

**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

**THE EFFECT OF ANXIOLYTIC STRATGIES
ON WRITING APPREHENSION AND WRITING PERFORMANCE**

PHD Thesis

Sarkawt Muhammad QADIR

**Nicosia
November, 2021**

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Sarkawt Muhammad QADIR

Supervisors

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen BOSTANCI

Prof. Dr. Mustafa KURT

Nicosia

November, 2021

APPROVAL

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Sarkawt Muhammad QADIR, titled “The Effect of Anxiolytic Strategies on Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance” and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Examining Committee	Name	Signature
Head of the Committee	Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ali Yavuz
Committee Member	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Oytun Sözüdoğru
Committee Member	Asst. Prof. Dr. Aida Adriannejad
Committee Member	Asst. Prof. Dr. Yasemin Çetereisi
Supervisor and Member	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen Bostanci
Supervisor and Member	Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

Approved by the Head of the Department. / / 2021

.....

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

Approved by the Institute of Graduate Studies

.... / / 2021

.....

Prof. Dr. K. Hüsnü Can BAŞER

Director of the Institute of Graduate Studies

*This thesis defense was conducted virtually, which was recorded. Members of the jury verbally declared acceptance. All proceedings were accurately recorded.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Full name: Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir

...../...../2021

Signature:

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF ANXIOLYTIC STRATEGIES ON WRITING APPREHENSION AND WRITING PERFORMANCE

Qadir, Sarkawt Muhammad

PhD Program in English Language Education

Supervisors:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen Bostanci

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

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One basic negative second most talked about emotion that affects second language acquisition involves anxiety. Previous research has tackled foreign language writing anxiety in most educational contexts, probing into the levels, categories, causes, consequences and strategies. Nevertheless, no detailed research is seen to have dealt with writing apprehension of Kurdish university students, particularly with regard to in-class interventions. For this purpose, the present study endeavoured to tackle the effectiveness of sundry anxiety-reducing strategies on writing apprehension and writing performance in an English writing course lasting twelve weeks among second year undergraduate students. The level, categories, and causes of writing apprehension were first identified and then students' writing performance was measured through both analytic scoring and error analysis. The study further aimed at identifying sundry correlations among the variables of the study. To this end, the study utilized a quasi-experimental design to answer the research questions addressed. Data were collected from 39 participants through two questionnaires, an essay writing test, teacher's diary, and instructor observation. The results disclosed that although the students experienced a moderate level of writing apprehension in the pretest and posttest, a substantial decrease in writing apprehension was observed in the posttest. As for the categories, cognitive writing anxiety, being the most common category in the pretest, was the sole category that significantly decreased. However, no statistically significant decreases occurred in the causes of writing apprehension. The study further revealed that students wrote much longer essays and outperformed in the posttest. Certain correlations, though weak, were also observed between the variables of the study.

Keywords: Anxiety-reducing strategies, writing apprehension, writing performance, affective filter hypothesis.

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List of Abbreviations

EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ESL:	English as a Second Language
HCDP:	Human Capacity Development Program in Higher Education
KRI:	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
PGA:	Process-Genre Approach

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This study tackles the effect of sundry apprehension-reducing strategies on writing apprehension and writing performance. It also delves into certain correlations between the variables that are essential for understanding the nature of the constructs. For this purpose, this first chapter is devoted to providing information on the background of the study and situating the issue in the context and the literature. It also concisely describes the problem that needs to be improved. Then, it goes on to introduce the aims that the study intends to achieve as well as the significance of the study and the limitations that the design and the methodology impose on the interpretation of the findings. Finally, a summary of the chapter will be provided.

Background of the Study

The English language has achieved a global status and has currently been an inextricable part of everyone's life. The so many indispensable roles that it plays can exert impacts on societies at multiple levels. It is deemed one of the most commonly spoken languages of the world. This necessitates learning the language by speakers of other languages. It has been stated that approximately one in four of the population of the world have the capacity to communicate to a useful level in English (Crystal, 2010). English is extensively adopted for international communication globally for science, business, technology, education and social networking (Abdel Latif, 2015). It is the language of the airports, tourism, politics, and even education, particularly higher education. Learning the language can help Kurdish students ensure their success in those fields. Thus, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), English is recommended for all higher education institutions and the tendency is rising towards the use of English. The English language has become a necessity for many individuals. Most people need it for their profession, going abroad, and for academic purposes among many others. In the education setting in the KRI, enrolment in English language courses has been increasing ever than before. Furthermore, most students are required to meet certain English language proficiency levels to be able to graduate their master and doctoral studies and to work for companies and general consulates. Among the requirements, high proficiency in writing has occupied the centre stage, particularly for academic purposes and for

working as a lecturer at university as well as pursuing higher education studies. Therefore, writing accurately and fluently is demanded at university for both students and lecturers. In addition, identifying the reasons behind weak writing skills or poor performance as well as devising strategies for remediating such areas of weakness are additionally deemed essential.

Most of the teachers who are currently working at schools and universities are the product of the old English curricula named ‘The New English Course for Iraq’ and ‘Rafidain English Course for Iraq’ being in force since 1980 and 2001 respectively (For more details, see Sofi-Karim, 2015). However, radical changes began to occur to the English curriculum in 2007 in which the old one ‘Rafidain English Course for Iraq’ was replaced by the new one bearing the name ‘Sunrise’. The New English Course for Iraq, which was used in Iraq and Kurdistan before 2001 and was based on the structural approach and the audio-lingual method, applied techniques of the Direct Method that focused more on listening and speaking rather than reading and writing to teach English as a foreign language (EFL). In turn, Rafidain English Course for Iraq, which was taught until 2007 in Kurdistan, failed to be taught communicatively due to economic sanctions and embargoes imposed on Iraq (Sofi-Karim, 2015).

The new program named ‘Sunrise’, which is currently in force in basic and high schools, is based on a communicative approach. Teachers are expected to teach it communicatively with a major focus on the four language skills and the components of language, i.e., grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. It seems to have been effective as a whole during the past decade. However, the detrimental effects of the traditional approaches are still evident in the teachers’ teaching methodologies. Instead of focusing on the language skills, instructors are over focusing the components, particularly the grammar component. There are still many English classes in high schools that begin with the teacher writing grammatical rules on the whiteboard, and then interrogating students to learn it by heart and apply what they have learned as well as translating sentences and texts. This method of teaching can be delineated as a grammar translation method that does not develop high school students’ competence in language skills.

Based on my observation as a lecturer at the English department teaching various undergraduate courses and as a secondary and high school teacher teaching for more than a decade and a half, I have realized that EFL Kurdish undergraduate

learners encounter many difficulties and challenges in their language learning process at college. These students are given four successive semesters of English instruction in writing at university during the first and second years and writing is a part of their English curriculum in pre-university education. Most of them can pass English examinations with high grades. I regretfully see that they cannot speak or write effectively in real life situations and they do not have the required level of proficiency in writing. In spite of writing being taught at different stages of pre-university education and at university, teachers complain about their students' weak writing and poor writing performance. Students in general and students of English majors in particular in Iraqi Kurdistan should have efficient writing skills in order to be successful in their academic and professional career. Failing to do so, especially for university students, results in failing the students' future academic and professional career (Ismail et al., 2010).

Of particular interest and relevance in the context of the present study is writing where no explicit instruction of writing is observed in basic and high schools. Though the new curriculum is integrative, some teachers might leave out certain writing exercises, especially the ones that are not essential for developing grammar and certain writing activities are not taught in the way they are assumed to be taught based on the objectives of the lesson. More importantly, other activities are taught only to practise certain grammatical structures. Consequently, students may not have the required level of writing before beginning with college writing courses. It would not be surprising if some students admit that they only learn the language to complete their school requirements. A number of factors might have limited teachers' efforts to effectively teach English, particularly writing such as the dearth of time, lack of class space, large number of students in one class, lack of multimedia and technological devices such as computers, language laboratories, and projectors as well as the Internet, let alone other extracurricular factors and factors beyond the education system such as the financial crisis and the instability of the region for a long time. As a result, basic and high school teachers divert to other traditional methods in teaching English (Sofi-Karim, 2015), particularly teaching writing.

Considering teaching writing at university, certain obvious serious drawbacks can be noted. At university, instructors would lay extra focus on grammar, punctuation, spelling, and accuracy in both teaching and testing and less focus on fluency and communicative competence that are essential for developing students'

competence in writing. However, a balance needs to be struck between accuracy and fluency when teaching and evaluating college writing. Overemphasis on accuracy at the expense of fluency might lead to anxiety or apprehension among university students and students' competence might only be developed in terms of accuracy. In the same way, overemphasis on fluency might lead to inaccurate weak structures in writing. Based on the pilot study carried out prior to beginning with this study, most students complained that they feared of committing grammatical or spelling errors in addition to tests and evaluation. This presupposes instructors' overemphasis on writing accuracy that might cause students' anxiety (Cheng, 2004) or, at the most extreme ends, writer's block, which is a writer's incapability to proceed with the act of writing. One more point that is worth noting regarding assessment in this context involves directing most focus on summative assessment rather than formative assessment.

There may be many reasons for the mismatch between effort and result in this particular context. Firstly, it might be associated with the teaching methodology employed in teaching writing, particularly at university because, according to (Chaqmaqchee, 2015a), the majority of university instructors in the Kurdish setting employ traditional or product approaches. As will be detailed later, traditional or the product writing approaches are less effective in teaching writing and relieving writing apprehension (Mujiono, 2014; Stapa, 1994). Moreover, the use of a process approach has been shown to be more fruitful and a blend of the approaches, or more specifically, the process-genre approach has been shown to be yet more effective than all other approaches and has been suggested by prior studies based on students' needs and their learning style preferences (Amjal & Irfan, 2020; Janenoppakarn, 2017; Hasan & akhand, 2010). Secondly, going further than this and to my observation, the provision of feedback is rarely observed, even if it provided, the category of feedback that is given might not match students' learning preferences and proficiency or it might be only accuracy-oriented. Furthermore, providing feedback by the teacher only might reduce interaction among the students. Based on another study conducted by (Chaqmaqchee, 2015b), the majority of Kurdish university instructors provide only teacher feedback rather than peer feedback that is deficient of cooperative learning. In this type of setting, students generally prefer teacher feedback to peer feedback since they view it as a threat or they think they will be mocked as a result of peer feedback. Furthermore, students reckon that the

teacher is the one who has the knowledge rather than their peer. Thirdly, other causes of weak writing skills might be attributed to students' previous writing experiences. Based on my observation, students in high schools were required to write compositions as well as letters and they were tested accordingly in the old curriculum. However, no tests of writing are observed in the new one that has caused writing to be absent or at least very limited as teachers emphasize the components that are included for the baccalaureate exam (a national examination taken at the end of 12th grade upon completion of high school). This, according to (Yastibaş & Yastibaş, 2015), creates a generation that lacks critical thinking capacity and cannot write down the things they have learned on paper. When students, who come from such a system, are demanded to write, they will not be able to produce what is expected. Even if they do, they will have many problems during the process, which will finally make them feel anxious. Fourthly, students' weak writing skills can also be attributed to the affective factors such as anxiety, self-efficacy, attitudes, and so on as observed in the participants' responses of the pilot study and the literature (Soleimani et. al, 2020) because these cannot only inhibit students from receiving and producing English but also affect their learning process as will be discussed in more details in subsequent sections. Therefore, remedial strategies for reducing writing anxiety are essential to be tapped based on the context in question to communicate more effectively in writing, free from grammatical errors, using strong vocabulary, and organize ideas more logically.

What is most relevant in the present study involves the rearmost factor mentioned above, i.e., anxiety or apprehension. Students vary in their preferences for writing. Some students savour writing experience while others find it annoying, uneasy, and even a panicky experience. As confirmed by Daly (1985), the idea that students vary in their enjoyment of and inclination to writing is an old one and people vary in the extent to which they view the act of writing pleasant, comfortable, or anxiety-provoking. This has also, in turn, been confirmed by Aikman (1985) that, at one end, some students relish writing and seek it out because they think it is enjoyable. At the other end, students have just a completely different reaction; writing for them is a painful, fearful, and anxiety-provoking experience. A plethora of research (will be detailed in the next chapter) has reported that students as well as their teachers run into a variety of undesirable or unwanted emotions and feelings

involving apprehension, fear, or anxiety which perhaps hamper the advancement of their writing skills.

Apprehension can be experienced when communicating orally or verbally, i.e. oral communication apprehension or written communication apprehension. Nevertheless, only written communication apprehension is the concern of the present study. Almost everyone undergoes the apprehension of writing; undergraduate students experience it, so do graduate students while being asked to write their research papers and theses respectively. Even the instructor of the writing course feels it prior to a lecture (Clark, 1990). Gifted students experience a certain amount of anxiety as well. The severity of writing apprehension cannot be ignored even with gifted students because it diminishes their motivation to write (Thevasigamoney & Yunus, 2014). Although students vary in their apprehension levels (Daly, 1979), it is estimated that 10-25 percent of all students possess writing apprehension to some extent (Onwuegbuzie, 1980). Young children and adolescents experience language anxiety similar to what adult students experience (Sila, 2010). On top of these, the capability of students in writing does not matter a lot because this, to a great extent, depends on their attitudes, perceptions, and their level of apprehension (Daly & Miller, 1975b). Therefore, one of the recommendations of the foregoing studies is that the severity of writing apprehension should not be ignored because it diminishes writing skills and prevents from development of students' writing. Some further recommend using writing apprehension questionnaires in writing courses at the beginning of each writing course to identify students' level of confidence and apprehension and devise strategies or use methods to raise their confidence and relieve their apprehension. Thus, probing into anxiety in learning a second or foreign language is significant due to its negative effects on writing competence, performance, and achievement.

A considerable amount of research has shown the detrimental effects of anxiety on writing competence, performance, self-efficacy, attitude and perception of students (Abbas, 2016; Daly, 1978; Ismail et al., 2010; Sabati et al., 2019; Tola & Sree, 2016). According to Pappamihel (2002), when students are engrossed by the threat a learning situation poses, they cannot completely focus on that task. Apprehensive students underestimate their abilities in comparison with relaxed students (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994), and fear of being negatively evaluated by peers (Horwitz et al., 1986). Based on (Abdel Latif, 2007; Salem, 2007), writing is

an onerous task for which an apprehension-free environment is required in order for students to be able to produce well-qualified writing products or to enhance their writing ability and Krashen (1985) believes that anxiety hinders the student's capacity to process incoming language and short-circuits the process of acquisition. Accordingly, anxious students might perform less well and achieve less grades in writing. Therefore, attempts at reducing writing apprehension is urgently needed.

According to Gregersen (2003), apprehensive students might have negative reactions toward their errors and Horwitz (2013) indicates that almost one-third of students usually feel moderately to strongly apprehensive about language learning and students with higher amounts of apprehension receive poor grades. One reason for anxiety experienced by undergraduate students of English, according to (Aljafen, 2013), might be the big and unbridgeable gap, as briefed earlier in this section, between the way students were instructed writing in high schools and the seriousness of writing English at the university level that can, in turn, lead to weak writing skills. This might be true for the context of this study because, as observed, only sentence level writing and paragraph writing at times is focused on in high schools while essay writing and various types of essays are taught at college.

In order to be able to handle writing anxiety, one first needs to identify who an apprehensive writer is. Research on writing apprehension has revealed a large number of hallmarks of apprehensive writers. Generally, these writers find the demand for writing competency extremely frightening, fear their writing being evaluated, abstain themselves from writing, invariably fail to turn in compositions, do not attend classes regularly when writing is required, hardly ever enrol in writing courses willingly, will not be involved in extra-curricular activities outside of the classroom that demand writing, and find occupations that require little writing (Daly & Miller (1975a). Therefore, teachers encounter an exhausting task of handling and minimizing writing anxiety among even gifted or talented students.

To treat writing anxiety and enhance writing performance, many researchers have implied strategies or shown that certain strategies can, if not remove, at least minimize or lower students' writing apprehension levels and improve students' writing performance. Daly (1979) thought that teachers play a significant part in the lives of their students. If writing apprehension impacts on the student, teacher reactions to it are essential. Daly (1985) stated that writing anxiety can be mitigated in two ways. The first investigates the influence of educational programs on writing

anxiety where the scrutineer inspects the writing anxiety of a group of students before and after they complete a specific type of composition course. The second approach recognizes and examines miscellaneous remedial strategies intended to alleviate writing anxiety. Both approaches surmise that a positive attitude to writing is a desirable characteristic. Jebreil et al. (2015) thought that creating a more relaxed environment for students and changing the testing policy can help decrease students' writing anxiety and improve writing performance. It is the duty of the instructor to keep an adequate level of writing anxiety because, based on them, eradicating writing anxiety is not practical and not helpful. Aikman (1985) suggested that writing courses be taught to university students in non-traditional ways and that teacher evaluation be reduced and substituted for peer or self-evaluation (Aikman, 1985). Finally, a multidimensional view of writing is seen indispensable to assessing writing. The way a student writes or the willingness he shows to writing relies on more than just skill or competence. The student must find some merit in the activity of writing. Moreover, a student's writing attitude is just as fundamental to successful writing as are his or her writing skills. A positive attitude towards writing can also be a critical precursor of the successful development writing skills (Daly, 1985). Furthermore, teaching students to write requires care and concern on the part of language teachers as it is a demanding task for students of English as a first language and more demanding for EFL students (Erkan & Saban, 2011). Based on Harmer (2004), writing is a sophisticated skill that includes the writer to go through a number of stages, i.e. planning, drafting, editing, and revising and it is affected by the content, the type, and the medium of writing. Therefore, while teaching writing, the choice of an appropriate method is indispensable in depleting writing apprehension and ameliorating writing performance because an approach might be more effective than another. To elaborate, employing a process approach to writing might be more effective in teaching writing and reducing writing apprehension than a product approach (Abu Shawish & Atea, 2010; Stapa, 1994).

