T.C

KARABUK UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

FIELD OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE STUDENTS' WRITING PROBLEMS

MASTER'S THESIS

Prepared By

Emine AYDIN

Thesis Supervisor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özkan KIRMIZI

Karabuk

JANUARY/2019

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

To Karabuk University Directorate of Institute of Social Sciences

This thesis entitled "A Qualitative Analysis of ELL Students' Writing Problems " submitted by Emine AYDIN was examined and accepted by the Thesis Board unanimously as a MA thesis.

	Academic Title, Name and Surname	**Signature**
Head of Thesis Board	: Prof. Dr. Arif SARIÇOBAN	
Advisor Member	: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özkan KIRMIZI	
Member	: Dr. Faculty Member İrfan TOSUNCUOGLU	

Thesis Exam Date: 31.01.2019

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

Name Surname: Emine AYDIN

Signature   :

FOREWORD

A big number of people contributed to the success of this thesis to whom I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation.

First and foremost I would like to thank my thesis advisor Assoc. Prof.Dr. Özkan Kırmızı for leading me participate in this project and guiding me throughout this process. His belief in me for being able to write my thesis on time helped me gaining self-confidence in my work and finishing it. I would like to thank to Assoc. Prof. Ali Çağatay Kılınç for his valuable suggestions, support and sincerity. I appreciate his knowledge and skill in many areas, his proffessional guidance and his assistance in editing my work. I would also like to thank to Asst. Prof. Mahmut Polatcan whose emotional and academic support in my own study made this difficult process more bearable. Without their passionate participation and input, the validation survey could not have been successfully conducted.

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They gave me the opportunity to follow my career and actualise what I have wanted to accomplish.

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my beloved father, Bahattin İnal who gave me great support and his love when he was alive. He always supported my education related goals. I am sure he would have been proud if he had seen my accomplishments.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the problems that undergraduate students encountered during their undergraduate education and to detect their solutions for these problems. A total of ten undergraduate students who have been studying in English Language and Literature department of Karabuk University, Faculty of Letters participated in this qualitative study designed as a case study. Criterion sampling and maximum variation sampling were used together to select the participants of the study. In this respect, the criterion for participating in this study was to attend Writing Skills I and Writing Skills II courses and fail from one or both. Furthermore, the researcher exerted effort to gather data from students from different grades to act according to the main principle of maximum variation sampling. The data of the study were gathered through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher in line with both the related literature and the purposes of the present study. The data were analysed through content and descriptive analysis. Results revealed that ELL students mostly experience problems in critical thinking in academic writing and that these problems are more often caused by writing anxiety, and that positive feedback is the most important factor in solving the problems and that to improve their writing skills they need to expand their vocabulary by practicing reading frequently and that lecturers' applying a variety of strategies in writing courses makes a great contribution to students. Results from the current study were discussed in line with the related literature and some suggestions were presented.

Keywords: English Language and Literature, writing skills, qualitative study, content analysis.

ÖZ(ABSTRACT IN TURKISH)

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Karabük Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı'nda eğitim gören öğrencilerin eğitim sürecinde yazma becerilerine ilişkin yaşadıkları sorunların ve bu sorunlarla ilgili ortaya koydukları çözüm önerilerinin belirlenmesidir. Nitel araştırma yöntemi ve durum çalışması deseninde kurgulanan mevcut çalışmaya, Karabük Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı bünyesinde farklı sınıflardaki ELIT115 ve ELIT116 Yazma Becerileri I ve II derslerini almış toplam 10 öğrenci katılmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcılarının belirlenmesinde amaçlı örnekleme yöntemlerinden ölçüt, maksimum çeşitlilik ve kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme yöntemleri birlikte kullanılmıştır. Buna göre mevcut araştırmaya katılım için belirlenen ölçüt Karabük Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı'nda eğitim gören öğrencilerin ELIT115 ve ELIT116 Yazma Becerileri I ve II derslerini almış ve herhangi birinden (veya her ikisinden) başarısız olmuş olmaktır. Bununla birlikte mümkün olduğunca farklı sınıflarda eğitim gören öğrencilerden veri toplayarak maksimum çeşitlilik örneklemesine uygun hareket etmeye özen gösterilmiştir. Araştırma verileri yazarın ilgili alan yazına ve araştırmanın amaçlarına uygun olarak oluşturdukları yarı-yapılandırılmış bir görüşme formuyla toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde içerik analizi ve betimsel analiz teknikleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları, İDE öğrencilerinin yazma sürecinde en çok akademik yazıda eleştirel düşünememe sorunuyla karşılaştıklarını, bu sorunların daha çok yazma endişesinden kaynaklandığını, olumlu bireysel geribildirim almanın sorunların çözümünde en önemli unsur olduğunu, yazma becerilerini geliştirmek için sık sık okuma yaparak kelime haznesini genişletmek gerektiğini ve bu süreçte öğretim üyelerinin derslerde farklı stratejiler uygulamalarının öğrencilere çok büyük katkı sağlayacağını belirttiklerini göstermektedir. Araştırma sonuçları ilgili alan yazınla ilişkili bir biçimde tartışılmış ve bazı öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler (Keywords in Turkish): İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı, yazma becerileri, nitel araştırma, içerik analizi.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ELL   : English Language and Literature

LEA   : Language Experience Approach

ELT   : English Language Teaching

EFL   : English as a Foreign Language

ESL   : English as a Second Language

YDS   : Yabancı Dil Bilgisi Seviye Tespit Sınavı

TOEFL : Test of English as a Foreign Language

WCF   : Written Corrective Feedback

EAP   : English for Academic Purposes

L1   : First Language

L2   : Second Language

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

The major part of language development and academic success for ELL students is to acquire the communicative competence in writing. As well as being a lingusitic and cognitive activity, writing also enables students to involve in the communities they live and the academic world they study by handling social and cultural issues. Writing is regarded as the most important skill for the students so as to foster their personal development and improve their academic success (Mukulu et al. 2006).

Writing skill is the key concept for ELL students in the sense of proving their academic success and expressing their literary beliefs. The process of writing gains more importance when the main aim is expression of thoughts or ideas about literary subjects.

However, acquiring writing skill appears to be the most difficult one for second or foreign language learners (Negari, 2011), and it is so even for ELL students. Since writing process requires involving in cultural and social issues, students may sometimes encounter with some problems in their educational lives as they are handling the topics from English Literature which means a different culture. Briefly literature refers to body of texts that are considered to have some aesthetic features mostly written by specialists. In addition ELL students are supposed to readand examine the texts a lot in English Literature in their academic lives and also write essays about specific subjects.

In this context, an ELL student must have the ability to think critically and to analyze the given information in order to come to a rational conclusion about the topic. Numerous approaches are available in terms of teaching writing at academic level and lecturers frequently question how they can help students to improve their writing. However, this is not the only business of lecturers; students must be autonomous learners and do their best to acquire the writing skill themselves by doing reading, searching for a subject in detail, brainstorming, getting feedback and so on.

It is clear that students have to get enough input before beginning writing. However, most of the time they cannot write properly although they have enough background information about the topic. This situation can be explained by various

reasons. Kırmızı (2015) found that time pressure, negative evaluation of the teacher and lack of sufficient English writing practice are the major factors that affect students negatively and lead them to have writing anxiety. Therefore this study aimed at looking further at the problems encountered by students in the process of acquiring academic writing skill and the causes of not being able to write effectively.

This dissertation first enlightens the readers with the titles as subject of the research, purpose and importance and method of the research, research problem, population and sample and finally scope and limitations so as to have a clear understanding of the subject in general.

The first chapter presents the theoretical background to the research questions and the problem stated by the researcher in order to introduce the relevant terminology and present findings of various researchers about the phenomenon that is being discussed in the present study.

The second chapter is devoted to the methodological considerations and the research procedure of the study. As the present study is constructed on a qualitative research design, detailed information is given about the qualitative research design. In this chapter, the participants and biographical profiles of participants are presented in detail. Then the procedure of data collection is given. The tools used to collect the data are mentioned and lastly information about the data analysis is also given.

In the third chapter, the data that were collected through the student interviews and impressions of the researcher from the audio records of the interview are presented and interpreted.

The fourth chapter discusses the findings in relation to the aim of the study and research questions. Throughout the chapter, an overall understanding will be given with reference to the previous researchers' findings on the same issue. Some implications for the application of the study and suggestions for further studies are given at the end of this chapter.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

All people learning a second or a foreign language need to possess four skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) in order to comprehend what is spoken and produce the language for an effective communication as native speakers do. Maltepe (2006a) pointed out that language skills can be defined as the way to comprehend what an individual reads, listens to, sees and speaks precisely and properly and transmit them exactly and correctly to the others. Writing is a productive skill since it requires using our hands and brain collaboratively to generate ideas and write them on paper properly. Formal language is used in written texts and ELL students are supposed to use advanced level of English (or at least upper-intermediate level) in their essays according to their ultimate goals.

Learning writing is a sort of problem-solving process comprising generating ideas, outlining, monitoring and editing (White & Arndt, 1991). While writing the students encounter some problems like not being able to generate ideas and put them on paper coherently, and even to use grammar properly and they do not have enough vocabulary knowledge in general sense. They may sometimes misunderstand the instruction which means the detailed directions that guide the students for performing the task. As a result of misunderstanding the instruction, they completely create a distinct paper with a different subject from the instruction.

In addition, as they are nonnative writers, they have different cultural background and they have to cope with the new cultural aspects they write about. While doing so, they have to overcome their linguistic inadequacy keeping them from focusing on the literary subject. So mastering writing becomes a challenging task for the students. Demirel (2002) stated that one can develop his writing skill gradually, for that reason writing should be practised frequently. So writing should be a habit that they practice everyday for ELL students. Practising writing regularly will quite likely improve their ability to write constantly. At this point our students sometimes neglect practising writing and they neglect even reading the related texts most of the time giving shortage of time as an excuse.

The major problem is that ELL students lack writing skills because of some specific reasons like language related, student related, teacher related and motivational

factors. Motivational factors have the highest rate among the causes of problems but it should be taken into consideration that students skip reading and making enough search on the subject before beginning writing. The ultimate reality here is that they memorise the sentences from the book enough to form an essay to write and they get high marks from the exams which seems to be good for them; but they are not good at analyzing the given information, thinking critically and coming to a rational conclusion. As a result they lose their chance to broaden their horizon and get to know the world better.

A question comes out at this point. What are the reasons of lacking the ability to write for students then? Although they are accepted in this department by an entrance test, they hesitate to write knowing that writing is their major task in the department. Improving writing is not the sole job of the teacher. Students must do individual writing exercises and practises themselves. Teachers are at this point only the guides for them, not doer of the action. Students should have the language awareness, they should know where they are in learning process, what should be done next and what they should do to improve writing.

Therefore, it is significant to determine the factors that affect students' writing skill development. It should not be forgotten that these students will be academicians or scholars in the future and writing will be an essential part of their lives. Hence, they should have the exact ability to write about a literary subject and express their thoughts and ideas explicitly.

Based on the discussions above, the primary purpose of this study is to observe the problems of ELL students that they encounter in the process of acquiring academic writing skill and the possible causes of them. It also aims to compose some suggestions for students to improve their writing skills.

As it is challenging for most of the students to write an essay in target language rather than to read or to listen, ELL students must write lots of essays, mostly literary ones, during their academic lives. Since they are coming from the education system based on rote-learning and get used to handle with multiple choice questions for university entrance exam, unfortunately they lack discernment and might not be able to command on a simple subject. It is just because of this reason that the researcher

aimed to search for and analyze the situation since it is easy to realise that ELL students encounter some problems in the process of writing. They have difficulty in approaching the literary texts critically so they need to improve their understanding of studying a literary text and to practice reading more.

As a result, it is inevitable to gather all available information and come to a rational conclusion about the problems encountered. Also, there are some recommendations for the students within the context of improving their writing skills and for the instructors in order to make the teaching process more efficient for both students and themselves.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research is built on qualitative research method and case study design having an emphasis on the questions of'why' and'how'. The researcher aimed to ensure depth and clarity in this study by imploying a qualitative method. Interview as the main data collection method was considered the best to collect data from a small sample of students. In this study, according to the views of the participants who have failed either or both Writing Skills I and Writing Skills II courses at Karabuk University, Department of English Language and Literature, the aim of the in-depth study of the problems encountered in the process of acquiring writing skills at academic level and the probable solutions to these problems in their particular conditions and context has been the main concern of this study. The interviews were conducted in Turkish to prevent any miscomprehension problems.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The ultimate goal of this study is to find out mainly what kind of writing problems ELL students at Karabuk University encountered during their academic lives, the causes of these problems, the suggestions to solve these problems, how to improve academic writing skills and how writing should be taught concerning the practices in the process of education and individual studies. The present study aims to find answers to the following questions:

1) What are the most common types of problems ELL students face in writing ?

2) What are the causes of writing problems among ELIT students?

3) What are ELL students' suggestions to overcome writing problems?

4) What should students do to improve their writing skills?

5) What are the views of the participants in terms of how writing should be taught?

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A sample of 10 students who have been studying at Karabuk University, the department of English Language and Literature in Karabük participated in this study. In determining the participants of the study, criterion sampling, maximum diversity and convenient sampling from purposeful sampling methods were used together in a systematic way that complement each other. The criterion to choose the proper participants is having failed either or both of Writing Skills I and II courses. Out of 10 participants, 5 (%50) were females and 5 (%50) were males. Three of them are second year students; four of them are third year students and three of them are fourth year students. Five of them are from evening education and other five is from daytime education. The participants were interviewed to find out the problems encountered in the process of writing and the probable causes of these problems.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This study draws on writing problems of ELL students encountered during the process of acquiring writing skills at Karabuk University in Karabük. The aspects looked into were writing problems encountered by ELL students, prospective causes, suggestions for these problems, the ways to improve writing and how writing course should be taught. The data of the study were gathered through a semi-structured interview form developed by the researcher as in line with both the related literature and the purposes of the present study.

It is assumed that all the participants supply sincere and correct information. Although this study provides vital insights into students writing skills, it has its limitations, as well. One limitation is the lack of a diverse student population. The participants of this study were from one particular university and ELL department. As face to face communication was established with the study group to participate in the research, it is impossible to have a close contact with the students from other

universities. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to all ELL students types of high schools in Turkey.

Another limitation is the absence of teacher perspectives concerning writing problems of ELL students. For this research the researcher herself interviewed the participants at the department where she was teaching. Therefore, the focus is only on the students' ideas and thoughts about writing and acquiring writing skills.

In addition, although the method and design of the research are not appropriate for the generalization of the research findings, it can be expected that the findings will be a reference source for the successive studies.

1. CHAPTERONE: Literature Review

In this chapter, "The Role of Writing Skills in Academic Lives of Students", "Teaching Academic Writing", "Approaches To Teaching Writing"; "The academic writing challenges"; motivation, language problems, grammatical competence, cognitive problems, affective factors, writing anxiety, cross-cultural differences in writing and authorial identitiy(voice in academic writing)are focused on. It moves on to give the survey literature including the studies carried out both in Turkey and outside Turkey. In the last part, " The Need for Research on Writing" is discussed.

1.1. The Role of Writing in Academic Lives of Students

Writing is the most important way that helps students, especially ELL students, express their thoughts, feelings and ideas soulfully. Learning writing is not an instantaneous process; on the contrary, there are a number of rules that learners must follow both structural and functional. Writing is assumed as the most important language skill needed for personal improvement and academic achievements by students (Mukulu et al. 2006). In this part, the role of writing skills in academic lives of students will be discussed in relation to some issues like writing assignments, writing and identity, critical thinking, feedback and writing anxiety.

As we know the new generation, students and even children are using technology more often and they are called "computer age" children or youth. Therefore, they prefer visuality in the class and the tools appealing to their five senses. However, as a result of being a technological individual, they do not prefer even writing the sentences on the board during the class; instead, they take the photo of the board using their mobile phones. Also the education system in our country does not encourage students in writing from the first years of education unfortunately. That's why, learners' inadequacy and problems in writing mostly stems from the education system. However, it should be kept in mind that writing skill is one of the fundamental skill for an ELL student to prove himself as a profession in his field.

First of all assignments for writing play a significant role for students' success in acquiring writing skills. The student who practices much and who can transfer his ideas by writing can learn easily how to write more accurately. It is one of the main four language skills and they should know that in order to be successful in using the

second language effectively they should be successful in other skills as well. Many students struggle with academic writing and they often find it hard to handle at all, even about topics that they have enough knowledge such as their home life, homeless people, or a social context (Schellekens, 2008).

Ur (1996) suggests, "Writing is fundamentally different from the other four skills, not only because it is visual as contrasted with oral, or productive as contrasted with receptive, but also because of how it is produced and the way it communicates." It is a skill that relies on the use of strategies such as planning, evaluating, and revising the text to achieve goals. Second, writing is a means of extending and deepening students" knowledge; it acts as a tool for learning subject matter (Shanahan, 2004). So, writing assignment is an efficient way of practicing writing and also types of writing and producing ideas for a specific topic and it is an absolute necessity for students. Writing assignments provide students learning new concepts and increasing their awareness about a certain topic. They also have the chance to improve thinking crititically and broaden their perspectives throughout the world.

Writing and identity is a significant issue in writing process and they are closely related to each other. Students sometimes regard academic writing process as something which leaves the author out and makes students deal with only facts. They think that academic writing requires using impersonal writing style and feel that subjective statements are removed from the text they write. As a result they generally cannot come to a rational or personal conclusion for their papers because they are alienated from the topic. This is not realistic of course. Authors should include themselves into discourse and even use first person pronoun. Hyland (2002) argues, "by treating academic discourse as uniformly impersonal we actually do a disservice to our students, and that as teachers, we might better assist them by raising their awareness of the options available to them as writers."

Students should be encouraged to use their personal views and construct their own identity on papers to reach more realistic inferences. Since they are non-native users of English, writing in second language becomes a challenge for them and they face difficulties in writing. They hesitate to command on subjects and rely on general perception of the topic.

Authors should also have a contact with their audience. When one begins to write, he should ask himself "who is the audience?" While writing lifestyles, occupations, age, educational levels, interests and anxieties of the readers and even their dreams should be considered in detail. By doing so, a writer can identify to whom he writes and then he can provide a mental communication with the readers. Writers accept, once a reader is involved, that written words no longer have the meaning they imbued or intended (Palmer, 1969).

Critical thinking is a medium to achieve a successful piece of writing. "It is reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do." (Norris and Ennis, 1989).

According to Cottrell (2008), critical thinking is a process of analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information independently to guide a person's actions and beliefs. It encourages and facilitates higher order learning. Students have some problems in producing and extending ideas related to the topic to be written in English since they belong to a different culture and traditions of discourse. Cultural background has a great impact on the essay they write. In this respect class discussions may be useful to expand their ideas and think critically. Also an essay without brainstorming and doing research on the topic will be a disaster. Students should search for the topic by reading previously-written articles, reading books, searching library databases on-line or even consulting their elders or peers in order to get life experiences about the topic. Finally the most significant task to achieve critical thinking is reading; reading frequently whatever the topic is and whatever the kind of the texts are. By doing so they can reach the mode of writing and teachers should support them at this point by providing reading texts and assignments, and web links of certain sites.

Moreover, getting feedback is one of the most crucial parts of experiencing academic writing. Positive feedbacks allow students to show their learning capacity, the point where they are in this process and how they can improve their writing abilities. Also, getting feedback provides them a chance to self-control of their skills and learning capabilities.

In writing assignments and especially in-class studies, the students need a beneficial feedback to make a profit. A good feedback should explain the grade in terms of strengths and weaknesses, correct or edit the student's work, evaluate the match between the student's essay and an 'ideal' answer, engage in dialogue with the student, give advice which will be useful in writing the next essay. (Ivanic, Clark, & Rimmershaw, 2000)

Writing self-efficacy is the final subject to be discussed in this sectionn regarding academic writing. It can be defined as the individual's perception and evaluation of his or her writing skills (McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer, 1985). Simply self-confidence is the key to success in writing. If one lacks his self-confidence in writing, there may occur some problems like arising writing anxiety. According to some research the students rated time pressure, negative evaluation of the teacher, and lack of sufficient English writing practice as the most important causes of writing anxiety. (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015). If it can be kept in a dose of stress and anxiety, it becomes generally useful for students to produce good papers. But the more a student worries about writing, the more his writing anxiety rises and the lower his success is. A strong negative correlation between writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety is confirmed. That is to say, students writing self- efficacy increases as their anxiety decrease. (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015).

Writing skill is the basic skill for an ELL student for building a proper self-expression since writing is and will be a large part of their profession throughout their lives in a variety of situations. Writing tends to be the primary source for an ELL student rather than other language skills in the department and for this reason they should master it. In addition they need to promote their writing as a medium of communication for their professions, for example as a literary critic, in the future.

1.2. Teaching Academic Writing

Academic writing involves utilizing complex grammar and formal vocabulary, and teaching academic writing is a very complex; but on the other hand fruitful process for both teachers and students. At the university level, it is significant to be aware of that writing requires certain formal rules. Both instructors and teachers help students recognize the conventionsof academic writing. Developing an argument, addressing a

specific audience, and choosing a convenient writing style are some of these conventions. It is probable that learners and teachers may face some problems during teaching and learning academic writing which make the process harder. Writing is very important in the sense that it relates to all the other aspects of language learning and majorly affects it. Culture also plays a big role in teaching academic writing and teaching academic writing is more complicated than people think it seems to be.

Teaching writing in higher education is essential to accomplish a range of purposes according to different contexts where it happens. The first purpose of teaching writing is assessment which is often a major one for student writing (National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, 1997).Students might have to produce essays, written examinations, or laboratory reports whose main goal is to show the way they can master a discipline when it comes to course content. In evaluating such writing, lecturers pay attention to both the content and the way it's written, that is the language, the form, the arguments, grammar and punctuation. The second purpose is learning which can be helpful to learners whenever they struggle with disciplinary knowledge as well as create more general skills to examine and critique (Hilgers et.al, 1999). Students might also be asked to write texts that follow their reflections on the learning process itself, as with taken notes of thoughts, questions, issues, and ideas about reading, presentations, and practice.One of the goals of most writing and essay courses is to write a research paper that includes finding sources that make sense and integrating them into their paper. The third purpose is entering particular disciplinary communities, whose communication patterns are the primary means by which academics send and judge ideas (Prior, 1998). As they move forward through the university, students are often expected to write texts that increasingly equal to the ways and agreements of their chosen segments, with this expectation reaching a high level of postgraduate study.

Grammar and vocabulary are highly important parts of teaching academic writing. Celce-Murcia (1991) argues thatgrammar instruction is of great importance for educated, academically-oriented, and advanced L2 learners if they are to reach their goals. She mentions "the importance of an average degree of grammatical accuracy in academic or professional writing cannot be replaced" (p. 465). Reid (2000, p. 283) points out how "writing agreements require specific verb tenses in distinct academic

writing situations." She explains that abstracts of research reports and background information are "usually written in present tense, while the actual research is described in past tense or present perfect tense." Even at the intermediate levels of student proficiency grammar teaching can begin with an examining and analyzing the bodies in formal academic writing. Before that, the goal of instruction is to make learners' awareness better and notice the frequent grammatical features, and then working on this base, the average things in grammar structures can be openly addressed and practiced in the production of academic writing (Celce-Murcia, 2002; Ur, 2011).

Assignments are a very significant part of writing in the sense of providing students chances to practice writing more; a frame or a scheme should be formulated.Light (2004) notes that the more pages students write in a course, the more time they spend on the course, the more intellectually challenging they perceive it to be, and the more they feel like they are a part of it.Successful writing does not only mean following the rules of grammar and vocabulary. It means adhering to a full utensil of different written discourse norms or conventions.Students should be aware of the changing organizational patterns and discourse styles and how they affect communication. Moreover, academic writing, like all forms of communication, is an act of identity: it not only conveys disciplinary 'content' but also carries a representation of the writer (Hyland,2002). In time the written text becomes a personal production of the writer himself.Beside mastering grammar and vocabulary, students should also produce a coherent text. Coherence can be described as connectivity of the surface text with cohesive devices (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). By the help of frequent assignments with various topics to write, students will have the opportunity to experience to reach a coherent text while writing.

Other prominent aspect of teaching academic writing is providing feedback to students for their papers, although it takes a lot of time and effort; however it is also very fruitful.Students are assessed largely by what they write and need to learn both general academic conventions as well as disciplinary writing requirements in order to be successful in higher education (Coffin, et. al, 2003).In this context, it is valuable for students to receive feedback from their instructors for their essays in order to produce more and more accurate texts. In order to provide good feedback, teachers use some tools such as rubrics, to help them evaluate students' performances.

Traditionallyrubric system has been seen as a tool to help the scoring system and to provide valid judgment of who's competent or not (Jonsson and Svingby, 2007, p130).The measurement and assessment tools aimed at students' writings have similarities and differences depending on their objectives. Most of the measurement tools published with regard to written expression use a 100-point scoring system.

Critical writing includes considering evidence to drawlogical conclusions. It is being sure that you have pondred all aspects of the arguments you possess.Critical thinking is associated with reasoning, used for "the central activity of presenting reasons in support of a claim." (Andrews, 2000). It is an indispensable skill which one should have so as to produce an accurate text. While writingone writes with a specific purpose and that purpose is to answer the chosen question,an academic one and to make the reader believe in the way you do. In order to be rational and believable, one needs to convince the readers and present evidence. In this respect, teachers should have an emphasis on the activities in class that enable students engage in critical thinking and posing reasons to support their thesis.It shouldn't be forgotten that writing is a way of communication and it is a tool for information interchange. In addition, it is a platform where the writer can persuade the reader to agree with him. So, thinking critically requires the ability to elucidate, analyse and evaluate the events.Teaching students strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions has shown a significant effect on the quality of students' writing. Through conducting some approaches and teaching skills, teachers and instructors give the students the clue to be able to write a good paper by using some skills like brainstorming, thinking aloud, writing a short story and combining sentences in a simple way.Addressing the role of writing in the scope of World Englishes paradigm, Matsuda & Matsuda (2010) suggested some guidelines such as teaching the dominant forms and functions of language, the borders between the things that work and the things that don't work, the tenets and policy of discourse negotiation and the threats of using distinct characteristics.

Finally, a skill as rudimentary and imperative as academic writing is not at all easy to master or perfect but to strive for perfection is necessary for a student. In this respect, the students should be encouraged to participate more in class and group activities.A teacher should try to get them to read and write more to expand their

vocabulary and broaden their horizon.Lastly, through periodic assessment of assignments, clear feedback can also do wonders for the students.

1.3. Approaches to Teaching Writing

In language studies, teaching methods and skills are various and required to be taught according to the levels of the students. It can't be expected from a student to accomplish and make a progress in writing skills before completing the other tasks in basic level. As well as speaking, reading and listening, writing is a language skill which has many important stages within the process of acquiring that skill. As a result, these processes are needed to be taught with a defined and in a planned way.

