spell very well.					
14.	I can use the punctuation correctly.					
15.	I can edit my compositions for mistakes such as punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.					
16.	I can easily use structures I have learned in my class accurately.					
17.	I can link ideas together easily.					
18.	I can use transition words correctly to make my composition a better one.					
19.	I can use connectors correctly to make my composition a better one.					
20.	I can use a wide range of vocabulary in my compositions.					
21.	I can use synonyms in a composition rather than repeating the same words over and over again.					
22.	I can write a brief and informative overview of a given topic.					
23.	I can manage my time efficiently to meet a deadline on a piece of writing.					
24.	I can rewrite my wordy or confusing sentences to make them clearer.					
25.	I can extend the topic to fit in a given word limit.					
26.	I can choose and defend a point of view.					
27.	I can make long and complex sentences.					
28.	I can fulfill a writing task without difficulty within a given time limit.					

G. TURKISH VERSION OF SWS

Ad-Soyad:

Tarih:

Bu anket yabancı dilde yazma becerisindeki öz yeterlilik seviyenizi ölçmek için hazırlanmıştır. Toplam 28 sorudan oluşmaktadır. Sonuçlar araştırma için kullanılacağından, sorulara dikkatli ve içten cevaplar vermenizi rica ediyoruz. Katılımınız için teşekkürler.

Her bir ifadeyi okuduktan sonra size en uygun gelen ifadeye bir tik işareti (√) koyunuz. (1=Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum, 2=Katılmıyorum, 3=Kararsızım, 4=Katılıyorum, 5=Kesinlikle Katılıyorum)

		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Verilen konuyla ilgili ilginç ve uygun bir yazı yazabilirim.					
2.	Yazımda konu hakkında verilmesi gereken tüm bilgiyi kolayca verebilirim.					
3.	Verilen yazma ödevine uygun bir tarz kullanabilirim.					
4.	Konu ve yazı tarzını kolayca eşleştirebilirim.					
5.	Yazmak için kolayca fikir üretebilirim.					
6.	Yazmak için konu verildiği zaman hızlıca fikir üretebilirim.					

7.	Ödev verilen konuda zorluk yaşamadan yazı yazabilirim.					
8.	Kompozisyonumdaki fikirleri destekleyecek örnekleri kolayca bulabilirim.					
9.	Kompozisyonumda fikirlerimi savunabilirim.					
10.	Kompozisyonumda dilbilgisel olarak doğru cümleler kurabilirim.					
11.	Zorlanmadan karmaşık bir dil kullanarak yazı yazabilirim.					
12.	Hatasız dil yapıları üretebilirim.					
13.	İyi bir şekilde imla kurallarına uygun yazı yazabilirim.					
14.	Noktalama işaretlerini doğru şekilde kullanırım.					
15.	Kompozisyonumda noktalama, büyük harf kullanımı, paragraf yazımı konusundaki hataları düzeltebilirim.					
16.	Sınıfta öğrendiğim yapıları doğru bir şekilde yazımda kullanabilirim.					

17.	Fikirleri birbirine kolaylıkla bağlayabilirim.					
18.	Kompozisyonumu daha iyi hale getirmek için geçiş sözcüklerini doğru bir şekilde kullanabilirim.					
19.	Kompozisyonumu daha iyi hale getirmek için bağlaçları doğru bir şekilde kullanabilirim.					
20.	Kompozisyonumu yazarken geniş bir kelime haznesinden sözcükler kullanırım.					
21.	Aynı kelimeleri tekrar tekrar kullanmaktansa kelimelerin eş anlamlılarını kullanabilirim.					
22.	Verilen konu hakkında kısa ve bilgilendirici bir özet yazabilirim.					
23.	Bir yazı üzerinde çalışırken teslim tarihine yetiştirmek için zamanımı verimli şekilde yönetebilirim.					
24.	Uzun ve kafa karıştıran cümlelerimi daha					

	anlaşılır hale getirmek için tekrar yazabilirim.					
25.	İstenen kelime sayısını tutturmak için konuyu uzatabilirim.					
26.	Bir bakış açısı seçip onu savunabilirim.					
27.	Uzun ve karmaşık cümleler kurabilirim.					
28.	Yazma ödevini verilen süre içinde zorluk çekmeden tamamlayabilirim					

G. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions for the Students

1. Of the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing), which one do you consider as the most difficult? Why?
2. Describe the paragraph writing process in a foreign language with three adjectives.
3. What kind of difficulties do you encounter when writing in English?
4. What can be the causes of the writing anxiety? What kind of English writing tasks make you feel apprehensive?

Interview Questions for the Instructors

1. Which language skill (reading, writing, speaking, or listening) do you think EFL learners feel anxious about? Why do you think so?
2. What are the main causes of writing anxiety (education, feedback, grades, etc.)?
3. What kind of difficulties do you face with in writing classes or when the students are required to write in the target language?

H. TURKISH VERSION OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Öğrenciler için Mülakat Soruları

1. 4 dil becerisinden (okuma, dinleme, konuşma, yazma), hangisi sizin için en zor beceridir? Nedenleri ile açıklayınız.
2. 3 sıfat ile paragraf yazma sürecini betimleyiniz.
3. İngilizce yazı yazarken ne gibi zorluklarla karşılaşıyorsunuz?
4. Yazma kaygısının sebepleri neler olabilir? Ne tür yazma görevleri size kaygılandırır?

Öğretmenler için Mülakat Soruları

1. 4 dil becerisinden (okuma, dinleme, konuşma, yazma), öğrenciler hangisi ile alakalı kaygı hissediyor? Nedenleri ile açıklayınız.
2. Yazma kaygısının temel sebepleri (eğitim, geri dönüt, notlar, vb.) nelerdir?
3. Yazma derslerinde ya da öğrencilerin İngilizce yazı yazması gerektiğinde ne gibi zorluklar ile karşılaşıyorsunuz?

I. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Göncü, Selen

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA, ELT	Bahcesehir University	2020
BA, ELT	Istanbul University	2016

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2014-2015	American Association Language Course	English Teacher
2016-2017	British Time Language Course	English Teacher
2017-2019	Turkish Air Force Academy	Instructor

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Beginner Spanish

CERTIFICATES

Mayflower College, Teachers of Aviation English Course, September 2019

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS

Second Language Acquisition, Educational Psychology, Adult Education, EAP, ESP, Professional Development, Material Development, ICT in ELT, Aviation English

HOBBIES

Travelling, Playing Instruments, Photography, Trekking