In the context of this study, students are deemed to have not elevated writing skills. Based on my own experience of teaching in both university and pre-university education, I can confidently state that Kurdish students' writing skills are considerably weak (See Abdulmajeed, 2016). Students' final exam writing answer sheets I have scored in the different modules I have taught can confirm our proposition. Reasons for this are manifold. However, any attempt at improving

students' writing skills should aim at improving teaching writing and appropriately setting the affective factors. For this reason, the present study assumes the responsibility of doing this task in a new context that is underexamined in this respect.

Problem of the Study

One of the major problems that hinders the process of second language learning includes anxiety that is a component of Krashen's (1981) Affective Filter Hypothesis affecting all the four skills of language, among them writing. If writing in the mother tongue (L1) is difficult and faces students with anxiety and inaccuracies, writing in one's foreign language is considered much more. The problem that students encounter when they experience writing anxiety is very well depicted by McLeod (1987) in the quote below:

I am watching a roomful of college freshmen take an essay test; I can nearly see the tension in the air. Several young men and women stare into space, pencils poised, brows furrowed, sweating slightly. A number of others gnaw their lower lips. Others chew their pens, their pencils, and their fingernails. One examinee tears a page out of his bluebook, crumples it tightly, and fires it at a nearby wastebasket. When I announce there are five minutes left there is a rustle of sighs and low groans, a burst of final activity. Students leave, their faces smiling or frowning; few faces are totally impassive (p. 426).

What was sketched above explains one of the how-do-you-do situations of writing apprehension, that is of the essay exam. In other writing situations such as when writing an essay at home or in the class or when selecting academic courses as well as jobs, students might display other symptoms and behaviours in addition to the aforementioned ones in the quote. For instance, highly apprehensive students have been observed to write shorter essays and essays with reduced syntactic maturity, less syntactic complexity as well as limited syntactic constructions (Faigley, Daly & Witte, 1981), exude lower self-confidence (Hassan, 2001), obtain lower grades (Zhang, 2011), and spend less time on planning and organization (Selfe, 1984). In connection with majors and occupations, the level of students' anxiety can be so high at times that they avoid selecting majors, courses, and even occupations that have writing requirements (Daly & Wilson, 1983). Due to all these negative ramifications of apprehension as well as many others that will be mentioned in the upcoming

chapter, further investigation of writing anxiety in a new context like this one is very well justified.

In the Kurdish setting, many Kurdish students of English after twelve years of studying English and four years at college do not still have the required level of writing in English. This unsatisfactory level of writing can be reflected in their essays and research projects as well as the writing components of other courses (writing across the curriculum), particularly drama and novel because I have taught these modules that require much writing in the exam and have observed that students have produced writing that was either incomprehensible or contained lots of ill-formed stretches. Again, this is also confirmed by (Abdulmajeed, 2016) that the participants of her study produced many unclear, incomprehensible, and erroneous sentences. The causes abound; One of them can be associated with the way writing is taught. To elaborate, most instructors claim that they employ a process approach to writing. However, few of them follow all the steps required in the process approach, as observed. Furthermore, feedback, which is essential in the process approach, is mostly provided in passing. Another reason for students' poor writing might be associated with the lack of topical knowledge, which according to Krashen (1981), doing extensive reading can develop such knowledge and help students in their flow of ideas. Writing frequency can also be considered a reason of writing apprehension and poor performance as, the more students write, the more their writing fluency would be. In the present context, students are observed to do little writing on their own if not compulsory. Yet, another reason relates to setting the affective factors by instructors through providing support, transforming students' negative feelings to positive ones, and providing positive feedback. Considering anxiety, for instance, it has been mentioned as the nightmare for students that disrupts not only students with moderate level of writing proficiency, but also gifted students.

Writing anxiety is experienced by students of all ages, stages, education levels including postgraduate students (Hanna, 2010; Qadir et al., 2021), genders, and even instructors. According to Horwitz and Young (1991), almost half of language students in language classrooms experience foreign language anxiety. In the Kurdish setting, however, instructors' attempts for reducing or removing students' anxiety and taking into account of the other affective factors might not be according to the needs of students. Some instructors, particularly the ones who have not taught writing do not feel the detrimental impacts of apprehension on writing, so

do a few students, as observed in the responses of a few students and instructors in the pilot study. In order for students to have better writing products, instructors need to create an apprehension-free atmosphere and attempt at reducing high apprehensive students. Therefore, the present researcher, who is also the instructor of the writing course, endeavours to have interventions to identify the impact of certain apprehension-reducing strategies.

According to (Al-Ahmad, 2003), most researchers believe that writing apprehension is a major problem in the ESL/EFL context because students have the burden of the language in addition to that of topical knowledge. Therefore, devising certain strategies to relieve apprehension and improve writing performance based on the particular context is recommended. Some strategies are context bound and some are general and they can work in all learning contexts. Furthermore, when devising strategies, causes of students' apprehension should be taken into account. If students' apprehension is caused by lack of linguistic knowledge, then strategies that raise students' linguistic knowledge should be employed and so on. Accordingly, the task of a writing instructor lies not only in specifying the level of apprehension among students, rather the causes, the specific learning context, and devising strategies based on these. In this study, certain strategies were adapted to the context that focused on reading, writing, the psychological state of the students, teaching methodologies, feedback, and support as well as the use of Google Classroom as a learning platform because students are observed to have done no or little reading and writing in their pre-university education, have not been supported well enough both cognitively and emotionally, have been given no or little feedback to their writing, and teachers have often used a traditional or a product approach in teaching writing. At the most extreme ends, most of the instructors' effort has been devoted to certain mechanical exercises, types of sentences, and so on that is merely concerned with recognition of certain facts rather than production of a well-written paragraph or essay. To tackle these issues, strategies relevant to them were invented.

On top of all of these, a number of researchers, among them Cheng (2004) thinks that further validation research with a different sample or in a different learning context is desirable in order to help improve on this measurement instrument as DeVellis (2016) states that, "validation is a cumulative, ongoing process" (p. 113). For this reason, various educational implications and recommendations for further works in this area have been proposed. It has been

suggested that further studies be conducted to discover anxiety-reducing strategies in more specified EFL learning contexts so as to open more windows to psychological dimensions of language education in different contexts (Jebreil et al., 2015; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014). Yet, a number of researchers, to name just a few (Cheng et al., 1999; Hassan, 2001; Cheng, 2004; Kurt & Atay, 2007; Salem, 2007; Abdel Latif, 2007) argue that most research in the past decades of the previous century has focused on native students' writing apprehension and that not sufficient research has been devoted to second or foreign language students' writing apprehension and; therefore, they suggest conducting studies among second or foreign language students in other contexts. One last problem that has remained unexamined involves the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance. Previous studies have not shown if writing apprehension is linked to writing performance in the Kurdish setting. This study probes into the correlation and observes if the apprehension-reducing strategies can affect both writing apprehension and writing performance within the lenses of Krashen (1981)'s Affective Filter Hypotheses that anxiety is assumed to short-circuit the acquisition of a second or foreign language and that any attempt at reducing it can improve performance.

Aim of the Study

Thus, the present study endeavours to recognize the extent of the apprehension experienced by a group of undergraduate Kurdish EFL students because it is not examined yet, at least to my best knowledge, until the start of the current study. It further elaborates the categories and causes of their apprehension. More importantly, the study will apply the process-genre approach together along with certain anxiety-reducing strategies, devised through pilot-testing, in a time span of a 12-week semester in a writing module, and will observe the fluctuations that might occur to the writing apprehension levels, categories, and causes as well as writing performance due to their combined effect. Most importantly, the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance will also be revealed for the purpose of understanding whether alteration in writing apprehension levels co-occur with alterations in writing performance. This study is exclusively devoted to answering the research questions stated below:

1. To what extent do Kurdish undergraduate English as a foreign language students experience anxiety in writing?

2. What is the most and least common category of anxiety experienced by Kurdish undergraduate students of English in writing?
3. What are the factors that trigger Kurdish students' writing anxiety?
4. To what degree are Kurdish students of English accurate in writing essays in English as measured by:
 - a. analytic scoring
 - b. the number of the errors?
5. What are the most and least common error categories in Kurdish students' writing?
6. Is there a statistically significant correlation between:
 - a. writing anxiety and writing performance as measured by analytic scoring?
 - b. writing anxiety and writing performance as measured by error frequencies?
 - c. analytic scoring and error frequencies?
 - d. gender and writing apprehension?
7. Would the strategies influence:
 - a. writing anxiety levels?
 - b. writing anxiety types?
 - c. Writing anxiety causes?
8. Would the strategies influence:
 - a. writing performance as measured by grades
 - b. writing performance as measured by error analysis?

Significance of the Study

Writing, one of the major productive skills of EFL learning, has always been the focal concern of EFL practitioners and researchers. It represents a continual demand and valued commodity in the educational setting. It is viewed by many as an essential competency needed for academic success (Aljafen, 2013; Daly, 1979; Ismail et al., 2010), being utilized in learning other receptive and productive skills (Zhu, 2004). The ability to write effectively in English is considered vital to equip students for success in college and their future careers (Aljafen, 2013; Tuan, 2010), being demanded in many professions (DeDeyn, 2011). Every student in almost every school grade is required to involve in some amount of writing (Daly, 1979). Certain

courses on both levels of high school and college should accent writing because this age demands competence in writing and it would be hard to find a profession that does not require writing (Daly & Miller, 1975a). Furthermore, the potentiality to write gives both children and adults superiority over those who are not potential in writing and these students have been described as 'not blessed' in Harmer's phraseology. To illustrate, measuring a students' knowledge in the education setting is based on writing proficiency in most exams. Writing is also equally essential for both native and foreign students because it has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English. On top of these, writing can always be used as a means of reinforcing language known as reinforcement writing, i.e. for practising recently learnt grammatical rules, encouraging students to concentrate on accurate language use (Harmer, 2004). It can also promote and stimulate thinking, learning, communication and makes thought available for reflection (Mekheimer, 2005). Therefore, writing will be the medium where the current investigation anchors.

Before 2010 in KRI, most English departments predominantly concentrated on the pure linguistic levels rather than the language skills. This was one reason for why most students would have gained lots of knowledge about language but they would have found it difficult to speak or write fluently or at least comprehend native speakers of English after graduation. Although attention was shifted towards language skills after that date due to the study abroad of many students under the auspices of a program called HCDP and their exposure to foreign universities in various countries, the ramifications of the old teaching methodologies are still dominant. Even nowadays, though being reformed, many university instructors, as observed, lack appropriate and effective methods of teaching the language skills. Therefore, the present study tackles one of the productive skills of language that is essential for both academic and professional careers and weaknesses in writing might affect them in the future. In addition, adapting an appropriate method of teaching the language skills, especially writing can be an initiative for carrying out more research in this area.

Furthermore, the speculations raised in the previous sections from my personal experience triggered my curiosity to be enthused about knowing more regarding writing anxiety and performance among Kurdish students at university who are required to write in English. It is also evident from the above accounts of the issues in the context in question and the findings and recommendations of the

previous studies in contexts other than the Kurdish context that writing anxiety is a serious issue hindering students' learning. Therefore, the present study will devise remediation strategies and uses an approach to teaching writing, which is new to the educational context, to reduce the adverse impacts of writing apprehension on students and ameliorate their writing performance. It also attempts at showing the correlation between writing anxiety and writing performance. It extends previous research by examining the role of writing apprehension on writing performance that, to date, have not been related to apprehension, particularly in the Kurdish setting.

More importantly, although the literature is replete with research on second or foreign language anxiety during the last five or so decades, research in this area appears to be scant in the Kurdish setting; very few studies have been devoted to tackling English foreign language learning anxiety in general and no studies, to date, have tackled writing apprehension among Kurdish students of English, particularly in connection with writing accuracy and performance to identify the certain areas of writing inaccuracy that seem to be associated with writing apprehension. Some significant attempts have been made to identify the areas of writing weakness among university students in writing (Abdulmajeed, 2016). However, the impact of affective factors, particularly anxiety on writing accuracy or performance has remained uninvestigated. Only one study, namely (Soleimani et al., 2020) investigated the correlation of affective factors to writing performance quantitatively and that study has recommended teachers to try to minimize the negative impacts of anxiety and to study writing anxiety qualitatively as well as raise students' level of competence through confidence. Furthermore, since writing accuracy and performance in EFL students' writing were considered to be the main problem that students encounter in their writing according to (Abdulmajeed, 2016), the researcher determined to tackle writing performance. Thus, the present study is significant because it tackles writing anxiety in a new context, considers the recommendation of the foregoing studies, and minimizes anxiety in a language skill that is significant for students' academic careers. Most importantly, it would be beneficial for second language researchers, instructors and students to be aware of areas of weaknesses in the present context and to understand the effect of a psychological construct such as apprehension on writing performance. Above all, no attempts have been made to devise strategies that can help relieve Kurdish EFL students' writing anxiety and the design is the first time used in the Kurdish context to investigate undergraduate students' writing anxiety in

a public university that might add up to the previous studies conducted in the area in other contexts.

Above all, this study, considering the instrument devised for the causes, is unique in the type and number of the items included as well as the analysis of the data obtained. In most previous studies, only interviews were used to elicit the causes (Miri & Joia, 2018) while in this study an interview and a questionnaire were used. In most previous studies, the number of the items was less than twelve items representing the causes (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Syarifudin, 2020; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017; Zhang, 2011) while this study expanded the literature and the resulting questionnaire included twenty-two items. In the previous studies, the cause statements were either too broad or too specific (Jawas, 2019) for which a question mark might hang over them. Hence, the current quasi-experimental study is undertaken to tackle the writing anxiety of Kurdish undergraduate students of English and the issues raised above.

Limitations

The data were collected from 39 Kurdish sophomore students of English at a public university in the KRI. Generalizations of the results to other populations can be made in the region with university students as most universities in the Kurdistan region share nearly the same educational and cultural backgrounds. Yet, some noteworthy limitations have to be stated in terms of the current research that are associated with the sample and the methodology as well as setting restrictions to unfold ideas for future research to avoid these limitations. One such limitation is concerned with time constraints. The semester in which the writing module was taught was neither a complete nor a usual or regular semester due to the unstable political situation and Covid-19. According to rules and regulation, each semester must include sixteen weeks. However, the current semester was carried out in fourteen weeks including the midterm and final exam. Additionally, the unstable political situation and the frustration caused by the financial crisis reduced the number of the weeks to twelve weeks in which students themselves skipped a week and one week was made a holiday by the authorities. Furthermore, one week was devoted to the midterm exam and two weeks to the pretest as only twelve students came back at the beginning of the semester. Above all, based on the department's curriculum, two hours should have been spent on teaching writing weekly. The

authorities demanded that only one hour be in-class and the other be electronic or online, i.e. the application of blended learning. Thus, the treatment was given throughout the period of a semester that lasted only twelve weeks, with each week being one in-class hour and the other hour being devoted to online work done by the students based on the departmental decision. Psycholinguistic research requires sufficient time to produce more fruitful and generalizable results. Thus, devoting more time might have produced more generalizable results. A second limitation concerns specialization with this study's findings being associated only with English majors. Featuring participants of various majors would have certainly contributed more ideas and would have produced different results as students of English majors are more motivated to improve their writing. Staying on the sample, the size of the sample was rather small although it was 54 in the pretest but reduced to 39 in the posttest due to the large number of assignments they had, as confirmed by them, in the other modules because most work was conducted online by the students in the other modules. One last limitation is associated with the design of the study, being a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental one. Having had a control and the sample being assigned randomly into control and experimental, it would have been able to causally link apprehension to performance in writing.

Conclusion

Almost all teachers might have noticed a class of students being told to write about something, whether they be high school students or college students, many of them will be terrified and confused on what to do and where to begin. One of the reasons behind this can be the apprehension they experience when writing. Writing apprehension is one of the psychological characteristics that pertains to all students including native students of a language. Students experience apprehension when they listen to an extract from a film, read a novel or a short story, speak to a native speaker of another language, or when they compose a piece of writing such as a composition, an essay, or an article. This presupposes that apprehension pertains to both native students and foreign students as well as competent and incompetent students. It can be observed in all the language skills. However, the level of apprehension might vary from one individual student to another. It can also differ from one stage or university to another. The variation in the apprehension is dependent upon several factors including fear of committing errors, lack of

knowledge in English structure, negative writing experience in the past, not sufficient knowledge about academic writing, and negative attitudes to writing (Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2015). Writing apprehension in the Kurdish setting seems to be under-investigated with no studies examining the apprehension level of Kurdish students of English when writing essays and attempting at reducing it. Therefore, this study was devoted to this area in a new setting. This first chapter opened a gate to acquaint readers with the most essentials of the topic under investigation describing the background, the problem, the aim, and limitations. Further details regarding the topic will be given in the upcoming chapter reviewing the literature available in the arena of writing apprehension and the theoretical framework as well as studies will be further detailed.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Introduction

In the foregoing chapter, the researcher explained the problem in the wider context of previous studies and the specific Kurdish educational context. This literature review chapter endeavours to set the theoretical background required to understand writing apprehension, writing apprehension-reducing strategies, and writing performance. For this purpose, some information on writing and approaches to writing is first provided. Then, syllabus and its types as well as blended learning will be briefly defined. Next, current knowledge on the concept of anxiety or apprehension, its categories, causes, correlates and symptoms and associated concepts will be detailed. Furthermore, the chapter will also explain the origin of the two terms anxiety and apprehension. Following this, Krashen (1981)'s Affective Filter Hypothesis, which is the theoretical framework of the present study, will be explained. This, in turn, is followed by reviewing related research and the explication of the strategies recommended by language educators as well as researchers to reduce apprehension when writing. The criteria for the literature review selection includes the utilization of books, creditable journal articles, papers, and research reports as well as theses and dissertations.

Writing

To begin with, writing, compared to other human activities, is a relatively recent development whose earliest form dates back to 5, 500 years ago. Since then, it has undergone a number of various forms and passed through several stages. Approximately two centuries ago, writing was solely utilized by rulers of state and church. However, it became indispensable later for everyone due to industrialization and enlargement of societies and for the purpose of the individuals' fulfilment and advancement. From this point on, no one called into question the vitality and essentiality of the writing skill (Harmer, 2004). Writing is simply defined as the transformation of one's thoughts, ideas, and feelings into written language. It incorporates different interrelated components, being a demanding process in which students are required to employ high thinking skills, organize ideas effectively, and use appropriate language structures and writing mechanics (Erkan & Saban, 2011).