One of the most important approaches to teaching writing is *process writing*. To be able to comprehend this concept, it is crucial to focus on the meaning of it. Basically, the word "process"may make this term clear in a sense that it requires time. Rather than giving feedback for any writing after being finished by students, in this concept, the main idea is cooperation during the writing from beginning to the end. By doing this, the risk of making mistakes is minimized by both the teachers and the students. However, process writing should also be in an order which can be categorized as pre-writing, focusing ideas and also the editing. To make these statements more clear, it can be said that in process writing as a teaching method the aim is to make students aware of all the stages such as improving ideas by contributing to their initial thoughts and content integrity rather than giving feedback for the completed writings or only correcting the grammar mistakes.

In addition to process writing, another important approach to teaching writing is LEA which can be explained as *Language Experience Approach*. In this approach the aim is to convey the main idea through shared experience. Students, both by hearing and seeing, are able to acquire writing skill easily (Mustafa, 2008). As the learners of writing have the chance of combining the images and the words, finally, they easily learn how to be successful in writing process. The advantages of language experience approach both for the teachers and learners are very important in terms of understanding it clearly. First of all, the related words with the writing topic are introduced for the students in indirect way and students have no difficulty for finding true words. Secondly, as the main problem in writing generally stems from the fact that

students have difficulty in finding the exact idea to discussthe topic, language experience approach may solve this problem in a short time as one-hour lesson when compared to other approaches to teaching writing.

Due to the fact that the purpose is teaching writing skill in practical and encouraging way, teachers also use *shared writing* approach. In shared language writing approach, both student and teacher compose the text together. It also may be explained as a process in which writing is learnt through writing. In this sense, students having difficulties in producing new ideas or keeping the writing alive will be more successful (Morrison, 1998). Planning, shaping and finally structuring phases are the important elements of shared writing. Thanks to step by step interaction, students of writing class easily comprehend the task and learn how to write in a short time. (Murphy, 2008)

Sometimes, it may be hard for students to write an essay by their own due to the fact that they may not imagine or they may fail in terms of being off the topic. In this sense, another strategy which is called as *interactive method* is highly useful for students. This method provides students to be confident during the writing process thanks to the teachers' involvement. As it may be understood from the name, this method is an interactive communication between the students and the teachers. Interactive method has many advantages.One of the advantages of this method is having a deep understanding of connecting the sentences together and the supporting detailsentences. Secondly, interactive method makes students feel comfortable in terms of getting the knowledge of the structure which may be summarized into three sections such as introduction, body and finally the conclusion part. As well as introducing the knowledge of structureto the students, it has also contribution to processof teaching writing in terms of providing an easy and fluent way of teaching for teachers. In addition, the other benefit of interactive writing is to ask questions about the topic to the students and create a brainstorming activity in order to make them think on the topic which they are required to write about.

Just like the interactive method, *guided writing technique* is another important method which includes the teacher directly in learning process. The aim of guided writing technique is to use the target language in an accurate way and also make the

students feel comfortable as the writing process sometimes may be challenging and it may discourage them both cognitively and physiologically.

In *social / genre approach* to writing, students are required to use many different sources. In this approach, the teacher should provide students the knowledge of how discourses function. Here, the goal of the students is to examine the relationship between the writer and the text and finally the readers. So, it is understood that this process focuses on the relationship of these three. In this sense, the teachers' role in teaching process is highly crucialto motivate the students.Due to the fact that writing contains both composing the language and also transcribing it, teachers are required to be sure that they give necessary skill task to their students and provide corrective feedback. In addition to the teachers' role in developing their students' writing skills, the learners should practice more and more to be able to correct their grammar mistakes and convey the accurate information through correct structure.

Assessment of the students' writing is another aspect of teaching writing. It allows students to check and improve their writing and change the direction if it is necessary. Formative assessment and evaluative response in writing assessment are two important kinds for teachers to guide their students (Hillebrand, 2001). Assessments also give the chance to provide feedback to the students.

All in all, to be able to gain accurate knowledge of writing, there are *other techniques*which may be applied during writing classes. These are practical techniques such as establishing enjoyable writing habits, presenting interesting topics to write,dictation, sentence completion and improving the writing style in terms of clarity and also the necessary feedbacks given at the right time (Coffin, et. al, 2003).

Also, there are many *classroom activities* for students to understand how to write well. Brainstorming is one of these class activities which may be realized both by teachers and the students in an interactive way. Brainstorming should be achieved at the beginning of the writing process. Through this activity, students may feel more confident and ready to write. With the support of the teacher, brainstorming provides students to think in detail and in order (Bussman, 1996). Mega-writing strategy is another classroom activity for successful writings. This activity requires students to comment on their own essays orally and also write about it. It will be very practical for

students to comprehend the writing task. Revision techniques are also useful. Here, the responsibility of the teachers should be to point out necessary information such as adding a few metaphor to writing or revising the conclusion part by giving an advice etc. Making grammar instructions is another classroom activity for writing. Through feedback, teacher should shed light on this issue by giving, if necessary, a list of phrasal verbs or prepositions (Broughton, 1980).

All of these approaches and methods/strategies' main purpose is to make students encouraged about what they are doing or how they should do it within the writing process, as guidance is of great importance in learning and teaching writing.

1.4. Academic Writing Challenges

Writing,as one of the main language skills, plays a major role in expressing one's ideas, thoughts, opinions, and attitudes. Through writing, people are capable of sharing ideas, feelings, persuading and convincing others. People may write for academic purposes, personal enjoyment or for some other reasons. They may address an audience of one person or more. Students in ELL departments are expected to have an above average success in academic writing.Yet some challenges might occur to students while composing a written content and these challenges may vary according to certain factors that affect the students. These factors have negative effects on the final result of their work leading to low self-esteem or a destructive criticism by others. Academic writing mightparticularly be the central issue where most of ELL students face difficulty in handling, because it requires enough experience in second language as well as content knowledge. The language used for essays and research purposes require a formal style of writing. This means how important the academic style is. Kroll (2003) argues that writing is a very important and very complex process that learners need a set of skills to master.

Challenges that students face in academic writing make it hard to deliver a readable and understandable material to the reader. Since writing is also a part of student assessment, they have the aim and the effort to prove their content knowledge and proficiency in English language. Here are some challenges studentsand also academicians facein the process of academic writing such as lack of motivation, language problems, grammatical incompetence, cognitive problems, affective factors,

writing anxiety, cross-cultural differences in writing and voice in academic writing (Authorial Identity).

1.4.1. Lack of Motivation

Motivation is the general willingness to do something or learn a new language. It initiates the positive beginning to the process of writing. "Motivation is one of the significant predictors to the academic English writing" (Chomsky, 1988; Hilgard, Atkinson & Atkinson, 1979). It creates the will inside the student (Wong, 2007). Students are easily influenced by the environmental factors. For example, classmates' participation may push others to participate in class activities and produce the seocnd language actively during the lesson and this expands their horizon. The interactivity enhanced by the teacher is also important because it prevents students from boredom and increase their motivation to learn. The attitude of the students towards the target language and its cultural background can also manipulate the degree of motivation the students could have. When leaners have more experience and interest in target language they would have much higher motivation to attain academic writing than other students who have no experience or interest in the target language. Gardner and Lambert (1959, 1972) assured that motivation in second language rely on the attitude of the learner regarding the target language and its population. They approached two types of motivation, the first is integrative motivation in which it is related to the inner desire of the learner to learn and join or combine himself with the target language and its culture; the second is instrumental or extrinsic motivation and here learners adopt language learning for external reasons such as getting a better job or achieve higher education. These two types of motivation invented by Gardner and Lambert might be a good fit for nowadays' learners where the English is merely called a lingua franca. Yet integrative motivation could provide more motivation for students as the need to learn stems from the inner side of the learner. In a further research Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) found that motivation is likely to reach its highest when two motivation types operate in the same person. Motivation in writing can be classified as an inner feeling ruled by external or internal factors and all as a result will affect positively or negatively the writing proficiency of the learner.

The lack of motivation is a serious problem for every student. Dağgöl (2013) points out, "Since will to learn builds one of the basic elements of learning, students

take an important step on the road to learning through motivation" . The lack of motivation might be caused by external factors such as the environment in which the students live in and the absence of support, or internal factors like laziness, shyness or weak desires and a lack of a clear goal. The unsuitable institutions can be a fair example of external factors that affect the motivation for writing; high ranking and modern universities urge the students to learn how to write about fascinating and griping topics using modern technologies to achieve this task. Also, the methods applied by the teachers play a critical role in motivating the students and establishing a constant encouragement. If someone is really motivated and is eager to achieve his goal, the external factors wouldn't affect him that much, but when a person is full of doubt and lacks self-esteem is where the real problem lies.

Motivation arises because of the emotional attachment to the task at hand.Students might sometimes feel uninterested or unattached to the topic to be writtenand thenthey lack the motivation to write. One might feel unmotivated because their previous writings were not well received by their peers or teachers. So, it becomes difficult to write again. When it comes to sharing their own personal thoughts and feelings about a certain topic in written form, students hesitate to write their statements on a paper because of certain reasons like being unsuccessful in expressing their thoughts well in English, teachers' negative evaluation about their papers, duration and lack of content knowledge.

Sometimes the motivational problem can be overcome by providing the student a simple nudge of positive criticism on their papers. It would change students' beliefs about themselves as learners and how teachers have a significant influence on their motivation.In academic writing the teachers with a good strategy represent extrinsic motivation for students.On the hand, students can motivate themselves by reading extensively, practicing writing receiving feedback for their papers and learning from their mistakes.

1.4.2. Language Problems

Language reflects the culture and expresses the individuality of the writer. It crosses the individual's perspective and principles and every language has its own structure. Studies have shown that students whose mother tongue is not English, which

indeed has different grammar structure, tend to have more problems to face in comprehending the instructions of writing at a university or at schools where English is the education language.

Writing is not just wording or making sentences, it is a show of power of language. When it comes to academic writing, how one expresses his ideas is of great importance. Harklau (2002) claims, "If learners work more through written sources of language, they will tend to develop the linguistic features that are associated with written registers in that particular context" (p. 339). When one expresses himself on paper, the reader can only rely on that paper, the only source to understand the author is the paper, so there should not be ambiguity in the discourse. One needs to take a solid stand rather than deviating from one side to the other and failing to make a clear point. To avoid such a problem, how the ideas and the information collected should be clearly expressed and explained. Many students face language problems while writing an essay just because of lack of writing practice. They feel insecure about their writing and due to this insecurity they can easily start making mistakes. Many L2 writers realise their inadequate lingusitic knowledge just when they come across with the demands of academic writing (Swain, 1985).

Language problems students face might be considered as not having sufficient vocabulary, lacking writing style, repetition of words or ideas, thinking in mother tongue and not being able to paraphrase the citations and so on… Errors, mechanical mistakes like spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, poor use of grammar, syntax, vocabulary and reliance of L1 might be considered among language problems. In addition, these problems lead to lack of confidence in writing. Using the daily language and slang words in academic writing refers to lack of proficiency in English language. However, according to Fuko and Fujii (2001) academic writing requires the student to have the ability to integrate skills which include gathering information, paraphrasing and summarizing the resources, organizing ideas in logical order, editing and finally proofreading.Furthermore employing the proper and advanced level of vocabulary is required in academic writing.

To overcome these problems students should start reading more so they can get an idea of how things work in writing process and how they ought to write. As well as reading, they should practice writing more and more. Practicing enables students to

write essays with more ease and gain confidence. One must convey the message clearly to the reader otherwise the reader will never be sure what is implied and will neither be impressed nor moved by the piece. Also teachers and students can share their mutual experiences through dynamic interactions in the class. So the discourse provided by the teacher in the class will bring opportunities to the students to use words in the proper context.

1.4.3. Grammatical Incompetence

Writing has a communicational purpose just like discourse. However, unlike discourse writing needs much more sophisticated work in order to reach its communicational purpose. It also requires linguistic and grammatical knowledge in addition to the technique of word choice. Canale and Swain (1980) claims that English academic writing learners need competence in many areas: grammatical, lexical, sociolinguistic in target language. However, learners face several grammatical issues while attempting to write, for example linking sentences by using the right tense is not easy for English language leaners in writing process. Academic writing requires a grammatical competence that reflects the experience of the writer. Students may have problems regarding subject verb agreement, choosing the right tense for the sentence, use of prepositions, conjunctions and so on. "The basis of these problems is the traditional style of teaching grammar on the part of teachers and lack of practice on the part of learners" (Kleisar, 2005). On the other hand,students do not achieve coherence in a textand use of cohesivedevices are crucial in writing as well as the logical order of the text. Word choice also makes writing softer and can deliver the main message intended by the writer through using comprehensible words that are neither exaggerated nor very simple.

Grammatical mistakes can be overlooked when it comes to speech in which fluency is its main point, also we can use gestures and intonation or pitch while speaking which gives us additional ways of conveying the meaning and strengthen our point of the argument (Crystal, 1995). However the same cannot be implemented for written language nor the academic one no less. Professional language and expressions are required in writing, and grammar is like the heart and soul for an academic text, and by which the reader can identify the author's command of the language and how knowledgeable the author really is. A study of Refnita (2014) in Indonesia concluded

that the reasons behind the difficulties regarding grammar are language carelessness and the lack of grammatical competency. Refnita (2014) suggested, "all programs of English grammar and writing instructions should be addressed to build and develop students' grammatical competency and language awareness. By doing so, grammar instructions really help develop and improve students' linguistic and communicative competences which can be practically seen in writing and other language skills" (Refnita, 2014).

Academic writing is quite unlike creative writing or journalistic writing in that academic writing must be formal throughout the course of the article or the paper. Nothing can be left to the imagination of the reader, everything needs to be clear and a stance must be taken by the writer. The writing should be concise and to the point;grammar mistakes are to be avoided at all cost. Academic writing is all about sharing the findings and thoughts about a certain issuein the world and when doing so one needs to express original opinions to help others see their point of view, which really cannot be accomplished with a plagiarized paper. In this respect, students may sometimes have difficulty in paraphrasing the experts' statement and it unfortunately leads to plagiarism on paper.

In order to broaden student's horizons reading consistently enables students to reach profound knowledge in every field. Having the ability to paraphrase and utilize research techniques in order to support their ideas while writing will minimize grammatical problems for students. Improvement in writing goes ahead with the development of other language skills as well. Baleghizdeh& Gordani claim, "it is vital that writing is clear through compliance with rules of punctuation and the conventions of grammar to maintain clarity and avoid ambiguity in expression" (2012).

1.4.4. Cognitive Problems

Writing is truly a multi-dimensional task involving various mental faculties of a person such as cognitive skills. Cognitive skills are the essential skills which our brain employs to think, learn, read, reason, and pay attention. For a student, these skills are of the utmost importance to learn writing. Same is the case when it comes to academic writing, strong cognitive skills are paramount to a student's ability to do well in classes. It may be asserted that good cognitive skills and functions develop

naturallyforsome people and not for others. This might be true, but it does not change the fact that like other skills, cognitive skills can be improved.

Students may have some problems regarding their cognitive abilities. The amount of the well-structured and organized information and knowledge should be quiet enough to produce a proper piece of written text or essay due to labeling these information in which the form and the provided facts or examples increase the reader's excitement. Punctuation problems, spelling problems, capitalization problems, content problems and organization problems all undergo to the cognitive process. Cognitive problems may appear in writing process while students are combining elements of the traditional modes as required to compete the student's rhetorical purposes. So the cognitive side of the academic writing process is severely wide. Since English and Turkish languages belong to different language families, there are basically apparent differences between two languages. Thus the students need to spend time on improving their spelling skills and critical thinking while dealing with the academic writing in target language. A proper content is crucial in academic writing. A notable content with interesting and thoughtful ideas supported with factual examples makes writing purposeful as it strongly grabs the reader's attention. However, it shouldn't be forgotten that while students are trying to keep up with grammar, punctuation, spelling and others in writing, they should not care less about the message, ideas and thoughts they want to deliver to the readers. Although cognitive problems can affect learner's quality in producing written text, it has no strong impact as the psychological side like motivation. Cognitive issues can be fixed within time, it needs appropriate practice in order to gain experience.

The cognitive linguistics combines both psychology and linguistics and it deals with the relationship between language and our thoughts. According to Croft and Cruse (2004) cognitive linguistics is based on three principles: Language is not an autonomous cognitive faculty, grammar is conceptualization and finally knowledge of language emerges from language use. These three principles are developed to oppose the generative syntax and truth-conditional semantics, each of the mentioned principles has its own theories and hypotheses. It also addresses the debate of language-thought and the question of which of them comes first. The cognitive linguistics is mainly related to L2 speakers or learners and that is because the two perspectives view the

effects of language and thoughts on each other. For example according to Piaget's theory (1936) there is the perspective of universalism which suggests that the thoughts influence the language and if a certain concept exists within a certain culture or a group of people the native speakers of this culture will have to develop new words to describe these new concepts and ideas. On the other hand Whorf (1956) argues that L1 influences the way we think and our interpretation of what we hear in other languages according to existing ideas that have been implanted by the mother language. Even if we don't dive further into cognitive linguistics we can most definitely conclude that a lot of misunderstandings would occur while writing in L2 and how hard it is to balance ideas while converting them into an academic text using another language.

1.4.5. Affective Factors

Affective factors also have a key role in academic writing. These factors can be defined as the set of emotions and attitudes people have about themselves or the surrounding environment. Some of the affective factors are inhibition, attitude, and self-esteem. Protection from exposing oneself to others can be called as inhibition. Students with high levels of inhibitions often choose not to participate. Students feel vulnerable due to inhibition and spend much less time in active learning, this can negatively impact their writing as well. It is quite clear that having a positive attitude towards anything helps students excel and vice versa. Having a bad attitude towards writing can easily disrupt a train of thought and affects the writing process in a bad way. If one has a positive attitude towards writing,it means he will keep on learning new things and take new steps to make their writing better and better. Self-esteem is also an affective factor in academic writing as also discussed before. Students who have low self-esteem do not believe in themselves and think that they will not be able to be good atwriting. They might not believe in themselves to finish an assignment, so they hesitate even to begin writing. These problems need to be addressed before writing and practice makes perfect.

Affective factors represent a substantial part in academic writing. These factors influence the learner's attitude towards writing in academic English and it may be positive or negative for a learner. If the student is affected positively, he will probably be successful in producing a well-written paper. The student's optimistic attitude towards the teacher, the students in the group or even to English as a language may

produce positive results in learning process and vice versa. External factors like the learning environment, teaching methodology and student-teacher or student-classmate interaction; also internal factors like self-confident and attitude towards writing might determine students' perspective of academic writing. Psychological state or environmental factors simply affect a student's ability to write. Lack of confidence, low self-efficacy and motivation may lead to potential problems (Sawyer, et. al, 1992). Self-efficacy is defined as "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations." by Bandura (1995); and the individual's perception and evaluation of his or her writing skills (McCarthy, et. al, 1985). Another definition of writing self-efficacy can be a student's "belief in his or her ability to successfully perform writing tasks at a given level" (Shell, et. al, 1989). They are expected to have writing self-efficacy in terms of content, design, unity, and accuracy, punctuation. Students with a high level of self-efficacy have a high level of self-confidence and they believe that they can organize the learning environment conducive to their own learning (Bandura, 1986). Moreover, studies point out that there is a correlation between level of self-efficacy and academic achievement (e.g.,Pajares, 2003; Pajares & Kranzler, 1995; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990).

A student with a high level of self-efficacy and low level of writing anxiety will probably be able to produce a well-organized paper. In this respect teachers should support students to enhance their writing self-efficacy and reduce their anxiety through practicing writing and constructive approach to the writing course. Therefore, a student with high level of writing self-efficacy consider difficult writing tasks a challenge and work accordingly to resolve the problems that they face (Lavelle, 2006).

1.4.6. Writing Anxiety

Writing anxiety is very common among ESL leaners and ELL students as well. Lack of self-confidence and fear from being evaluated as well as excessive self-criticism could be the main causes for writing anxiety. "Language anxiety can be described as the general fear of performing in the second language" (Erhman, 1996; Horwitz & Young, 1991). Recent studies found that writing anxiety decreases students' performance (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014). Hassan (2001) states that students with low anxiety came up with better quality compositions compared to students with high anxiety. Moreover, writing anxiety has some impacts on the psychological aspect of

the learners.The learners' fear ofteacher's opinions, teacher's negative feedback and students' concerns about receiving good grades,passing the coursemighteven slower their cognitive progress in learning other writing skills and the linguistic aspect of the target language. "The causes of language anxiety among adult second language learners are complex, but include such psychological factors as the ESL student's fear of negative evaluation or opinion, concern about receiving good grades on assignments and tests, or feelings of embarrassment or incompetence in the second language" (Bailey, 1983). Writing anxiety mostly appears to students in testing situation, students begin to feel the fear of committing a great mistake especially in difficult and unfamiliar tasks and that may cause paralysis in the development of the learner's academic writing acquisition. Apart from the psychological aspect students might exhibit physical stress such as headaches, trembling, hand wringing and other signs. According to Daly and Miller's studies (1975) gender also affects the level of anxiety in which males are likely to have higher anxiety than females. These studies also indicate that non-native writers have higher levels of anxiety than the native writers. Teacher's feedback is significant and can easily direct the student's feelings towards writing into positive or negative directions that affect their level of anxiety in writing. Teachers should be aware of the point that they are criticizing the papers; not the students themselves and they should build positive and constructive criticism towards to students in order to make them be enthusiastic to write. Writing anxiety in its both physical and psychological impacts can decrease the learner's ability in writing process as sometimes it can be destructive to their mood in writing.

Writing anxiety is a serious obstacle that stands on the way of students during academic writing. The feeling of anxiety can also be caused by the reasons such as being worried of the fact that the students are expected to present a highly remarkable texts, lack of self-confidence, not believing in one's true abilities, lack of writing strategies, grammatical incompetence, failing the course and not being able to gather information and so on. The constant thinking caused by the reasons above will demobilize the writing process and spark a challenge before even starting the writing process itself. This constant fear and worry may develop from a psychological state into a physical state causing some diseases like blood pressure (Green, 2017). Green 82017)also claims that self-efficacy has a negative association with the writer's anxiety and vice versa. Writing anxiety can be avoided by getting support from teachers or

peers. Showing the writing drafts to friends or colleagues will ultimately help get new ideas and realise one's strengths and weaknesses of his style. Another way of getting rid of anxiety might be thinking of the writing as a process that contains several small fragments that work like chain which leads to the final result and it is possible to accomplish at the end which is worth waiting patiently.

On the other hand, contrary to general belief, no anxiety doesn't provide students a stimulant to write; in reality moderate level of anxiety leads students to be aware of the task they are doing.

1.4.7. Cross-Cultural Differences

Global communication depicts how people of different culture interact with each other in different ways. Culture is an umbrella term which includes a huge variety of beliefs, habits and what forms the identity of the person. Culture has a severe influence on the individuals especially when considering or estimating a specific matter. Academic writing adopted most of its subjectivity from culture and through the parallelism between the language and culture. Academic writing is closely related to the cultural background of the writer himself in both native and non-native writers. Kramsch (2001) states that nobody is free of culture, language and culture depend on each other. The writers from different social groups who express their own opinion and their point of view on matters can clearly provide a typical image of that social group they belong to. "As language embodies the values and meanings of a culture and is the most visible and available expression of a particular culture, it signals people's cultural identity" (Byram, 1989). Culture's subjectivity, its variation in arguments and reasoning make it controversial, and that also what makes academic writing controversial. L2 students are more likely to be exposed to such kinds of influences and the possibility of cultural shock is higher in comparison to the natives due to the cultural influence. "Because writing is considered as a cultural phenomenon, it is suggested that once this cultural schema is formed in L1, it would influence writing in a second language" (Connor, 1987; Kaplan, 1966).

Our world houses numerous cultures from east to west and from north to south. Each culture has its own habits, rituals, costumes, beliefs and most importantly language. When viewed how different these culture are, cross cultural

misunderstandings become very natural. The culture we live in and the language we learn as our mother tongue will always affect our perception of every new information we gain. In its simplest form culture shapes what we learn. Our wrong perception of other cultures caused by cross culture differences is not the only problem, the real problem rises when one tries to convey his thoughts and feelings. This causes misunderstanding and this misunderstanding is certainly reflected throughout the process of writing. The first step to avoid such misunderstandings is to consider the audience who read our pieces by posing the questions; "ask yourself what you know, or what you might be able to find out, about the people you are interacting with. Are you communicating with a 60-year-old senior executive or a 20-something manager?" (Molinsky, 2016).

Apart from the cultural influences on the content and the main ideas, another cultural influence can be noticed in terms of style in writing, for some L2 learners. Their style may not give a clear image about their culture because of the low L2 proficiency or some other writing challenges. In a study supervised by Kaplan (1966), in analyzing 600 essays written by student groups from different cultural backgrounds, he noticed variability in writing structures and patterns done by these cultural groups such as direct linear, parallel constructions, indirect, digression, and concluded that L2 is largely affected by L1. Cultural tendency in the style of writing is almost not applicable for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students because they are taught the norms of English in an advanced way and they also taught on specific style orientations while writing. Cultural aspect plays a crucial role in writing, it always stands behind the initiated debates on the matters discussed in a piece of writing, and thus cultural background greatly influences academic writing.

In academic writing the differences between cultures, histories, languages, and even personalities may cause the diversity in types of writing pieces. English is considered as an international communication language mainly in the academic and scientific contexts. It is significant to inform researchers from different origines and cultures who are willing to publish their works in a special field to pay attention to the norms and standard factors of English language in their writings because some misunderstandings and misconceptions of a specified matter may happen in the message they convey while writing. Academicians always analyze the language in a

text which belongs to the writer's identity because language is a central feature of human and cultural identity and of a specific nation. In other words the author's language, identity and culture are interconnected. Since the cultural differences influence the comprehension of events in people belonging to differents cultures, non-native English writers confront the cognitive problems which lead to the misunderstanding of English native speakers.

Ultimately, owing to the diversity of cultures around the world, each culture has its own way of communicating. These diversities may cause misunderstandings and misconception throughout the written communication. In order to be successful in English academic writing non-native speakers have to consider written or formal English language features. As the writers learn about the sociocultural practices of their readers, they can deliver their written discourse to their expectations better.