Writing is deemed a difficult task as it is required to be consciously learned in contrast to the other skills of language, involving listening and speaking that do not need to be taught and are acquired naturally (Harmer, 2004). In other words, writing is not an inborn skill or a potential aptitude (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Another difficulty of the writing skill lies in one's expressing himself adequately because, whereas native writers of English possess a vocabulary of several thousand words and a natural ability to handle the grammar of the language, second or foreign language writers should shoulder the responsibility of learning to write and learning the language simultaneously (Hyland, 2003). Even those who possess high aptitude and talent in a second or foreign language encounter challenges of performing exceptionally well in writing (Thevasigamoney & Yunus, 2014). Therefore, the writing skill itself might be anxiety-provoking. For this reason, student writers need to master certain skills to be able to master the anxiety caused by the difficulty of the writing skill.

Approaches to Writing

During the past decades, a number of approaches have been commonly utilized in teaching writing including the product approach, the process approach, the genre approach, and the process-genre approach. Below is a precise description of each approach.

The Product Approach

A product approach, which has been in force and dominant since 1970s (Ngubane et al., 2020), is a traditional approach that involves mimicking a model text that is usually presented and analysed at an early stage. This means that students are provided with a model essay and are assumed to read and follow the model, i.e. to imitate the model to construct a new piece of writing (Steele, 2004). This approach concentrates on writing products by looking into texts, considering their formal surface elements and discourse structure. Writing is viewed as a textual product and a coherent organization of elements structured via a system of rules. Texts can be described regardless to particular contexts, writers, or readers. Furthermore, texts have a structure that are orderly arrangements of words, clauses and sentences. Writers can encode a complete semantic representation of their meanings by following grammatical rules (Hyland, 2009).

The objective of writing instruction in a product approach is for students to be able to produce a text that resembles in form and language conventions to the one they have studied (Ngubane et al., 2020). It concentrates on the end result of the learning process and advocates classroom activities in which the student is involved in copying, imitating, and transforming models of correct language at the sentence level (Nunan, 1991). Furthermore, it focuses on the model text, the form, and the teacher's text duplication. This means the grammatical features of the text and its organization are deemed more important than the ideas and the thoughts within the text. Assessment focuses for the most part on students' accuracy in writing, particularly accuracy in grammar, punctuation and spelling as well as exposition (Hyland, 2009; Ngubane et al., 2020). Indirect assessments, usually cloze or error recognition tasks and multiple choice, are extensively utilized in evaluating writing as well as direct writing skills such as a timed essay that can provide little information regarding a student's capacity to produce a good piece of writing (Hyland, 2009).

This approach incorporates four phases, including familiarization, controlled practice, guided writing, and free writing. Familiarization includes students studying model essays or texts and underscoring the features of the genre. Controlled practice is the controlled practice of the underscored features such as the language features or structures in isolation. Guided writing, in addition, involves the organization of ideas that is deemed more important than the ideas themselves. Finally, free writing involves the end product in which students select from among a number of writing task options. Students use the structures and vocabulary they have been instructed to construct the piece of writing required (Pincas, 1982; Steele, 2004). For instance, students familiarize themselves with an array of descriptions of houses by identifying the names of rooms and prepositions employed in describing a house. Next, they might produce certain simple sentences concerning house from a substitution table. Then, students produce a piece of guided writing depending on a picture of a house. After all, students produce a piece of writing regarding their own house. Thus, primary concern in this approach goes to linguistic knowledge, i.e. the appropriate use of syntax, vocabulary, and cohesive devices (Pincas, 1982). More importantly, teacher responses to writing in this perspective favour error correction and pinning down problems in students' control of language rather than how meanings are being expressed. (Hyland, 2009).

Before students can write coherent paragraphs, they are expected to have mastered language at the sentence level. Therefore, writing classes are in the first stages devoted to grammar exercises and sentence formation. This approach fits in well with the sentence perspective of the structuralist linguistics and the bottom-up approach to language production and processing (Nunan, 1991).

One of the merits of this approach is that students learn to use certain pattern-product methods in writing an essay systematically, particularly in writing narrative, descriptive, and persuasive essays. Furthermore, students learn to correct sundry sentence patterns and vocabulary for these text types and enhance their grammatical awareness (Tangpermpoon, 2008). One of the demerits and criticisms of the approach is its heavy focus on the use of correct grammatical features, forms and language features (Ngubane et al., 2020). However, other authors including (Badger & White 2000) reckon that the product approach does realize students' needs for linguistic development and competence across various texts for them to become effective writers. To them, imitation is one technique by which students learn. Put another way, teachers are recommended to balance the product approach with other writing approaches to efficiently advocate the development of their students' writing skills.

The Process Approach

As the name suggests, the process approach focuses on the writer rather than the text and refers to the processes that writers go through when producing a text. In this approach, the process of writing is as significant as the product (Hyland, 2009). It emphasises the development of good practices by stressing that writing is done in four stages of planning, drafting, revising and editing, which are recursive, interactive and potentially simultaneous (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2009; Nunan, 1991). In other words, the process approach focuses on the different classroom activities that promote the development of language use through brainstorming, group discussion, and rewriting (Steele, 2004). This approach is a cyclical approach, not a single-shot approach in which students are not supposed to produce and submit complete answers to their writing assignments, rather they are expected to go through a number of phases of drafting and gaining feedback on their drafts, whether it be from peers or teachers. Then, it is followed by revision of their texts (Badger & White, 2000; Kroll, 1990), i.e. writers do not produce final texts at

their first endeavour, rather the final text emerges from successive drafts (Nunan, 1991). Therefore, writing in this approach is a non-linear, exploratory and generative process by which writers explore and reformulate their ideas as they endeavour to approximate meaning (Zamel, 1983).

To exemplify, a process approach to writing works as follows: A usual activity at the planning stage would be for students to brainstorm on the topic of houses. At the drafting stage, they would choose and structure the outcome of the brainstorming activity to offer a plan of a description of a house. This would usher the first draft of a description of a specific house. After discussion, students might revise the first draft individually or in groups. Finally, the students would proof-read the text (Badger & White, 2000).

This approach can be characterised by focusing on quantity rather than quality, encouraging writers not to worry much about formal correctness, encouraging collaborative work as a way of improving motivation and developing positive attitudes, and deflecting attention to grammar (Nunan, 1991). Moreover, writing in this approach is viewed as predominantly associated with linguistic skills including planning and drafting, rather than linguistic knowledge including knowledge about grammar and text structure. Additionally, writing development is viewed as an unconscious process that occurs when teachers lubricate the exercise of writing skills (Badger & White, 2000).

The merits of the process instruction are manifold. Generally, the stages of the process approach enable students to be responsible for making writing enhancement themselves (Raimes, 1991), i.e. to produce coherent texts independently after passing through a number of steps involved in the process of writing mentioned above. Specifically, it helps students generate ideas before starting writing through brainstorming in the planning stage. It helps them to revise their ideas back and forth and to edit their writing prior to the publication of the final product. Furthermore, Writing is learnt, not taught in this approach; therefore, the role of the teacher is to be, dissimilar from the product approach, non-directive and facilitating, providing students with the room to construct their own meanings through a positive, encouraging, and cooperative environment with lowest interference of the teacher, i.e. teachers play the role of an executive control known as a monitor or a facilitator. Teachers evoke students' thinking through pre-writing tasks, including analogies and journal writing. This, then, is writing as self-discovery

(Hyland, 2009). More importantly, in the revision phase students will be able to identify their weaknesses in writing through both teacher and peer feedback and correction.

The demerit of the approach is that it provides no clear theoretical principles to assess good writing and it does not provide advice to accomplish it because good writing does not mirror the application of rules. Although the process approach has aided to move teaching of writing away from a limited attention to form, it disregards communication in the real-world settings where writing matters. Furthermore, this approach suffers from a number of limitations, including the similarity of the composing process patterns in L1 and L2 and not differentiating between skilled writers and novice writers or between L1 and L2 writers. For instance, skilled writers write differently from novice writers and they employ more efficient planning and revising strategies. In addition, L2 writers plan less, are less fluent, and produce less accurate and effective texts. L2 writers revise more, yet they reflect less (Hyland, 2009). Other criticisms involve the confinement of the approach to one text type, namely narration and limits students' ability to master certain text types such as arguments or exposition (Nunan, 1991). Finally, Zamel (1987) states that notwithstanding the enlightenments into the intricacy of the writing process revealed by prior studies, most writing classes are yet based on product-oriented exercises and drills which studies have primarily discredited. For this reason, students will have fewer opportunities to write that leads to teachers to consider this as the final product to evaluate and this conveys to students the message that the function of writing is to produce texts for teachers to assess, not to communicate meaningfully with another individual. This is quite similar to the Kurdish context in which most classes claim to employ the writing process approach. However, these exercises and drills of the product approach are still evident and teachers evaluate students' writing as the final product and this lacks meaningful communication in writing. Based on (Zamel, 1987), writing classes should consider students' purposes for writing that cut across producing texts for teacher assessment. Consistently, Badger and White (2000) state that the process approach neglects the context in which writing occurs and believe that this is abnormal. They further state that four elements of the context should be concentrated on in the pre-writing phase including the audience, the organization of the text, the generation of ideas, and the purpose. For this reason, the genre approach to writing was suggested later.

The Genre Approach

The notion of ‘genre’ is straightforwardly defined by (Hyland, 2003) as an abstract and socially realized way of employing language for a specific purpose. Furthermore, the term ‘genre’ can refer to a kind of discourse that transpires in a specific context that has idiosyncratic and identifiable patterns and norms of organization and structure, and that has specific and idiosyncratic communicative functions, e.g. letters, news broadcasts, various types of essays, narratives, business reports, speeches, advertisements, and so on, with all having idiosyncratic patterns of organization that correspond to specific communicative functions (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). This means that when constructing a text, the writer must employ specific features related to texts from the genre in which he is writing. Similarly, the reader expects specific features of the text based on genre expectations in reading a text (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). The features may be: linguistic, such as grammatical and lexical choices; paralinguistic, such as print size; and pragmatic and contextual, such as purpose and setting (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Thus, the genre approach, which is especially strong in Australia and results from the work of functional linguists of Halliday and Martin under systemic functional linguistics (Ngubane et al, 2020; Nunan, 1991; Richards & Schmidt, 2010), is a newcomer approach to writing instruction, particularly L1 writing (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). It has striking similarities with the product approach and it can even be regarded as an extension of the product approach to writing in many ways (Badger & White, 2000). It focuses on the various categories of text structures or genres and have particular generic and rhetorical structures, identifiable norms of organization and particular communicative functions. This approach is based on the assumption that mastering certain categories (genres) of writing is required for entire participation in social processes (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Carrying out each approach, there are a number of steps which students have to go through. This approach can be applied in three phases, including modelling the target genre, joint construction, and independent construction. In the first phase, students are exposed to instances of the genre they are expected to produce. Next, a text, similar to the model, is constructed jointly by students and the teacher. The third phase involves the independent construction of a text by the students themselves.

Although the is theoretically deemed repeatable, each phase seems to appear merely once (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993).

The genre approach views writing as a social and cultural practice and focuses more on the reader (Hasan & Akhand, 2010; Ngubane et al., 2020). Accordingly, writers choose their words to interact with readers and to offer their ideas in sensible ways to their readers. This includes what Halliday calls the interpersonal function of language, and it is presented in every sentence we write. Readers must be affected and persuaded by a text that views the world in parallel ways to them. Put another way, writing is an interactive and cognitive activity that uses accepted resources for sharing meanings in that context (Hyland, 2009). Emphasis is placed on the teaching of a particular genre that students need for later social communicative success (Ngubane et al., 2020; Paltridge, 2004). For this reason, pertinent genre knowledge needs to be explicitly taught in the writing classroom (Hasan & Akhand, 2010), including the language and discourse features of specific texts and the context in which the text is employed (Paltridge, 2004).

With this approach, the teacher assumes an authoritative role to support or scaffold students through guided activities while moving towards their writing goal. This scaffolding approach is propped by Vygotsky's socio-linguistic theory, which stresses the collaborative and interactive nature of a writing class. Vygotsky notes that scaffolding gradually decreases as students unaidedly produce their own texts equivalent to the model. The role of the teacher then moves from explicit instructor to that of facilitator until students gain writing self-reliance (as cited in Ngubane et al., 2020).

A significant point that sharply distinguishes the genre approach from the other approaches is that meaning is not imparted from mind to mind as in the product approach, nor does it reside in the writer's cognition as in the process approaches. Rather, it is generated between the participants themselves (Hyland, 2009). In addition, similar to the product approach, this approach regards writing as predominantly linguistic. However, it differs from the product approach in that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced (Badger & white, 2000). For instance, research articles and letters are used in different social situations or contexts and for different purposes.

This approach has a number of advantages. Firstly, it teaches students a diversity of sentence patterns to construct different coherent text types used for

various social purposes (Ngubane et al., 2020; Tangpermpoon, 2008). Secondly, writing based on the genre approach is an interaction between writers and readers. This adds a communicative element to writing. It converts the stereotype of a secluded writer hunched over a keyboard. This view has been developed by Martin Nystrand, who states that the success of any text is the writer's capability to meet the rhetorical demands of readers (Hyland, 2009). Thirdly, the approach is based on the assumption that students generally have little difficulty in identifying similarities in the texts they employ and are capable of drawing on their repeated experiences with such texts to read, understand, and probably write them relatively easily. This is partly because writing is a practice based on expectations (Hyland, 2004). Fourthly, this approach helps to better understand the ways that language patterns are employed to write coherent and purposeful texts. Genre proponents state that people do not merely write, rather they write to achieve some purpose. Writing is used to get things done, request an overdraft, to tell a story, describe a technical process, or craft an essay, and so on (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003). Therefore, genre is affected by features of the situation including purpose, subject matter, the connection between the writer and the audience as well as the pattern of organization. However, the major aspect of situation is purpose in this approach (Badger & White, 2000).

However, the approach suffers from a number of drawbacks. First, the genre approach combines both the knowledge of text as well as social and cultural knowledge for the students; therefore, specification of the either is a difficult job (Paltridge, 2001). Second, it overemphasizes the reader while it deflects student expression (Swales, 2000). Third, despite adequate work on particular genres, no agreed-upon categorization of genres has emerged (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Finally, if students want to be effective writers, they ought to approximate writing as a social practice and a purposeful task with intended readers in mind. Consequently, it is essential for students to write with an obvious understanding of their audience (Ngubane, 2020). Thus, the three key elements that have to be considered in this approach are: context, purpose, and audience (Nunan, 1991)

The Process-genre Approach

In the past two decades of the previous century, the product and process approaches dominated most of the teaching of writing in the EFL classroom. However, focus tended to shift to the genre approaches in the 1990s. Yet, a new

arena in the teaching of writing that emerged involved the process-genre approach which is a synthesis of the product, process, and genre approaches (Badger & White, 2000). Due to the pitfalls of the previous approaches, the process-genre approach appeared, though being complementary to the previous ones. One pitfall in the previous approaches, e.g. in the process approach is the dearth of the input (Badger & White, 2000). According to Krashen (1982), one reason behind increased affective filter, or more specifically second or foreign language anxiety, includes the lack of comprehensible input. Therefore, the current study employed the process-genre approach which can provide sufficient input affecting the affective filter. Although the other approaches each has been criticized and have been presented to oppose each other, they can become complementary when their certain strong elements are borrowed and synthesized, like the process-genre approach.

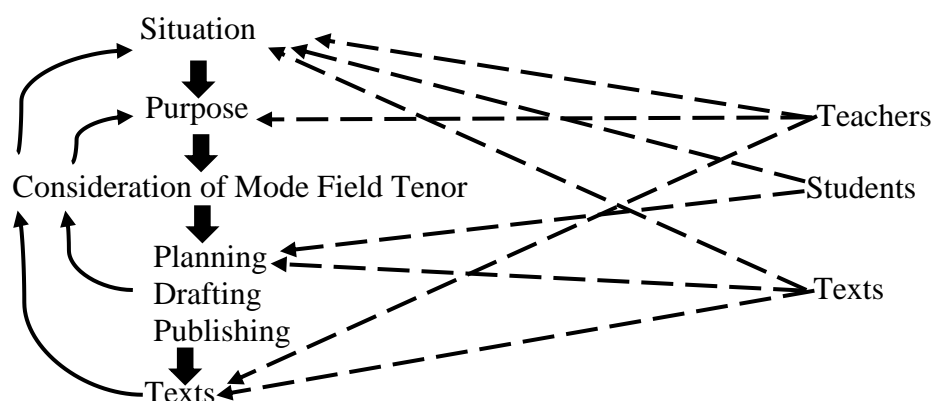
Based on this approach, different genres need different sorts of knowledge and a diverse array of skills. Writing should be embedded in a social situation to accomplish a purpose arising from a particular situation. It further concentrates on the language employed in a text and the processes by which writers produce a text (Badger & White, 2000). According to Belbase (2012), this approach lets students study the connection between purpose and form for a certain genre since they employ the recursive processes of prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. Employing these steps develops students' awareness of various text types and of the composing process. The various activities engaged in this approach make sure that grammatical and vocabulary items are instructed not in isolation, rather in meaningful, interactive situations and derived from the specific genre, as explained in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

A Process-Genre Model of Teaching Writing (Badger & White, 2000, p.159)

A process-genre model of writing

Possible input



As seen in Figure 1, Badger and White (2000) have proposed five features of a process-genre approach, including situation, purpose, consideration of mode/field/tenor, planning/drafting/ publishing, as well as text. Accordingly, instructors need to replicate the situation as closely as possible, and assist students sufficiently to recognize the purpose and other aspects of the social context that include mode, field, and tenor. After this, students would employ the skills suitable to the genre, including redrafting and proofreading, to generate their own text.

For teaching writing using the process-genre approach, one needs to adopt these procedures based on Badger and White (2000) as cited in (Belbase, 2012) and (Bensen, 2014):

1. Preparation. The instructor prepares the students to write by defining a situation that will need a written text and accommodating it within a particular genre, for instance a persuasive essay arguing for or against an issue of current interest. This triggers the schemata and lets students to anticipate the structural features of the genre.

2. Modelling. In this stage, the instructor introduces a model of the genre and allows students to consider the social purpose of the text, such as the purpose of an argumentative essay, which is to convince the reader to act upon something. Then, the instructor explicates the way the text is structured and organized to accomplish its purpose.

3. Planning. This stage incorporates many meaningful activities that trigger the students' schemata concerning the topic, such as brainstorming, discussing, and reading relevant material. The objective is to assist students develop an interest in the topic by associating it to their experience.

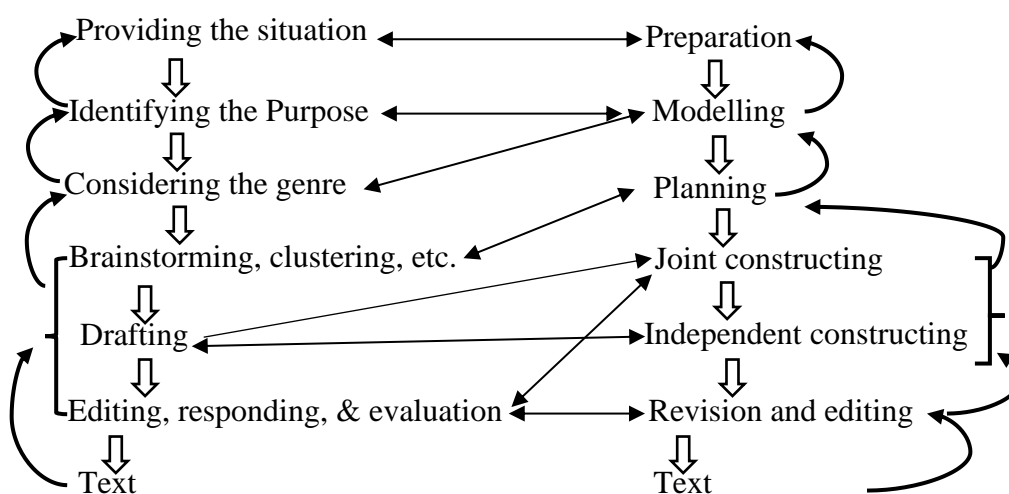
4. Joint construction. In this stage, the instructor and students work together to construct a text. The instructor utilizes the processes of brainstorming, drafting, and revising. Students supply information and ideas, and the instructor writes the generated text on the board. The draft offers a model for students to refer to when they work on their individual compositions.

5. Independent construction. At this point, students will have analysed model texts and have cooperatively written a text in the genre. They can now afford the task of constructing their own texts on a relevant topic. Class time can be set aside for students to write independently so that the teacher is available to assist, explain, or consult or the task can be assigned as a homework.

6. Revising and editing. Students will have a draft that will pass through final revision and editing. This does not necessarily mean that instructors need to collect all the papers and score them one by one. Students may check, discuss, and assess their work with classmates, as the instructor again assists and facilitates. Their final achievement will promote self-esteem among students because they have produced something. Figure 2 illustrates the application of the six steps explained above in a recursive way.

Figure 2.

Application of the Process-Genre Approach (Belbase, 2012, para.7)



Curriculum and Syllabus

The fact that L2 writing is instructed in a diversity of environments across the world, each with its own institutional restrictions, instructor proclivities, and student goals, indicates that writing courses can differ immensely. Notwithstanding all this variety, however, designing any category of writing syllabus necessitates instructors to analyse student needs, choose what is to be learned based on these needs, order the elements appropriately for successful learning, offer opportunities for writing, and track student progress and supply efficient intervention (Hyland, 2003).

The literature has coloured the two terms curriculum and syllabus with various shapes and shades of meanings that have led to a sort of confusion. For some, curriculum and syllabus are totally interchangeable, i.e. curriculum is merely another name for syllabus. When used interchangeably, some researchers prefer the term curriculum over syllabus since they see language content within a broader context of educational aims. For others, curriculum and syllabus are distinctly different. To

illustrate, curriculum, which is a broader term than syllabus, refers to the total programme of the formal studies provided by a school or an institution, such as the secondary school curriculum or the English language teaching department curriculum. In other words, curriculum is the totality of content to be instructed and aims to be recognized within one school or educational system. Whereas, syllabus involves a representation of the contents of a course of instruction and the particular order in which they are to be instructed; an overall plan for a module or content in one subject area (see Appendix B) (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Nunan (1988), on his part, makes a rather similar distinction between the two terms. He states that curriculum is making general statements concerning language learning, purpose and experience of learning, and evaluation. However, syllabus is more localized and is built upon accounts and records of what actually occurs at the classroom level (Nunan, 1988). Thus, a syllabus seems to be more specific and more concrete than a curriculum. A curriculum is inclusive of syllabus but the reverse is not true. A curriculum may endorse a number of syllabuses. For example, a curriculum may cover a complete school year but a language syllabus might constitute only one part of the curriculum. A curriculum might indicate solely the goals but the syllabus indicates the content of the lectures employed to move students toward the goals (Krahnke, 1987). The two different interpretations of the term curriculum and syllabus aforementioned arise from the different educational environments, for instance in the United States curriculum is often interchangeable with syllabus but it is not in Britain (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Finally, although curriculum and syllabus are totally different, they are closely connected.

Fundamental to the notion of curriculum is curriculum alignment. Curriculum alignment is simply the degree to which the various elements of the curriculum, i.e. aims, syllabus, teaching, and assessment accord. This means there is lack of curriculum alignment if a curriculum is based on a communicative approach, but the assessment procedures are based on grammatical criteria or if teaching materials in a course do not mirror the objectives (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Thus, curriculum (see Appendix A) should state the educational aim of the programme, the content of the programme and the order in which it will be instructed (syllabus), the instructional procedures that will be utilized (methodology), the means of student

learning assessment (assessment and testing), the means of assessing whether the programme has attained its goals (evaluation) (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Taken the terms curriculum and syllabus differently, curriculum development and syllabus design should be different. Curriculum development, that started in the 1960s, refers to the processes that are employed to decide the needs of a group of students, to develop aims for a program to fulfil those needs, to determine a suitable syllabus, course structure, instructional methods, and to perform an evaluation of the language program that stems from those processes. In contrast, syllabus design is one facet or part of the broader process of curriculum development that involves the process of developing a syllabus (Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Thus, to determine a syllabus is to determine what gets taught and in what order (Krahnke, 1987). Similarly, Richards and Schmidt (2010) state that syllabus design is a step in curriculum development that tackles the procedures employed for developing a syllabus, i.e. the procedures used for determining what will be taught in a language programme. To them, however, curriculum development is the study and development of the goals, content, implementation, and evaluation of an educational system.

Types of Syllabuses

Language teaching syllabuses might be based on various criteria such as grammatical items and vocabulary, the language needed for different kinds of situations, the meanings and communicative functions that the student needs to convey in the target language, the skills that underscore different language behaviour, and the text types students need to control (Richards, 2001). These syllabuses are characterised by devoting more attention to language use and deflecting attention from language form. Put another way, when designing a syllabus, choices of the contents of a syllabus can range from roughly purely linguistic syllabuses in which the content of instruction would be the grammatical and lexical forms of the language to the purely semantic or informational syllabuses in which the content of instruction is a skill or some information (Krahnke, 1987), i.e. attention diverts from language form and directs towards language use. Furthermore, when designing a language syllabus, an instructor must determine how much of the language content of the course ought to be common core, which includes those fundamental aspects of a language such as vocabulary and grammar that a

student needs to know whatever his aim is in learning the language, and how much ought to be directed to the student's particular needs, e.g. for science or business (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Based on Harmer (2015) and Krahne (1987), there are six categories of syllabuses. Although these syllabus categories are described independently, they are practically combined (Krahne, 1987). Below is a precise description of each one of them.

Grammatical (Structural, Formal) Syllabus

Grammatical syllabus is a syllabus that can be utilized for the instruction of any language. It is deemed to have rooted from the study of Latin whose basis is the grammar-translation method that requires little or no communicative from the teacher (Murphy, 2018). It is so-called because it is organized around grammatical items or structures such as grammatical rules, tenses, sentence patterns, nouns, verbs, adjectives, subordinate clauses, and so on that occur in a language and are arranged into an order suitable for teaching (Krahne, 1987; Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). In other words, it is a syllabus in which the content of language teaching is a collection of the forms and structures. Furthermore, a grammatical syllabus may involve other facets of language form such as pronunciation or morphology (Krahne, 1987). The sequence of introducing grammatical items and structures in a structural syllabus can be built on factors such as frequency of occurrence, complexity of the items, usefulness, contrastive difficulty with respect to the student's first language, situational need, or pedagogical convenience or a mixture of these (Nunan, 1988; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Conventionally, structural syllabuses have been employed as the basis for general courses, especially for elementary students. This kind of syllabus has been criticized for five major reasons, including concentrating on form rather meaning, not developing communicative skills, concentrating on the sentence rather than on longer stretches of discourse, constituting an imperfect dimension of language proficiency, not reflecting the acquisition order noticed in naturalistic L2 language acquisition (Richards, 2001).

A principal property of grammatical syllabus is that it is synthetic. Synthetic syllabus, which involves a list of grammatical items organized in order of difficulty, requires the analysis of language into component parts, e.g. grammar is analysed into parts of speech and grammatical constructions, with each being instructed separately.

The students' task, then, is to glue the individual parts together again, in other words, to synthesize them (Krahnke, 1987; Nunan, 1988; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Although few language courses are currently planned merely around structural criteria, grammar component has remained an integral part of many language courses for many reasons. Instructing a language through its grammar represents a familiar approach for many students and teachers. Furthermore, grammar offers an appropriate framework for a course because it can easily be connected to other strands of syllabuses such as notions, functions, topics, or situations. Most importantly, grammar constitutes a quintessential component of language proficiency and communicative competence (Richards, 2001). The majority of language instruction methods until 1970s were built on structural syllabuses. From that date on, a number of alternative syllabus categories have been implemented (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) that will be discussed below.

Notional-Functional Syllabus

It is a category of communicative syllabus in language teaching that was extensively discussed by philosophers of language and sociolinguists in Europe in the 1970s as a reaction against the structural syllabus or situational syllabus. It is a syllabus in which the language content revolves around communicative functions, i.e. the meanings and concepts a student needs to communicate (e.g. quantity, size, age, colour, comparison, time, location, duration) and the different functions or speech acts (e.g. suggesting, requesting, describing, inviting, offering, identifying, promising, etc. in written or spoken discourse) the student will employ the language for. The meanings and concepts are called notions, with the word notion being borrowed from the notional grammar (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Krahnke, 1987; Murphy, 2018; Nunan, 1988; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). The notional/functional syllabus, being part of the communicative language teaching focusing on communicative competence instead of linguistic competence (Richards, 2001), specified the semantic-grammatical categories such as frequency, location, motion and communicative function categories that students need to express, more specifically indicating the situations (business, travel) in which they need to employ a foreign language, the topics (education, shopping) they need to talk about, the functions (requesting, offering) they need the language for, the notions (time, duration) used in communication, and the vocabulary and grammar needed (Richards

& Rodgers, 2014). The major assumption is that control over individual functions and notions leads to communicative ability (Richards, 2001).

One key feature of the notional/functional syllabus is that it is analytic. An analytic syllabus is a syllabus in which the starting point of syllabus design is the units of language behaviour (i.e. requests, apologies, and other speech acts). At a later stage, if needed, the vocabulary and grammar utilized for different functions can be analysed (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

The notional/functional syllabus became very popular for designing syllabuses due to some reasons. First, this syllabus mirrors a more comprehensive perspective of language than the structural syllabus. Second, it concentrates on language use instead of linguistic form. Third, it can be easily be connected to the other kinds of syllabus content, for instance grammar, vocabulary and topics can easily be connected. Fourth, it provides an appropriate framework for designing instructional materials (Richards, 2001). Fifth, it places students and their communicative needs and purposes at the centre of the curriculum; therefore, it offers realistic learning tasks. Sixth, it allows students to focus on receptive skills such as listening and reading before running into performance (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Murphy, 2018; Nunan, 1988).

However, this syllabus category has been criticized by British applied linguists as solely substituting one type of list, i.e. a list of grammatical items for another list, i.e. a list of notions and functions. It indicates products rather than communicative processes. Furthermore, it offers a very imperfect and imprecise explanation of a few semantic and pragmatic rules. It states nothing about the procedures that people use in the application of such rules when they are involved in communicative activity (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Murphy, 2018; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Additionally, it provides no clear-cut criteria for choosing and grading functions, offers a simplistic perspective of communicative competence, assumes that language ability can be analysed into separate parts and can be instructed separately, and creates remarkable gaps in students' grammatical competence because certain essential grammatical structures might not be included in the functions taught to students (Nunan, 1988; Richards, 2001). These are all the criticisms raised against the notional/functional approach to syllabus design.

Situational Syllabus

It is a syllabus in which the selection, presentation, and organization of language content is strictly organized around situations such as at the bank, at the airport, at a hotel, at the supermarket, etc. (Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Richards, 20001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). It helps students to cope with real situations in a foreign language and it is arranged according to the particular needs of certain students such as tourists (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). This syllabus category recognizes the situations in which the students will employ the language and the usual communicative acts and language employed in that context. Situational syllabuses are sometimes employed in travel books and books that concentrate on controlling expressions encountered in specific situations (Richards, 2001).

A situation can be defined as an environment or a context in which certain communicative acts normally take place. Situational syllabuses based on informational content can have three categories, namely limbo, concrete and mythical. The limbo situation is one in which the particular context of the situation has little or no significance. For instance, in introductions at a party, the context of the party is greatly impertinent, and what is essential is the specific language focus involved. However, the concrete situation is one in which the situations are enacted against specific contexts. What is essential in a concrete situation is the context and the language associated with it. For example, ordering a meal in a restaurant is an instance of a concrete situation because the context is significant. The mythical situation is one that relies on some a kind of fictional story line, usually with a fictional cast of characters in a fictional setting (Krahnke, 1987).

One of the benefits of a situational syllabus presenting language in a context and instructing language of immediate practical use. Nevertheless, it is subject to many criticisms. Firstly, the choice of instructional content is normally built on intuition; therefore, little is known regarding the language employed in different situations. Secondly, the language employed in a certain situation might not be applied to another situation. Thirdly, a situational syllabus might lead to gaps in a student's grammatical competence because grammar is tackled incidentally (Richards, 2001). However, the problem with it is that situations ought to be defined subtly that lack sophistication. Another problem is that it relies on predictability. Neither the language employed in a situation nor the properties of the situation is

predictable. Yet another one is that situational syllabus might obliterate linguistic generalities cutting across different situations (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Skill-based Syllabus

Skill-based syllabus is one which is arranged according to different capacities that are involved in employing a language for the purposes of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This approach assumes that learning a complex activity such as listening to a lesson includes control over several separate macro-skills (e.g. writing) or micro-skills (e.g. creating a topic sentence) that constitute the activity. Examples of skills include, creating a topic sentence in writing, recognizing key information in listening, identifying turn-taking signals in speaking, and reading for gist in reading (Krahnke, 1987; Richards, 2001). A skill-based syllabus groups puts together linguistic competencies such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, discourse into generalized kinds of behaviour, e.g. listening to speaking. The major purposes of skill-based syllabus is to learn a specific language skill and develop more general competence in the language (Krahnke, 1987).

This category of syllabus, like the others has a number of advantages including focusing on performance, teaching skills that can transfer to many other situations, recognize teachable and learnable units, and providing a practical framework for designing courses. However, it has been criticized because it possesses no serious basis for deciding skills, and concentrates on discrete facets of performance instead of developing more integrated and global communicative capacities (Richards, 2001).

Task-based Syllabus

Task-based syllabus, being a procedural syllabus, involves a syllabus in which content and classroom activities are arranged according to meaningful and purposeful tasks and the procedures necessary to accomplish them rather than linguistic features such as grammar or vocabulary. A task means an activity that is fulfilled using language such as finding a solution to a puzzle, applying for a job or following instructions to prepare something. The implementation of such tasks and procedures is to substitute a traditional grammar-based syllabus with a meaning-based one in which negotiation of meaning and communicative fulfilment of tasks are employed to urge second language acquisition process instead of explicit

instruction and practice of grammatical form. Therefore, the tasks that are used in a task-based syllabus should be specifically designed for L2 language acquisition and should provide comprehensible input and modified output to students (Krahnke, 1987; Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Furthermore, tasks can be classified into pedagogical and real-world tasks. Pedagogical tasks are built on L2 language acquisition theory and cause L2 language learning processes and strategies such as jigsaw, information-gap, problem-solving, decision-making, and opinion-exchange tasks (Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

One of the benefits of this syllabus category is that grammar is not considered to be a major element because students learn it when carrying out these tasks. Another is that this syllabus type a more efficient method of learning a language because it gives a purpose for the use and learning of a language rather than learning language items for their own sake. Task-based syllabuses have not been applied extensively currently because of broadness of task definitions, unclear procedures for the design and choice of tasks, encouraging fluency at the expense of accuracy (Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Topical/Content-based Syllabus

Content-based syllabus, which was popular in the 1980s (Johnson & Johnson, 1999), refers to a syllabus in which content, teaching and learning activities are centred around themes, topics, or other units of content such as weather, leisure, racism, music, etc. (Richards, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). According to Krahnke (1987), content-based syllabus is not a language syllabus and the major purpose of this syllabus is to instruct some content or information utilizing language that the students are also learning (Krahnke, 1987). In this category, content is the starting point in syllabus design instead of grammar, functions, notions, or situations. All language courses regardless to the syllabuses they are built on must incorporate some form of content. Content in the other approaches to syllabus design is subsidiary but, in this approach, it is primary (Krahnke, 1987; Richards, 2001). Content-based instruction or syllabus is growing across the world to utilize English as a medium of instruction because students learn both English language and content simultaneously (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Based on the literature reviewed by Richards (2001) and Sabbah (2018), content-based syllabuses have a number of advantages, including facilitating comprehension, making linguistic form more meaningful, satisfying students' needs, motivating students, facilitating the integration of the four language skills, easing the use of authentic materials. However, the demerits of this syllabus type include difficulty in determining topics, themes and content, obscurity in the balance between grammar, content and other strands in the syllabus, requiring qualified teachers to teach content-based courses, and difficulty in having a basis for assessment (Richards, 2001).