1.4.8. Authorial Identity

Authorial identity or voice of writer makes the piece of writing authentic or one of its kind. The writer's own distinctive views and ways of making the ideas appeals to the reader. The voice of the writer appears in many writing mechanisms mentioning organization, word choice, directness, etc. Costley and Doncaster (2001) suggest that authorial identities are built through the style that social discourses are embodied into writers' texts; also through embracement of these discourses. Writers' voice is subjective as it's different from one writer to another and that is what leads to the existence of different ways of expression on one topic read by different readers with different preferences. Tardy and Matsuda (2009) described voice in writing as the writer-reader debate motivated in the text, and readers are variables. The voice serves as a band between the writer and the reader in which the writer can attain his purpose of writing through delivering the clear message of writing and impress the readers with their well-supported theories to make the reader's experience in reading their piece of writing totally convenient. Authority or the authorial voice gives more reliability to the text, in which through the writer put his own touches on the text to turn it into authentic piece accompanied with his skills in persuading and being dynamic with readers. Voice in the text might be regarded as the spirit of the text given by the writer, each of us have our favorite writer and this preference initiated by their voice in their

writings that left an impact on us as readers, through this process the authors get their identity in production writing pieces.

The writer's voice is not an issue by itself as a concept, but the problem is if a writer lacks the "voice", they will fail to capture readers' attention and admiration. The lack of a writer's voice can be caused by the lack of originality, not in content but in the way they imagine and view ideas and thoughts. This may cause the amateur writers to try and copy or imitate in order to appeal to the readers and public.A further ramification can be plagiarized from other writers' works which means the issue of borrowing from other sources without referencing and adaptation of discourses is the problem of "textual plagiarism" (Pecorari, 2003).

Authorial identity clearly appears when writers express their identity in written context in order to promote their readers to read and persuade them to think in the same way the author does. In other words, it is a procedure that strengthens the communication between the author and the readers. Certain writers organize their work in an objective manner and others write in a subjective way. Thus, organizing the text, guiding the reader, and acknowledging funding bodies are integral parts of authorial identity. Academic writing is also a way of representing of self; thoughts, ideas, historical background and culture. The fact that students are having problems in reflecting their own voice on their papers usually stems from lack of practice. To overcome this problem students should read more so that they can get an idea on how things work, and how they ought to write to reflect their own voice within the text. As they read and practice more, they will gain confidence and the confidence in writing is the key to be authorial in writing. Although a large number of writers disagree the subjective style of the author owing to the fact that it disrespects the traditional academic writing form.One must convey what he aims clearly to the reader using his own voice in writing; otherwise the reader will never be sure what is discussed and will neither be impressed nor persuaded by the piece.

This section focused on academic writing challenges students face in academic writing and what causes lack of motivation, language problems, grammatical incompetence, cognitive problems, affective factors, writing anxiety, cross-cultural differences and voice (authorial identity) in academic writing. These challenges put barriers on the way of students whose native language is not English in writing and

prevent students to produce solid and readable essays to the reader. It should be noted that writing is the most invaluable skill for ELL students for achieving their academic proficiency. Academic writing challenges may vary according to the learner's experience with the target language. Psychological and physical factors might also have a negative or positive reaction on the leaner's academic writing acquisition process as well as some other external and internal factors. Students should make an identification to their weaknesses and then work hard to find solutions to their problems. Yet being enough familiar with the target language still serves as the criteria for successful writing with almost no considerable challenges. The challenges encountered within academic writing process are the ones that everyone has faced before or will face at a point; however, these challenges are not permanent and are curable.It only requires dedication and practice, just like normal craft require observation and practice to achieve its mastery and command.

1.5. Previous Studies on Difficulties in Academic Writing

Writing process requires high mental capability in critical thinking and other issues in order to build up a strong argument to be implicated in a written text. It also requires knowledge in the language itself from grammar to punctuation, partly upper-intermediate but highly advanced level of English and so on. Thus, students should have these competences that can appear in different forms in each practice of writing. If not, students may face some problems in writing process. Writing anxiety and self-efficacy are the most noticed ones among the students. So, many studies were carried out on students from different countries to investigate the problems that they are suffering from while engaging in academic writing. To illustrate researchers are giving more attention to writing anxiety recently (Atay & Kurt, 2007; Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallert, 1999; Cheng, 2004, Hassan 2001). In this regard, there are few studies done within the Turkish context and on the Turkish student specifically concerning academic writing. Results vary as well as the researches' methodologies in these studies. Yet not all of the predicted causes underwent a study process. Altınmakas (2015) states that a small number of studies carried out in turkey is related to academic writing to date. The existing research mostly investigated from anxiety scope and did not further investigate other issues such as rhetorical difficulties, cultural differences, voice in academic writing or cognitive problems and so on.

1.5.1. Studies Carried Out in Turkey on Writing Problems

Writing receives considerable scholarly attention in Turkey in relation to different aspects.

A study was carried out by Altınmakas (2015) on twelve freshmen year students and seven seniors studying English as a major at a Turkish foundation university. The aim of the study was to investigate the interaction between contextual and educational factors affecting Turkish students' academic writing acquisition. As secondary participants there were three English teachers and six members from the faculty all on the same study field. After a cross-analysis of the results of the two groups she found that the Turkish students' academic writing is influenced by a range of correlated factors: (1) L1 and L2 knowledge, (2) teachers' opinions in writing, (3) students' experience in academic writing and text genres, (4) faculty members' predictions.

Uysal (2008) investigated whether the previous schooling experience and the cultural background influenced of 18 Turkish students through producing their texts in both L1 and L2. Background questionnaire and textual analysis were employed. Her findings showed that there is a bidirectional transfer of L1 and L2 rhetorical patterns which can be caused by their previous L1 learning experience and their level in L2.

Alagözlü and Süzer (2010) investigated whether writing issues occur to Turkish writers' papers such as lack of critical thinking and voice which are rooted within the cultural disposition. The study was conducted with 30 Turkish ELT undergraduates (pre-service language teachers). After analyzing their L1 and L2 critical thinking essays, the researchers pointed out that the participants' writings had low scores. The scores of L1and L2 texts did not show a big difference in between. For that reason, Alagözlü and Süzer (2010) found that the participants' language is not the reason behind their critical thinking weakness in their texts. They explored that their difficulties stem from their unfamiliarity with the structure of argumentative essay, lack of discernment training in Turkish educational system and social cultural maxims.

Atay and Kurt (2006) investigated to what level writing anxiety might affect L2 writing practices and pedagogical beliefs of 85 ELT senior year undergraduate students from Turkey. A writing anxiety inventory and an open-ended questionnaire

were employed in order to collect data. Findings revealed that two levels of anxiety (high and average) affect the students' process of writing texts in terms of organizing and producing ideas. The results derived from the open-ended questionnaire showed that writing anxiety is mainly occur from the teachers' attitudes, students' previous writing experiences, time limit, exams, deadlines and classroom atmosphere.

Yağız (2009) investigated the attitudes and beliefs of 70 Turkish graduate students towards academic writing. A semi-structured interview and textual analyses were employed to collect data. Findings showed that students' academic writing difficulties mainly caused by insufficient instruction regarding academic writing in the level prior to their graduate studies, unfamiliarity with academic writing structures, and some other factors like motivation, procrastination and low self-efficacy. Thus Yağız (2009) advised that writing courses should be offered in graduate programs for graduate students and that instructors should have flexibility in both feedbacks and supervision and use constructive manner.

Karakoç (2016) carried out a study to investigate the band between the students' productive vocabulary knowledge and academic writing, receptive vocabulary knowledge and reading through analyzing. The results of vocabulary test done by 175 B2.2 level prep-school Turkish students at Anadolu University school of foreign languages. The results revealed that the students' receptive vocabulary knowledge are notably higher than the productive vocabulary knowledge, it was also found that vocabulary has significant contribution to students' writing performance.

Kırmızı (2015) carried out a study on 172 English Language and Literature students enrolled in a Turkish state university to investigate students' self-efficacy, writing anxiety and to reveal the causes of writing anxiety. Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), Causes of Writing Anxiety Inventory (CWAI), and Writing Efficacy Scale (WES) were used in data collection process. The results showed that students have a moderate level of writing anxiety; it also showed that male students could have higher rates of writing self-efficacy and they suffer less from writing anxiety. The investigation determined the causes of writing anxiety which are time pressure and negative evaluation of the teacher, and exposed a negative correlation between writing self-efficacy and writing anxiety.

Kara (2013) conducted a study at the University of Anadolu in Turkey in order to investigate the attitudes of the students about their academic writing courses, anxiety and the reasons that might cause some of them to fail in that course. In order to examine how reliable the concept of test-retest, the study was conducted twice (Daly and Miller, 1975) on 150 from two academic years. The first part of the study took place on the eighth week of a 14th-week semester, the second one took place on the fifth week of a 14th-week semester. The 150 students were all from the first year, and they were to write two paragraphs discussing their attitudes about their writing courses and the difficulties they face during the writing process and what they think might be causing them to fail. The most corresponding reasons mentioned by the students were that they are not used to express themselves using writing and that they have no previous experience regarding writing in their years of education, as well as lacking some skills like gathering information, organizing ideas. Alongside feeling that their English is not sufficient enough to express and reflect themselves.

1.5.2. Studies Conducted Outside Turkey

Regarding academic writing, many studies have shown that difficulties appear in many areas such as; writing a thesis/dissertation, writing papers for course assignments, answering written exams and these difficulties could be found in grammar at first place. Many students have difficulty in writing an accurate paper or an essay even in their native languages; so it becomes more challenging for them to write in second language (Gilmore, 2009). In this section, the studies regarding the difficulties in academic writing conducted outside Turkey enable us to understand what makes it challenging for the students being educated in other countries while writing an academic paper in English language. McDonough (1999) makes it clear that the principles of first language writing have a considerable effect on learning writing in target language. In addition international students don't sometimes recognise the demands of their major regarding writing which results in making a struggle with their academic papers.(Cooper & Bkowski, 2007). Moreover, Schneider (2009) points out that the use of formulaic style in teaching writing makes it hard for the students to be engaged in writing activity deeply because; teachers' aim in introducing a formulaic writing is to increase students' scores in standardized tests; but not to increase their writing proficiency. This makes the students lose interest in writing activity.

Al Badi (2015) conducted a small scale investigation on the academic writing challenges that aimed at answering the following questions (1) what are the academic writing difficulties encountered by ESL learners? (2) what are the factors that may cause these difficulties? Her investigation was conducted on 20 postgraduate students from 4 different countries; but all were studying at a university in Australia, and all are from Asia but from different cultures and background. The needed data for the study was collected by two questionnaires. This investigation revealed that the difficulties faced by these 20 students tend to be similar, even without considering their previous educational background. After the investigation the answers to the questions mentioned above were as such: writing is not a basic or simple cognitive activity but a complex mental production that requires careful thinking. As for the factors: coming from a different cultural background, not being trained to be critical thinker, low language proficiency, grammatical mistakes and the inappropriate way of using vocabulary.

Fareed and Ashraf conducted (2016) a study to investigate the factors that hinder Pakistani students' writing skills. This investigation also aimed to improve Pakistani ELS students' skills by obtaining suggestions concluded from the study. The samples for their study were collected from 30 undergraduate ESL Pakistani students. The study was conducted by using the qualitative approach. Fareed and Ashraf categorized the findings of the study in three major areas: Pakistani undergraduate ESL learners' writing problems, writing factors that are responsible for the problems and suggestions to improve the students' writing skills. The issues or mistakes from the written samples were examined and illustrated into tables in order to traingulate the most occurring problems; grammar came on top as the most frequently occurring problem for the students, then came syntax, lack of vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, verb forms and finally word order and spoken expressions.

It is noticed that students at MARA university of technology, in Kenya are facing many problems with their writing courses and it was affecting their overall course grades. So Noriah Ismail, Supyan Hussin and Saadiyah Darus (2012) started a study in order to analyze the students' writing problems and needs so that they can provide sufficient writing module in order to boost and enhance their writing skills. Their study investigated the writing problems of ESL Tertiary students in the BEL311

English proficiency course that is being provided by MARA university of technology. Not only that but this study tries to look at the suggestions of both students and lecturers about the important elements that can be implemented in the IQ-write course. The students upon whom the study was conducted were 60 part three Diploma students who were taking the identified: the student's inability of being critical and analytical while writing, not having enough practice time in classes and the ineffective and dull writing activities that were held in classes.

Ibnian (2017) managed a study conducted at The World Islamic Sciences and Education University, Jordon in order to identify the difficulties faced by Jordanian university students while writing. His study sample comprised of 82 English majors. The study included a questionnaire regarding the difficulties that are being encountered while writing in ESL as well as an open-ended question about the suggestion for solutions that might help the students in the future. The result of the study revealed the lack of ideas was the most reoccurring problem for the students. Then it is followed by "the incorrect use of mechanics of writing" and finally "lack of clear assessment instruments and marking schemes" occupied the third rank.

A study was carried out by Ariyanti and Fitriana (2017) on students so that they can investigate the reasons behind the poor quality of student's essays from the latest semester and the difficulties they encounter. Students' essays were used as samples, alongside open-ended questionnaires. The study focused on 33 students from the English language department at Widya Gama Mahakam University, Indonesia. The study showed that the main difficulties for the students were: grammatical difficulties, cohesion and coherence, diction, paragraph organization and vocabulary misspelling.

It was noticed that the students at the University of King Saud were face some difficulties during their writing lessons. In order to reveal these difficulties a study was conducted by Al Fadda (2011). The samples for this study were 50 students, all from the University of King Saud from the academic year 2008-2009. The study used three main questions, the first was what causes the stresses when it comes to writing, the second was what were the teaching approaches that hinder the quality of the academic writing, and the third and final was if interacting with English speaking natives would improve their writing skills. All these questions were asked from the students point of view. The results showed that that students suffer from not being able to distinguish

between the forms of written and spoken English, not being able to establish a draft or an outline to their ideas and finally using very weak vocabulary and expressions.

In the academic year 2008-2009 a study was conducted at the College of Business at University of Utara in Malaysia that aimed to investigate the problems faced by the Arab students studying at that university (Al-Khasawneh, 2010). The necessary data for this study were collected via face to face interviews with the students themselves. The study asked some questions like: the styles of writing that the Arab students use, the problems they face and what causes these problems as well as their opinions on how these problems could be solved. These questions revealed that the Arab students suffer from problems related to vocabulary register, grammar, organization of ideas, spelling mistakes and referencing.

Bagheri and Riasati (2016) completed a study in Azad University, Iran, that aimed to reveal the problems that block the way of EFS students towards academic writing competency, detect the source of these problems and to try and rectify them. The samples for study were 25 graduate students and 25 post graduate students aging from 22-40. IELTS task1 and task 2 writing mock tests were used at the participants so that data can be collect, as well as some unstructured interviews with university professors. The study showed that the PhD were more sufficient that their MA counterparts and there was a noticeable difference between the scores, though this difference becomes blur when examined on students from the same groups. The findings revealed that developers of the Curriculum paid little attention to the writing courses, not to mention that the teachers who are teaching the writing courses did not achieve proper education themselves and are not aware of the requirements for this sensitive task. Also English is a foreign language to the culture of Iran and there is not enough exposure to it, and that academic writing is a very sophisticated process that requires a great amount of knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, coherence and cohesion and collocation.

The studies above demonstrate that writing difficulties do occur to all non-native learners regardless of their cultures and backgrounds. Beside experiencing common problems, there is also a notable disparity between the Turkish and non-Turkish contexts in terms of academic writing issues.

If we examine the results of the mentioned studies, we can notice that the most frequent and apparent problem that both Turkish students suffer from, as well as students from other nationalities is lack of vocabulary and also the inability to use suitable words in a certain context. Another common problem among Turkish students and others is the lack of previous training or knowledge of the forms of academic writing. The least common problem between the students inside and outside Turkey is the difficulty to master the grammatical structure of the English language.

The problems that reoccur for the Turkish students are mainly: the effects of their mother tongue on English and how they transfer their knowledge from L1 to L2 using expressions from L1, no prior knowledge of writing - Turkish students are having insufficient instruction as the majority of studies resulted- , writing anxiety and low self-efficacy and finally materials or courses were provided by the education system that could prepare them to write an academic text.

As for the students from other nationalities, the most occurring problem especially for students from the middle east and some parts in Asia is how foreign and alien the English language is to their cultures, the lack of critical thinking that would enable academic writing, spelling, punctuation, the lack of ideas, coherence and cohesion, and finally the poor way of organizing ideas and integrating them into a solid text.

1.6. The Need for Research on Writing

Writing skill, which has an important role in students' and academicians' lives, is one of four language skills and it serves as a tool for an individual to express his thoughts and ideas and to achieve his objective. Besides, it is a productive skill having an aim to deliver the information to the audience in a written form as a formal piece of writing. Therefore it is considered as the most difficult language skill to master in the sense that some rules should be applied while writing such as grammar rules, correct speling, format of the essay, coherence – cohesion – unity in the essay as well as in paragraphs, use of upper-intermediate or advanced level of English and so on.

It is obvious that writing skill is of great importance in terms of expressing one's ideas, feelings and thoughts as well as other language skills and it should be taught in elementary school as a basic course whose aim is providing students a chance

to think critically. Despite its significance for students at every level of education and academicians at universities, far less time and effort have been spent studying the specific problems of writing skills so it could not get the value it deserved. Yet, one can see that few articles regarding writing skills are available when literature is viewed in Turkey. Research on writing has been neglected because the focus was on reading skills while teaching English. On the other hand academic research teams have recently realised the significance of writing and the need for a high quality written paper for the research area.

There is an explicit need to improve writing skills of today's youth and even children learning English at schools absolutely. The emphasis is on reading skills while teaching English at secondary schools whereas the emphasis is on multiple choice questions regarding university entrance exam for students with the aim of studying at an ELT or ELL departments at universities in our country. Even in the academic world it is a serious problem to be able to write an article in English for academicians if they have not been exposed to the nature of English language before. Although it is approved that writing is of great importance, the research on literacy of language skills have an emphasis on reading only. (Coker & Lewis, 2008)

Among ELL students there has been a perception that they are not good at writing as they have practised reading more and handled with multiple choice questions for the exams until now. It often receives less attention than other language skills and it is not easy to compensate the deficiency of writing skills in a short span of time. Without pushing reading and other skills into the background in terms of language development, writing literacy should be encouraged by the teachers at schools in early stages of learning English language and by the instructors at universities. In this respect research efforts on academic writing should meet the needs of students and academicians in the sense of improving their academic writing and enhance their perspectives on writing as well.

Since literature courses are predominant in English Language and Literature Department curriculum and students' performances for the courses are assessed mainly in the form of writing an essay, the existence of the problems encountered in this process necessitates the production of further research findings related to the topic. In this context, some of the psychological, linguistic and cognitive factors make the

writing process a complex and difficult manner of discourse both in native language and second language for many people. Writing skill is a critical skill that especially students of the English Language and Literature department must acquire, and it must be handled in a realistic way by the students and examined in its different dimensions. Finally, another significant reason for the current research is that the problems encountered by ELL students in the process of acquiring and using writing skills in undergraduate study and suggestions for these problems potentially hold a contextual qualification.

In these research to be done attention must be given to first determining the problems encountered while writing and causes of these problems. Then maintaining and supporting the writing skills of individuals and obtaining further skills in writing in different subject areas should should be targeted. It is believed that an increased focus on writing research will make it possible for people to retain their current jobs and for graduates to obtain a better job opportunity. Writing skills also enables people to reason, comment on a certain issue and it provides a cultural interaction with the topic to be handled. Writing awareness of students and academicians should also be searched in terms of improving their writing skill.

In this respect the researcher in this study preferred to do a research on the problems encountered by ELL students' in writing because of the reasons stated above. The researcher aimed to have a detailed information via the participant interviews regarding the issue and consequently propose solutions for the problems and suggestions for both students and ELL department –the instructors as well with regard to amendment of the ELL education at the department.

Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to observe the problems of ELL students that they encounter in the process of acquiring academic writing skill and the possible causes of them. It also aims to compose some suggestions for students to improve their writing skills. Since they come from an education system based on rote-learning and get used to handling multiple choice questions for university entrance exam, unfortunately they lack discernment and might not be able to command on a simple subject. It is just because of this reason that the researcher aimed to search for and analyze the situation since it is easy to realize that ELL students encounter some problems in the process of writing. They have difficulty in approaching the literary

texts critically, so they need to improve their understanding of studying a literary text and to practice reading more.

2. CHAPTERTWO: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological considerations and the research procedure of the study; research design and participants are described. Further details are given about the participant students. Furthermore, the role of the researcher as the participant observer is explained. Following this, the procedure of the application, the data collection and the instruments used to collect data are reported. The information about the procedure followed and data analysis techniques administered in the study are given.

2.1. Research Design

That many problems have been encountered in the process of acquiring writing skills both in Turkey and in many other countries has been discussed in conceptual and empirical studies with respect to acquiring academic writing skills in literature and some research findings have been gathered regarding these problems and how they can be solved. The writing skill is a skill that must be acquired in parallel with other language skills due to the fact that English language and literature students' main goal is realizing analytical thinking and interpretation. Because of the fact that literature courses are predominant in English Language and Literature Department curriculum and students' performances for the courses are assessed mainly in the form of writing an essay, the existence of the problems encountered in this process necessitates the production of further research findings related to the topic. In this context, some of the psychological, linguistic and cognitive factors, as Byrne (1988, p.4) puts it, make the writing process a complex and difficult manner of discourse both in native language and second language for many people. Writing skill is a critical skill that especially students of the English Language and Literature department must acquire and it must be handled in a realistic way by the students and examined in its different dimensions. Finally, another significant reason for the current research is that the problems encountered by ELL students in the process of acquiring and using writing skills in undergraduate study and suggestions for these problems potentially hold a contextual qualification.

2.1.1. Model of the Research

This research is built on qualitative research method and case study design. A case study in qualitative research is a research design based on the questions of 'how' and 'why', which allows an in-depth study of a phenomenon or event that the researcher can not control (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2011). In this study, according to the views of the participants who have failed either or both Writing Skills I and II courses at Karabuk University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, the aim of the in-depth study of the problems encountered in the process of acquiring writing skills at academic level and the probable solutions to these problems in their particular conditions and context has justified the use of case study design.

2.1.2. Qualitative Research as the Approach

A qualitative research takes place in natural settings where a person behaves or an event occurs normally. The focus is on the participants in this original setting. A qualitative research tries to figure out the questions "why" and "how" of the topic and provides careful and detailed descriptions of the survey whereas a quantitative research deals with numbers, measurements, frequencies and so on.

In qualitative research a natural picture of the event is tried to be presented and the researcher works intensively with few participants in order to comprehend and interpret the case in detail, how people approach their problems and explore their opinions, feelings, actions and dispositions. Because his aim is to obtain data from a small group and propose solutions to a certain problem, not to generalize the findings to a large population. Qualitative methods are supposed to involve detailed information about the participants and quotes taken from them about the research questions.

Qualitative research approaches are considered to be the most appropriate ways to figure out the experiences and opinions of the participants because the purpose of qualitative methodologies is to investigate and apprehend people's experiences in more prominent profundity (Brown, Stevens, Troiano, & Schneider, 2002). Creswell (2009) claims that a qualitative study endeavors to comprehend a human issue through drawing a big picture that contains a rich data obtained from the participants, that is why a qualitative research approach is adopted in this study since it will enable me to

conduct in-depth interviews with students to figure out the causes of writing problems of ELL students.

In this respect, the current study was designed as a qualitative research method and a case study focuses on Karabuk University, English Language and Literature department students who failed either or both of Writing Skills I and II courses and aims to propose solutions for the relevant context by revealing the problems encountered. Therefore, findings of this research may constitute a significant source of data for the efficient factors in the process of organizing, managing and conducting Writing Skills I and II courses and also other literature courses which require academic writing at the Department of English Language and Literature, at Karabuk University. However, although the research method and the research design are not appropriate to generalize the research findings, it can also be expected that the findings obtained constitute a reference source for subsequent studies on the subject.

2.2.   Participants

The participants of this research constitute a total of 10 students who failed either or both of Writing Skills I and II courses at Karabük University Faculty of Letters English Language and Literature Department. In determining the participants of the study, criterion sampling, maximum diversity and convenient sampling from purposeful sampling methods were used in a systematic and complementary way. Accordingly, a criterion was first developed by the researcher in order to determine the participants of the research. This criterion is having been studied at the Department of English Language and Literature at Karabük University, Faculty of Letters and to fail either or both of Writing Skills I and II courses.

The fact that a student who took these two basic courses masters the process of acquiring writing skill, writing rules and that he has experience in writing has created the justification of this criterion to inform more reliable and profound data to this investigation. Later, the maximum variation sampling mechanism has been tried to run considering that specified participants appropriate for these criteria are studying in different grades as much as possible. In this context, students from Karabük University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades, day time and   night education participated in this research.

Finally, by using convenient sampling method a total of 10 students; 3 from second year, 3 from third year and four from fourth year participated in this research.

2.2.1. Biographical Profiles of Participants

The information presented in this part was taken from the data the participants provided during the interviews and it will include information about the participants' sex, age, graduation high school, experience in learning English, grade-point average at the department and their target profession. In order to protect their identities pseudonyms will be used while stating the biographical characteristics of the participants.

Five of the participants are male and five of them are female.

When their age is taken into consideration; Sedat, Tarık and Berkay are 24 years old; Sezin, Kübra and Anıl 23; Elif 25; Gözde 21; Derya and Harun 22 years old.

It will be significant to look through the high schools from which the participants graduated in terms of evaluating the findings of the present resesearch. Sedat (İzmir), Elif (Mersin), Harun (Urfa), Kübra (İstanbul), Derya (Manisa), Berkay (İstanbul), and Anıl (İzmir) graduated from a regular high school in their hometowns. So they did not have a preparatory year in which they could learn English deeply. Sezin (Tokat) graduated from a vocational high school and also she did not have a preparatory year as well. Consequently they had been learning English for four years before beginning their university education.

Tarık (Amasya) and Gözde (İstanbul), graduated from Anatolian highschool which has an intensive English teaching program. So they had been learning English for five years before beginning their university education.

In the present research carried out at Karabuk University in Karabuk, Turkey, the participants are undergraduate students of ELL department. In addition, after taking the central University Examination all ELL students had one year prep-class prior to their education in the department. Then when they begin their undergraduate studies in ELL department, the students are engaged in intensive practice of reading and writing for their departmental courses.

It would be meaningful to consider the importance of teaching English language as a foreign language in many universites in Turkey. These universities have set a one - year English preparatory class in which prep students are taught the basic language skills of English language. The aim is to attain or improve the students' English language level to intermediate level to proceed with their accepted departments.

However, the present study is interested in the writing skill which is the primary skill for English Literature students. In this sense they are supposed to have a good knowledge of writing skill so as to put their thoughts and ideas about literary topics on paper and express themselves to their instructors. One would wish that each 10 students had prep class and intensive English teaching program at high school and had an absolute knowledge of writing skills.