Blended Learning

Blended learning seems to have been in effect since the invention of the Internet and the World Wide Web in the late 1990s. It occurred for the first time in a 1999 news release from EPIC Learning. Nonetheless, similar to many Internet buzzwords around this time, its scrupulous connotations have altered and later converged and stabilized. From 2006 onwards, blended learning has been conceived as an amalgamation of face to face and technology mediated instructional forms and practices (Friesen, 2012).

Thus, the emergence of technology, particularly new technology such as laptops, smartphones, and tablets have provided EFL students with new opportunities to learn and use English through various social networking sites and learning management systems. Nevertheless, using such technology and the Internet in different educational settings might produce different and even sometimes contradictory results. Tackling how various educational settings impact on writing apprehension and writing performance could assist whether educators should choose a blended learning or a conventional learning method of teaching writing. To illustrate, students with elevated behavioural anxiety may not perform well in a writing module since the additional layer of online study responsibilities could double the avoidance behaviour, e.g. watching TV instead of studying. Such students might need more scaffolding in the classroom by an instructor than students with a lower level of anxiety (Bailey et al., 2017).

Blended learning is refined and defined by Staker and Horn (2012) as a “formal education program in which a student learns, at least in part, through delivery of content and instruction via digital and online media with some element of

student control over time, place, path, and pace” (p. 3). One prevalent property of blended learning, therefore, is the delivery of a module partly online or electronic and partly through other modalities, with the two modes being connected. Put another way, what the students learn face-to-face informs what they learn online, and vice versa (Staker & Horn, 2012). Thus, learning with blended learning is not restricted to the school day, the walls of the classroom, the pedagogy employed by the teacher, and the pace of a roomful of students. Although the online student relies, to a great extent, on the instructor’s capacity to offer learning material and he should be trained in blended learning to improve teaching excellence (Husson & Waterman, 2002), the instructor is not the only stakeholder. Student participation is a quintessential component to successful learning taking place within a blended learning setting (Staker & Horn, 2012). One of the strategies of the present study would be using blended learning with the aim to reduce apprehension and enhance performance.

Anxiety

People vary in the degree of the emotions they experience in their lives. Depending on the context, the personality of the individual, the timeframe within which they live and many more factors, they experience those emotions. The emotions can be either positive or negative. If they experience negative emotions, it might affect them behaviourally, physically, and/or psychologically. The behavioural effects might, in the context of university and education, involve not attending classes regularly and/or smoking. Physical upshots might include headaches and high blood pressure. Whereas psychologically, negative emotions can bring about a number of upshots including preoccupation with failure or not getting the desired mark one deserves, not being able to recall what one has memorized. According to (Zeidner & Mathews, 2011), anxiety runs into someone both mentally and physically. Mentally, anxious individuals run into feelings of nervousness, tension, worries, as well as intrusive thoughts. Physically, they might display signs of bodily activation that is sometimes caused by a flight or fight response, involving perspiration, a pounding heart, and gastric disturbance.

Anxiety is a basic negative emotion or affect (Barlow, 2001; Spielberger, 1972; Szyszka, 2017; Zeidner, 2014; Zeidner & Matthews, 2011) that is experienced by everyone (Freud, 1949), even by animals (Based on Darwin cited in Barlow,

2001, p. 2). It has a rather long and chequered history. It is a highly and intensely investigated phenomenon in both psychology and education; the second most talked about emotion after motivation in language education (Scovel, 2001, p. 127).

Research dealing with it in various contexts and various fields of enquiry has filled the literature with studies tackling the causes, symptoms, consequences, and correlates of this negative emotion. Nevertheless, investigations of anxiety have witnessed a dramatic increase only after the 1980s (Rachman, 2004), particularly in language education.

Anxiety can also be used in a positive sense as when someone becomes anxious about getting things done, or about ensuring that things go well, or about being on time for an appointment. A world free from anxiety or fear would be a boring place that might cause frustration and torpor (Tyrer, 1999) or non-existence and insecurity (Sanders & Wills, 2003). The absence of innate fears such as fear of the unexpected, strangers, creeping insects, or heights makes it possible for human beings to be unprotected from danger. It is the fear response that leads to safety and survival. Barlow (2001) goes further than this and discusses the possibility of anxiety being “the shadow of intelligence” or “the spectre of death”. He argues that anxiety becomes the “shadow of intelligence” when the ability to experience anxiety and the ability to plan co-occur as two sides of the same coin. Accordingly, anxiety can also have a protective function (Barlow, 2001, p. 1-2), which is termed facilitating anxiety based on some authors. This does not mean to accommodate anxiety positively in all situations in this study and place it under positive emotions, rather it is to distinguish the two contradictory functions of anxiety from each other. Nevertheless, anxiety can have a debilitating function which is when it debilitates language performance, competence, and achievement.

Although interest in researching anxiety has only increased in the past four decades, the study of anxiety stemmed from the Classical Greek period (Zeidner & Mathews, 2011). The term is derived from the Indo-Germanic root *angh* that later occurred in both Latin and Greek words referring to a feeling of constriction or throttling but incorporating a more enduring discomfort or distress (Corr & Fajkowska, 2011; Tyrer, 1999; Zeidner, 2014). In English, several words incorporate the ‘angh’ root, such as ‘anger, anguish’. A somewhat similar term ‘angst’ was also employed later by Kierkegaard and Freud. To the former, the German term ‘angst’ can refer to ‘dread’ and ‘anxiety, while to the latter, ‘angst’ reflected the term

‘anxiety’ without a recognizable object. Anxiety was seen as a vague apprehension regarding the future, in spite of its theoretical importance concentrating on both past and present. With anxiety having an object, Freud preferred the term ‘furcht’ meaning ‘fear’ (Barlow, 2001; Zeidner, 2014). Lewis (1980) hints a number of translations of the term ‘angst’ including ‘agony, dread, fright, terror, consternation, alarm, apprehension’. He also believes that ‘angst’ signifies a more shattering emotion than the English term ‘anxiety’ that can frequently be used as a synonym of ‘concern’ (as cited in Barlow, 2001, p. 7). To Sophocles, anxiety is viewed negatively in his precise definition “To a man who is afraid, everything rustles” (Zeidner & Matthews, 2011, p. 1), which can be interpreted as everything in life is messed up when one has fear or anxiety; even the sound of leaves can frighten him. Although the origin of the term is known, the terms used to describe such an experience of emotion are many and confusing, involving “anxiety, fear, dread, phobia, fright, panic, apprehensiveness”. The aforementioned words each can be qualified with “acute, morbid, generalized, diffuse, ...” to provide various and subtle differences between the terms (Barlow, 2001). Finally, according to Barlow (2001), a more accurate and comprehensive term for anxiety would be ‘anxious apprehension’ to differentiate it from fear which conveys the notion that anxiety is future-oriented in which one is ready to cope with forthcoming negative events. Thus, anxiety is anticipatory in this sense. It is because of the aforementioned reasons that the two terms ‘anxiety’ and ‘apprehension’ are used interchangeably in this study.

Furthermore, striking similarities exist between anxiety and fear in many respects, including anticipation of danger, the presence of tense apprehensiveness, elevated arousal, negative affect, and accompaniment of bodily sensations. They are so closely related that in many occasions the two terms are substitutable (Rachman, 2004). To illustrate more, Sanders and Wills (2003) view anxiety as the experience of fear. However, they should not be considered precisely the same. First, anxiety is characterized by uncertainty and uncontrollability, which means that the individual suspects a danger but he is not sure when and if he faces or experiences it or not. By contrast, the danger caused by fear can be characterized by its immediacy, i.e., a danger that is immediate such as a dog snarling (LaBar, 2016; Rachman, 2004; Zeidner & Matthews, 2011). To illustrate this in the context of education, a student has the uneasy feeling about his success in the writing course but he is not sure if he succeeds or fails. Second, anxiety and fear differ in time of the effect. For instance,

while the dangers of fear are focused on the present moment, the dangers of anxiety are future-oriented (Rachman, 2004; Zeidner & Matthews, 2011). Third, the specificity of threat can also distinguish anxiety from fear. Anxiety is seen as a diffuse apprehension that is objectless and its source of threat is elusive while fear is viewed as a reaction to a specific, perceived danger that is observable (Barlow, 2001; Rachman, 2004). This was the fundamental distinction between fear and anxiety to most authors based on the presence or absence of recognizable cues, especially to Freud and Kierkegaard. However, behavioural approaches changed that and supposed that “all anxiety has clear identifiable cues, although some cues are more diffuse than others” (Barlow, 2001, p. 7). Fourth, anxiety is viewed as a state of prolonged fear in response to a vague threat. In contrast, fear is escorted by a subjective sense of apprehension or dread. Thusly, anxiety is lasting longer, future-oriented, has a less specific cue or elicitor (Lang et al., 2000), and functionally, unlike fear, fights a threat rather than flee from it (McNaughton & Corr, 2004). Fear becomes anxiety if active coping mechanisms are not successful and the fear left unresolved. Nevertheless, fear is not a necessary precursor to anxiety. Anxious states are caused by a number of cognitive processes such as abstraction, rumination, risk assessment, and mental simulation (LaBar, 2016). Lastly, whereas the onset and offset of anxiety are uncertain, those of fear are detectable (Rachman, 2004). Thus, it is now apparent that these two terms, though having many features in common, they do differ in certain features.

Definitions of anxiety abound and are variable. Anxiety is simply the feeling that someone gets when he feels that there is a danger that might prevent him from being developed further. Anxiety is similar to someone who is stuck in a crowded place. Many researchers define it as an uncomfortable feeling in which the individual encounters a threatening event. Although Freud employed the term ‘angst’ as mentioned earlier in this section, he never defined it (Bellack & Lombardo, 1984). However, he described anxiety as the psychic reaction to danger. A dangerous situation means one that threatens a person with helplessness in the face of threat (Barlow, 2001). Rachman (2004, p. 3) defines it as “the tense, unsettling anticipation of a threatening but vague event; a feeling of uneasy suspense”. Similarly, LaBar (2016, p. 751) reckons that anxiety is “a state of unease about a distal, potentially negative outcome that is uncertain or unpredictable”. More simply, anxiety refers to a profound emotion of fear or apprehension that evinces certain physiological

symptoms such as tension, sweating, and increased pulse rate (Cequeña & Gustilo, 2014). It is a pervasive trait that gravely influences a large proportion of the population (Daly & Miller, 1975a). Spielberger (1972) defines 'anxiety' as a multidimensional construct and a subjective feeling of apprehension, tension, nervousness, and worry caused by an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Anxiety is associated with a change in the nervous system that co-occurs with the tension, apprehension, and nervousness. Thus, according to Toth (2010), anxiety is not a unidimensional, easily definable construct, rather it is a multidimensional psychological construct.

Delprato and McGlynn (1984) think that anxiety can at least be employed in four senses. First, it refers to a long-lasting personality trait that extends across various situations, e.g., "John is an anxious person". Second, anxiety can be described as a response that is transitory and specific to a situation, e.g., "John is anxious during final exams". Third, anxiety can be equated with a peculiar attribute of affective experiencing, e.g., "John feels anxious". Fourth, anxiety does not denote any behaviour, rather it designates an inference or presumptive description of some behaviour, as in, "John studied the material because he was anxious about failing the exam". Finally, based on Barlow (2001), if one were to put anxiety into words, one can say, "That terrible event could happen again, and I might not be able to deal with it, but I've got to be ready to try". Based on Rachman (2004), the verbal expression of anxiety might be something like, "I constantly feel as if something dreadful is going to happen". Examples of such statements were observed with our participants during the module taught and are discussed in chapter four.

Mental health professionals and psychological counsellors help us recognize anxious people physiologically, psychologically and biologically through a number of symptoms and signals. Bellack and Lombardo (1984) provide a vivid account of anxious people through an example of a sleeping woman who responds to a man awakened by his footsteps in front of her apartment. The response involves trembling, sweaty palms, heart palpitations, and a knot in the stomach, a sense of terror, fear of an injury that might occur, and fleeing out the back door. This response is termed anxiety. According to Lababidi (2015), anxiety comprises three interconnected components, involving cognitive, physiological, and behavioural. The cognitive component of anxiety (which is also known as worry based on the literature reviewed by Toth, 2010), concerns negative expectations, self-doubt, and

subjective appraisal process. The physiological component is reflected in blood pressure, sweaty palms, muscle tension, forgetfulness, and blushing. Whereas, the behavioural component is associated with leaving a situation, avoidance behaviour, and frequent absence. On his part, Rachman (2004) thinks that it is difficult to detect signs of anxiety as anxiety is rather pervasive, formless, and puzzling to the person undergoing this emotion. Based on the literature he has reviewed, Barlow (2001) summarizes the biological attributes of the experience of anxiety where the cardiovascular system is activated via the constriction of marginal blood vessels which, in turn, increase the arterial pressure and reduce the flow of blood to the extremities. People frequently become white with fear because of decreased blood flow to the skin. Breathing becomes quicker and deeper to supply required oxygen to swiftly circulating blood. This increased blood circulation transfers oxygen to the brain in which cognitive processes and sensory functions are triggered to actively function. The liver releases an increased amount of sugar into the bloodstream to strengthen organs and muscles, involving the brain. The pupils become wider and more open. The digestive system dysfunctions that causes a dry mouth. Based on Eysenck's biological theory of personality (See Barlow, 2001 for further details), anxious individuals possess high resting levels of cortical arousal and a high level of autonomic nervous system reactivity.

Types of Anxiety

Anxiety can have various forms, types, or dimensions based on an array of criteria. One of the earliest psychologists who drew attention to the types of anxiety was Freud in his psychoanalytic theory who distinguished between three types of anxiety based on the locus of the source of threat including reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety. By reality anxiety, Freud meant fear reactions to the perception of an external danger. In other words, it is the response to a realistic threat (e.g., a burglar, an oncoming car in the wrong lane), while neurotic anxiety is an irrational response to an internal conflict (Kleinklecht, 1991; Rachman, 2004). More precisely, "when the source of threat was internally generated from unconscious impulses and forbidden desires, it was termed neurotic anxiety". Yet the third type, which is moral anxiety, is caused by unconscious conflicts or the moral portions of one's personality (Kleinklecht, 1991, p. 8).

More importantly and relevantly, psychologists and language educators (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991; Spielberger, 1972) have also categorized anxiety into three types in terms of transience or permanence or duration, including trait anxiety, situation-specific anxiety, and state anxiety. The distinction between trait and state anxiety dates back to the 1960s (Toth, 2010). The first type, trait anxiety, can be defined as “relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness, i.e., differences in the disposition to perceive a wide range of stimulus situations as dangerous or threatening, and in the frequency that a person responds to such situations” (Spielberger, 1972, p. 39). Individuals with trait anxiety probably become nervous in any situation and lack emotional stability (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Young, 1999). Accordingly, anxiety is a part of the individual’s personality and one of the major traits of the human personality; hence trait anxiety (Horwitz, 2001). Trait anxiety is an essential component of Eysenck’s three-component personality model and the Big Five model (Toth, 2010). This type of anxiety is not merely concerned with language learning situations, rather it occurs in a wide range of situations. The second type, situation-specific anxiety, refers to feeling anxious in a single situation. One situation can trigger anxiety and tension but not another, e.g., test anxiety, foreign language anxiety and stage fright. Situation-specific anxiety, based on (Horwitz, 2001), is the anxiety aroused in particular situations and it is recognized as the main type of language anxiety. According to Toth (2010), situation-specific anxiety is based on the belief that certain situations are more likely to evoke anxiety than others in spite of individual differences as to what specific situations are perceived as anxiety arousing, such as taking a test or speaking in public. The third type, state anxiety, is a temporary psychological state that refers to the experience of anxiety itself. This type affects the individual’s emotional, cognitive and behavioural states (Young, 1999). To put it another way, state anxiety is the anxiety that arises at a specific moment in time under a particular circumstance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). It is a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus, such as important tests (Horwitz, 2001). Therefore, it is called “the moment-to-moment experience of anxiety” or “here and now” experience by (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 28). Anxiety states are said to be transitory; they recur when evoked by a threatening stimulus and usually endure for only a limited period after the disappearance of the threat. Elevations in trait anxiety cause elevations in state

anxiety. The intensity of state anxiety may vary over time due to variation in the amount of stress encountered by an individual (Spielberger, 1983).

Furthermore, Horwitz et al. (1986) identified three types of anxiety that are exclusively associated with language learning or language performance, including communication apprehension (being afraid of communicating with people), test anxiety (fear of being evaluated such as tests or assignments), and fear of negative evaluation (being concerned about how others evaluate you). Most studies associated with language learning anxiety concentrate on communication apprehension, particularly on speaking anxiety. Other anxieties include social anxiety and existential anxiety. The former refers to those who are anxious about the impressions of others and fear their undesired evaluation while the latter is produced as a result of learning a second or a foreign language where students feel that they lose themselves, they cease to exist, and they touch their core of self-identity and self-image if they learn another language (Toth, 2010). Other studies have reported yet other types of anxiety caused by the language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and in this study writing. This type is known as skills-specific language anxiety that is concerned with the four language skills (Arnold, 2000; MacIntyre, 2017). While writing anxiety is correlated with general language anxiety, it is an independent and specific anxiety (Cheng et al., 1999; DeDeyn, 2011; Gkonou, 2011). In addition, writing apprehension could be treated as a skills-specific language anxiety (Cheng et al., 1999; Gkonou, 2011).

Anxiety has also been categorized into three types based on its dimensions which is the major concern of the current study, namely cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and avoidance behaviour. By cognitive anxiety we mean the mental dimension of anxiety such as preoccupation with performance, negative expectations, and concern about others' perceptions. Somatic anxiety includes the physiological dimension of anxiety that endorses sweating, tension, and palpitations. Avoidance behaviour includes student writers avoiding writing (Cheng, 2004). The earlier studies conceptualized foreign language anxiety as a transfer of other types of anxiety, namely trait anxiety, test anxiety, and anxiety of public speaking. However, current studies consider foreign language anxiety as a situation-specific form of anxiety peculiar to foreign language learning and separate from the other types of anxieties because it is a specific anxiety that occurs during the acquisition of a second or a foreign language.

Language Anxiety

One of the affective factors and individual characteristics that is assumed to affect language learning involves anxiety, which is the most widely investigated affect or emotion in second language acquisition because it is a frequent and intense experience and it has negative impacts on success in language learning (MacIntyre, 2017). Anxiety is a complex emotion that has preoccupied second language acquisition researchers, teacher educators and teachers worldwide. It is a single negative influence that resides within the student. Current researchers view language anxiety as an unhelpful and debilitating emotion. As a result, it should be reduced or vanished from the student and the classroom (Gkonou et al., 2017). Students with identical potentials and learning in the same learning situations may draw different responses to the language they are exposed to, whether it be a first language, a second language, or a foreign one. The differences are, by far the most researchers, attributed to affective factors. According to Bigdeli and Bai (2009), language anxiety is not biological, but a learned behaviour, which relates to how students view and value their learning. Although some researchers reckon that anxiety is a minor inconvenience for language students (Young, 1999), others reckon it may interfere with language learning, and its effects may cause lower proficiency (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Horwitz et al., 1986).

Language anxiety is currently regarded as a situation-specific form of anxiety (Horwitz, 2010, 2001; Horwitz et al., 1986; Luo, 2013, 2012; MacIntyre, 1999) that occurs at a particular point of time in response to a specific situation (Spielberger, 1983), because it is a unique form of anxiety that is consistent over time, but invariable within a given situation (MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

The study of language anxiety in a second or foreign language was launched five decades ago, in the 1970s. The essence of the term 'foreign language anxiety' dates back to Horwitz et al. (1986)'s study that is considered a turning point and an initiation in the literature concerned with anxiety (Dewaele, 2002). After the invention of this measure and after conceptualizing foreign language anxiety as situation-specific, researchers began to develop particular measures of foreign language anxiety such as Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al., 1986), Second Language Writing Anxiety Scale (Cheng, 2004), Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (Kim, 2000), and Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale

(Saito et al., 1999), among several others. This specific anxiety construct is assumed to be responsible for the uncomfortable experience that language students undergo.

Language anxiety is viewed as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) describe language anxiety as “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second or foreign language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning” (p.284). Language anxiety can also be seen as the worry and negative emotional reaction that is aroused when learning a second language (Gregersen & Macintyre, 2014; MacIntyre, 1999).

Researchers have approached language anxiety in different ways. Horwitz and Young (1991) and MacIntyre (1999) approach language anxiety in two ways: First, they view second or foreign language anxiety as a manifestation of other more general types of anxiety such as test anxiety. This means that individuals who experience anxiety in certain kinds of situations have the susceptibility to also experience anxiety when learning a second or a foreign language. This approach is termed the transfer approach that views anxiety as a manifestation of a general trait anxiety or the transfer of some situation-specific anxiety. Second, they regard language anxiety as a discrete form of anxiety experienced in response to language learning. This approach is known as the unique anxiety approach (Daubney, 2010; MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Toth, 2010). It is so-called because it proves a special form of anxiety that is manifested in reaction to the unique experience of learning a second or foreign language (Toth, 2010).

In his scholarly review, MacIntyre (2017) has trisected the literature on language anxiety into three broad approaches, namely the confounded approach, the specialized approach, and the contextualized dynamic approach that reflect historical trends. The confounded approach is so-called because the ideas regarding anxiety and their impact on language learning originated from a combination of various sources regardless of an in-depth consideration of the concept of anxiety for language students. The problem with this approach was measuring language anxiety and producing confusing results. Furthermore, the measures were adapted from psychology measures that had nothing to do with language itself. The specialized approach involves the identification, definition, and investigation of language

experiences. The third trend or approach concerns investigating anxiety in relation to a complex web of language experiences.

Based on Luo's (2013) review, four theoretical models of language anxiety exist, with each having components. Horwitz et al.'s (1986) model comprises three components; communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. Kim's (2002) model of foreign language anxiety that is composed of three components, namely production anxiety, literacy anxiety, and aural and evaluation anxiety. Later, she added two other components including teacher-induced anxiety and anxiety that is caused by problems with cultural understandings. Luo (2011) included four components in her theoretical model of foreign language anxiety, namely listening anxiety, speaking anxiety, reading anxiety, and writing anxiety components that were considered as four sub-anxieties of a foreign language. Luo's (2012) four component model of foreign language anxiety was produced after a close review of a number of studies. The components involved were classroom environment, student characteristics, target language, and foreign language learning.

A number of studies have reported language anxiety as a consequence that is influenced by academic, cognitive, and social factors. Academic factors that can arouse language anxiety include pronunciation errors, unrealistic student beliefs, overcorrecting students in front of others, and methods of testing. Cognitively, language anxiety is caused by low self-esteem, personality traits and shyness, biased perceptions of proficiency, and fear of losing one's sense of identity. Socially, language anxiety might be affected by fear of being laughed at, being embarrassed, and making a fool of oneself, a poor accent, using wrong words, misunderstanding communication, cultural gaffes, competitiveness, and the number of contacts with native speakers and its quality (MacIntyre, 2017). Other causes of language anxiety with the Japanese language were reported to be language proficiency, experience of learning the language, experience of using the language with native speakers, and experience of travelling to the country speaking the language in question (Chanprasert & Wichadee, 2015). Yan and Horwitz (2008) attributed foreign language anxiety to seven major causes, namely regional differences, teacher characteristics, class arrangement, learning strategies, test types, parental influence, and comparison with peers.

As for the sources of language anxiety, Young (1991) identified six sources of foreign language anxiety, being associated with the student, the teacher, and the

instructional practice. Foreign language anxiety, accordingly, arises from personal and interpersonal anxieties (low self-esteem, communication apprehension, social anxiety and competitiveness), student beliefs regarding language learning (students believing that pronunciation or vocabulary is the most important practice in language learning, communication, travelling to an English-speaking country, speaking with an excellent accent), teacher beliefs regarding language teaching (being authoritative in the class, intimidation of students, not being too friendly), instructor student interactions (a harsh manner of correcting students' errors), classroom procedures (responding orally, presenting in the class), and language testing (teaching communicatively but testing grammar, unfamiliar test formats). Luo (2013) based on his review, discerned four major sources of foreign language anxiety: the language learning process, student characteristics, the classroom environment, and the target language.

Furthermore, anxiety has been reported to be a cause rather than a consequence, in the context of language and education. It has been reported to impede learning of the target language and prevent from academic success (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). It causes learners to abandon their studies and have negative attitudes towards the target language and the relevant culture (Gkonou et al., 2017). It tends to reduce the willingness to communicate (Horwitz, 2010), cause deleterious tensions among students in a class, sow the seeds of self-doubt in the students' minds with respect to their identity, and have a damaging effect on second language learning lifeblood. It leads to poor language performance (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994) lower language achievement (Horwitz, 1986; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999), decreased listening comprehension (Elkhafaifi, 2005). It is because of these corrosive impacts of anxiety on second language learning that anxiety research resonates with researchers and practitioners for the past four decades (Gkonou et al., 2017).

Other consequences of language anxiety can be academic, cognitive, and social. Academic consequences include lower grades, reduced self-perception of L2 competence, and over-studying. Cognitive effects that result from language anxiety include preoccupation with failure and performance, self-disapproval thoughts, preventing information to enter the cognitive processing system in the input phase, being affected of speed and accuracy during the processing phase, being influenced of second language communication at the output phase through distorting

information retrieval, complexity of sentences, and the ability to use a second language accent. Social consequences include lower linguistic self-confidence, language student motivation, and less frequent communication (MacIntyre, 1999; MacIntyre, 2017; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

Toth (2010) also concentrated on the effects of anxiety on the three cognitive processes of learning from instruction, namely input, processing, and output stages. In the input phase, anxiety can influence learning by interfering in the extent to which instructional input is internally represented. This is effective as input that has not been internally represented is not available for processing at the next stage. In the processing stage, anxiety affects learning by impacting on the cognitive operations involved. In the output stage, anxiety interferes in the retrieval of previously mastered material.

Anxiety manifests itself in the second or foreign language classroom in the distortion of sounds, incapability to duplicate the intonation and rhythm of the language correctly, freezing up when called on to perform, forgetting words or phrases recently learned, refusing to speak, resisting learning the language, avoiding eye contact, nervous laughter, short answer responses, cutting classes, joking, and remaining silent (Young, 1991). Anxiety in a foreign or second language can also surface in the form of students complaining of problems with distinguishing sounds and structures of the target language and grasping the content of a target language message, over-studying, doing poorly in exams, avoiding studying, skipping classes, having difficulty in concentrating, becoming forgetful, sweating, trembling, sleep disturbances, missing classes, avoiding engaging in classroom activities, being unprepared for classes, couching in the last row, procrastinating homework, avoiding speaking in class, and having palpitations (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Consistently and uniformly, research studying the correlation between anxiety and second language achievement or second language performance has indicated that there is a moderately negative connection between them. In other words, students who display higher levels of language anxiety score lower on indices of second language performance than their less anxious counterparts. Nevertheless, the nature of the connection has divided researchers into two lines of research, namely those believing in anxiety being the cause of individual differences for success in language (Horwitz, 2000, 2001) and others believing anxiety being the consequence of second language learning (Sparks et al., 2000). The first view

assumes that anxiety is one of the variables that can account for differential success in learning a second language. It can have, as mentioned above, cognitive effects at any of the three learning stages by reducing student's ability. The second view assumes that anxiety is not a variable that can account for individual differences in second or foreign language achievement, rather it is a consequence of differences in language learning. Success or failure in learning a second or foreign language relies on one's native language learning ability or aptitude and not on affective differences such as anxiety. Their proof for this is that scales that measure language anxiety measure not only anxiety, rather they measure students' language learning ability and proficiency as well. Students with weaker language learning ability tend to score high on anxiety (Toth, 2010). Based on Young (1991), the assortment of variables such as language skill, language setting, research design, age of participants, anxiety definitions and anxiety measures should be taken for granted in the connection between anxiety and language learning or performance.

Strategy

The term 'strategy' is employed in a diversity of areas and a variety of contexts involving language learning and teaching, psychology, applied linguistics, and biology, among several others. In general, the term 'strategy' involves procedures that are employed in learning, serving as a way of reaching a goal. More specifically, learning strategies involve those conscious or unconscious processes that language students utilize in learning and employing a second or foreign language. In first language learning, the term 'strategy' can refer to the ways that children process language, without indicating intentionality or awareness. Yet in learning a second language, which is the concern of the present study, a strategy is simply a behaviour that is intentional or potentially intentional exercised with the goal of learning (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). In psychology, the term can denote a program of action that is designed to attain a goal or accomplish a task (VandenBos, 2015). Learning strategies can also be described as certain methods of approaching a task or a problem, modes of operation for attaining a particular end, planned designs for manipulating and controlling specific information. In other words, language learning strategies are operations used by the student to assist the acquisition, retrieval, storage, and use of information. More clearly, strategies involve specific actions that students take to make learning faster, easier, more self-directed, more

enjoyable, more effective, and more transferable to novel situations. They vary from one moment, situation, individual and culture to another (Tavakoli, 2012).

Strategies of Reducing Second or Foreign Language Anxiety

One of the current challenges that faces students and teachers alike is to employ coping strategies that help them reduce their anxiety. In order for one to beat off these challenges, one needs to consult research and theory and to discern not only the sources of anxiety, but also identify expressions of stress in students (Young, 1991). Furthermore, teachers should shoulder the responsibility of using strategies that reduce students' anxieties. The literature is replete with studies examining strategies used to diminish or at least minimize the anxiety experienced by students while learning a second or foreign language. Removing or reducing student's anxiety is deemed essential as it immediately influences student's language achievement, performance, or proficiency in the language as discussed in the previous section. This section tends to review the strategies utilized by students and instructors to reduce their foreign language anxiety.

In order to identify the strategies of coping with foreign language anxiety, one needs to identify the anxiety-producing factors mentioned above that cause EFL/ESL students' anxiety. An extensive body of research has hinted a diversity of strategies to help cope with anxiety. For this purpose, researchers recommend a cognitive, affective, and behavioural modification method. For the cognitive remediation, they have suggested modifying students own cognitive appraisals as they believe that anxiety is caused by the thinking disturbances that occur in the classroom (Mejias et. al, 1991). The cognitive remediation also endorses encouraging to develop positive self-talk and should be taught to manage students' self-evaluation more realistically (Ying-Ling & Kondo, 2004). The affective remediation incorporates controlling bodily reactions and employing systematic desensitization therapy where students are instructed to relax in the presence of anxiety stimuli. This approach assumes that emotional arousal is the main concern (Mejias et. al, 1991). However, the behavioural approach proposes that poor academic skills are the main source of anxiety (Ying-Ling & Kondo, 2004). This remediation involves skills training method where students are instructed the behavioural skills needed in specific oral communication contexts (Mejias et al., 1991).

Although a large number of studies have been devoted to anxiety reduction in second or foreign language learning settings, most research in the area has produced scattered, imprecise and unclear results. In addition, as mentioned by Yasuda and Nabei (2018), another problem concerned with the effective use of foreign language anxiety-reducing strategies involves the lack of empirical studies in this field. Any teachers' attempts at creating a low-apprehension atmosphere is essential, students of a second or a foreign language need to control their anxiety by employing certain coping strategies. Since language anxiety is situation-specific, students need to use realistic coping strategies in actual learning situations, e.g., immigrant students who have native speaker classmates in English as a second language setting have greater fear of negative evaluation from classmates than teachers while students feel greater fear of negative evaluation from teachers than students in English as a foreign language setting.

Educators can help anxious students in two ways; they can either help them cope with the anxiety-arousing situation or they can make the learning setting less stressful (Horwitz et al., 1986). Making the language classroom environment less formal and more friendly where students can commit errors without sounding inept can also help students cope with the foreign language anxiety encountered by them by creating situations where students can feel successful in employing English and avoid setting up the activities that increase the chances for students to fail. It has been elicited from participants that employing a pure communicative approach can increase the chances of success, even with imperfect language competence. In addition, drama-like or role-play activities can make students feel safe in a pretended situation with a pretended identity. In setting up a task or an activity, clear instructions and making sure that students have enough lexis and ideas might help reduce students' anxiety. Friendly and encouraging role of teachers, developing students' confidence, not interrupting students while communicating, providing positive and corrective feedback, encouraging students to think of their positive personality characteristics, building students' self-esteem, ceasing having a native-like pronunciation on the part of the students, avoiding the practice of providing summative feedback in the form of grades and marks, and promoting single sex classes are critical in reducing anxiety (Tanveer, 2007).

Influential foreign language anxiety-reducing strategies can generally stem from three major sources as mentioned earlier, namely instructors, peers, and

students themselves. This means that instructors can help reduce foreign language students' anxiety, so do peers and students themselves. On the students' part, among ten strategies, the three most common ones that foreign students of Japanese employed to reduce their anxiety of Japanese learning involved attending every class weekly, taking risks in language learning, and asking peers for help (Chanprasert & Wichadee, 2015). For reducing English speaking anxiety, Japanese students of English used preparation and positive thinking frequently as influential coping strategies among all the five strategies included in the study (Yasuda & Nabei, 2018). The strategy of making presentations in small groups rather than individually and doing pair and group work has been effective in reducing language anxiety (Fuji, 2019). Young (1990) proposed the following strategies: providing supplemental instruction or a support group for anxieties that stem from the students' personality, using more pair and group work for anxieties that arise from classroom procedures, playing language games focusing on problem-solving, and correcting errors not in a harsh manner but in a friendly way. Studies have also been carried out to tackle the effect of certain strategies or techniques to reduce test anxiety. It has been found that breathing exercises can have a positive effect on reducing students' test anxiety (Zondi, 2013). To conclude, a large number of different anxiolytic strategies have been proposed by prior research. However, since the reduction of second or foreign language anxiety is not relevant to the current study, more strategies would be recounted only in the context of writing anxiety later in the upcoming sections.

Writing APPREHENSION or Writing ANXIETY?

Since communication problems have been increasingly investigated since 1970s, miscellaneous labels have been employed to describe sundry communication problems, be it in speaking or writing, throughout the past decades, including stage fright, willingness to communicate, reticence, shyness, social anxiety, communication reticence, and communication apprehension. Some were later adapted to foreign or second language learning contexts to describe the fear or anxiety that is connected to communication in a foreign or second language that the student has learned at school or university. This fear or anxiety has been conceptualized as foreign language communication apprehension or anxiety. The diversity of these concepts has led to confusion in terms of their meaning and usage, with some researchers concentrating on the distinctions while others on their

commonalities. However, all these concepts can be categorized under the more general concept ‘willingness to communicate’. The three most prevalent terms are, therefore, reticence, shyness, and communication apprehension, with communication apprehension being relevant to the current study. Although communication apprehension is merely oral in essence, it was later broadened to incorporate other modes of communication like reading and writing. The ‘writing apprehension or anxiety’ label, similar to its superordinate ‘communication apprehension’, is thus multidimensional that is originated from personality traits, situational constraints, or the interaction of these two (Cheng, 2004; Korpela, 2010).

Thus, the umbrella term for writing apprehension or anxiety is ‘communication apprehension’. In other words, writing apprehension is a specific type of communication apprehension. What was mentioned above described how the term ‘writing apprehension’ descended. However, one more point that needs to be clarified here concerns the two terms ‘anxiety’ and ‘apprehension’. Reviewing the current literature on the difference between the two, the present researcher observed no such clear-cut distinctions. However, the researcher believes that apprehension is more associated with first language while anxiety with a second or foreign language as reflected in Daly and Miller (1975a) and Cheng’s (2004) work respectively. That is, apprehension in the context of writing is more attributed to Daly and Miller (1975a) and their associates who used it to investigate writing apprehension among native speakers of English. On top of that, Daly (1985) attributes the selection of the ‘apprehension’ term rather than ‘fear’ or ‘anxiety’ by Daly and Miller to the historical complexity of the latter two terms as explained in the first section of this study. He adds that Freudian psychology is in conflict with contemporary psychology over the meanings of ‘fear’ and ‘anxiety’ and that the more neutral term to Daly and Miller is ‘apprehension’. Other investigators have also employed ‘blocking’ or ‘fright’ (Kara, 2013), but these two denote other meanings different from the two former labels. For instance, writer’s block is viewed as the writer’s incapability of starting or continuing writing for reasons other than a lack of basic skill or commitment (Rose, 2009). To be on the safe side, since the two terms ‘anxiety’ and ‘apprehension’ have been used interchangeably in the literature, they will be employed in the same way in this study.