In this respect Tarık and Gözde stated that they were lucky to attend an Anatolian high school and have one year preparatory class plus a rich content in terms of English language teaching at high school. That made it easy for them to get accustomed to the frequent use of English at the department, and mostly spoken English, as can be seen in excerpt 1.

 (Excerpt 1);

"In our prep classes we spoke always in English. We had experienced English teachers and also one native speaker at high school. We had lots of opportunities to speak and write, we did lots of practices. So I felt confident when I began ELL department." (Tarık, Interview Transcript, p. 2)

However, the other participants were not as lucky as Tarık and Gözde because they were not offered a prep class and a qualified English language teaching program during their high school years. They did not have sufficient knowledge of English language when they started univeristy. As a result it was so hard for them to handle with literary courses and native speaker lecturers at first. They stated that they even thought to quit university.

 (Excerpt 2);

"When I first attended Introduction to English Literature class, I felt like a fish out of water. The professor was speaking English all the time. I could not understand anything. He assigned reading a novel to us for the next class, I read but I looked up the dictionary for most of the words and it made me disappointed. I thought that I would not finish the department and could not be a teacher." (Harun, Interview Transcript, p. 1)

Considering their profession preferences after graduation; Sedat, Sezin, Elif, Kübra, Derya and Anıl would like to be an English teacher at a secondary or highschool whereas Tarık, Gözde, Harun and Berkay want to be an academician at a university, English Language and Literature department.

Students were also asked about their current grade point average out of 4 at the department during the interview. Sedat has 2.75, Sezin 2.80, Tarık 2.73, Elif 3.80, Gözde 3.00, Harun 2.60, Kübra 3.00, Derya 2.58, Berkay 2.90 and Anıl has 2.80 grade point average out of 4 at the department at the time of the interview.

2.3. Data Collection

Face to face communication was established with the study group to participate in the research. In pre-interviews, preliminary information related to the purpose of the research was presented to the participants and they were informed that the researcher would like to interview them at a place and time of mutually determined in case of volunteering. Before starting the interviews with the participants, the purpose of the interview was explained to the participants in more detail this time and it was declared that they will be interviewed voluntarily, that they will be able to end the interview whenever they want, and that if allowed the researcher would like to receive audio record of the interview in order to prevent data loss. All of the participants allowed audio record of their interview. For this reason, all of the interviews were audio-recorded. In addition, there are some ethical principles to be followed in a qualitative research (Creswell,2007). In this respect, it is expected that the participants in the current study would be free to participate in the study and decide on their own. In addition, as stated above, permission was obtained from the participants in audio recordings of the interviews, and it was stated that the names of the participants would be hidden during the reporting of research findings and the results of the research

could be delivered to them if they liked. Each participant was interviewed twice, and was expected to respond to the questions in general without being asked the probe questions in the first interview. In the second interview, each participant was asked to answer the probe questions of each question respectively. The researcher asked the same questions in the same order to all the participants in the course of the interviews, unless they had already given answers to any questions that had not been asked yet. Additional questions were asked to some of the participants, sometimes, to clarify or expand an issue. Each interview lasted between 50 to 100 minutes and the interviewees were not interrupted during the interview.

2.3.1. Data Collection Procedure

A four-step process was followed to prepare the interview form used to collect data in this survey. According to this, the researcher first made a literature review and searched the previous studies related to the topic. A draft interview form was then prepared by the researcher, taking into account the objectives of the current research.

In the second phase, the prepared draft form was presented to the views of two professors; one is an expert in the field of assessment and evaluation in education and other in the field of educational administration. Some changes were made on the form according to the opinions of the professors who examined the form before.

Then, in the third phase, in an attempt to avoid any prospective misunderstanding or ambiguity during the interviews with the participants, a pilot study of the interview was conducted to three students who are currently studying at Karabuk University, Faculty of Letters department of English Language and Literature and not included in the original participant group of the study and they were asked to express their opinion on the interview form. The pilot interview lasted for about 70 minutes. Some changes on the interview form were made based on this pilot study.

In the fourth and last phase, the interview form was presented to a professor from the department of Turkish Language and Literature and thus the final form of the interview was achieved.

2.3.2. Data Collection Tools

In this research, a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher was used in order to collect data depending on body of literature and expert opinions. There are five questions regarding the process of acquiring writing skills in the interview form. Hereunder, participants were asked what kind of problems they encounter while writing, what the causes for these problems are, what their suggestions to these problems are, what students should do to improve their writing skills, and how writing skills course should be taught. In addition, it is recommended to create probe questions in order to make the interview more appropriate for a profound data collection and for better understanding of questions by the participants (Glesne, 2012). In this respect, probe questions were added to the end of each question to provide a better understanding of the problem by the participants. For example, probe questions were designed for the first question regarding the problems students encounter in the process of acquiring writing skills; the problems, (1) in paragraph writing, (2) in essay writing and (3) in academic writing.

2.3.3. Interview as the Main Data Collection Method

Since interviewing the participants provide a detailed information about their feelings and the perspectives of the world they live in, it is suitable for this research to conduct interviews. One cannot observe the students' perceptions about academic writing directly, therefore conducting interviews makes it possible for the researcher to ask questions and obtain detailed information about the subject to be investigated.

The interviewer will be able to guide the discussion in a semi-structured qualitative interview in order to make the participants provide detailed information in their statements for the research questions. When other methods are considered, the result of a semi-structured qualitative interview is more reliable as the detailed data are received in this process so the researcher has the opportunity to have a sound base for his study.

A semi-structured interview was used in this study. In planning this research, following steps suggested by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) were followed to conduct semi-structured interview, which are thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying, and reporting. First, the purpose of the study was

determined and then interview questions that will clear up the problems encountered in academic writing were created in advance to be posed to the participants taking the issue of plagiarism into account. After interviewing the participants, the audio – recordings of the interviews were transcribed. Finally, the findings of the current study were based on rational results and reported in the following chapters of this study. The interview questions are available in Appendix B and a sample interview transcript with one of the participants is available in Appendix C.

2.3.4. Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, there are four basic criteria to establish validity and reliability; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln ve Guba, 1985). Credibility is, in its most general sense, related to the fact that the research reflects the facts. There are some methods that can be applied to ensure credibility as a concept that refers to internal validity of the research. In order to ensure internal validity of this study the researcher made benefit of long-term interviews and participant confirmations. In this respect, the researcher made an effort to gather the most detailed data possible by means of making in-depth interview of the participants. Attempts were made to create an environment where the participants could feel comfortable during the interview; they were asked to focus only on the research questions, noting that there is no need to mention about any special names during the interview in line with the ethical principles. At the same time, that the participants took Writing Skills I and Writing Skills II courses before enabled them to feel more comfortable during the interview and to make a deep evaluation about the process. The other method used to ensure internal validity in this study is the participant confirmation. In this context, each participant interview was audio-recorded and then transcribed in detail. In addition, the content of the interview was presented to each participant (face to face or via e-mail). They were asked to express their views related to the content and to indicate if there are any points they want to add or omit.

Transferability, as a relevant subject to the generalization of the findings of a study, is a controversial issue in terms of qualitative research. Although it is generally accepted in the literature that qualitative research is not in the effort to produce generalizable results, it is understood that the transferability of qualitative research is seen as a detailed explanation of the whole research process to the reader.

(Lincoln&Guba, 1985; Miles&Huberman, 1994; Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2011). Detailed description and purposeful sampling methods were used in the current research to ensure transferability. In this context, every phase of the research was described in detail and all the implementations carried out to the reader were presented in full detail and clarity. Also, in the selection of the study group, criterion sampling, maximum variation sampling and convenience sampling methods were used together in a consecutive order and systematically. In this way, the most detailed data on the research problem was collected.

An independent researcher method was used to ensure dependability in this study. (Yıldırım ve Şimşek, 2011). Accordingly, an expert in educational administration and inspection who is engaged in studies on similar topics and not included in the research group was asked to examine the final work as a whole and also whether there is a logical relationship between the problem status of the study, literature review, research method and design, findings and results of the research. As a result of the expert's examination the study maintains a coherent structure as a whole. Finally, the expert who examined the dependability of the research was presented the raw data of the research and the themes and codes generated on the raw data and then he was asked to check the themes and codes obtained from the raw data. As a result of the examination, it was observed that the evaluations of the researcher and the expert were compatible with each other.

Considering that full details of the data should be made available by the researcher so as to base the researcher's claim, the researcher provided many quotes and excerpts from the participants' interview to achieve confirmability during the conversation about writing problems of ELL students. However participants stated that they will be more comfortable when they use Turkish language while talking; but those excerpts were written in English in this study.

2.3.5. Researcher's Role

So as to serve to the aim of the qualitative research that is obtaining naturalistic data from the interviews and audio-recordings, the researcher acted as a "participant observer" in this study. Participant observation is a kind of strategy in which

observation and direct participation and analysis of the documents are combined. The researcher gains the data from the participant directly as a first-hand information.

In the current study, the researcher was available and included in the whole data collection process. The students, as the participants of this research, were ELL students who attended Writing Skills I-II courses in the first year and they are sincere, objective and helpful. In the sense of gaining reliable data from the participant interviews, it is important to build trust between the participants and the observer. All of the participants were available in the office on time for the interview and they helped the researcher sincerely as they were the owners of this study. This was due to the relationship between the researcher and the participants. The researcher made an effort to ask open-ended questions in the interviews and also did not imply herown opinions regarding any issue during the interview.

Finally, the researcher observed that her expectations in relation with the results from the interview data were the same with that of before conducting the interviews for all the interviewees.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data gathered in this research was analyzed using descriptive analysis and content analysis methods. Descriptive analysis and content analysis are the most commonly used data analysis methods in social science. (Büyüköztürk, Kılıç-Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz ve Demirel, 2010). Content analysis is a kind of technique and it is used to analyze the data obtained in a qualitative research. Coding, clustering and searching for themes are included in content analysis. This means the identification and labelling of the texts by keeping the relations between the parts. In this research, theme and codes were achieved via content analysis. Furthermore, participants' statements were quoted directly in proper places to support and touch on the interesting and different points in the findings. The participants were represented by "P" abbreviation and numbers in data analysis and direct quotes.

It is known that Qualitative Data Analysis is a process in which obtained data in the form of statement or explanation are comprehended and interpreted. In the current study, all the audio - recordings of the participants' interview were transcribed by the researcher by listening again and again. In addition the transcriptions were

controlled by another colleague by listening to the audio - recordings once more in order to prevent the loss of data. After transcribing the recordings, the data obtained were coded by the researcher and a colleague by highlighting the statements with similar topics. And then while coding they chose some representational phrases among those highlighted sentences. Then they clustered these codes for the purpose of identifying the relevant information effectively. The cited quotes in this thesis are verbatim as uttered by the participants and transcribed from the recordings.

3. CHAPTER THREE: Findings and Discussion

The focus of the following chapter is on the interpretation of the data collected through a qualitative research design via audio-recordings obtained from the participant interviews. The oral data that were gathered from the student interviews will be analyzed using content and descriptive analysis conducted so as to specify emergent patterns and themes relevant to the present study. This chapter ends with a discussion part referring to the findings of each research question in detail.

As a result of content analysis and descriptive analysis based on the research data, the findings of the study were gathered under five basic themes. These are "the problems encountered by ELL students in the process of acquiring writing skill", "the reasons of these problems" and "suggestions for these problems", "methods/strategies to improve their writing skills" and "how to teach writing course". When analyzing the data, the opinions expressed by the participants regarding each question were combined using codings and the relationship among the themes which were created based on codings was reported using visuals. The codings set for each theme were presented by quoting from the response of the participants. In the excerpts, the codings belonging to the participants (P.3- P.8 etc.) were used. Each section corresponds to research questions respectively.

3.1. Findings of Research Question 1;What are the most common types of problems ELL students face in writing?

The views of the participants on the "problems ELL students encounter while writing" and their frequency of expression are presented in Figure 1.
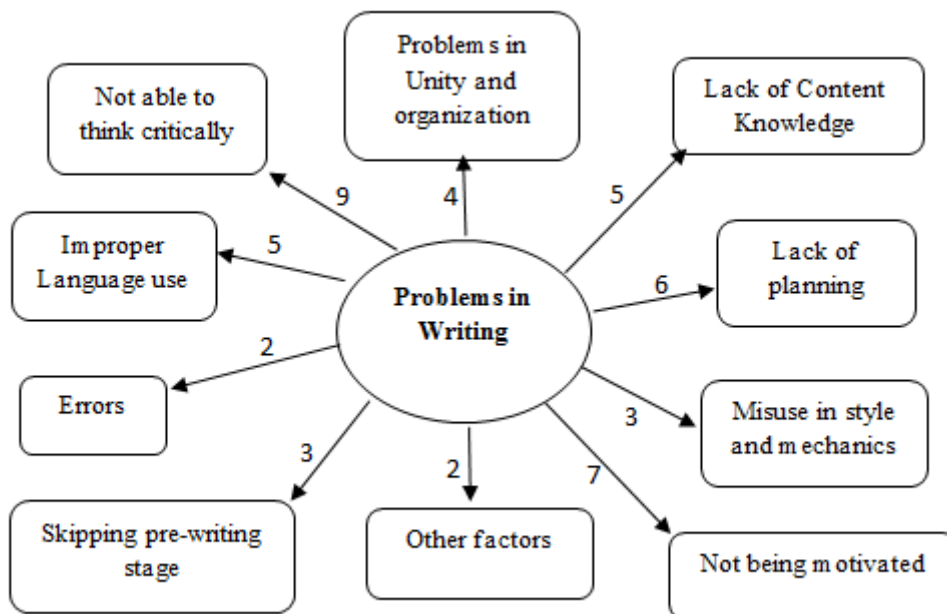
Figure 1. *Participants' views on the problems ELL students encounter while writing and frequency of expression.*

In Figure 1, participants' views on the problems ELL students encounter while writing are presented under 10 headings as; "not being able to think critically", "not being motivated", "lack of planning", "lack of content knowledge", "improper language use", "problems in unity and organization", "skipping pre-writing stage", "errors", "misuse in style and mechanics" and "other factors".

Not being able to think critically. A clear majority of the participants noted that they are not able to think critically about the topic in the process of writing. (f=10). It is clarified by the statements of the participants as;

"I think this situation stems from not reading enough and I'm not a social person, I don't like talking much. When there is no information interchange during the conversation, one can not improve his ability to comment. Therefore I don't have the ability to comment on something simply. Also I sometimes misunderstand the instruction. For example I'm not able to discriminate "cause" and "effect" while writing, it confuses my mind. "(P, 1) and "There is an idiom that refers to one's success in the exam among my friends; you wrote blank or meaningful? If l write both the requested information and comment on the topic, it means the exam paper is meaningful; but if I discuss the required information only and do not make an analysis

on the topic, that means writing a blank paper unfortunately. I usually skip brainstorming and convey the information directly most of the time. I fear that I will not be able to finish it on time"(P. 5) and "I think I can not generate ideas sometimes even if I read about the topic. I cannot connect my bodies to the introduction. Therefore, I fall into repetition frequently while writing; so my paper lacks logical explanations of the topic. I can not create a literary text; it seems like an essay in which the information were given in a sequence." (P,9).

Other students stated their opinions about not being able to think critically as follows;

"Sometimes, even though I want to think in a different way to speak my mind clearly, I stuck on one idea and it covers my mind. In this situation, I try to do brainstorming and get other ideas from my friends. It actually helps me to be in each side of the debate so that I can analyze the problems by grasping reasonable relations between the concepts. I generally skip referring to the senses, I realise it when I finish; so it is impossible to turn back and add sensual statements on my paper. " (P, 7) and "Not to think critically is the most difficult problem we come across. We generally cannot criticize given instructions, and extend our ideas while writing. I think that we are just interested in our own ideas, we do not care of others statements or considering the reader while writing. Because we should include the reader in our writing. Point of view is important; however, we are always connected to own ideas. We need to improve our horizon by reading articles, books, magazines etc. We need to understand complex statements." (P, 6) and "When I cannot focus on the topic that I write about, I cannot think critically. I also need to know everything about my topic with all deeply detailed to think and write critically. A student should use proper reporting verbs in his essay for example or avoid generalization while writing. These are a part of critical thinking. However, if I don't have enough background knowledge about the topic, I cannot realize critical thinking during writing process. " (P, 4).

It can be understood from these expressions that they do not read enough to write a proper essay, they don't focus on the topic carefully and they have the fear of not finishing on time, so participants have difficulty in thinking critically and being able to handle a topic with a critical perspective in the process of writing.

*Not being motivated.*Most of the participants stated that the secondary important problem students encounter in the process of acquiring writing skills is that they are not motivated enough while writing an essay. The sample statements of the interviewed students are stated below;

"I sometimes drift away from the topic while writing. I think it stems from lack of concentration. For example, somebody coughs or the teacher gives unnecessary information in the middle of an exam so I am easily distracted."(P,10) and "While I am trying to write about the topic in detail, I realise that I get off the main idea. At the same time, we are trying to apply the rules of essay writing. I easily lose my concentration.'' (P, 2).

Other students' opinions about not being motivated are as follows;

"I generally have a lack of motivation when I feel uncomfortable about subjects I'm writing on in addition to environmental factors. My imperfect knowledge leads babbling and then I'm at a loss. This is a time of having troublesome for me, and it gets easier to be distracted." (P, 4) and "Actually in writing exams, we cannot be prepared enough. There are many factors related it. Being motivated calls for more energy and it depends on your self-confidence. If I do not feel good in the exam, I cannot think healthy and this reflects on my paper. My statements cannot make a bridge between each other. Self-confidence is also important, according to me if a student is capable of reading, speaking, listening, and writing, s/he is always ready to write." (P,6) and "Sometimes the topic I write about can be boring to me, so in this case I cannot be motivated to write. Also time limit has a great effect on me…" (P,5)

According to these statements it can be noted that the participants feel demotivated most of the time and they are easily distracted by the external factors.

Lack of planning. Some of the participants emphasized that they have problems in planning their essay and it challenges them at the end of the writing process. The participants expressedtheir ideas on this issue as;

"I skip brainstorming most of the time. I don't want to waste time, I would like to go on writing. I don't actually have time pressure. I complete my essay in time mostly, however, I am always afraid that time won't be enough "(P.5) and "Most of

the time I start writing shortly after I choose the topic. I plan the ideas that I will discuss in my mind. I do not make an outline. I think I will lose time. Since I do not plan at beginning, I cannot come to a conclusion. Even if I reach the final, after the half, it turnes out to be a verbiage." (P.2)

Students' further opinions about lack of planning are as follows;

"It takes time to create a writing plan and I'm afraid of losing that time by making a writing plan. I dont have enough time to give planning some space... Normally a writer expected to spend his 15 minutes in brainstorming yet this is nothing but a impossible expectation from students when they are forced to write 2 essay in 75 minute. 30 minute of this writing will be spending just for "thinking". I always force myself to think that I figure something out." (P, 8) and "A good plan means a good draft. It shows the way how to organise my paragraphs and my topics, however, gathering each piece of my ideas and connecting them together is also a struggle. When I go back to understand what is missing, I come across with ideas still waiting for implementation in paragraphs." (P, 4).

It is inferred from these statements that one of the problems students face in the process of acquiring writing skills is that they - on purpose - skip planning which is one of the most important steps to be fulfilled before starting essay writing.

Lack of content knowledge. Some of the participants consider lack of content knowledge as a problem, especially in academic writing in the process of acquiring writing skills. The participants told their experiences exactly with the following words;

"Sometimes we can not access the sources related to the topic via the internet or in the libraries. So we experience difficulties in finding sufficient content knowledge for the topic to write. Then we tend to plagiarize or we make many definitions and limited comments ." (P,1) and "Sometimes I do not think too much, I write the main ideas right away. I think I can extend the topic and come to a conclusion. I write two sentences then I realise that I don't have more ideas to write about the topic in my mind. Later, I try to change the main ideas, but then I realise that very little time is left." (P, 8).

Moreover, other students stated their opinions about lack of content knowledge as follows;

"I usually read summaries instead of full content. It gives me more time to comprehend and process my writing. This causes lack of information and also mistakes in writing."   (P, 2) and "One should have a fund of knowledge for creatively writing. When I assume my in-class performance, time limit and course facilities hinder me so much. The Internet is full of data, yet we are banned to access, I want to utilise from the library of my university, yet I come across with modest issues, lack of books in the fields. When the road to knowledge becomes difficult, it's hard to write in a short time." (P, 7) and "Not having enough knowledge about the topic is a crucial problem we face. If I have enough information about the given subject, I can write till the end of paper. When you have grasp of content knowledge, it is indispensable that you can show your writing skills in a great way." (P, 4).

From these expressions, it is understood that lack of content knowledge is one of the problems that the participants encounter in the process of acquiring writing skills, and that this situation leads students to insecurity in writing.

Improper language use.   The participants noted that another problem they encounter in the process of acquiring writing skills is the fact that they can not use English language properly. This problem is clarified by the participants' expressions as follows;

"I think I have insufficient vocabulary. To be more precise, I can not find the exact word to use. I write the simpler one instead of the proper one, therefore the sentence becomes also simple. When I think in Turkish, there are lots of words to use; but if it is to be expressed in English, I can not remember." (P, 10) and "I think in Turkish and find the exact words; but when it comes to writing in English, I can not. I think it is because of my insufficient vocabulary and lack of grammar. Also I love speaking English with my friends but while I am writing I cannot use daily language and this challenges me " (P, 5).

Other opinions about improper language use are as ;

"It is very difficult to find equivalent meaning in English while I'm thinking in Turkish therefore I'm facing problems in using English language often. When I try to use an academic language, I use vulgarity or another inappropriate language unconsciously or proverbs and idioms to express myself better. I repeat myself because I do not know that the use of this language is wrong. I also use collocations incorrectly because I do not see them as single blocks." (P, 3) and "We, students cannot use English language properly. Perhaps, daily language affects us while using advanced level of English language. We need to learn true usage of sentences, constructions, grammar rules, and words. However, according to me, the biggest problem related to improper language is thinking the source language (Turkish). This is the mistake we have always made. In order to correct this, we should read academic essays, books, and newspaper, there is no doubt that this process enables us to improve our writing skills." (P, 4) and "I always have hard times to find the right vocabulary for my writing. Because of the cultural differences it is hard to find the right words. When I start to think of my writing, I firstly think in Turkish then translate it to English." (P, 7)

These statements suggest that the participants do not have sufficient background in English language and that they can not express their thoughts and ideas sufficiently in academic writing.

Problems in unity and organization. Some of the participants mentioned that they have a problem in unity and organization during the acquisition of writing skill. The participants' views can be summarized as;

"First, I cannot write a coherent paragraph. We need to explain the topic clearly in a paragraph but when I try to add more ideas, it suddenly becomes a large volume of an essay. When I omit some of the ideas or statements, then my paper lacks the exact meaning of the topic. I become out of topic again while trying to make it better." (P,9). and " While I am writing a thesis statement, I compose simple sentences. I can not express the most crucial point in my essay. I do not think that my ideas are sufficient as a reply, it seems like it could be better. I can not be sure about my main ideas. It might be because I am not sure about the subject ." (P,8).

Other students stated their opinions about problems in unity and organization as follows;

"I rush in my writing. Because of rushing, even though I start my writing at a point somehow I rush and find a whole different statement in the conclusion. By the way, I sometimes want my writing to be heard fancy so I want to use cooler scientific or academical words and I lost my organization and unity at that point." (P, 3) and "Writing sentences is easy, but difficult to connect. It is necessary to switch between sentences, to explain cause and effect relation in a logical way, and each paragraph should support each other. Sometimes you cannot state an idea before another idea. That's why I give detailed information for every idea after that I notice I'm getting away from my subject actually. If you have poor organization and unity for your essay, you cannot connect statements each other. It is not important to write too much. For instance, when you create a great and clear topic sentence, you can easily write and progress. Moreover, everything following in the paragraph needs to be related to the topic sentence, this shows how a good essay you create. I always try to link the paragraphs each other and not to go out of topic but I find it so difficult to do" (P, 10) .

In these statements, it is inferred that they have difficulty in writing a coherent text while trying to convey what they know as an academic context while the participants are trying to write academic articles, and that they consider not being able to write a proper thesis statement as a problem and that this situation both makes the writing process challenging and reduces their self confidence.

Skipping Pre-writing Stage. Some of the participants stated that they intentionally skip planning their essay before writing, even if they would gain time in doing so. The participants' views on skipping pre-writing stage are as follows;

"Actually I don't plan my essay even in the exam, I directly start writing what comes into my mind at that time. While trying to write everything on my paper and hand it in to the teacher on time, I skip planning. I want to finish it immediately and give the paper to the teacher as soon as possible because of writing anxiety. Of course I do research and read sample essays, but I feel demotivated when I don't understand what I read and then I hesitate to read another one. So I only write my own sentences about the topic."(P.7)

In addition, students' further opinions about skipping pre-writing stage are as follows;

"I don't find it necessary to prepare before writring or writing drafts and totally waste of time. Why would I write something before I begin to write? Doesn't make sense to me. But it leads to fallure in writing actually."(P, 6) and "In my opinion, we neglect brainstorming or writing drafts before writing, but when I go back and read what I wrote I see every paragraph is the same and the hardest is falling into repetition in conclusion. Thus, I cannot find another way to describe my thoughts. I think in exams, we are generally anxious and want to finish writing as soon as possible since there is duration. However, it is essential pre-writing should be offered with the time necessary for a student to create a plan or develop an outline to organize materials for the final product." (P, 9).

It is inferred from these statements that participants' writing anxiety prevents them to do planning and that their lack of English language knowledge makes it hard to search for the topic as they can not grasp the main idea while reading.

Misuse in style and mechanics. Also, some of the participants stated that another problem they face while writing is that they do not have enough knowledge of style and mechanics to apply on their paper. The participants pointed out their opinions on the issue as;

"Plagiarism is a significant issue in writing process, but I do not pay much attention to the rules while writing, I often skip strict rules and go on writing, I do not care about them. Even if I write a reference list at the end of my paper, I'm skipping using parenthesis within the paragraph while referencing the author name, the year of publication and so on." (P, 3) and "… I think once I start writing I can make it continue. Then I realize that I wrote the same words over and over again. In addition with the worry of transferring my thoughts on the paper in time, I forget about using punctuation and capital letters while writing." (P, 8).

Another student stated her opinion about misuse in style and mechanics as follows;

"Punctuation marks are used to convey ideas and sentences clearly, therefore, I need to use them in place. Since my mother tongue is Turkish, I decide punctuation marks, emphasises and stresses according to my language which seriously confuses me in English." (P, 4).

In these statements, it is inferred that students are not aware of writing rules and they do not have either the knowledge of style and mechanics or they neglect enforcing these rules in the process of writing.

Errors. Some of the participants stated that they make simple mistakes in choosing the proper word while writing just because of writing anxiety and lack of attention. The participants expressed this situation as;

"...generally I can not remember longer words. I write them directly just as they are pronounced, I try to remember the correct form, but then it remains like as it is." (P.8) and "I usually confuse the usage of the articles; -a, -an, -the. For this reason I frequently open the grammar book and search for their use in English language. I don't care about the rules much in the exam but I feel the need to remember the rules while writing" (P.4)

From these statements it is observed that the participants are not able to use English language effectively because of not reading enough which causes them to make simple mistakes while writing in the process of acquiring writing skills.

Other factors. Finally, some of the participants also have other problems such as unclear meaning or handwriting, inability in forming compound sentences, not getting feedback and bad starting of the text. They stated that these problems affect the writing process and the motivation of students negatively. Participants indicated these problems as;

" Once we start the essay badly, it continues in the same way. Therefore it is necessary to start well. As I don't brainstorm I write introduction without thinking and then I realise that introduction is bad , it doesn't suit the rest of the sentences ″ (P. 1) and ̔Especially, they don't give our exam paper to check, don't show our mistakes. Class is crowded, so it requires petition to do it. I have never objected to my grade. Only one of our teachers helps us, the rest of teachers do not give feedback.″ (P. 9).

In these statements, it is inferred that students start the essay badly, they can not get feedback, so they can not correct their mistakes in the process of writing.

3.2.   Findings of Research Question 2; What are the causes of writing problems among ELL students?

The views of the participants on the "causes of ELL students' writing problems" and their frequency of expression are presented in Figure 2.
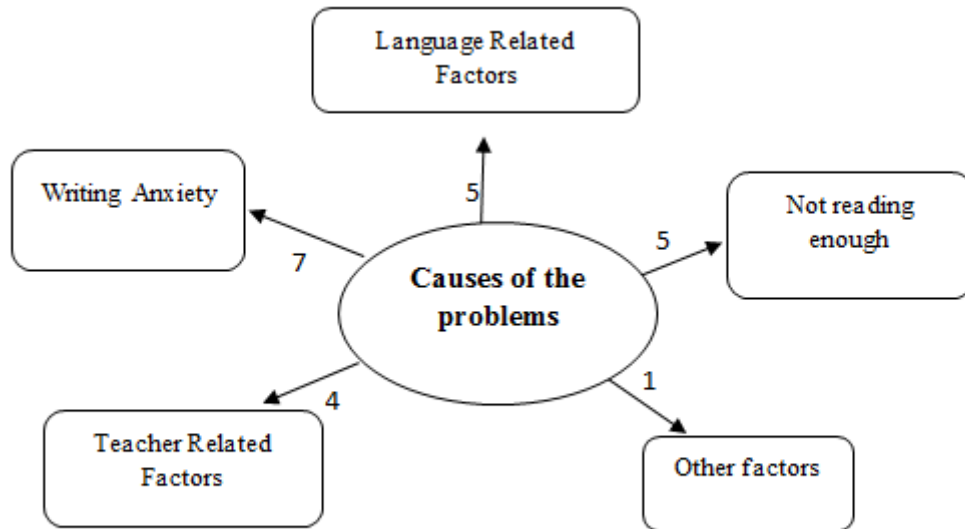

Figure 2. *Participants' views on the causes of ELL students' writing problems and frequency of expression.*

In Figure 2, participants' views on the causes of ELL students' writing problems are presented under 5 headings as; "writing anxiety", "not reading enough", "language related factors", "teacher related factors" and "other factors".

Writing anxiety. The majority of the participants expressed their opinion that the problems students encountered in the process of writing skill acquisition originate from lack of confidence and writing anxiety. The views of participants' on the issue of writing anxiety are given in the quotations below;

"We cannot write as well as the essays we have read before and this causes writing anxiety. Maybe our grammar is actually good enough to write but at the time of writing, we cannot remember the exact words and proper phrases. Hıım… so this creates the fear of being unsuccessful and causes anxiety."(P,10) and "All the external factors, even a momentary distraction makes me stop writing immediately, I am easily distracted… During the exam, how can I say, even the teacher standing next to me immediately makes me lose my attention.   This point should be taken into

consideration, teachers should not get closer to the students during the exams; especially writing exams. Once you are distracted and forget about the idea to be written, you cannot make up your mind again… just focus on writing." (P,4)

Other students expressed their opinions about writing anxiety as follows;

"Before writing I feel terrible, my stomach aches and my hair falls off on the writing paper. Noticing those reactions takes my writing anxiety to another level." (P, 8) and "I'm getting anxious when I have to write something because I know I'm having trouble in this area. Every new subject is a new nightmare. My another fear is that the assumption that my failure in writing will affect my lessons. It scares me to fall behind my friends, and after a while, it becomes a phobia." (P, 2) and "Anxiety might be a major problem for most students like me. While writing they can feel bad. It can be stressful. Even if they know how to write an essay, they cannot write since they are under pressure. I think level of anxiety also depends on person to person." (P, 5) and "My problem is to find the right vocabulary and my biggest afraid is to make sentences wrong and misunderstanable. These are the things that make me anxious." (P, 9) and "Most of the time I feel depressed so I do not want to write about the topic that I have to write. Because I have the fear of being criticized by the teachers and not meeting their expectations." (P, 6).

From these statements, it is inferred that students are anxious about various issues during writing and that they are concerned about not receiving a positive comment in general sense.

Not reading enough. Many of the participants indicated that some of the problems encountered in the process of acquiring writing skills are student related ones. The participants' statements about not reading enough are as follows;

"Teacher, I don't like reading, I don't spare time to read except coursebooks, because I don't like reading. I like writing more. It is a torture for me to read a book especially whose topic I don't like, I get bored. But as a result, it affects writing, therefore we can't write well." (P,5) and "I can't think analytically that is to say thinking critically. I don't have the ability to comment on something. Literature is a branch which requires commenting on a specific issue and thereby it's hard to adopt writing." (P, 1)

Moreover, students' opinions about not reading enough are as follows;

"We don't spend much time on reading, I generally read the summary of the books, not themselves. Reading enriches vocabulary and makes students familiar with words. Not reading enough creates failure in use of words." (P, 4) and "Reading means having a knowledge and looking at things from a wide angle, which I cannot do either. As I do not read the book, I do not come across with new words to use them. Reading books also allows us to use language appropriately that might be the reason why I struggle with the use of language." (P, 7) and "Another important problem we encounter is paying no mind to reading. When I read articles or books, I can write in an accurate way. I can imitate structures on articles I have read. So it is essential that we need to read so much if we want a good essay." (P, 2).

It is understood from these statements that participants have the problem of not reading enough, -unfortunately on purpose- and as a reasult not thinking analytically in writing process.

Language Related Factors. Most of the participants stated that the vast majority of the problems encountered in the process of acquiring writing skills arise from lack of grammar. The statement of the participants are as follows;

"I think we don't practice writing, we don't spare time for it. Because I think the more you practice the better you are. At least you can determine what to use and where on your papers. If you do practice in a certain time interval, it also contributes to your success in the exam which means you have solved the biggest problem in terms of time management.'' (P,8) and "In my opinion, lack of grammar knowledge is one of the biggest problems in writing because you both disrupt the proper flow of the text and can't express your thoughts properly. You can't use the exact conjunction you need to use when you lack grammar knowledge. This causes both not writing a coherent essay and lack of information given in the text.''(P,9).

Students' further opinions about use of language are as follows;

"My mother language comes from a different language family. Sentence structure and cultural differences challenge me while writing." (P,6) and "Sometimes not using English language properly may cause some problems in writing. It is

indispensable that we can write by thinking Turkish. This may lead to some problems in essays. We cannot reflect our thoughts easily in our minds due to the difficulties of English language." (P,10) and "My english level is sometimes not enough to handle the writing, so it makes my essays to look unprofessional." (P,3) and "Thinking in Turkish, my mother tongue, I get difficulty to write, it is not the same as thinking and writing in English." (P,4).

From these statements, it is understood that the participants' problems in the process of acquiring writing skill are originated from lack of grammar knowledge and not practicing writing enough.

Teacher related factors. Some of the participants stated that some of the problems encountered in the process of acquiring writing skill are caused by the teacher. The views of participant' on this issue are given in the quotations below;

" The teachers cannot check our papers individually. Maybe, it is because the class is crowded, but that leads us not to correct our mistakes. We keep making the same mistakes.'' (P,7) and "Teachers' methodology is very important, what they teach, I mean, what the teacher's strategy is. It is something which captivates the whole class, sometimes it may cause dislike. The teacher must have various strategies for one hour course, in order not to make the students get bored.'' (P,3).

Other students' opinions about teacher related factors are as follows;

"Every teacher has his own approach and some might just assign students without feedbacks. This prevents students to see their mistakes and improve their writing techniques." (P,8) and "From entering the class with a smile to voice tone instructors use every detail has an impact on students. Instructor's energy affects the student positively or negatively. Once I timidly asked a question I expect my instructor to reply me sincerely." (P,5) and "Every teacher have their own wishes from their students. I have to know what my teacher wants me to write and point about. I am afraid my essays do not sound good for them. In every course teachers come out with a new topic so that I cannot focus on new ideas easily." (P,4).

With reference to these statements, it is inferred that teachers cannot devote time to their students and they don't apply enough strategies to apply in the class which appeal to everyone are among the reasons of writing problems.

Other factors. Some of the participants pointed out that the problems students face in the process of acquiring writing skills stem from lack of material. It is clarified by the participant's view as;

"Teacher, we can not always access online or find hardcopy materials useful for our essays. Our professors, on purpose, assign us to write about a topic which is hard to find the related information about it both from the library and internet so that we will not copy and paste the statements from the sources; but they ignore that if we make a copy paste assignment, we will be punished by getting low marks after all. … they do it intentionally I think." (P, 10)

From these statements, it is noted that the students are not able to reach the necessary source regarding the topic they write all the time in the process of acquiring writing skills.

3.3. Findings of Research Question 3; What are ELL students' suggestions to overcome writing problems?

The views of the participants on the "suggestions to overcome writing problems" and their frequency of expression are presented in Figure 3.
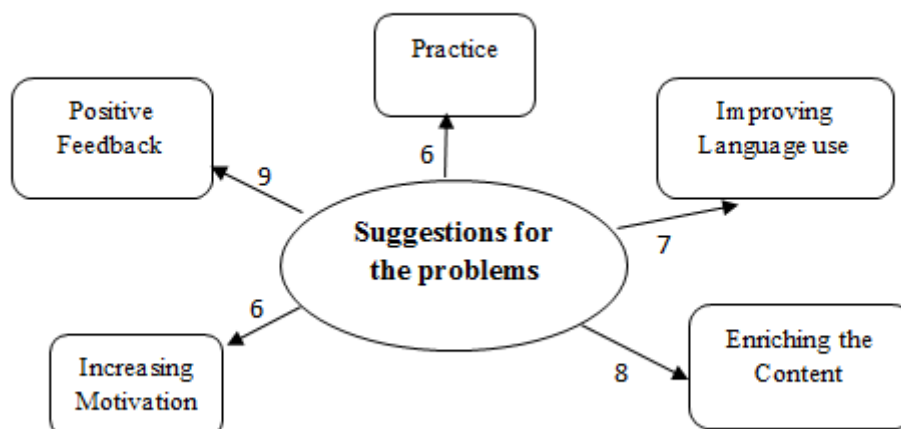
Figure 3. *Participants' views onthe suggestions to overcome writing problems and frequency of expression.*

In Figure 3, participants' views onthe suggestions to overcome writing problems are presented under 5 headings as; "positive feedback", "enriching the content", " improving language use", "practice" and "increasing motivation ".

Positive Feedback. Majority of the participants indicated that getting feedback for the paper students write will be effective for solving the problems faced during the acquisition of writing skill. The views of the participants on positive feedback are stated as;

"Actually, teachers should give positive feedback. Of course, students need to see their strong and weak points, the task they can not do, but teacher should do that without discouraging the students. Feedback should be both positive and espacially individual ."(P, 5) and "Our teachers should give us feedback. Positive feedback given to the students increases students' tendency to write, hence they can write more. It contributes students' development in writing. At least, students become aware of the mistakes they have done. The biggest problem is misunderstanding the instruction … Giving feedback for the mistakes like content error or grammatical mistakes might prevent the repetition of the same mistakes." (P,7).

Other students expressed their opinions about positive feedback as follows;

"Feedback encourages students to write better and try harder it should be given to motivate students positively." (P, 9) and "One of the most courageous factor in my writing period is receiving positive attitudes form my friends and teachers. If they encouraged me for what I wrote I started to take pleasure from my achievement and I took pains of it. I realised that I reduce my mistakes and learned much of everyone in this way." (P, 2) and "It is clear that positive feedback has a great effect upon students. If teachers always follow you and say "You are going well." This is good for students and they will be encouraged and they can improve their writing skills without having obstacles. However, in many classes, there are so many students, and I see that teachers cannot follow the students this is the reason why students should follow teachers and they should ask them if the writing is good or not." (P, 6) and "Teachers sometimes make me think that all the effort that I suffer make wasn't just a waste of time. When they look carefully at my essay, it makes me motivated." (P, 4).

In these statements, it is pointed out that during the process of acquiring writing skills the feedback provided by the instructor gives a chance to the students to correct their mistakes, they realize their strengths, and it is also important for their ability to think critically.

Enriching the Content. Most of the participants stated that students should reinforce their brainstorming, their ideas and thoughts within the scope of content of their essays in the sense of suggestion to writing problems. Participants certified their opinions on this issue as follows;

"Students should search for the topic in detail in order to gain insight and to be able to produce accurate ideas about the topic. They should read the articles written before about the given topic for the purpose of realizing what the author emphasized on, in what way he handled the topic and how he refered to other studies…They should read more and more to understand what an essay looks like." (P, 8) and "Doing brainstorming is significant while writing an essay. In general we do not want to spare time for brainstorming especially in the exams, however even for a few minutes we can plan our essay in our minds. We also should identify our strengths, what we can do and we can not do; if so, we will be encouraged to write more and we feel confidence in us." (P, 10) .

More opinions about enriching the content are as follows;

"One way to overcome writing problems is to make your paper rich in content. I may use statistics, interviews, journals, databases, reports, and libraries. Reading analysis helps to enlarge my topics to be convenient. Using data from journals by giving references, quoting and paraphrasing enriches my writing." (P, 5) and "Students should read various articles written about the related topic and then it becomes an accurate and rich paper. It can undoubtly help students improve their writing skills. But how ? I think teachers should show some examples of brainstorming, outline, or conclusion sentences before starting writing so students can easily think and write." (P, 4).

In these statements, participants emphasized the importance of doing research and collecting data before beginning writing an essay in terms of increasing productivity, enriching the content and their contribution to the exams in the process of acquiring writing skills.

Improving Language use. Most of the participants stated that they should be able to use the language effectively to transfer their ideas on the paper in the process of acquiring writing skill. Participants' views can be summarized as;

" Teacher, reading affects students' writing skill to a large extent because I think he that reads most knows the most. In my opinion, it is more permanent when we read a text rather than technological tools. It is more effective to touch the book directly and feel the book. Reading a lot develops vocabulary which will also reflect on his or her writing. For me, it will solve the problem of vocabulary deficiency at least.''(P,7) and "Teacher, I think students should study four language skills all in one because they complete each other. If he does speaking and reading also listening, his vocabulary will develop, he will have acquired the new words and his statements will be better. ''(P,2).

Other students expressed their opinions about improving language use as follows;

"Using different types of writing structures could help students improve their language use. For instance two different topic could include two different word group;

scientific and common." (P, 3) and "I do believe that if we do not communicate with native speakers or other English speakers, the language cannot penetrate our minds. Thus we must be able to connect English speakers to identify our mistakes in every part of our language skills such as writing, speaking and listening. Furthermore, once one's grammar lacks, complex and advanced sentences become impossible to be made." (P, 6) and "To improve one's language, he should improve his speaking, reading, and listening skills. When you improve these skills, you will feel that you can use the language in a proper way. For example, I read books and articles so that I can write grammatically well papers." (P, 5) and "When we write something we need to use advanced vocabulary to make it look Professional and formal or to make the reader believe that you know something about that topic. Reading, reading and reading…" (P, 4).

From these statements, it is inferred that doing reading will affect students' writing skill positively in the process of gaining writing skill and improving four language skills together will contribute to vocabulary acquisition a lot.

Practice. Some of the participants pointed out that providing a good writing requires a lot of language practice in the process of acquiring writing skills. The participants' words on practice are as follows;

"Writing a draft is very important in the sense of handing a good paper to the teacher, because if we show the first draft we wrote and want some help from him, we can correct our mistakes and don't repeat the same mistakes in our following writings." (P,5) and "Social writing can be useful for practicing. For instance, we have a whatsapp group account. You learn about people's culture, they learn about your culture. And also you learn how you should write. Spoken language and written language are different from each other. You can see the difference. You have a responsibility as a foreign language student. Hence, you are supposed to use the language properly. Therefore, you need to search for the topic to write." (P,1).

Further opinions about practicing are as follows;

"As students practice more they gain more experience in writing. Each time they write they can overcome their fear of writing process." (P,9) and "To use my ideas I should learn how to relate them technically in my paper, yet it is a long-term

problem. Only by exercising I may be able to develop myself like baby steps. I had miserable papers, yet since I write more often, I practise more and more, I have had advanced essays recently." (P, 7) and "Every lesson we can only write about one topic but all of my classmates cannot think properly about one topic, we need more than one topic that we can choose one or two. We need to lots of exercises." (P,4)

These statements clarify that doing plenty of pactice or writing a draft or several drafts in the process of writing are beneficial for students to correct their mistakes on the paper and social writing has some contributions for the students to write well.

Increasing Motivation. Some of the participants stated that their motivation should be on the maximum level to be able to write effectively on the process of gaining writing skills. The participants remarked as;

" A student should know both her good and weak points in writing. Because if we mention about problems encountered, students should know their weak points to correct; so they do not repeat them again or get over in this way." (P,5) and " Teacher, in my opinion in terms of enhancing the productivity, we should devote special time for writing. Students may think more effectively when they feel comfortable or they think the same things but the way you express will be better. Actually you think the same thing but you express it in a better way so you enrich the content of the topic more. You expand the topic you think." (P,8).

In addition, other students expressed their opinions about increasing motivation as follows;

"Students can be rewarded in order to motivate them into writing. Those rewards can be little things but must carry a motivating message." (P,6) and "I find my own reasons to be motivated. I award myself such as if I finish this essay I deserved to watch a movie or walk around the city. That's not all, sometimes I dream about the consequences of my duties and hang on to my job. Other students should do the same." (P,4) and "Motivation is really important for writing. We should feel imaginative. Moreover teachers should trust their students. When we are motivated to write, much better papers will come out. Students believe in themselves to be successful in

writing." (P,2) and "We may ask our friends to comment on our writing and this may give us a motivation to keep writing." (P,10).

From these expressions being comfortable about writing and the awareness of students' weak and strong points during the process of gaining writing skills affect this process possitively in terms of solution of the problems.

3.4. Findings of Research Question 4;What should students do to improve their writing skills?

The views of the participants on "how to improve writing skills" and their frequency of expression are presented in Figure 4.
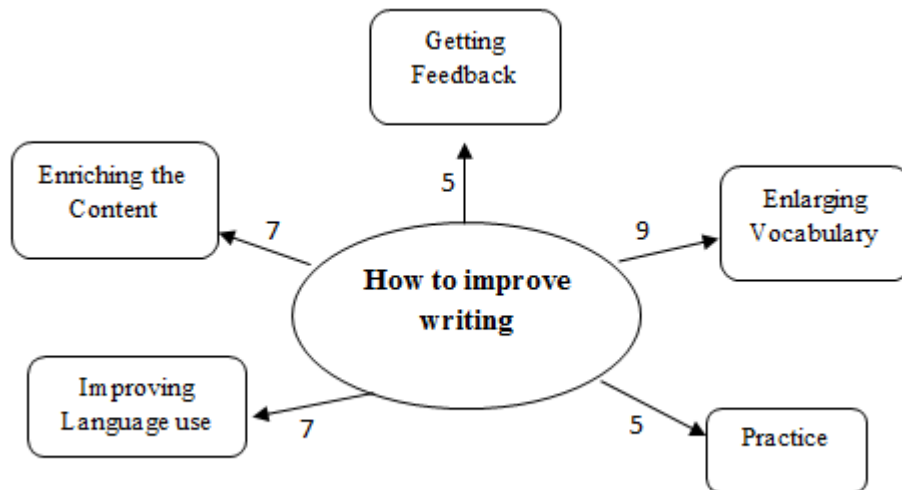

Figure 4. *Participants' views on how to improve writing skills and frequency of expression.*

In Figure 4, participants' views on how to improve writing skills are presented under 5 headings as; "enlarging vocabulary", "improving language use", "enriching content", "practice" and "getting feedback".

*Enlarging Vocabulary.*Many participants expressed their opinion that enlarging vocabulary is the primary way of improving their ability to write in the process of acquiring writing skills. Statement of the participants on enlarging vocabulary as;

" …My another suggestion is to improve our vocabulary in this situation. If we think that we are not at a proper language level, we should be able to develop our

vocabulary. Infact it is not only related to the level but also this is something that needs to be improved constantly. Everybody can do it, I mean improving their vocabulary.''(P,5) and "We need to enhance our vocabulary by doing extensive reading. They can do social writing or do speaking. They can look up the dictionary for the English meaning of the words commonly used in daily life. Actually there are lots of new words to learn. If I cannot remember the English meaning of a word, I look up my dictionary immediately.'' (P,1).

More opinions about enlarging vocabulary are available as;

"Keeping a vocab notebook is one of the best way enlarging vocabulary. Each time student sees a new word he should check the meaning and write it down to vocab notebook. "The palest ink is stronger than the sharpest memory "." (P,8) and "Having a rich vocabulary is a long activity which needed reputation. Rather than memorising words, using them in life would be better to preserve them in our minds. While running on an eye over dictionaries I encounter with various advanced words that I can use in my essays instead of easy words. Moreover, one way of learning a vocabulary is making connections with memories. I learned 'oath' while I was trying to express my brother's 'oath of enlistment'." (P,3) and "We need to know much more words as much as we can. To remember words is not easy. For me we should study and memorize 50 words we do not know as daily. Like YDS, TOEFL Word lists can help us enlarge our vocabulary." (P,7) and "As much as you improve your target language and read sample essays you can write more effective and better writing." (P,9) .

In these expressions, the participants expressed that students should do extensive reading primarily to improve their vocabulary in the process of acquiring writing skills and that doing social writing or speaking might be effective in this process.

Improving Language use. The majority of the participants stated that in the process of acquiring writing skills, students can develop their writing skills straight by being able to use the target language grammar effectively and therefore by doing a lot of reading. Here are their statements;

"We need to develop grammar in the target language first. Reading is the first thing to do so. Verbalising what you read and putting down on your paper is again one

of the significant step to follow. Just studying the grammar rule does not work, it is important to apply the rule you have learned while writing, so that reading, speaking and listening have a great contribution to this process ." (P,8) and "Certainly we should read sample articles teacher. Primarily we should do research to find out what article means, why it is written for, what type of article it is, what its content is, what I should benefit from and what type of resources the author uses. Accordingly, I need to determine what I should do during writing process." (P,7)

Further opinions about improving language use are as follows;

"Researching and analyzing previous articles, theses etc. might help gaining new skills in language use such as use of idioms and phrases." (P,2) and "I think that improving our language depends on speaking and reading. It is possible to have a great language use if you improve your speaking and reading skills." (P,5) and "Reading can improve your language. You may know the vocabulary but you cannot remember if you don't read frequently." (P,4).

From these statements, it is inferred that developing one's target language – especially grammar- hence doing reading has a primary role for the students in the process of acquiring writing skills and that reading sample articles will contribute greatly to this process.

Enriching the Content.   Most of the participants indicated that one way to improve students' writing skills is to enrich the content of the essay they write in the process of acquiring writing skills. The participants expressed their views as;

"I think they should make plan first and then write, because when you make a plan, both you provide a proper content and write a coherent text; also you can finish writing your essay and submit it on time." (P, 8) and " First of all the students should search for the topic from various sources and they should not depend on the course content only. Secondly, the students should make an outline for the topic. In doing so, the students plan their writing appropriate to the topic and can make a progress throughout this plan. It enables us to write a coherent essay without skipping any points to discuss and to progress quickly in generating ideas." (P, 7) .

Other opinions about enriching the content are as;

"Using different kind of word groups and research sources may help enrich the content. Variety of searches and resources enrich the content in every area and types of writing." (P, 2) and "I think teachers should show some examples of brainstorming, outline, or conclusion sentences before starting writing and some sample essays related to the current type; so students can easily think and write." (P, 5) and "After doing reading and lots of practice of writing you may begin to enrich you content but be careful not to make it confused." (P, 4).

From these statements, it is clear that the participants have an emphasis on the convenience of creating an outline, the importance of planning the essay before beginning to write in terms of providing a rich content and managing the time in the process of acquiring writing skills.

Practice. Some of the participants commented that frequent writing practice in the process of acquiring writing skills will greatly improve students' ability to write. This situation becomes clear with statement of the participants as;

"I keep a copy of the papers I wrote in the first grade. When I look back these papers, I can see how I wrote amateurishly. I realise my mistakes, what I need to improve, what I need to emphasize while writing. It may be considered as a feedback for a student."(P,1) and "Students have to practice more often because the more you practice, the more you learn how to write. You like it as you can do; you produce more as you love it. So, they should do more practice. Perhaps, it may be more encouraging for the students first to write in his native language and then to translate into English. Anyway, you should absolutely do practice." (P, 4).

Other students' opinions about doing practice are as follows;

"Making daily practice improves writing skills. For example student can summarize a BBC article everyday or regularly." (P,7) and   "For me, students should be given homework to do weekly, I mean essay writing. By doing their homework, they will also practice writing. So students can be prepared before the class and they are ready to write new essays." (P,6) and "Making writing practice can surely improve my writing skills. If I get practice about reading and summarizing, I believe that my writings would be better." (P,3).

In these expressions, it is stated that students should practice regularly and keep copies of their writings because it plays a significant role on their own development in the process of acquiring the writing skills and that practice has a positive effect on production of the ideas on the papers.

Getting Feedback. Some of the participants discussed that getting feedback in the process of acquiring writing skills has an important role in improving the writing skills. The views of participants on the issue of getting feedback are given in the quotations below;

" We should get feedback from our teachers either positive or negative to determine whether our ideas while or after the process of writing are appropriate to the topic or not. Getting fedback helps us to realise our mistakes, because when our mistakes are checked, they are handled critically. Sometimes although we make a mistake, we may think that we wrote well. "(P,2) and "Absolutely the students should get feedback. You could misunderstand the rules in writing. When you get feedback from one of your friends, it helps to correct it. When you get feedback from your teachers or your peers who are more successfull than you, you may write in a better way. It will be more effective when you get feedback from one of your peers rather than your teachers."(P,6).