Writing Apprehension

Accounts of writer's block, apprehension about writing, and writer's procrastination are not new and date back to the 1970s when Daly and Miller (1975a) devised a scale called writing apprehension test (WAT). Thus, anxiety or apprehension has boosted particular interest in the field of language acquisition and learning in the past five decades. Most discussions of foreign language anxiety first revolved around speaking, listening, and reading. Later, writing anxiety was considered as a specific sort of anxiety, peculiar to the language-particular skill of writing (Kurt & Atay, 2007). Daly and his associates conducted a series of systematic studies about students' feelings to writing and its correlation with writing competence and performance. Based on their studies, one reason for the increasing interest in writing apprehension has been the observation that many students are abnormally anxious about and fearful of writing. Instructors of composition, communication, journalism, and other fields can narrate stories of those who have been anxious and find writing unrewarding and punishing (Daly, 1985). Consistently, Abbas (2016) and Hassan (2001) asserted that writing apprehension debilitates the promotion of students' writing skill and their written products.

Writing apprehension, which has been regarded as a specific component of foreign or second language learning, has been researched in various contexts using a diversity of measures including first language and foreign or second language measures. Psychologists, communication experts as well as teachers and second language acquisition researchers have found it worth exploring owing to its debilitating repercussions on language learning. It has occupied the centre stage for the past four or so decades. According to Aikman (1985), investigation of writing apprehension is considered as an off-shoot of investigation into oral communication apprehension. It was believed at first that students with a high level of oral communication anxiety tended to indemnify this anxiety by writing. Nevertheless, it was found later that the connection between the oral and the written anxiety does not exist and these proved two independent constructs.

It is common for language students or, more specifically saying student writers, to have negative feelings such as anxiety, fear, low self-esteem and low motivation when writing an essay, an article, a research project, or any other piece of writing in a second or foreign language. Based on prior research, these feelings of anxiety can sometimes be so serious that students may skip writing classes and even

avoid situations that require writing (Daly, 1985). A significant body of research has been devoted to the investigation of general foreign language anxiety, particularly speaking anxiety. However, attention has been dramatically shifted to writing anxiety in the past twenty years, particularly after the invention of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory by Cheng (2004) in ESL/EFL contexts. Nevertheless, some of these in the area are merely relatively a duplication of prior research, not offering new insights into writing anxiety.

A certain amount of creative tension is present and necessary in all writers, but for some the situation brings on a destructive amount of tension. Those of us who teach basic writers frequently see writers who exhibit this destructive tension and reluctant writing (McAndrew, 1986). Writing apprehension has been conceptualized in a multitude of ways. It is viewed as a unidimensional construct by Daly and Miller (1975a); a unidimensional construct means one which is unitary and global that contains no subscales (Cheng, 2004). Daly and Miller (1975b), in their oft-cited definition, refer to 'writing apprehension' as "a subjective complex of attitudinal, emotional, and behavioural interaction which reinforce each other" (p. 11).

Accordingly, the anxiety experienced by anxious writers is mirrored in the attitudes and emotions they express as well as the behaviours they show as they write, about their writing, and in their written products (Faigley, Daly, & Witte, 1981). More precisely, writing apprehension is conceived as a relatively enduring disposition (Daly, 1985) and "a situation and subject-specific individual difference" that is concerned with "a person's general tendencies to approach or avoid situations perceived to demand writing accompanied by some amount of evaluation" (Daly, 1978, p. 10) or "the tendency of people to approach or avoid writing" (Faigley, Daly, & Witte, 1981). In other words, writing apprehension is an individual difference that entails a general avoidance of writing and situations that require an amount of writing accompanied by evaluation of that writing (Daly, 1979). Several aspects of this definition overlap with that of foreign language anxiety conceptualized by (Horwitz et al., 1986) mentioned in the previous section. Most importantly, writing anxiety is defined as a situation-specific category of anxiety that entails fear of evaluation and is commonly perceived to mean negative, anxious feelings about oneself as a writer, one's writing situation, or one's writing task that distort some part of the writing process. It refers to writers who are intellectually able to fulfil the task at hand, but who nevertheless have difficulty with it (McLeod, 1987). Similarly,

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) used apprehension basically to refer to someone's negative and anxious feelings that distort some part of the writing process, i.e., to describe those writers who know how to perform tasks, but who face problems with these tasks due to apprehension. In the same vein. Similar to Daly (1978, 1979, 1985), Tadesse (2013) defines writing apprehension as apprehension about the writing process that influences students' capacity to write causing enduring predispositions to dislike, fear, or, at the most extreme ends, avoiding writing. According to Thompson (1980), writing anxiety is a "fear of the writing process that outweighs the projected gain from the ability to write" (p.121). Bloom (1985) refers to it as a label for one or an amalgamation of beliefs, feelings, or behaviours that hinders a person's ability to begin, work on, or complete a certain writing task that he is intellectually capable of doing. Somewhat different from the above conceptualizations, Cheng (2004), based on her tripartite view of anxiety, conceptualized writing anxiety as a somewhat stable anxiety disposition concerned with second language writing, involving a diversity of dysfunctional thoughts, elevated physiological arousal, and maladjusted behaviours. In the present study, Cheng's (2004) definition is applied as the researcher believes that writing anxiety can affect language students cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally.

Thusly, a number of characteristics of writing anxiety can be observed that might distinguish it from other similar disciplines based on the definitions provided. First, writing apprehension is not pervasive, i.e., it is not present in every aspect of someone's writing life. For instance, someone might feel apprehensive when writing an essay but not an email (Kostić-Bobanovic, 2016). In other words, as confirmed by Daly and Miller (1975a), Bloom (1981) and Cheng (2004), among several others, writing seems to be situation and subject-specific. This is supported in the literature by Huwari and Abd Aziz (2011) who showed that the writing situation plays an essential role in writing apprehension, with students experiencing more apprehension when writing a dissertation than writing an essay. Second, writing apprehension is a language-skill specific anxiety (Cheng et al., 1999), i.e. a kind of language anxiety. Third, writing apprehension is not innate, i.e. people are not born apprehensive, they become apprehensive through negative experiences with writing (Hassan, 2001; Lindy, 2006). In other words, there are situational demands rather than features inherent in a student that cause writing anxiety, and that anxiety rises when students cannot develop realistic expectations for their writing (Larson, 1985). Writing

apprehension is both a learned condition that results from repeated negative writing experiences and a particular response to a certain stimulus, e.g. the writing assignment (Daly & Miller, 1975a). Thus, writer's block, writing apprehension and writing difficulties in general are internal conditions, but they might be externally imposed impediments at some point, such as prohibitions that are associated with race, sex, and class that become internalized (Leader, 1991). Fourth, writing apprehension is self-limiting, relatively visible, and relatively easily overcome by rational instruction (Bloom, 1981). Finally, writing apprehension entails fear of negative evaluation and avoidance behaviour.

Since writing is a product-based skill, it causes more anxiety than the other skills in a L2. It needs students to use their own thinking and ideas; therefore, it is more stressful for them (Tsui, 1996). It is seen that all English proficiency levels face difficulties when writing in a L2 and suffer from various kinds of problems such as writing apprehension. Based on Clark (1985), even the teacher of the writing course feels some sort of apprehension before entering a writing class, and both undergraduate and graduate students experience writing apprehension when they are asked to write their graduate research or their theses respectively (as cited in Friesen, 1990, p. 20).

Based on the studies reviewed, most report a high or a moderate level of apprehension among undergraduate and postgraduate students in different contexts and that apprehension has detrimental impacts on a number of writing variables. However, of particular interest and relevant to the current study is the level of writing apprehension. The literature has revealed that writing apprehension is a common phenomenon not only among foreign writers of English (Abdel Latif, 2015; Altukruni, 2019; Cheng, 2004; Hassan, 2001; Kim, 2006; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014), rather among native writers, particularly undergraduate students (Britt, 2011; Daly & Miller, 1975a; McAllister, 2014) as well as postgraduate students who experienced a high level of writing apprehension in Huwari and Abd Aziz (2011) and Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) and a moderate to high level in Qadir, et al. (2021).

Students vary in their writing apprehension. Some experience a high level of apprehension while others a low level. Daly and Miller (1975a) suggest three levels of writing apprehension, involving high, moderate, and low level. Hanna (2010) discovered that writing apprehension may influence students at all levels even after they have graduated from universities. Her research on apprehensive graduate

students at Midwestern University found that they experienced a high level of writing apprehension. Some studies indicated that even students of high L2 competence may not necessarily perceive themselves as competent language students and may not be free from anxiety in using that L2 (Cheng, 2002). For this reason and others, this study was undertaken to deal with the issue in the context in question.

To end this section, in what follows the researcher aims to do six things: First, explain the affective filter hypothesis; second, demonstrate the correlation between certain demographic factors and writing apprehension; third, profile the high-apprehensive writer and explain the characteristics of their written products; fourth, discuss what triggers their writing apprehension according to what the literature has reported; fifth, present the detrimental effects of high writing apprehension; sixth, outline the correlates of writing apprehension as presently understood; seventh, expound the strategies employed to reduce writing apprehension; eighth, briefly explain writing accuracy and its relation to writing apprehension and; finally, explain the approach used in teaching writing in the study.

Affective Filter Hypothesis

One of the theories that explicitly concerns itself with the accounts of foreign language anxiety incorporates Krashen's (1982) theory of second language acquisition. The theory explicates how the affective factors are associated with second language acquisition and language proficiency. It consists of five major interrelated hypotheses that are associated with second language acquisition, involving the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and finally the affective filter hypothesis. What is most relevant in the framework of this study are the input and the affective filter hypothesis components of the theory.

The affective filter hypothesis component of the theory dictates that non-linguistic affective variables such as attitude, motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety play a significant role in acquiring comprehensible input, with comprehensible input being described as input suitable to the level of students' foreign language competency (Krashen, 1985). These variables impact on the successful acquisition of a second language. They can be a barrier that inhibit the optimal input for acquisition (Krashen, 1981). In other words, the affective filter hypothesis implies that language students might be distracted by affective factors in

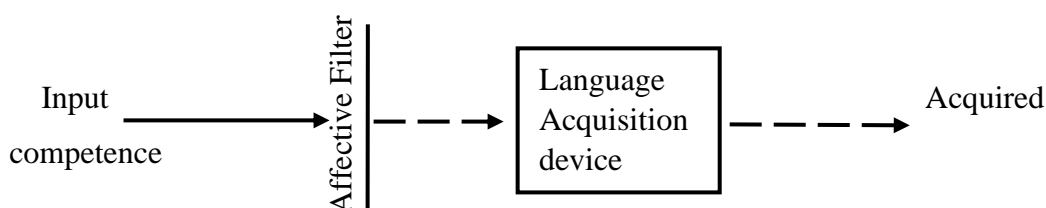
language learning, which act as a filter either enabling or disabling input that is necessary for language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). If the filter is high, little or no acquisition occurs even if the input is beautifully sequenced or the exercise is meaningful and communicative (Krashen, 1981). Thus, people acquire second languages only if they receive comprehensible input and if their affective filters are low enough to permit the input in. Accordingly, a high level of anxiety generates a filter that inhibits language acquisition and makes students unreceptive to language input (Horwitz & Young, 1991; Schutz, 1998). Whereas, a low level of anxiety assists second language students to improve their language skills and to engross in a meaningful use of the target language (Schutz, 1998), i.e. a low level of anxiety is conducive to second language acquisition (Krashen, 1981).

Therefore, Krashen claimed that the best acquisition will take place in environments or contexts where the affective filter is low (Brown, 2014). The best methods of language acquisition, according to Krashen (1981), are those that supply comprehensible input in low anxiety situations. In some cases, the individual might be proficient but the situation may be a fertile ground for anxiety, particularly when there is fear of negative evaluation which Vielhaber (1983) views it as a characteristic of writing anxiety. Thus, the amount of comprehensible input and the strength of affective filters are deemed as causative factors in Krashen's (1981) theory of second language acquisition.

On top of all of these, Krashen (1981) argues that students with non-optimal attitudes seek less input and possess a higher level of affective filter that prevents from input reaching the language acquisition device, as reflected in what he says, "the effect of affect is outside the language acquisition device" (Krashen, 1981, p. 32). Figure 3 explains Krashen's (1981) operation of the affective filter hypothesis.

Figure 3

Operation of Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis



Thus, this study can be accommodated in and specifically proceeds within Krashen's (1981) theory of second language acquisition for contextualizing the role

of one of the emotional variables affecting one of the skills of foreign language, namely second language writing as there is enough corroboration in the literature that suggests a correlation between general foreign language anxiety and English writing anxiety (Cheng, 2002). This indicates that reducing classroom anxiety is a key prerequisite for minimizing English writing anxiety (Choi, 2013). In Krashen's (1982) terms, the primary goal of newer methodologies should be to reduce student anxiety and the new definition for a teacher is someone who supplies input and makes it comprehensible in a low filter situation.

Most importantly, Krashen (1982) argued that students should not be put on the defensive which means that methods and materials should not only display students' weaknesses, rather they should help him acquire more. He suggested several ways for creating a low filter, including supplying comprehensible input, focusing on meaning and message rather than form, not insisting on premature production, not focusing too much on error correction, not overusing drills and repetitions, not focusing on full grammatical accuracy, not focusing too much on grammar in the course, following the Natural Approach and Total Physical Response, listening to music, and most importantly insuring comprehensibility of the message.

Hallmarks of High Apprehensive Students

As discussed earlier, a certain amount of anxiety might be necessary for performing certain tasks or duties. However, a high level of writing apprehension greater than this normal level might have a host of repercussions on students' individual characteristics, the quantity and quality of written products, behaviour in writing courses and job selections, evaluation and the process of writing. For teachers to be able to modify writing apprehension or remove it from writing classrooms, they need to identify who an apprehensive writer is.

In terms of individual attributes, high apprehensive students are characterized by having a low level of writing motivation, writing self-esteem and writing self-efficacy. They have negative attitudes towards writing and are more anxious in expressing their own attitudes than low apprehensives (Abbas, 2016; Cheng, 2002; Faigley et al., 1981; Hassan, 2001; Reeves, 1997; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Salem, 2007). High apprehensive writers also have little confidence in writing (Daly & Miller, 1975b; Hassan, 2001; McAndrew, 1986; Selfe, 1981), dislike writing and

composing (Bloom, 1981; Selfe, 1981), and are less interested in college majors that endorse intensive writing (Daly & Shamo, 1976); therefore, they hold specific beliefs about writing and learning to write (Daly, 1985), such as holding low expectations of success in writing (Daly & Miller, 1975b & c; McAndrew, 1986). They attribute any successful experience in learning writing merely to luck, and attribute less successful experiences to lack of ability. They are less aware of written words and written language, not playing with nor appreciating the written language's artistry. They are less aware of the usefulness of writing, and see writing as not very important in their daily lives and future plans (Daly, 1985). Most importantly, they feel less satisfied in writing courses (Daly & Miller, 1975b & c).

Taking for granted the detrimental effects of high apprehension on written products, high apprehensive writers write differently in terms of both quantity and quality. Quantitatively, high apprehensive writer papers contain significantly fewer words and statements and their essays and compositions are shorter (Book, 1976; Daly, 1977; Daly & Miller, 1975b; Faigley et al., 1981). In other words, high apprehensives produce three times as fewer words as low apprehensives, commit fewer spelling errors, and convey more information (Book, 1976). Papers of high apprehensive undergraduate students or their writing as a whole display decreased length and fluency, reduced syntactic maturity and complexity, less information, and less developed ideas in expressive types of writing or in narrative-descriptive essays (Faigley et al., 1981), and thus, containing a restricted repertoire of syntactic constructions.

In terms of quality, papers of high apprehensives and their messages are proven to be of lower quality in narrative-descriptive writing (Book, 1976; Daly, 1977, 1978; Daly & Miller, 1975a & b; Faigley et al., 1981; Hanna, 2010). Their writing contains less intense language and less qualification. Their written products are evaluated less positively (Daly, 1977; Daly & Miller, 1975a, b & c; Faigley et al., 1981; Garcia, 1977). They contain simpler and shorter structures (Daly, 1978) and are less effective in counter-attitudinal effects (Toth, 2010). High apprehensive writers write a paper or proposal that is undeveloped compared to those with low level of writing apprehension (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2001). Finally, consistent with the aforementioned, Hassan (2001) revealed that low apprehensive students produce better quality compositions than their high apprehensive counterparts. Thus,

these facts should make writing apprehension a serious issue to the teacher of basic writing, especially the teacher who assigns narration and description.

When it comes to behaviour in writing courses, high apprehensive writers display a sufficient amount of apprehension in their behaviours. They avoid situations that require writing, avoid communication situations in general, and react apprehensively, and when reluctantly put in these situations, they experience yet a higher level of apprehension (Daly, 1977, 1978, 1979; Daly & Miller, 1975b; Phillips, 1968; Smith, 1984) as they foresee primarily negative repercussions from such engagements (Phillips, 1968). They rarely continue in writing courses, majors, or jobs that require writing (McAndrew, 1986). The reason for this is that they find writing unrewarding (Daly, 1978; Faigley et al., 1981), neither artistic nor useful (McAndrew, 1986) and even punishing (Faigley et al., 1981). Furthermore, high apprehensives demonstrate less willingness to enrol in writing-oriented courses and retell less past writing experiences (Daly and Miller, 1975b & c) due to their incapability to have performed well in previous writing courses. They leave the classroom as they arrive at the writing sections of examinations, without writing even a few sentences (Erkan & Saban, 2011). Therefore, they tend to approach jobs that suit their level of apprehension and select jobs and academic majors that have less writing requirements (Daly & Miller, 1975a; Daly & Shamo, 1976; Reeves, 1997).