More student opinions about getting feedback are as follows;

"Feed back provides students seeing their strengths and weaknesses. By the time they get feedback, students will understand their weaknesses and they will be able to improve their skills." (P,7) and "We may ask our friends to check our papers, yet this check should not be a quick fix. In our writing class, we make lots of mistakes and our instructors' feedback is insufficient on account of the crowd of class. If there was a chance to correct each student individually, it would be easier to describe or mistakes." (P,4) and "You need to get feedback from someone professional to know your faults. Otherwise you would keep doing them. In time you are getting accustomed to doing the same mistakes again and again if you aren't aware of your mistakes. And you should get feedback just after you finish writing your essay I think." (P,3) .

In these statements, it is pointed out that during the process of acquiring writing skills, getting feedback (peer or teacher) will make a great contribution to students'

writings and it will be beneficial for students to correct their mistakes on the paper and therefore it will enable them to think critically.

3.5. Findings of Research Question 5; What are the views of the participants in terms of how writing should be taught?

The views of the participants on "how writing should be taught" and their frequency of expression are presented in Figure 5.
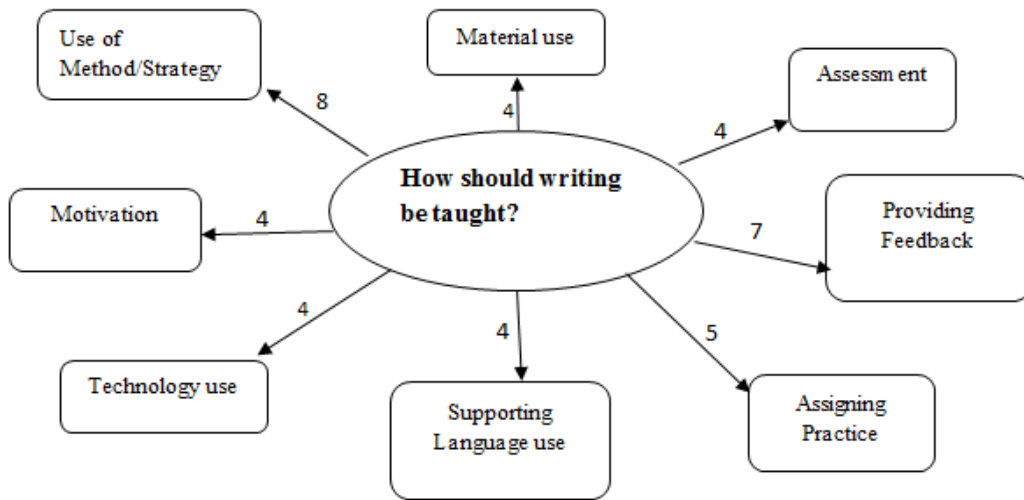

Figure 5. *Participants' views on how writing should be taught and frequency of expression.*

In Figure 5, participants' views on how writing should be taught are presented under 8 headings as; "use of method/strategy", "providing feedback", "assigning practice", "supporting language use", "motivation", "assessment", "material use" and "technology use".

Use of Method / Strategy. Majority of the participants suggested that different strategies should be applied together in one class in the process of acquiring writing skills. The participants' statements about use of method/strategy are as follows;

"Teacher, studying different strategies sometimes encourages students. Because when they choose one way to go, what they think becomes always the same, they are not able to interpret or express it in a different way. They write in the constant routine, always in the same way. Explain something, support it; explain something, support it…Studying different strategies is useful for them in terms of expanding the topic."

(P,6) and "Teacher, we did freewriting in class, actually it is very enjoyable, since it is not in the exam format, students like writing. While doing free writing, as we transmit our thoughts without thinking, to some extend we can reflect everything on our paper easily as is it not in the exam format. So it becomes as a preparation for the exams for us. I think it should be done frequently." (P,7).

Other students expressed their opinions about use of method/strategy as follows;

"Writing is taught at school, therefore, teachers should adopt a strategy for writing and give place to other methods. In my opinion, teaching writing should be a lecture at first, demonstrating paragraph patterns, students should produce free writing to observe their progress." (P,3) and "Teachers shouldn't follow one type of method in each class. They should support the students with various methods and strategies." (P,8) and "Use of the right method or strategy for each student from different types of learning styles is very important. Teacher's methodolgy should appeal to all students. I can learn more easily from one rather than the other methods for example." (P,5).

It is indicated that the implementation of different strategies in writing courses by the instructors has a great role on appealing and encouraging students to write and freewriting contributes to this process a lot.

Providing Feedback. A great majority of the participants stated that receiving feedback for their papers in the process of acquiring writing skills would make a great contribution to their improvement in writing. This implication becomes clear with the statement of the participants as;

"For instance, it is necessary the teachers show common writing mistakes in class actually so that students will not repeat the same mistakes for their following essays. Even when a student compares his articles written before and now, it will contribute to his awareness of his writing ability. Showing mistakes made on former papers is very important in the sense of not repeating the same mistakes on the following ones." (P,7) and "It is very important to give positive and individual feedback to the student. It would be better if we would give feedback to him individually… It will be helpful to encourage the students to write…"(P,3) .

More opinions about providing feedback are as follows;

"Teachers should give feedback to students to prove their reliability. A student wouldn't notice teachers support without feedbacks." (P,9) and "Teachers should give feedback to students carefully. Some of students cannot feel good about their writing. That's why teachers should be sensitive to the individual needs of the student. Moreover, as I mentioned one on one meeting should be indispensable for students." (P,6) and "Students cannot realise their faults without any feedback, so in order to improve their writing skills they need to get feedback." (P,5) and "If I take feedback whenever I need, it motivates me and I get prepared for the course fully and feel confident. If the teacher examines the written paper with his student together, it helps the student understand his mistakes more than ever." (P,10).

From these statements, it is inferred that discussing about common mistakes on previous writings has a positive impact on not repeating the same mistakes for the following ones and that it is important for the teachers to give feedback in individual sense in order to motivate the students to write.

Assigning Practice. Most of the participants indicated that lecturers should provide students writing practices apart from three-hour course period as an extra study in the process of acquiring writing skills. The participants' expressions as follows made it clear to understand;

"The lecturers should assign writing practices to the students as homework. For example, I can write better when the teacher directs me and when I am sure how to write. When the teacher directs me, I can remember the things that I will write about and I make up my mind and feel confidence to write. Also you achieve a coherent essay. and you can support your main ideas better and your statements are more meaningful." (P,8) and "It is not possible to understand how to write an essay without reading the sample essays written before. Firstly, we should read the sample essays so that we can understand what an essay looks like. To some extend reading is not enough; we must write, we must make a mistake and we have to correct our mistakes and rewrite. This is the only way to achieve a proper writing." (P,9).

Further student opinions about assigning practice are as follows;

"Assignments should be given from subjective to objective topics in order to provide excitement in writing and then self-confidence. Giving them subjective topics at the beginning will create a feeling of enjoy and this could increase their focus in writing." (P,2) and "I think giving homework to students depends on individual purposes and it should precisely be connected to the last feedback student got. Students should do their homework weekly and students should write freely." (P,4) and "Students sometimes have difficulties to find a topic to write so teachers can help them by giving homework to practice writing with the given writing topics." (P,5).

In these expressions, the participants referred that practicing writing a lot and reading several sample essays will be very useful for the students to comprehend how to write a good essay in the process of acquiring writing skills.

Supporting Language Use. Some of the participants reported that 4 basic language skills should be developed together during a lesson in the process of acquiring writing skills. Their views on supporting language use are as follows;

"The teacher should process the four basic language skills altogether. When the student both speaks and writes, he improves his listening and writing skills together. Reading is also improved but speaking is trouble. It should be practiced. When we come to final year, we find ourselves in a great trouble with speaking. We really need to see the teacher as a medium to speak. The teacher should establish himself as someone ready to speak with his tudents."(P,3) and " Teacher, we have still problems with grammar and spelling rules, therefore; I think the teacher should repeat grammar and punctuation rules where necessary."(P,4).

In addition, other students expressed their opinions about supporting language use as follows;

"We frequently compare and contrast source language and target language in order to write something accurate. But in our writing there sometimes occurs something teachers cannot understand. Teachers should support our English both by speaking and writing." (P, 7) and"I believe that writer should know language very well to write; but advanced vocabulary can be taught by the teachers. If the teacher gives us external links of the grammar subject we can learn totally and we wonder the subject by this way learning strategy could realize successfully." (P, 10).

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It is understood from these statements that the teachers should have the same emphasis on reading, speaking and listening skills as well as writing in the courses. It is also stated that they lack grammar knowledge and spelling rules and that it is necessary to include discussing grammar and punctiation rules in courses.

Motivation. Some of the participants indicated that encouraging students to write and determining their individual needs and purposes would make a great contribution to teaching writing course. The views of participants on the issue of motivation are given in the quotations below;

"It is necessary to motivate the students by praising them. If the instructors do not motivate them, the students tend to take a dislike to write. The students like praises; "well done, well written". They show an interest in writing when they receive a positive attitude by means of getting feedback and they feel that they have to study the lesson."(P,9) and "... if the instructors are aware of what students can do and can not do, they can follow a path and awaken the feeling that students can do the tasks at their own level; this makes them like writing more. Accordingly it makes easier to set a goal for themselves."(P,8)

Others expressed their opinions about motivation as follows;

"Although seem impossible, sometimes little cupcakes or chatting with teacher all class could be more enjoyable and motivated." (P,2) and "Creating compititive media is useful for teaching writing. Publishing best written text each week motivates student in every skill. Boosts self-confidance, helps overcoming wiriting anxiety, gives positive feedback by teachers and classmates and most importantly it is a biggest reward to be shown as an example reward. Teachers don't know how much their praise for the students valuable is. Student pays attention to what the teacher says. Actually teachers are great source of motivation I think." (P, 10).

With these expressions, participants expressed the importance of teachers' motivating the students in the process of writing skills and that their individual needs should be recognized by the instructors.

*Assessment.*Some of the participants expressed that students' success in writing should be assessed considering their performance during the term rather than the

exams solely at the end of the semester. This situation is clarified with the participants' statements below as;

"Instructors should encourage students to prepare a writing portfolio. Students must look at back what they wrote in the past. In addition, they can see their improvement whenever they write a new essay. So portfolio is crucial for them." (P, 2) and " It just does not seem right to me to assess the students by exams only. In general students' attitudes towards the lesson, class participation, all of his writings during the term should be taken into consideration while assessing their performance." (P, 5).

More opinions about assessment are as follows;

"Teachers should assess the students considering their performances in class and analyzing their improvement throughout the term. Teacher should be able to observe student's improvement and evaluate them by their achievements in writing." (P, 6) and "Teachers should evaluate students performances individually. Students' mistakes can be different so it is not good to generalize students' mistake. Another issue is midterm and final exams should not be the only way of assessing a student." (P, 3) .

In these statements participants pointed out that instructors should encourage students to prepare a writing portfolio during the term and also that students' class participation and their performance throughout the semester should be considered in the assessment of their success.

Material Use. Some of the participants suggested that teachers should bring sample essays and read them to the students in order to make them understand what a good writing looks like. Participants' views on material use are stated as:

" Yes, teachers should bring sample essays. So having seen an example before writing can direct students to write better. At least, he receives help from the paper when he doesnt know what to do."(P,9) and " Yes, teacher must bring essay samples to the class because I think showing rules visually might be more effective. For example, you can write a sentence not only at the beginning of the pharagraph, but also you can use it in different places; I think that it will have a great impact on realising the correct form of the mistakes." (P, 6).

Further opinions about material use are as follows;

"Using striking and interesting articles, theses or short stories could be use to gain student interest. Underlining important points via MS Office programs helps to students focus on given lesson." (P, 4) and "An instructor may vary text patterns to adapt different subject fields. Writing is not only essay writing, it also can be a letter or email, what I mean is an instructor should enhance our formal an informal writing skills, furthermore, but a textbook is also to obtain for teaching. New articles related to each type of essay might be shared with the students every week. Also giving some specific writing examples to students make them see how it goes. Then they may have idea to shape their own writing." (P, 3).

These statements imply that the sample essays are a good example for the students in the process of acquiring writing skills and they are important in terms of improving students' language skills.

Technology use. Some of the participants indicated that the use of techology will make a great contribution to writing process. It can be clearly understood from the quotations below;

"Instructors should use technology because it is easy and fast to access the required information and also it will speed up the lesson by providing visuals." (P, 2) and "I suggest that the instructors should impose a long online deadline rather than assigning – restricting - an essay to finish at the end of the lesson. It will be beneficial for them in terms of preparing an elaborate paper…" (P,5).

Other students expressed their opinions about technology use as follows;

"Projecting text through computer is not just easy also it is highly effective for both material and technologic use. Instead of using writing board teacher can give lecture more efficiently and reduces energy he or she use. It also provides visual attraction for students." (P, 7) and "In developed countries, technology offered in classrooms catches the attention of students easily which increases class participation. If writing courses were supported with laptops, each student would be able to access the internet, search online journals for topics, use an online dictionary, or use grammar check websites. Technology use has a great impact on students' writings. Teachers and

students can check plagiarism on their paper. They should check everything on internet. Technological devices could help us to concentrate on the topic during the class or make it possible for doing a research using technology." (P, 6).

In this context, it is inferred that the teacher should take the advantage of technology while teaching writing in the sense of rapid and easy access to required information and provide online writing practices to the students.

3.6.   Findings and Discussion

Findings and discussion of the study will be presented in this chapter. The purpose of the study was to identify writing problems encountered by ELL students at Karabük University. It also aimed to learn the causes of these problems; probable reasons of having problems in writing. In addition suggestions were given in order to solve these problems by the students themselves. Moreover students pointed out their views on how to improve writing skills and finally they discussed how writing courses should be taught.

According to the findings gathered from the students interviews not being able to think critically is the most common problems encountered by students, writing anxiety is the common cause for these problems, positive feedback is the most important factor in solving these problems, practicing reading to expand vocabulary is considered to be an efficient way to solve the problems and lecturers' applying various strategies in classes makes a great contribution to students.

Students are aware of their inadequecies in academic writing and also in English language as a medium of instruction in ELL department. The students attributed their problems in English language and grammar to the methods of teaching English in secondary education in our country and their environment which does not give enough opportunity to use English language in their daily lives. They realised the significance of reading and practicing writing for their profession and suggested them for their peers. Findings of the current study highlighted that ELL students' low proficiency in English is an influential factor contributing to their writing problems. As their papers reflect their grammar mistakes and lack of having topic knowledge, they experience the same problem in speaking as well. Hence, just because of these

inadequecies they hesitate to participate in course activities in classes and sometimes even to speak about the topic.

They do not want their faults to be proved by their friends and especially by their teachers as they do not want to lose favor with their teachers. They know they should do something to improve their language competence and writing skills.

Writing anxiety affects their desire to write negatively and as a result changes their attitude towards writing. They pointed out that time pressure in essay writing and the fear of not producing a good paper make them demotivated. Moreover, they placed a great emphasis on the getting feedback from their teachers for their writings. They stated that once they notice their mistakes on their papers, they probably not repeat the same mistakes in their further studies. Also they feel confidence when their teacher check and comment on their papers.

They also made a point of the fact that various methods should be applied by instructors while teaching writing during the class. They expressed that every student does not get the same pleasure from the same teaching method. So the instructors should change the way of teaching and give learning opportunities for other students to learn with different learning styles.

Finally they confessed that literature takes up a great part in their life and it is indispensable for them. For this reason they internalised a life full of literature and reading and writing but unfortunately in their third or fourth year of their education, not earlier.

The findings of this study support the general assumption that ELL students in Karabük University have some problems in writing and they remain incompetent in academic writing. In this context ELL students in preparatory classes need a great concern and attention of instructors. It might be suggested that all ELL students should be in a seperate group and subject to a busy schedule. The program should include the classes with integrated language skills so as to improve their language. Simplified stories which get the students to the joys of reading for pleasure enable students real reading in English through six stages, because reading is considered as the interaciton between the reader and the text. These books also help ELL students be accustomed to literary texts they will handle for the following years and writing instructions may be

parallel with story in these books. In time they will learn how to apply a reading strategy to comprehend the text and as they read they will prepare a treasure of vocabulary and ideas to write. As they practice writing, they will write better.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: Conclusion

This chapter will present the results obtained in this study on the qualitative analysis of ELL students' writing problems are evaluated. They are compared with the previous researchers' studies in the literature and an overall understanding of the findings will be given. Implications for pedagogical practice and recommendations for subsequent research are involved respectively.

4.1. Evaluation of the Research Questions

In this study, writing problems encountered by ELL students in the process of acquiring and improving writing skills and the solutions to these problems were attempted to specify according to the opinions of the students. Participant views were gathered under five themes as follows;

" problems encountered in the process of acquiring and improving writing skills, causes of these problems, possible suggestions for solving these problems, methods / strategies to improve writing skills and how to teach writing skills course ."

Results revealed that ELL students experience problems in critical thinking mostly in academic writing and that these problems are more often caused by writing anxiety, and that positive feedback is the most important factor in solving the problems and that to improve their writing skills they need to expand their vocabulary by practicing reading frequently and that lecturers' applying different strategies in classes makes a great contribution to students. As an overall reflection of the discussions until now, the findings of the study will be presented by making references to previous research related to the topic with the intention of helping the reader to establish connections between the findings of the current study and previous research results.

The survey first shows the fact that ELL students are not able to think critically is the main problem they encounter during the process of acquiring writing skills. In addition improper language use, problems in unity and organization, lack of content knowledge, lack of planning, misuse in style and mechanics, errors, skipping pre-writing stage ve not being motivated are other problems they experience. Similar findings are available in literature as well (Doğanay, et. al , 2007). Critical thinking is associated with reasoning, used for "the central activity of presenting reasons in

support of a claim." (Andrews, 2000). When its university context is considered, critical thinking is defined in the sense of abilities or skills such as selection, evaluation, analysis, reflection, questioning, inference and judgement (Tapper, 2004). Lack of critical thinking can be linked to metacognition, which is related to students' ability to properly evaluate their written work (Hawthorne, Bol, & Pribesh, 2017; Negretti, 2017). Elander, et. al, (2006) and Jones (2005) have discussed that if the university does not explain and teach critical thinking discourse practices and implementations clearly enough, it is probable that international students fail to depict critical thinking. It is significant that students should improve their ability to think critically in order to meet the expectations and necessities of their profession. For writing to benefit thinking, an individual should be able to make their ideas explicit and to evaluate and choose tools necessary for an effective discourse (Quitadamo and Kurtz, 2007). As mentioned above, the critical approach plays an important role in improving students' writing skills and is influential in the nature of the process. Şaraplı (2013) pointed out that in order to develop their critical thinking, students should acquire research skills. In this context, it can be argued that in the present study the participants stated that their primary problem in acquiring writing skills is "not being able to think critically" is compatible with anticipations and body of literature. Al Sharadgah (2014) suggested that using Internet-based writing programs in the process of teaching writing can develop students' critical thinking as students are using their critical thinking actively while searching for the topic from the search engines and the emphasis is on thinking while realizing the task. Besides, the fact that the students consider improper language use and not being motivated as one of the important problems in this process can be explained in relation to the context in which the research is carried out. These findings of the research show ELL students think that lack of critical thinking and also misuse of English grammar and lack of motivation need to be addressed with precision at the point of acquiring academic writing skills.

In addition, it is considered that the participants also mentioned about skipping pre-writing stage and lack of planning which were other findings of the research can be evaluated together with the research findings discussed. In this context, students need to take the utmost care before, during, and after writing in order to write a good and an effective essay. In this process, the fact that students subject to an education system based on memorisation and multiple choice test techniques throughout secondary

education and thus they do not have reading habit; and the fact that they should use their reasoning skills in the courses at university may have been influential in the emergence of the relevant finding of the research. In this respect, there is an important task for instructors and students in order to make the education at Karabük University ELIT department more qualified and to increase the students' success. Instructors should direct the students to help them acquire reading habits and think critically; on the other hand students should do reading frequently and have a scientific attitude towards the process of acquiring writing skills by internalizing that these abilities are inseparable parts of ELIT department.

The other finding of the study is related to the probable causes of the problems encountered by ELL students. Accordingly, the participants indicated that the problems encountered in the process of acquiring writing skills were caused by writing anxiety and writing anxiety affected their motivation in a negative way. Similar findings were also obtained in literature (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Kara, 2013). Anxiety is a factor that affects the process of writing directly. Language learning anxiety is defined as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specially associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and writing" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, p. 284). Recent studies found that writing anxiety decreases students' performance (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014). According to Hassan (2001), students with low anxiety came up with better quality compositions compared to students with high anxiety. Likewise, Cheng's (2002) study also found that students with high level of anxiety are reluctant to take writing courses. There also several studies that indicated that writing apprehension has a negative influence on EFL/ESL learners' writing performance and quality (Cheng, et. al, 1999; Atay & Kurt, 2006). According to the research, writing anxiety occurs because of language complexity in general and complexity of writing as a skill in particular (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Schweiker-Marra & Marra, 2000). When considered from this point of view, problems encountered by ELL students in the process of acquiring academic writing skills may have consequences such as a decrease in students' motivation, being discouraged to write, failing courses (considering that the assessment of majority of the courses are in the form of essay writing) and perhaps an extension of graduation. The students have concerns about not being able to finish writing their essays on time, negative criticism of the instructors, getting low marks from the examinations and hence the extension of

the term. They emphasized that in some cases, even if they master the subject, they cannot put their thoughts and ideas on paper because they are afraid of the negative criticism of the instructors. People with high self-efficacy approach tasks with calm serenity, while those who are fearful experience anxiety and stress (Bandura, 1997). In this context, our students may be suggested to do more writing practices, to search for the subject deeply and master it and to meet the requirements of the course in order not to feel frustrated in this process. If the instructors give positive feedback to the students and encourage them to write without diminishing the significance of reading and other skills, it may be beneficial for students to relieve their writing anxiety. It is essential for the instructors to encourage a certain view of students' literacy of writing and therefore so as to decrease their writing anxiety instructors must do all one can do. In addition further studies should be applied in order to reveal the ways to reduce students' writing anxiety in literature.

Another finding of the study is related to the suggestions of the participants about the solution of the problems encountered in the process of acquiring academic writing skills. The participants are of the opinion that getting positive feedback for their essays, doing research about the topic, doing plentiful reading and practicing writing will be effective in elimination of the problems. The fact that positive feedback is the most emphasized element of the participants' suggestions for the problems seems to be related to not receiving enough individual feedback in this process. This is because the class is too crowded – more than 100 students when the students who failed from writing course in previous year attend the class -, the students are frequently asked to write essay – one or two per week – and it is almost impossible to check more than 100 students' essays one by one each week.

However, when the related literature is viewed, it is observed that a number of similar findings are available in literature pointing out that getting feedback for the essays has contributed to students' improvement much in the process of acquiring academic writing skills (Bozkır, 2009; Bilen, 2014). It can be asserted that the relevant findings of the present study are compatible with anticipations and the related literature when it is considered that getting positive and more precisely individual feedback might significantly contribute to students' success in writing. One of the related studies argued that peer feedback increases students' motivation and improves their writing

skills (Bilen, 2014). Moreover, error correction is widely popular between ELS students, in which the corrective feedback given by a peer or an instructor intends to solve a specific error or misconception that a student faces. For example, it may be needed for rejecting false hypotheses from particular sources and preventing certain kinds of over-generalization from becoming part of the L2 learner's interlanguage (Bley-Vroman, 1986; Carroll & Swain, 1993; Chaudron,1988; Rutherford, 1987; White, 1989, 1991). With the increasing number of the language learners corrective feedback became more debated. Carrolland and Swain (1993) states that due to the uncompleted data that are relevant to L2 learners, these learners are in need to be provided with feedback, they also argued that feedback help the L2 learners to "narrow the range of possible hypotheses that can account for the data". Mainly due to the slight difference of perceptions between learners and instructors regarding feedback it became more important to focus on the views of both instructors and students. Harmandaoğlu Baz, Balçıkanlı and Cephe (2016) in their study to examine the perceptions of instructors and students about corrective feedback, found that on the contrary to instructors at the point of oral feedback students prefer oral feedback but instructors are reluctant about it. Roothoft and Breeze(2016) conducted a survey on teachers' and students' attitudes in regard of oral feedback, the results showed that students were much positive than teachers to accept all kinds explicit feedback, and to experience positive emotions.

Written corrective feedback (WCF) is mostly used in providing feedback as it is also preferred by instructors, on the other hand students' preferences on how to get their feedback are variable thus instructors must be aware of it. According to the findings of a study (Hajian, et. al, 2014) students prefer all errors be corrected, but teachers prefer selecting some and students prefer teachers' correction rather than peer or self-correction. The same findings were revealed by Abdolvahed (2017). In his study on ten female students within the Iranian context to discover their feedback preferences through written exam, the students all submitted to the teachers' correction rather than other correction alternatives. Students demands of having a direct or indirect feedback is also flexible, the study carried out by Esra, Cem and Paşa (2016) showed that students are more likely to prefer direct feedback while on another study on the Chinese context conducted by Haishan and Qingshun (2017) found that students tend to receive indirect feedback. Both of the studies above asserted that instructors

tend to use indirect feedback. Unlikely, not all instructors agree on using WCF. A study (Rajab, et. al, 2016) on teachers' perception regarding written corrective feedback showed that instructors' main factor in following WCF strategy was the time and they also related it to work-load difficulties. Some theorists of the second language acquisition believe that written corrective feedback is harmful to L2 acquisition and it should be controlled completely, whereas others present corrective feedback as an indispensable factor for L2 development. Ferris (1999) asserted that written corrective feedback is an important predictor in increasing the accuracy of writing for L2 learners.

In this context based on the research findings it is possible to make an inference that getting especially positive feedback – teacher or peer feedback – in the process of acquiring academic writing skills is a crucial factor in achieving students' goals from the point of determining to what extend they are successful in writing, what they can do and can not do and how they can improve themselves in writing. On the other hand, the participants are of the opinion that reading the related texts and doing research about the topic, in addition practicing writing regularly will be effective in solving the problems in writing. In general, the writing process is divided into 3 stages: pre-writing, while-writing and post-writing. In fulfilling these stages, brainstorming in pre-writing; writing drafts in while-writing; editing the final draft in post-writing are basic skills in order to be able to write a full-fledged essay. Getting feedback at each stage acts as a safe bridge to the next stage. Students are likely to achieve success in writing when they are able to make use of this process by doing plenty of reading and practicing writing. Their success in writing will reflect on their course grades as well, consequently they will be motivated to write more and more and they will also feel self-confident while practicing other language skills reading, speaking and listening likewise. Briefly, positive feedback for their papers plays a great role for students in developing their writing skills.

Another finding of the research relates to the opinions of the participants about how they can improve their academic writing skills. Accordingly, participants are of the opinion that expanding their vocabulary by practicing reading frequently will be effective to improve their writing skills. The fact that the most frequently emphasized method by the participants for improving students' writing skills is to improve their

vocabulary by reading frequently seems to be related to lack of vocabulary resulting either from poor secondary education they received or their individual deficiencies of knowledge. Similar findings are available in literature (Al Badi, 2015; Karakoç, 2016). Since students in Turkey have been a part of rote-learning based education system in secondary education process and they aren't accustomed to read extensively, they lack knowledge of English language vocabulary and they have difficulty in using four language skills in an integrated way. Nation (2005, pp.588 - 589) advocates that supportive speaking, listening and reading can be followed prior to the writing process in order to help learners to activate their receptive vocabulary knowledge. In this context, different methods to improve vocabulary are presented in literature (Walters & Bozkurt, 2009; Kocaman, 2015). Özdemir (2016) in her study found that using vocabulary notebook has a positive impact on activating the usage of vocabulary of students within academic writing. In Turkey having a vocabulary notebook (noting down the word itself, its meaning in target language, sometimes its pronunciation and an illustration of that word next to it) is also a common method for students to obtain a rich treasure of vocabulary in English teaching in secondary education. Moreover, Wolsey (2010) emphasized that instructional academic words that students might face in academic texts is likely to improve their uptake or acquisition of those words and their performance in written tasks. Also, Graham and Perin (2007) note that discipline-specific vocabulary teaching could result in student's writing improvement, but they asserted that additional effort is needed in this area. The more words students are exposed to in writing process, the more they expand their vocabulary. Furthermore, Coxhead (2000) created around 570 academic word list words including thousands of terms so that both teachers and students make use of this list.

When everything is taken into account, students should be conscious of the significance of expanding their vocabulary and it should be an objective for them so as to become good writers. In order to fulfill this objective, they should do extensive reading. Besides, they have to use accurate and appropriate grammatical structures to form their sentences in a meaningful way. Owing to the fact that authentic reading comprises native utterances, it enables students learn to utilize grammar structures properly. It is significant for professors to notice that teaching techniques and in-class activities will directly have an influence on transferring students' skills successfully to the real life situations.

The final finding of the research is about the views of the participants on how to teach writing to the students. According to the participants applying a variety of methods/strategies together in one class while teaching writing will be more effective for students, so in this way at least one method/strategy would arouse one of the students' interest. The fact that the participants stated that there must be more than one method applied in one-hour class that can be specific for each student at the point of teaching writing arises from individual learning differences and consequently their expectations in that way. Likewise when body of literature is reviewed, there appears to be a series of research findings on the use of various methods in teaching writing (Uyar, 2014; Alpaslan, 2002). Teaching writing methods/strategies are various and required to be conducted according to the levels and learning styles of the students. Students can develop their writing skills when their interests are taken into account and when they are given perpetual chances to practice writing (Ismail, 2011). Students, both by hearing and seeing, are able to get the writing skill easily (Mustafa, 2008). Mary Beaven (1977) revealed that teachers achieved success in making the students feel more confident by using shared experiences and discussing students' thoughts and ideas within the class. Moreover, Storch (2007) advises that students are allowed to combine their linguistic resources in pair work in order to interchange their knowledge about language collaboratively, which gives them an opportunity to succeed more in writing experiences. Furthermore technology use might be an effective part of teaching writing as well. Technology integration cheers and motivates the students to occupy themsleves in reading and writing (Lee, 2012). They may download e-journals and have a file of them on their screen just like an essay notebook and they may have a look at these well-written articles without any grammar mistakes whenever they like. Lee (2012) also states that doing an interactive research of journals as a classroom practice is beneficial for language learners and it motivates them in terms of writing better. Ghandoura (2012) interviewed students and revealed that students are of the opinion that computers made it fast and easy for students to acquire writing skills in that while writing on a computer, it gives an immediate alert to grammatical and spelling errors. Offered various strategies to complete a writing task, students of different proficiency level and learning styles are allowed to choose the exact strategy that fits their needs in learning process style of way of studying (Macaro, 2010). Considering that using more than one method/strategy is an important factor in the

process of acquiring writing and affects the process positively, it can be argued that the relevant finding of the research is compatible with the expectations. As the students have different learning styles because each student is unique, it is expected that instructors use a variety of methods/strategies in courses; otherwise students may be demotivated. In this context based on the relevant research finding, it can be inferred that bearing in mind that each student is unique, offering each student an opportunity to learn, teaching each class using various methods/strategies and thus avoiding a monotous class are significant factors in achieving students' aim of acquiring academic writing skills. Participants, on the other hand, underlined that the use of technology and practicing writing by the students will also make a significant contribution to this process. Participants emphasized that their papers should be checked individually and they want to get online feedback as well as the feedback in class. When we think of the importance of feedback for students to improve their writing, this method can be thought to contribute considerably to them. In addition, they indicated that the best way to improve writing skill is to practice; they claimed that they will be able to express themselves more easily and think more practically when they practice writing frequently. In this respect, it can be said that an amendment in course syllabuses in the sense of applying various methods/strategies at each course, providing feedback to the students for their essays via internet using available databases and encouraging them to practise writing will be very effective in this process.

4.2. Implications and Recommendations for Further Studies

In the current research designed as a qualitative research method and a case study, the problems encountered by the students of the Department of English Language and Literature at Karabuk University, Faculty of Letters in the process of acquiring writing skills, causes of these problems, possible suggestions for solving these problems, methods / strategies to improve writing skills and how to teach writing skills course were examined. For the purpose of placing the study on a scientific basis, the findings of other research from the literature were presented and some further studies will be recommended in this respect.

First of all, based on the conclusions drawn from the present study, "critical thinking" is a serious challenge for ELL students in the process of acquiring writing

skills. Participants pointed out that they aren't able to comment on a subject synthesizing the obtained information and integrating their own ideas into that subject, to produce or extend ideas about the topic, to write a coherent text, to avoid generalization, to edit their own papers and they also stated that they sometimes misunderstand the writing instruction, skip brainstorming and ignore including the reader to the essay. Lack of critical thinking can be linked to metacognition, which is related to students' ability to properly evaluate their written work (Hawthorne, Bol, & Pribesh, 2017; Negretti, 2017). Critical thinking is highly desirable aim of ELL students at the department. It should also be taken into consideration that graduate students are supposed to write papers to be measured through by their instrcutors as a way of assessment for their performances (Linder, Murphy, Wingenbach, & Kelsey, 2004).

Enhancing students' thinking skills, evaluating their writing skills and knowledge and encouraging them to engage in academic studies are the purposes of academic writing in higher education (Coffin, et. al, 2003). Developing critical thinking should be a core objective for a student of ELL education. ELL students should write their paper in a well-structured form and reach a logical conclusion that they should be aware of requisites of academic writing such as searching for the evidence, persistently asking specific questions to himself until completing the writing process, checking the accuracy of the information, giving reasons for choices and referring to other articles which were published previously paying attention to plagiarism while citing. Principally writing is an effective way of developing students' critical thinking. Practicing writing more and more might be considered as an efficient way of developing critical thinking. In each time of writing, students learn new things about writing and probably acquire a new skill which will help them write well. Instructors should integrate specific writing activities which will help students develop their critical thinking into their course flow. The ability to think critically makes a student an independent learner. An independent learner first identifies the information, then analyzes and finally makes use of the information for his own purpose. This ability will also contribute to one's daily life and his relationships both at work and in his private life. In this context writing skills both as a seperate course and as one of language skills should be integrated into the curriculum.

Other important point that emerged in this study is that ELL students are considerably suffering from writing anxiety. According to the excerpts, participants stated some reasons such as fear of being unsuccessful, failing from the course, time restriction, not being able to use English language properly, difficulty in finding the right vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge about the topic, ranking at the bottom of the grade list, being demotivated and fear of being criticized for being anxious about writing. Apparently they don't feel comfortable to write and it becomes clear that they have low self efficacy towards the act of writing which obviously effects their academic achievement negatively. It is quite aobvious that the anxiety associated with academic writing is so great that taking an essay writing for an exam or writing a literary essay whose topic is about literature becomes a distressful experience. ELL students are mostly supposed to write an essay either for their weekly studies for their courses or midterm or final exams by their teachers to assess their performance during the term. So it is of great importance for ELL students to reduce or eradicate their writing anxiety.

To begin with, the students should "focus on fluency and the development of ideas rather than accuracy." (Qashoa, 2014). Without hesitating to make mistakes in style and mechanics, grammar or errors, they should have an emphasis on content and logical flow of their paper. Then students should spare a dedicated time on reading the texts themselves. As they practice reading, they will probably gain grammatical proficiency. Moreover they should be aware of the rigid rules of writing as it is a part of formal piece of language. They should be familiar with the use of upper-intermediate or advanced level of English langauge; they should frequently be engaged in reading formal articles and essays related to their subject area. By doing so, they will have the chance to see the differences in natures of two langauges; English and Turkish. On the other hand, instructors are expected to provide corrective feedback giving the impression that errors and mistakes are the inevitable parts of learning writing. Finally students should know the fact that improving in writing is closely related to their specific efforts to do so.

A further inference of the current study is low English proficiency of ELL students. English language proficiency for the university students is defined as "the ability of a student to make use of the language to communicate in spoken and written

contexts while completing their university studies" (Australian Universities Quality Agency, 2009). Based on the findings of the research, participants stated that they do not have sufficient knowledge of vocabulary, that they think in Turkish; so they cannot express their ideas in English, that they are suffering from using collocations, proverbs and idioms improperly and that they do not have enough knowledge of advanced level of English language. They are not likely to achieve coherence in their paragraphs because of the fact that they have an emphasis on language issues in their writings rather than content or writing a coherent essay. As a result, they fail to provide coherence and unity within their essays.

As observed during the classes and general assumption of the professors at the department, students hesitate to speak English even though they have an argument about the subject because of the fact that they are afraid of making mistakes and being mocked by their peers. A study suggests that during group work, low confidence students are more likely to refrain from expressing opinions, and explaining their responses (Lai, 1994). Not having real life situations to practice their English might be a reason for their pudency. They lack confidence to express their thoughts and ideas loudly in the class. This is also an indication of having low proficiency and insufficient practice in English.

When it comes to academic writing, English proficiency is of great importance for ELL students. Academic writing requires students to develop the use of techniques like organizing and generating ideas and critical thinking and developing vocabulary as well as grammatical syntax. It is the responsibility of teachers to identify and dwell on the process of academic writing and raise students' awareness about academic writing. Therefore, language teachers are supposed to pay the due attention to the elements of academic writing, students' needs, and increasing awareness of the students. A study shows that the reading texts, vocabulary input and comprehension exercises helped the university students to improve on the lexical variety they use and grammatical structure and this study recommends that authentic reading materials should be used to support students' language use in teaching writing (Mahadi, et. al, 2018). Also, it is of vital importance to use the language in social contexts and as an interaction tool between people (Cummins & Swain, 1986). Likewise, Swain (1993)

indicates that one cannot improve his language rapidly without being encouraged to use it in a variety of contexts and real life situations.

In other respects participants deduced that it is meaningful for the instructors to provide positive feedback to the students for their essays - if possible individual feedback; it has a great importance in this process in the sense of establishing an intimate interaction with students and improving students' writing skills. Bichener & Knoch (2009) found that the students who were provided with written corrective feedback performed better in writing than those who did not receive any written corrective feedback. That the students are aware of their mistakes and the points they are good at doing while writing and that their inadequacies in writing are informed by the instructors will provide learning awareness for the students. Hence, the students will not repeat the same mistakes in the following essays and write a better and more accurate one. For this reason, an office hour should be allocated by the instructors except class hours to give individual feedback to the students. Peer feedback might also have a positive impact on students. Instructors should build a group-work within writing classes and provide students a chance to check each other's papers. For some students peer feedback might be more efficient rather than teacher feedback; it can also contribute to improve EFL students' language acquisition and writing skills (Min, 2006). Whether it is a teacher or peer feedback, it is obvious that students are motivated after receiving positive feedback for their papers. Some time after providing feedback to the students, it is also applicable and practical for instructors to guide students to make self-correct their mistakes that will lead developing one's learner autonomy in time as writing is a complex skill to master.

As there are few studies about writing or academic writing conducted in Turkey, the findings of the present study indicate clear implications for ELL students and instructors at the department as well. Based on the findings, students have great responsibility in overcoming these problems. Students have to do reading frequently, make a habit of reading and they have to consider the process of gaining writing skills as an academic period as a part of their profession. In this context libraries should be made attractive for ELL students by university's respective departments by means of a regulation and students should be incentivized to spend most of their time at university

library by encouraging students to read. In addition, the functionality of these research-learning environments must be maintained.

At the same time, the instructors may be suggested to guide the students providing them an opportunity to acquire reading habit and to think critically and they may also be suggested to conduct various in-class studies by using different methods/strategies each time. By doing so, students will also be motivated to write. It is also clearly seen from the literature review that motivational factors are very significant considerations to take into account throughout the process of acquiring writing skills. It would be meaningful to place a strong emphasis on the student's role in writing and implementation of the latest and various pedagogical tasks in classes will make it easier for the instructors to establish an ongoing enthusiasm in students towards writing practices.

When we retrace the origin of the problems, rote-learning based education system and multiple choice tests in this system do not serve the purpose of mostly the departments offering language education, foreign language-based ones and also the departments of social sciences in which discernment of the students are essential for their education. It should be kept in mind that the students who prefer these departments should be assessed by an exam system that will support their critical thinking based on interpretation and inference rather than multiple choice tests. So both the education process and preparation phase for these exams will be full of methods and techniques that will improve their reading and writing skills. As a result when the students begin their university education, they will be confident since they are familiar with the system of education that they have been through, will not worry about about writing because they have already done a lot of writing practices and they will continue their university education comfortably. They will find the opportunities to improve themselves in line with their goal and to specialize in the subject area.

The findings of this study support the general thought that ELL students have some problems in writing and they remain incompetent in academic writing. In this context ELL students need a great concern and attention of instructors in preparatory classes in terms of teaching English language grammar, context and vocabulary as a second language. Yasuda (2015) points out that limited language proficiency on the part of writers acts as an inhibitory factor. Keck's (2006) comparative study found that

in the writing process L1 writers made significant changes by modifying clauses to complex noun phrases and the like whereas L2 writers' revisions were characterized through minimal lexical or syntactic changes. In a similar vein, Wette (2010) also found that for effective summary making students needed to process an adequate vocabulary of superordinate terms rather having knowledge of synonyms that just closely match the original word. These findings indicate that lexical and syntactic proficiency predict success in the writing skill and require educators to provide students with sufficient scaffolding in lexical and syntactic knowledge.

The results of the current research are not suitable for generalization because of the method and design of the research. It is not favorable to generalize the study to draw general recommendations based on the findings of this study that investigated a small group of participants, yet the results offer significant insights with relation to academic writing of ELL students at Karabük University. For this reason, similar research can be done in order to analyze a similar situation taking place at a different moment, time, place and context in various dimensions. In addition, in consecutive research related to this subject, the problems experienced in acquiring writing skills and the suggestions to these problems can be examined with a multiple point of view based on the views of students and lecturers. Considering that case studies are carried out in order to examine a certain situation within its own reality, the investigation of the problems and the possible suggestions of the students studying at ELL departments at different universities might contribute to the efforts to improve the quality of these students in Turkey. Finally, similar studies can be fulfilled with the participation of masters (graduates) and doctoral students (postgraduates).

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APPENDIX A:ÖĞRENCİ GÖRÜŞME FORMU

Sevgili Öğrencim;

Bu görüşme, üniversitemiz bünyesindeki İDE bölümü öğrencilerinin yazma becerilerinde yaşadığı problemlere ilişkin sizlerin görüşlerini belirlemek amacıyla yapılmaktadır. Görüşme sırasında size yazma becerilerine ilişkin öne çıkan problemler, bu problemlerin sebepleri, problemlere sunabileceğiniz çözüm önerileri, öğrencilerin yazma becerilerine ilişkin akademik başarılarını nasıl artırdıkları ve yazma becerisi dersinin nasıl öğretilmesi gerektiği yönünde eğitim-öğretim sürecindeki uygulamalara ve bireysel çalışmalara ilişkin sorular yöneltilecektir. Görüşme sonuçları kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve bilimsel amaçlar için kullanılacaktır. Görüşme sorularına vereceğiniz içten cevaplar için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

Öğr. Gör. Emine İNAL AYDIN

A. GÖRÜŞME ORTAMI

　　1. T.C. KARABÜK ÜNİVERSİTESİ

　　2. Görüşme;

　　　• Tarihi ve Saati:

　　　• Yeri:

B. KİŞİSEL BİLGİLER

　　1. Cinsiyet:

　　2. Yaş:

　　3. Sınıf: 2. – 3. – 4. (1.öğr. – 2.öğr.)

　　4. Not Ortalaması:

　　5. Mezun Olduğu Lise:

　　6. Kaç Yıldır İngilizce Eğitimi Alıyor:

　　7. Hedeflediği Meslek:

C. GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

1. İDE öğrencilerine göre yazma becerilerine ilişkin en sık karşılaşılan problemler nelerdir?

a) Paragraf yazmada en sık karşılaşılan problemler nelerdir?

b) Makale yazmada en sık karşılaşılan problemler nelerdir?

c) Akademik yazıda en sık karşılaşılan problemler nelerdir?

2. İDE öğrencilerinin karşılaştıkları yazma problemlerinin sebepleri nelerdir?

3. İDE öğrencilerinin karşılaştıkları yazma problemlerine getirdikleri çözüm önerileri nelerdir?

4.Öğrenciler yazma becerilerini geliştirmek için ne yapmalılar?

5. Yazma becerisi dersi nasıl öğretilmelidir?

APPENDIX B:INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

My dear students,

This interview is applied in order to detect your views about the problems encountered by ELL students in the process of acquiring academic writing skill at K.B.U. During the interview you will be posed questions about the major writing problems, causes of these problems, the suggestions to solve these problems, how to improve academic writing skills and how writing should be taught concerning the practices in the process of education and individual studies. This interview and the results of the interviews will be confidental and will have no access by anyone except the researcher and also will be used merely for scientific purposes. Thank you in advance for your sincere answers to the interview questions.

Ins. Emine İNAL AYDIN

A. INTERVIEW ENVIRONMENT

1. Turkish Republic, University of Karabuk

2. Interview;

• Date and time:

• Place:

B. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Sex:

2. Age:

3. Grade: 2. – 3. – 4. (Daytime – Night)

4. Grade average point:

5. Graduated High School:

6. Duration of English Education:

7. Targeted Occupation:

C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. According to ELL students, what are the most common types of writing problems ?

a) What are the major problems students face in paragraph writing?

b) What are the major problems students face in essay writing?

c) What are the major problems students face in academic writing?

2. What are the causes of writing problems among ELL students?

3. What are the suggested remedies to overcome writing problems encountered by ELL students ?

4.What should students do to improve their writing skills?

5. How should writing be taught?

Researcher: Birinci sorudan başlıyoruz. Paragraf yazarken karşılaştığınız başlıca problemler nelerdir?

Participant 1: Tam özetini çıkarmadığımız için konunun, düşünmediğimiz için üzerine ne gibi şeyler yazmamız gerektiğini, yani brain storming yapmadan başlarsak, sıkıntı oluşturabiliyor. Akış değişiyor, tıkanmalar yaşanıyor, tekrarlamalar oluyor, güzel bir akış elde edemiyorsunuz.

R: Yeterli bilgi mi lazım coherence ı yakalamak için ?

P(1): Evet. Bir düzen olmuyo yazıda.

R: Organizasyonda ne gibi sıkıntılar var?

P(1): Organizasyonda da dediğim gibi bir brain storming yapmadan başladığımız için –aslında onu yapmak lazım- sıkıntı çıkıyor. O yüzden de paragrafları organize edemiyorsunuz. Acaba nereden başlasam, şuradan mı falan derken, akışı kaybediyoruz.

R: Başa dönüp tekrar düzeltme sıkıntısı mı yaşıyorsunuz ?

P(1): Evet paragrafları sildiğimi bile hatırlıyorum; ben mesela birinci sınıfta yazıp yazıp siliyordum.

R: Sonra da zaman yetişmiyor haliyle, doğru mudur ?

P(1): Evet. Bakmışız aynı şeyleri yazıp durmuşuz boyuna.

R: Gereksiz tekrarlar mı oluyor bazen paragrafta ?

P(1): Evet, konuyu bilmediğiniz için ne yazsam ne yazsam diye düşünürken, yazıyorsunuz ama yazdıklarınızı tekrar yazıyorsunuz ve bilmediğiniz için tekrar yazmalar da artış görülüyor, böylece aynı şeyi yazmış oluyorsunuz. Tamamen ona bağlı.

R: Başka ne gibi sorunlar yaşıyosunuz?

P(1): Topic sentence yazamıyorum mesela. Onu yazarken de konuya hakim olmak lazım. Bir de nelerden bahsetmeniz gerektiğini iyi seçmeniz lazım. Eğer onu iyi seçemezseniz zaten bir yerden sonra tıkanıyor.

R: Essay writinge gelelim, essay yazarken ne gibi sorunlar yaşıyorsunuz?

P(1): Güzel, güçlü bir thesis statement yazamıyorum, onu yazarken düzgün bir şey yazmazsanız –çünkü bütün essayi ona göre şekillendiriyorsunuz- güzel bir şey bulamazsanız, essay kötü oluyor. Sonuç kısmında da bağlayamıyorsunuz.

R: Peki neden bir thesis statement oluşturamıyoruz ?

P(1): Onun farklı sebepleri olabilir. Mesela konuya hakim olmamak olabilir ya da aklınıza o an bir şey gelmez, stres yapmışsınızdır. Bu gibi şeyler olabilir.

R: Paragraf yazarken karşılaştığınız başka problemler var mı?

P(1): zaman kısıtlaması Evet o da bir sorun. İnsan heyecanlanıyor.

R: Sınavlarda özellikle değil mi ?

P(1): Evet, sınavlarda. Bir de bazen iki essay yazmak zorunda kalıyoruz sınavlarda ve nasıl yetiştireceğiz derken insan panik oluyor. Bir de üzerine yazacağınızı unutuyorsunuz. Tam planlayamıyorsunuz izleyeceğiniz yolu. O yüzden zaman sıkıntı meydana getiriyor.

R: Peki hocanız dead line verdiği zaman mesela 2 hafta süre verdiğinde onda da oluyor mu aynı şey ?

P(1): Yok, onda öyle bir sorun yaşanmıyor. Sınavlar için geçerli. Birde fikir tekrarı daha çok oluyor genelde ama kelime yetersizliğinden kaynaklı tekrarlarda oluyor.

R: Fikir tekrarındaki sebep ne olabilir?

P(1): Genelde konuya hakim olmamak, tam çalışmamak. Bilmediğiniz bir konu hakkında yazdığınızda zaten hep aklınızda olan şeyleri yazmanız gerekiyor, o yüzden tekrar oluyor.

Bir de kötü başlarsanız paragrafa zaten devamı da kötü geliyor onun. O yüzden güzel bir şey bulmak lazım. Güzel bir şey bulduğunuzda onun üstünden yürüyebiliyorsunuz ama kötü bir şey attığınızda ortaya nasıl devam edeceğim endişesi oluyor. Yeterli bilgimiz olsa, okumuş olsak ilgili soru ile eserleri, güzel başlayabiliriz ama biraz da brain storming yapmak lazım. Örneğin; artık sınavlarda beş dakika sadece duruyorum böyle hiçbir şey yapmadan, düşünüyorum üzerine ne yazabilirim vesaire. Sonra onları not ediyorum bir kenara, ondan sonra onların üzerinden başlıyorum yazmaya. Aksi taktirde, direk başladığımızda yazmaya bir şeyin üzerine direkt kontrolü kaybediyoruz.

P(1): Sonra motivasyon eksikliği oluyor bazen hocam. Bu da genelde hocam öğretmenlerden kaynaklanıyor biraz. Mesela öğretmenlerin bu konuda biraz motive edici olması lazım. Mesela bir şeyler yazıdığımızda hoca gelip "bu arkadaş şu kadar almış, bu kadar almış" diyor. "Böyle böyle hatalar yapmışsınız, siz lisede değilsiniz" gibi cümleler kurduğunda, insanın motivasyonu kırılabiliyor.

R: Hocanın istediği gibi bir kağıt olacak mı, yazabilecek miyim endişesi oluyor mu ?

P(1): Evet, oluyor. O yüzden sınırın dışına da çıkamıyorsunuz. Acaba bunu yazsam yanlış mı olur ya da hoca ne gözle bakar gibi düşünceler oluyor. O yüzden de böyle bir ister istemez kısıtlanıyorsunuz kendi içinizde. Bu da motivasyonunuzu düşürüyor.

R: Bunun haricinde, başka bir şey var mı motivasyonunuzu düşüren? Bir seste veya gürültüde dikkat dağınıklığı oluyor mu ?

P(1): Hayır, o konuda hiçbir sorun olmuyor. Kelime bilgimiz az hocam. Evet, o açıdan dediğimiz gibi tekrarlamalar oluyor genelde. Bilmediğimiz için kelimeleri acaba nasıl aktarsam endişesi doğuyor. Sonra bir düzen olmuyo bazen yazıda. En baştaki konudan kaynaklanıyor. Brain storming yapmamaktan ötürü oluyor. Onu yaparsak bir sorun kalmıyor ama genelde işte o şey düşüncesi oluyor insan da "süre yetmezse." Oysa ki 5 dakikamızı versek düşünsek her şeyi ayalarız ama direkt başlayınca konu dağılıyor.

R: Bir karmaşa mı oluyo yazıda?

P(1): Evet o da konuya hakim olmadığımız için kaynaklanan bir şey. Bilmediğiniz için ne bulursanız yazıyorsunuz kağıda. O yüzden karışıklık meydana geliyor. Çok tutarsız şeyler çıkıyor ortaya.

P(1): Bazen de cuk oturacak kelimeyi bulamıyorum. Mesela bu yüzden çok cümle değiştirdiğimi bilirim yazarken. Aklınızda bir şey oluyor ancak onun İngilizcesini bilmiyorsunuz ya da aklınıza gelmiyor. O yüzden onu aktarmak için nasıl yazsam diye düşünürken hem zaman kaybediyorsunuz hem de yazamadığınız için farklı bir cümle yazmak zorunda kalıyorsunuz.

R: Kelime hazneniz zayıf olduğu için mi bu sorun yaşanıyor?

P(1): Evet, kelime haznemizi genişletmek lazım. Düşünüyorsunuz nasıl bağlasam ve hatta bazen unutuyorsunuz. Belli kalıpları aslında bilmek lazım. Onları öğrenmek lazım. Onları bilmediğinizde bazen çok düşünüyorsunuz "acaba nasıl bağlasam?"

R: Aslında bir kelime çok güzel kurtarır bir cümleyi, demek istediğinizi daha çok ifade edebilirsiniz.

P(1): Evet, doğru. Fikir üretemiyoruz. Bu da yine en baştaki sorunumuzdan kaynaklanıyor. Nasıl başlarsanız öyle devam edersiniz. Güzel bir thesis yazmak gerekiyor, güzel topic sentencelar bulmak lazım, brain storming yapmak lazım.

R: Essay yazarken karşılaştığınız başka problemler nelerdir peki?

P(1): Brainstorming çoğu zaman atlıyorum hocam. Zaman korkusu. Eğer ona vakit ayırırsam ne yapacağım diye düşünüyor insan. Halbuki brain storming üzerinde dursalar ilk 5 – 10 dakika çok daha rahat yetiştirebilecekler. Lakin zaman korkusu brain storming kısmını atlamalarına sebep oluyor.

R: Ne kadar önemli brain storming bir essay için?

P(1): En önemli şey brain storming benim için.

R: Evet, şimdi akademik yazıya geçiyoruz. Akademik yazıda ne gibi sıkıntılar yaşıyorsunuz?

P(1): İçerik açısından problem yaşıyoruz hocam daha çok. Genelde kolay bir şey üzerine yazdığınızda çok daha kolay bir içerik bulabiliyorsunuz; mesela gündelik bir şey olduğunda onun üzerinde çok daha fazla durabiliyorsunuz ama bilmediğiniz bir şey olduğunda yine içerik de kısıtlanıyor. Kısıtlandığı içinde yazacağınız şeylerde kısıtlanıyor. Bu yüzden konuyu bilmek lazım. Şimdi şöyle bir şey var; "acaba nereden bağlasam konuyu veya nasıl bağlasam?" "tam manasını verebilmiş miyim?" gibi korkular oluyor kişide. Onun için de çok okumak lazım. Bi karmaşıklık sürekli kendinizi tekrar ettiğinizde, o yazı karmaşıklaşmaya başlıyor. Onu nereye bağlasam veya bunu nereye bağlasam diye düşünürken, her şey karmaşık bir hal alıyor.

R: Peki atıfta bulunurken de karmaşıklık oluyor mu?

P(1): Evet olabiliyor. Genelde alıntı seçerken bilmediğimiz ya da daha çok anlamadığımız bir şey ise quotation, onun dışında bir şey yazdığımızda sıkıntı çıkıyor. O alıntıyı iyi anlayıp yazmak lazım.

Bazen yeterli kaynağa ulaşamıyoruz. Bazı kaynaklar çok kısıtlı oluyor ya da bazı kaynakları buluyorsunuz ama paralı oluyor ve çok elde edebileceğiniz bir şey olmuyor. O yönden sıkıntı çıkabiliyor ama çok da önemli bir şey değil o aslında.

R: Peki, Türkçe veya İngilizce daha çok hangisine ulaşabiliyorsunuz?

P(1): İngilizce. Onda da pek bir şey bulamadığınızda ya da kendiniz üretemediğinizde biraz.

R: Bunu bilinçli yapıyorsunuz değil mi?

P(1): Evet, bilinçli oluyor genelde. Üretemediğimiz için kendimiz genelde akademik yazıda daha çok oluyor bunlar. Terim fazla olduğu için ve terimin ne ifade ettiğini bilmediğiniz için çoğu şeyi tekrar tekrar yazmış oluyorsunuz ister istemez.

R: Yerine bir şeyler koyamıyor musunuz?

P(1): Kullanıyoruz ama terimin yerini çok tutmuyor genelde. Anlam karşılığını vermiyor. Evet. Bağdaştırmada sıkıntı yaşamıyoruz ancak daha çok çalışmadan yazdığımızda bir yazıyı, onu açıklayıcı güzel bir şekilde yazma durumumuz pek olmuyor. Bir başka deyişle tamamen bilgisizlik. Dolayısıyla eleştirel düşünemiyorum, az okumaktan olabiliyor belki ya da çok sosyal birisi değilimdir ve çok fazla konuşmayı sevmem, o yönüm çok gelişmemiştir belki. Tam olarak bilemiyorum.

R: Hıımm.

P(1): Sınavlarda sıkılıyorum. Evet, genelde 2 tane essay yazmamız gereken sınavlar çok sıkıcı oluyor. Hani hep şunu düşünüyoruz; iki tane yazmak yerine bir tane yazalım tam olsun. Çünkü aynı anda iki taneyi yazmayı çalıştığınızda, aklınız bir diğerine gidiyor ve karışıyor. Allak bullak oluyorsunuz, bir de ben yazmayı sevmediğim için iyice stres oluyorum.

Stres oldukça da güvenim azalıyor, bu da bahsettiğim gibi hocalarımızdan kaynaklanan bir şey yine. İstediği gibi olmayacak ya da yapamayacağım duygusu oluşuyor. Tabi bunlar ilk başta vardı; şimdi o kadar yok. Güven eksikliğinin bir diğeri sebebi de bilgisizlik. Konuya hakim olmadığımız için bu durumu yaşıyoruz.

Bir de süreyi yetiştiremem korkusu var.

R: Sürekli saate bakar mısın?

P(1): Hayır, hiç bakmam. Eğer bakarsanız, iyice paniklersiniz. Genelde öğrenciler hep soruyor kaç dakika kaldı vesaire. Bunun sebebi dediğim gibi ilk başta brain storming yapılmıyo, direk başlanıyo. Bir yerden sonra tıkanıyo. Sonra panik oluyo ve korkuya yenik düşülüyor.

Yazım kuralları insanı geriyo, şöyle başlamak gerekiyor, thesis statement şöyle olmalı gibi kurallar insana gına geliyor.

R: Çok sempatik gelmiyor mu yazı yazmak?

P(1): Evet, gelmiyor.

R: Peki, bu kurallar olmasa daha mı kolay olur yazı yazmak?

P(1): Daha kolay olabilir ama şöyle bir şey olur; düzen olmaz, organizasyon olmaz. Evet, aklımıza bişey geliyor, sonra unutuyoruz. Çünkü o anda farklı şeyler gelebiliyor aklınıza mesela telefonu şuraya veya buraya koymak geliyor aklınıza ve yazarken de farklı bir yerdesinizdir, farklı bir şekilde bağlamanız gerekiyordur. Yani onu yazmıyorsunuz hemen oraya, not da etmediğimiz için diğer cümleyi yazarken o düşündüğümüz şeyi unutuyoruz.

R: Sınav esnasında mı oluyor bu daha çok yoksa serbest yazılarda da oluyor mu?

P(1): Genelde sınavlarda oluyor. Motivasyonumuzu da düşürüyor bu aynı zamanda.

R: Bu neden oluyor peki, bıkıyor musunuz sürekli aynı şeyi yazdığınız için?

P(1): Evet, sınavlar arka arkaya olduğu için birisinde iki diğerinde bir essay derken artık sıkkınlık başlıyor. Güzel başlamanız gerekiyor güzel devam etmeniz için ve bunun içinde güzel bir fikir bulmanız gerekiyor. Onu bulamazsam veya bulduğumuzda memnun olamama kaygısı oluyor genelde.

R: Bu yaşanan sıkıntıların sebepleri nelerdir peki?

P(1): Bence temel sebep bilgisizlik hocam.

R: Sence sebep olarak düşündüğümüzde bilgi eksikliği ya da anlama eksikliği ne gibi problemlere yol açar?

P(1): Essayi güzel yazamamanıza yol açar. Genel olarak öğrencilerin yaşadığı problemlerden bir tanesi lack of time. Zaman kısıtlaması insanı heyecana sokuyor ve bildiğinizi unutuyorsunuz. Panik oluyor kişide.

Üstüne düşemiyoruz ne yazmamız gerektiğinin. Düzgün organize edemiyoruz yazıyı. İkinci paragrafa başladığınızda nasıl başlasam diye düşünüyorsunuz. Bunu garanti altına alsak daha mantıklı bir sıralama oluşacak.

R: Hıımmm anladım.Peki.

P(1): Bide okumamaktan kaynaklanıyor. Bi fikir oluşmuyor kafamızda. Topic sentenceslarda düzgün bir şey vermediğinizde onun üstüne fazla düşünemiyorsunuz. Farklı bir şeyden bahsetseniz daha çok şeylerde yazabilirsiniz belki de ama bilmediğiniz bir şeyi topic sentence a yazarsanız yazanın içinden çıkamıyorsunuz. Çünkü yazabileceğiniz malzeme olmuyor elinizde.

R: Verilen konular zor mu?

P(1): Evet, zor. Çok değil ama genelde böyle biraz daha yaygın konular olursa herkesin bileceği, yazmak daha kolay olabilir.

R: Ne açıdan zor sence? Anlayamıyor muyuz, o mu zor yoksa kaynak mı bulamıyoruz?

P(1): Bazen topic sentencelar bilmediğiniz şeyler üzerine denk geliyor. O yüzden yazamıyorsunuz. Benim hiç yorum yeteneğim yoktur. Edebiyatta yorum isteyen bir dal ve bunu dolayısı ile uyarlamak zor olabiliyor. Çünkü okumuyoruz.

Okusak aslında bir çok şeyi anlıycaz. Mesela nasıl yazılır, burada nasıl yazmışlar, yazıyı nasıl yönetmişler gibi arayışların olmaması yeteri kadar yazmaya engel olabiliyor.

R: Ne okumalı peki öğrenci, mesela akademik writing için hep makale mi okumalı yoksa diğer türleri de (roman, şiir, vs.) okumalı mı?

P(1): Aslında her türlü yazıyı okusalar çok güzel olur. Ama ne okuyabilirler daha çok dersek, İngiliz dili ve edebiyatı üzerine eserler okunulabilir. Böylelikle faydalı olur ve becerileri gelişir. Ama genel olarak mesela bir şey bile Türkçe aramak yerine İngilizce aramak daha yararlı olabilir. Ben bu yöntemi izlerim genelde. Örneğin bir hayvan araştırırım ve bunu yaparken İngilizceyi dil olarak kullanırım. Daha faydalı oluyor hem kelime öğrenirsiniz hem de analitik yazmayı etkiler.

R: Problemlerin sebebi adına eklemek istediğin başka bir konu var mı?

P(1): Yok hocam bu kadar.

R: Peki gelelim önerilere, bu problemlerin ortadan kalkması için senin sunabileceğin öneriler nelerdir?

P(1): Öncelikle hocanın olumlu bir dönüş sağlaması lazım öğrencilere ve bu onları daha çok motive edecektir. Öğrencinin bu şekilde kendine güveni gelir ve daha çok yazmaya istekli olur. Öğrenci hatalarını görür.

Aynı zamanda Eğlenceli bir şeyler vermesi lazım hocaların, sonuçta her yazı her öğrenciye hitap etmiyor olabilir.

R: Hocalar, öğrencilerini ders dışı da okumaya teşvik etsinler mi?

P(1): Evet. Bir de bu aslında öğrencinin kendisine kalıyor. Eğer istekli ise kendisini geliştirmeye, sizin demenize gerek kalmadan kişi onu yapıyor.

Öğrenciler kesinlikle research yapmalı ve bunu yaparken İngilizce dil tercihi olmalı.

R: Peki, bunun öğrenciye getirisi ne olur?

P(1): Kelime haznesi gelişir. Grammeri gelişir. Konuya vakıf olur. Farklı bir kültürden görmüş olur bahsedileni. Brain storming kaçınılmaz gerçek ve bundan çok bahsettik.

R: Brain storming ne kazandırır öğrenciye?

P(1): Zaman kazandırır. Özgüven kazandırır. Brain storming yapmadan düşünmeden essayi mahvedebilirler.

Bir de kendi seviyemizi bilmemiz lazım, en azından kendi sınırlarınızı bilirsiniz. Bu açıdan bazı öğretmenler sizden mükemmel olmanızı bekleseler de siz kendi sınırınızı bilmelisiniz yoksa kendinize olan güveniniz azalır. Ona göre kendimizi geliştirmeli ve zayıf noktalarımızı bilmeli.

Hıımm ben mesela çok social writing yapıyorum günlük hayatımda. Her gün mesela bir 10 kişi ile yazışıyorum. Bir whatsapp grubumuz var mesela. Dünyanın her yerinden mesela Yunanistan olsun İngiltere olsun hep bir aradayız o grupta. Günlük şeylerden mesela onların kültürlerini öğreniyorsunuz, onlar sizin kültürünüzü öğreniyor. Farklı şeyler öğreniyorsunuz sürekli. Nasıl yazmanız gerektiğini öğreniyorsunuz. Konuşma dili ve yazma dili farklıdır. Bu farkı görebiliyorsunuz ve öğrenebiliyorsunuz. Prepositionları öğreniyorsunuz kullana kullana, internetten bakıyorsunuz sürekli. Sizin bir sorumluluğunuz var, dil öğrencisisiniz bu yüzden dili doğru kullanmanız, yazmanız gerekiyor. O yüzden de araştırmanız gerekiyor, nerede ne kullanılır bakmanız gerekiyor.

R: Evet anlıyorum.

P(1): Bir de hocam aklımıza geleni direkt yazmamız gerekiyor. Her zaman o dinginlikte olmayabiliyor aklımız, zihinsel anlamda yorgun olabiliyoruz. O an çok şeye odaklanıyorsunuz, o an akla gelenin bir sonraki kısma uyacağını düşünüyorsunuz ve bunu not almazsanız. Diğer kısma varıncaya kadar o akla geleni unutabilirsiniz. Sonra hatırlamaya çalışırken zaman kaybı yaşıyorsunuz.

R: Study four language skills together, çoğu öğrenci 4 becerinin bir arada olmasını pek benimsemiyor ama olması lazım, değil mi?

P(1): Başka başka…Ha, evet, 4 dil becerisi birarada çalışılması gerek bence elbette. Okuma alışkanlığı edinmeli, listening yapılmalı bunlar birbirinden ayrılamazlar. Neyi nasıl yapmamızın farkında olursak kendimizi daha iyi geliştiririz.

R: Öğrenciler kendi yazılarını geliştirmek için ne yapmalılar?

P(1): Bence her yazdıklarının bir kopyasını bulundurmalı ve zaman zaman bunları okumalı, eksiklerini görüp bunları düzeltmeleri lazım.

Sonraaa, önce plan yapmalı sonra yazmaya başlamalı mesela. Plan yapmadan yazarsak karışıklık oluyor , tıkanıyoruz.

Outline yapılmalı aynı zamanda. Evet, kesinlikle yapmalılar. Şimdi zaman kaybediyor gibi görünüyo ama aslında tam tersi, zaman kazandırıyor bize.

R: Başka ne yapabilirler geliştirmek için yazma becerisini?

P(1): Geçiş cümlelerini genelde ne kadar çok bilirsek, hem akıcı olur hem de aynı şeyi sürekli tekrarlamamış olursunuz. Akademik bir yazı yazdığınızda daha uygun şekilde ifade özgürlüğü yakalarsınız. Hep mesela and and and yerine cümleleri birleştirebiliriz. But ile başlamak yerine however diyebiliriz.

R: Öğrenciler bunu başarmak için ne yapmalı? Çok mu okumalı sence ? Mesela benzer makaleler mi okunmalı konu hakkında yoksa roman, şiir tarzında eserler mi?

P(1): Her şeyi edebi anlamda kendi bölümleri ile ilgili okumalılar. Bu; essay olur, roman olur, şiir olur. Öğrencinin bakış açısına da değiştirir bunlar.

R: Başka ne kazandırır?

P(1): Kelime haznesini geliştirir öğrencinin.

R: Kelime haznesini bir öğrenci başka nasıl geliştirir sence?

Social writing yapabilir ya da speaking yapabilirler. Güncel hayatlarında karşılaştırları nesnelerin ya da Türkçe kelimelerin İngilizcelerine bakabilirler. Mesela çaydanlık nedir? Tea pot. Bilmedikleri çok şey vardır aslında. Ben düşündüğümde bunun İngilizcesi neydi diye, eğer cevap veremiyorsam sözlüğümü çıkarır bakarım ona.

Bunun yanında İngilizce dilbilgisini de geliştirmek lazım akademik yazı için.

R: Sence grammer nasıl gelişir?

P(1): Grammer çalışmaktan ziyade okuma yapmalı. Genelde zaten çok kişi iyi biliyor aslında grammeri. Kelime bilgisi ve bilgisizlikten dolayı yazamıyoruz. Grammerden çok onları aşmamız lazım önce.

R: Okudukça okuduğunuz textteki yapılar farkında olmadan oturur. Mantığını düşünmeden yaparız.

P(1): Evet, elbette.

R: Başka ne söylemek istersin.

Bir sonraki keep recordings of your writing, bunu portfolio gibi düşünün. Böyle bir şeyin ne gibi faydası olur öğrenciye?

P(1): Portfolio gibi bir çalışma yapmak lazım bence hocam. Yazdıklarımızı saklamak lazım. Ben birinci sınıfta yazdığım yazıların, özellikle sizin yazdırdıklarınızın bir kopyasını tutuyorum kendimde. Bunlara dönüp baktığımda ne kadar amatörce yazdığımı görüyorum, nerelerde hata yaptığımı, neleri geliştirmem gerektiğini, ne üstüne durmam gerektiğini görüyorum. Geri dönüşü daha kolay oluyor bir öğrenci için.

R: Yazmayı seviyor musun?

P(1): Sevmiyorum.

R: Peki başarılı olduğunu hissediyor musun? Yazma konusunda?

P(1): Yani, sayılır. Geliştiğini hissediyorum en azından.

R: Peki İngilizce grammer geliştirmek ekstra için bir şeyler yapıyor musun?

P(1): Günlük yaptığım şeyler oluyor.

R: Peki, writing kurallarına hakim olduğunu düşünüyor musun?

P(1): Yani, az çok ama bilmediğimiz daha çok şey var ve bunları geliştirmek lazım.

R: Peki, ders gereklikleri dışında başka makaleler okuyor musun?

P(1): Genelde hep sevdiğim şeyler üzerine araştırma yaparım, makale okumaktan ziyade İngilizce araştırma yaparım. Hem daha fazla kaynak buluyorum hem de İngilizcem gelişiyor.

R: Peki gelelim diğer soruya, yazma becerisi dersi nasıl öğretilmeli sence? Öğretmenler bu dersi nasıl işlemeli?

P(1): Bence hocalar sınıfta farklı yöntemler uygulamalı. Tek bir kurala bağlı kalmadan farklı şekillerde yazmayı öğretmeleri gerekiyor.

R: Başka?

P(1): Öğrencileri överek onları cesaretlendirmeliler. Evet, öğrencileri motive etmek lazım. Öğrencileri motive etmezlerse öğrenci yazmayı sevmediği için iyice soğuyorlar yazmaktan. Öğrenci aferin iyi yazmışsın gibi dönütleri sever.

R: Öğretmenler öğrencilere nasıl yardımcı olabilirler writing geliştirme konusunda?

P(1): Mesela bir essay önerirsiniz onun hakkında yazı yazarlar sizde artıları ve eksileri ile onları yönlendirirsiniz, burada iyi olmuş veya şurada hata yapmışsın burası olmamış gibi.

Eğer edebi bir konu işleniyorsa derste öğretmenler bunu eğlenceye dönüştürsün ya da daha sıkıcı olmaktan kurtarsın mesela bir şekilde. Öğrenciler edebi ve ciddi bir konudan çok hoşlanmaz diye düşünüyorum. Yani ben genelde pek hoşlanmıyorum. Hoşlanını da görmedim. Sıkıcı ve ciddi olmaktan çok eğlenceli bir hale dönüştürülebilir.

Başkaaa, mesela öğretmenler sınıfa örnek makale getirmeli, öğrenci bunu ister bence. Örnek makale getirip, bakın bu şekilde yazılmış siz de bu tarz gibi yazın denilebilir. Yani genel kuralları gösterilebilir essayin, öğrenciye. Yoksa bu şekilde yazın derseniz, öğrenci ona bağlı kalacak sürekli.

R: Başka fikrin var mı bu konuyla ilgili?

P(1): Öğretmenler sınıfta yeni makale türünü öğretirken, öğrencilerle tartışmalı bence. Beraber brain storming yapılsın her konudan önce. Evet, fikir edinmede de bu yardımcı olur.

Hocalar öğrencileri tek tek yazma esnasında takip edip ve değerlendirmesini o esnada yapsınlar dicem ama. Yani o pek mümkün değil.

R: Mümkün olduğunu düşünelim, yani 10 kişilik sınıflar olduğunu varsayıp buna göre ele alırsak soruyu sence nasıl olur veya olmalı?

P(1): Olabilir, bu öğrenciye ne yapması gerektiğini gösterir, yanlışa sapmaz öğrenci. Geri dönüşü daha kolay olur. Öğrenci hatasını görüp tekrarlamaz. Yoksa hata alışkanlığa dönüşür.

Öğrenciye hatasını göstermede en iyi yöntem bence hem yapıcı hem de bireysel geri dönüt vermeli bence. Kırıcı olmamak kaydı ile genelde şu hatalar yapılmış, sizin mesela kelime yetersizliğiniz var, kelime odaklanabilirsiniz denilebilir. Ya da güzelse yazdığı, bu arkadaşınız çok güzel yazmış. Şu yönlerden çok iyiymiş gibisinden olabilir.

Öğrencinin en çok sıkıntı yaşadığı şey bir paragrafa başlamak, bunda hoca yardımcı olmak adına, yani birkaç örnek verilmeli bence, devamı öğrencinin yaratıcılığına kalmış bir şeydir. Yoksa nasıl yapacağını bilemez öğrenci.

R: Hıım.

Öğrenci bilemez. Yani şey, hocalar öğrencilerin neyi yapıp ne yapamadıklarının farkında olsunlar Mesela; kim tenselerde zayıf, kim içerik olarak zayıf. Bunu bilsinler.

R: Bu ne fayda sağlar öğretmene?

P(1): Bunu bilmeleri daha sonraki konuları verirken de bir fikir oluşturabilir öğretmene. Genel bir şey verebilir çok fazla sıkıntı varsa içerik bakımından. Ya da kelime sıkıntısı varsa yine genel bir şey verilebilir. O açıdan daha iyi olabilir bence.

Yine hocalar öğrencilerin sadece dönem sonundaki vize ya da final notları ile değil de; dönemin başından itibaren yaptıkları çalışmalardan da değerlendirsin, notunu onlardan da versinler bence evet, iki saate sığdırmamak lazım öğrencilerin notlarını, çünkü genel olarak iyidir ama sınavda verilen konu ile ilgisi yoktur ya da öyle denk gelir, yapamayabilir.

Bir de hocalar öğrencilerin motivasyonunu mümkünse yükseltsinler. Writing becerisi zor bir şey ve öğrenciler tarafından da pek sevilen bir şey değil.

R: Öğretmenler motivasyonu sence nasıl yükseltebilir?

P(1): Övebilirler öğrencileri. Konu açısından da görsel bir şeyler verebilirler. Öğrencilerin motivasyonlarını kaybetmemeleri için değişik şeyler yapılabilir.

Sonra hocam mesela, hoca yazım kurallarını ya da instruction ı açıkça anlatsın sınıfta, hocanın açıklaması çok daha faydalı olur çünkü ben öğrencinin araştırma yapacağına pek inanmıyorum, güvenmiyorum. En azından belli başlı şeyleri gösterin, diğerleri belki öğrenciye bırakılabilir. Ana kuralları öğretmeleri lazım.

Sonra hoca öğrencilere pratik yaptırsın ders gereklikleri haricinde. Yaptırabilir tabi. Haftalık ödevler verebilir. Siz yapıyordunuz; mesela konu veriyordunuz 5 -6 tane ve bunların hakkında yazı yazın diyordunuz. Örneğin 18. YY ve 21. YY karşılaştırmasını yapın diyerekten. Bu tarz değişik konular hakkında yazmak güzel oluyordu. Zaten yazmak isteyen öğrenci gidip yazar. Hem kendisini geliştirir hem de 18. Yüzyılda neler vardı diyerek hem bilgi hem kültür hem de kelime edinir.

Başka mesela hoca ödev verdiği kağıtlardan beğendiğini seçip yazanın ismini söyleyip onu övsün mesela. Güzel yazmış, bakın arkadaşlar bunun gibi yazın desin örneğin. Olabilir bence. Çok fazla övmemek kaydı ile –kıskançlık yaratmamak adına- güzel olur. Her hafta farklı bir isim verilebilir bunun önüne geçmek için.

Bir de hocam hoca çocuklara worksheetler versin içinde kuralların yazılı olduğu bir dosya. Buna gerek var bence. Evet, verilmesi iyi olur ama verilmezse de olabilir. Öğrenciye kalmış bir şey lakin ellerinin altında olması dönüp bakmaları adına iyi olur. Yararlanabilirler.

Sonra free writing yaptırmak güzel bir fikir bence. Bildiğiniz üzere academic writing den farklı. Öğretmenler ara sıra free writing yaptırsın bence kafayı dağıtmak için. Bence yaptırmalı.

R: Peki, o ne katar öğrenciye?

P(1): Öğrencinin kendi sınırlarını görmesini sağlar. Akademik yazıya bağlı kalmadan kısıtlanmadan nasıl yazabiliyor. Farklı bir bakış açısı edinebilir.

R: Eklemek istediğin başka bir husus var mı?

P(1): Şey, hani bireysel feed backten hariç hoca, tahtaya bir derse mesela common error yazsın. Genelde yapılan hatalar bunlar diye sıralasın.

R: Bunun ne gibi bir faydası olur öğrenciye?

P(1): Öğrenci baktığında oraya kendisini görür, bir ayna misali. Mesela öğretmen ona bireysel feed back verdiği zaman o hatayı henüz yapmamış olur ve o konu hakkında konuşulmaz.

R: Sorularımız burda bitti. Verdiğin içten cevaplar için teşekkür ederim.

P(1): Ben teşekkür ederim. Yardımcı olabildiysem ne mutlu.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Emine İNAL AYDIN was born in Karabük, on April 25, 1980. She attended TED Karabük College High School. She studied at Selçuk University and graduated with a BA degree in Foreign Languages Education (Program in English Language Education) in 2002. She started her career as a lecturer of English Language at Zonguldak Karaelmas University. In September 2007 she continued to practise her profession at Karabük University and she has been teaching at the department of English Language and Literature for 11 years. She also taught English to preschool children for one year at Karabuk University, Demir Çocuk Preschool in 2013-2014 academic year. She took part in the Project called "Video based English Language education for Engineering Students (BAP)". She also attended the conference "3rd International Week on English Studies; Multiculturalism" as an active participant in Karabük. Her research interests include writing problems, academic writing, development of language skills, translation studies and teaching English to preschoolers. She is married and has two children.