Yet relevant to behaviour in writing courses, high apprehensive writers exhibit a number of other anxious behaviours. They write less (Daly, 1979; Daly & Miller, 1975b; Smith, 1984) and more poorly than their counterparts with low apprehension (Daly, 1979; Daly & Miller, 1975b). They prefer to avoid or procrastinate their tasks and duties (Bloom, 1981; Hanna, 2010; Selfe, 1985). In other words, they do not attend classes regularly, find excuses to write at home or outside class so that they have a friend write instead of themselves. They sometimes report that they performed poorly in previous writing courses (Cheng, 2002; Daly & Miller, 1975a, b & c; Salem, 2007; Smith, 1984). They face difficulties in selecting a topic for their writing (Daly, 1977; Faigley et al., 1981), have difficulty focusing on writing (Bloom, 1981) and are rarely found in advanced writing courses (Daly, 1985). High apprehensive writers bring to the act of writing rigid rules that block expression for these writers instead of facilitation (Daly, 1985; McAndrew, 1986; Rose, 2009). Due to these behaviours, classroom teachers indicate that highly

apprehensive students are much less likely to succeed in a diversity of academic subjects (Daly, 1979).

As regards the writing process of high apprehensive students, it is characterised by a pre-writing stage that is slightly successful at drawing out information regarding rhetorical properties from the assignment but these students lack awareness of audience and organizational strategies, do little prefiguring, move directly to drafting, and do less planning, spend little time on individual sentences, revise and edit the first draft meagrely (Selfe, 1984). Put it another way, apprehensive writers normally jot down the first idea they generate, do less revision while writing, fear of back-tracking that causes them lose ideas, do less anti-writing, shorten planning, and compress writing time and postpone it (Bannister, 1992). High apprehensives take more time to complete a draft, pause often, produce words at a lower rate, spend less time actually writing, and stop writing when the first draft is completed (Hayes, 1981). More importantly, they stop and start again and are preoccupied with surface corrections rather than global revision (Selfe, 1985). Most importantly and consistent with the above, they spend less time on plan and organization and hurry through writing assignments (Selfe, 1984, 1985). Therefore, the teacher, as the responsible one in a class, should provide a writing technique to reduce the anxiety.

Most important of all, high apprehensive writers can also be distinguished from low apprehensive ones by the amount of anxiety they experience when being evaluated. High apprehensives have fear of their writing being evaluated by their teachers (Bloom, 1981; Daly & Miller, 1975b & c; Hassan, 2001; Selfe, 1981) and fear of demand for writing competency (Hassan, 2001). For this reason, they are evaluated less favourably (Daly, 1979), are rated negatively (Hassan, 2201) by their instructors and peers and they score significantly lower on assessments of general verbal ability, measures of reading comprehension, and standardized and objective tests of writing ability used for college placement (Daly, 1978; Faigley et al., 1981). Writers with high apprehension score lower even on indices of grammar, mechanics, and general skill (Daly, 1978). All in all, high apprehensive writers achieve lower grades (Daly, 1985; Zhang, 2011) that eventually affect their writing products.

To conclude, even writing instructors do differ in their behaviour in writing courses based on the apprehension they undergo. It has been reported that high school teachers who experience a high amount of apprehension make a lower

number of writing assignments than low apprehensives (Daly, 1985). This indicates that high apprehensives have less command over matters of usage and written conventions than low apprehensives (Faigley et al., 1981).

The Aetiology of Writing Anxiety: Writing Anxiety as a Consequence

Although some attempts have considered writing apprehension as a consequence rather than a cause (Abdel Latif, 2007), one of the issues that has still remained unresolved involves the question of whether writing apprehension causes poor writing skills or the other way round, i.e. the egg or the chicken debate, as mentioned in (Daly & Miller, 1975a) and calls for more research in this area of enquiry have been made. The researcher will not discuss this issue in this section, rather will present the causes because one needs to identify the causes of writing apprehension to be able to avoid its negative effects and to successfully establish effective strategies used to reduce the apprehension experienced when writing (Cope, 1978). For the purposes of simplicity, the researcher will attribute and categorize the causes of writing apprehension to four sources as they emerge from the current literature, namely student-related causes, instructor-related causes, writing-related causes, and classroom-related causes although Kara (2013) thought that the most striking sources of writing apprehension are said to be writing itself, writing as a skill, and the instructor.

Literature is replete with eliciting the causes or reasons behind students' writing apprehension. It has been reported that foreign language writing itself provokes the same, if not more, amount of anxiety as the other skills since writing is product-oriented that entails students generating their own thinking and ideas and students may not be fully supported by instructors to recognize that they are on the right track. Writing requires individual work; therefore, students might sense that they are deprived of support and encouragement. This might make writing stressful for students and might impact on their writing performance (Tsui, 1996). This has been confirmed by other researchers that students think they do not have sufficient skills such as finding ideas, collecting information, organizing and combining that information and those ideas, as they have not practiced those skills enough. Other researchers thought writing anxiety might be due to the nature of writing assignments. By the nature of assignments, we mean those assignments that significantly contribute to the final grade of a course (Schmidt, 2004). Other causes

of writing anxiety being mentioned in the literature include the cognitive requirements of writing (Cequeña & Gustilo, 2014) because writing is seen a cognitively difficult and complex task that can be anxiety provoking for many students involving the gifted students, i.e. those who possess high aptitude or talent (DeMent, 2008). Apprehension with them goes unnoticed preventing them from becoming competent writers. Writing apprehension with gifted students masks their real writing proficiency as these students might be competent in the other skills but not in writing (Thevasigamoney & Yunus, 2014). This means, as mentioned earlier, that writing requires writers to go through a number of different processes. Additionally, writing requires a number of skills and conventions involving grammatical rules, selection of correct vocabulary items, development and logical organization of ideas.

Amongst the reasons cited in the literature are there some associated with students themselves. In other words, students possess certain personal or individual characteristics that make them be prone to anxiety, such as students' demotivation (Hilleson, 1996), their previous lack of success in writing (Daly & Miller, 1975b), their negative attitudes towards writing (Altukruni, 2019; Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2015; Erkan & Saban, 2011; Hilleson, 1996), and personal beliefs regarding writing and learning to write (Cheng, 2004). Further causes of writing apprehension include lack of self-confidence in writing in English (Aljafen, 2013; Altukruni, 2019; Cheng, 2002; El Shimi, 2017; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Zhang, 2011), a low level of writing self-efficacy (Abdel Latif, 2007; Hilleson, 1996; Rankin-Brown, 2006) and self-esteem (Abdel Latif, 2007; Hilleson, 1996), and frustrations sourced from self-expectations and self-evaluation on how competently one should write (Rankin-Brown, 2006). In addition, self-imposed pressure for perfect work that is known as perfectionism (Rezae & Jafari, 2014), students' creative tendencies, level of energy, determination to write (Bloom, 1981), poor self-perceptions (Cheng, 2004; Daly, 1985), the inclination to link writing to aversive consequences, and perceptions by the apprehensive students that, teachers are a source of punishment (Daly, 1985), have also been cited as reasons that can arouse students' writing apprehension. Another personality factor is penmanship that has nothing to do with the quality of good writing, but students equate good writing with good penmanship because good penmanship increases students' level of self-confidence (Heaton & Pray, 1982). Most important of all, students' proficiency in writing was reported to influence their

anxiety level, as MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) put forward the idea that writing anxiety decreases with the increase of proficiency in writing.

Other student-related causes of writing apprehension are concerned with certain cognitive and metacognitive abilities in writing that students do not possess. They can be bisected into abilities associated with writing components and those associated with writing skills. The causes related to writing components include students' lack of knowledge of grammar and vocabulary (Genç & Yaylı, 2019; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) that is also called linguistic deficiency, linguistic difficulties or inadequate knowledge of second language writing (Abdel Latif, 2007; Altukruni, 2019; Hadaway, 1987; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Zhang, 2011) in the literature. In addition, a limited number of vocabulary and idioms (Salem, 2007), lack of knowledge of punctuation and mechanics of writing (Heaton & Pray, 1982) cause students to feel apprehensive. Causes associated with writing skills include students' lack of competence in writing (Abdel Latif, 2007; Clark, 2002; Genç & Yaylı, 2019), weakness in writing, lack of sufficient and appropriate writing skills (Daly, 1985; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Hadaway, 1987; Heaton & Pray, 1982), and weakness of their past English education (Aljafen, 2013). Furthermore, students' lack of knowledge about the topic or the subject matter (Genç & Yaylı, 2019; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Bloom, 1981; Zhang, 2011) as well as incompetence to convey ideas in proper English (Hyland, 2003; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) and the inability to brainstorm and organize as well as combine ideas (Kara, 2013; Heaton & Pray, 1982) consider among the common reasons behind students feeling anxious in writing. More importantly, insufficient knowledge in academic writing (Abdel Latif, 2007; Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2015; Genç & Yaylı, 2019), poor history of writing achievement (Abdel Latif, 2007), the writing strategies utilized by the student for his writing (Hilleson, 1996), cultural knowledge, and less experience with second language rhetorical strategies (Salem, 2007) are again causes of writing apprehension.

Yet other student-related reasons that can account for students' writing apprehension but are not accommodated in the above categorizations might be poor or negative writing experience in the past (Abdel Latif, 2007; Aljafen, 2013; Altukruni, 2019; Atay & Kurt, 2006; Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2015; Genç & Yaylı, 2019), interpersonal threats (Cheng, 2004), and problems with topic selection (Bloom, 1981; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014). Other

miscellaneous causes involve social and academic restrictions such as impending deadlines, scheduling conflicts as well as family and marital obligations (Bloom, 1981). Another significant cause of writing apprehension is the stage of foreign language learning, as argued by Hadaway (1987) that students experience anxiety more in the early stages of foreign or second language learning than in the later stages. However, comments of Horwitz (2000) stand against this view that writing apprehension is experienced by students during any stage of language skill development and by no means limited to any level of language mastery. Most importantly, fear of criticism or of others' evaluation of the students' writing product causes writing apprehension (Abdel Latif, 2007; Clark, 2002) as well as students' impatience at the editing and proofreading stages (Cope, 1978) and perceived writing performance (Abdel Latif, 2007).

Writing apprehension can also be instructor-oriented, which means that certain parameters associated with writing instructors, their instruction, or their feedback to students' writing can cause apprehension in students. Causes related to instructors are reflected in their high expectations of students (Rezae & Jafari, 2014), and their attitudes and perceptions towards writing and students' writing (Kara, 2013; Tuppong, 2014). Taken into account instruction, certain instructional practices of English writing (Abdel Latif, 2007; Cheng, 2004) can also arouse apprehension that manifest themselves in an insufficient amount of writing instruction and writing time, inadequate writing practice and writing techniques (Hilleson, 1996; Rezae & Jafari, 2014; Zhang, 2011), provision of a writing assignment that has too little or weak stimulus (Heaton & Pray, 1982), teaching styles, the poor quality of the selected textbooks that do not expose writers to authentic examples (Kara, 2013), and employing a product instead of a process approach to teaching writing (Abu Shawish & Abdelraheem, 2010). Last but not least, feedback and the way instructors react to students' work have been commonly cited in the literature as causes of writing apprehension. Instructors' unwise feedback and correction procedures (Abu Shawish & Abdelraheem, 2010), lack of effective feedback (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), or the negative feedback and comments they provide to students (Abu Shawish & Abdelraheem, 2010; Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Kara, 2013; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014) as well as their reactions to mechanical problems, their negative reactions to the content of compositions (Daly, 1977, 1985), their excessive focus on the accuracy of form, i.e. grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, and punctuation (Cheng, 2004), and students' fear

of the way the instructor evaluates the writing (Rankin-Brown, 2006) can all count among the prevalent reasons that can provoke apprehension.

Yet other causes that have been mentioned in the literature and are concerned with none of the above categories include writing-related causes. Writing itself, the nature of the complexity of writing (Rezae & Jafari, 2014), the complexity of writing assignments or tasks (Altukruni, 2019; Daly, 1985), low frequency of writing (Kara, 2013), and a high frequency of writing assignments (Claypool, 1980) have been reported to be the cause of students' writing apprehension. In addition, students occasionally fear of losing their identity when using rhetorical styles and patterns to write (Rankin-Brown, 2006) that can arouse apprehension at times. Writing being compulsory, which is the case in the context of the current study, leads to writing apprehension (Powers et al., 1979).

Finally, evaluation of writing tests can be considered a major cause of evoking apprehension. Students generally fear of writing tests (Rezae & Jafari, 2014; Zhang, 2011). They feel apprehensive because they have fear of negative evaluation (El Shimi, 2017; Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Horwitz et al., 1986), i.e. they fear of their writing be evaluated negatively because they are convinced that they commit errors and might obtain low grades (Altukruni, 2019). They feel apprehensive about receiving teachers' negative feedback for their writing performance (Aljafen, 2013; Altukruni, 2019; Hilleson, 1996; Rezae & Jafari, 2014). They also fear the way their writing is evaluated by their peers (Rankin-Brown, 2006). Still worse than this, students are anxious about their work be compared in the public or among a group of students or to a group of students that might lead to ridicule and cause the writer embarrassment (Daly, 1985). Furthermore, evaluation in writing as a process requires students to write under time constraints; having a limited time to plan, write, and revise that might raise the level of students' apprehension (El Shimi, 2017; Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Heaton & Pray, 1982; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Therefore, an appropriate method of evaluation should be taken into serious consideration when assessing students' writing (Smith, 1984).

Consequences of Writing Apprehension: Writing Apprehension as a Cause

Psychologists, linguists as well as second language acquisition researchers have found writing apprehension worth investigating owing to its detrimental effects on students' writing variables, including writing quantity, quality, performance,

competence, and accuracy. It seems both common and natural for student writers to have negative feelings such as anxiety, fear, and low motivation when writing an essay in English. These feelings can at times be so serious that students may avoid or even skip writing classes, feel bored, select occupations that require less writing. In this regard, previous studies have evidenced a host of remarkable consequences. In this section, the possible ramifications of writing apprehension will be expounded.

One of the consistent implications of writing apprehension literature is that apprehension negatively impacts on the creation, quality and quantity of articles, students' grades (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989) and writing quality (Tighe, 1987). In other words, increase in writing apprehension leads to decrease in writing quality and final grades in a composition course. Powell (1984) revealed that writing apprehension influenced undergraduate students' writing grades in a composition course in which most A and B students had low apprehension, while D and F students had high apprehension. Altukruni (2019) showed that Saudi female students were worried about achieving poor grades in writing classes. In addition, writing anxiety influenced students' writing achievement and hindered their writing learning process (Genç & Yaylı, 2019).

Writing anxiety can further affect students' academic choice, e.g. their course selection and occupational choice, enrolment in writing courses and the language they employ in their writing (Daly & Miller, 1975b). Students with high levels of writing apprehension are less likely to be skilled and successful writers in high school and beyond (Griswold, 2015). Other effects of writing apprehension on writing are mentioned by Al-Shboul and Huwari (2015) who categorize them into three sorts of effects, namely personal effects, social effects, and academic effects (Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2015). Other research has displayed the negative repercussions of apprehension on students' attitudes towards writing and writing performance (Genç & Yaylı, 2019).

As regards writing performance, Altukruni (2019) displayed that writing anxiety negatively influenced Saudi undergraduate female students' writing performance. Apprehension caused more fear of committing errors and influenced their overall writing performance in the classroom. The participants of her study sensed that they were left behind and were not able to keep up with the class. Therefore, they were silent. They were grappling with developing and organizing ideas, coherence, cohesion, and creativity. Apprehension impeded their capacity to

express ideas clearly in second language writing. They produced short and low-quality papers as well as short and simple sentences in order to avoid committing grammatical and spelling errors. Not surprisingly, Altukruni (2019) mentions that a normal level of anxiety can also bring about positive effects such as encouraging to be prepared, boosting motivation, putting extra effort and time to start and finish writing tasks on time and fuelling performance. Conversely, Zhang (2011) stated that writing anxiety negatively affected writing performance in terms of course grades and timed writing grade. Contrary to what described above, Dracopoulos (2012) found that writing anxiety did not impact on students' writing performance.

Writing apprehension does not merely affect students' writing, rather it influences teachers' classroom practices. Daly and his associates have demonstrated that teachers' writing apprehension impacted on the way they evaluated students' written products. Unlike apprehensive teachers, low apprehensive teachers tended to be less bound by rigid rules, laid stress on creative expression and effort more, and were less anxious about mechanical structure. Teachers' writing anxiety was also revealed to be negatively associated with their use of exercises and activities that required writing (Kurt & Atay, 2007).

Writing anxiety can also affect students' motivation, feelings, and concentration. Students may feel bored and frustrated in writing classes and unmotivated to write and read in English. Their concentration can be lost when writing in English owing to physiological symptoms such as trembling and paralysing, particularly when writing under time pressure during exams. Their concentration may be lost as they feel that their classmates would ridicule their writing and reading (Altukruni, 2019).

Correlates of Writing Apprehension

Extensive research conducted during the last few decades has revealed a wide variety of significant correlates of writing apprehension to a number of variables such as writing competence, writing performance, and dispositional variables. This vast array of literature on the topic has occasionally produced mixed or confusing results leading to carrying out more research in the area. In this section, some of these correlations of writing apprehension are discussed and briefed for the purpose of identifying the difficulties that hinder teaching or learning writing.

At the outset, writing apprehension seems to be significantly associated with foreign language anxiety, native language writing anxiety (Cheng et al., 1999; Daly, 1985; Rodriguez et al., 2009), and foreign language classroom anxiety (Cheng et al., 1999; Choi, 2013; Daly, 1985; Hassan, 2001). Although the correlation of writing apprehension to foreign language classroom anxiety appears to be consistent, the two are distinguishable variables as the latter incorporates strong speaking anxiety elements compared to writing apprehension that is mostly laden with students' attitudes towards writing (Gkonou, 2011; Cheng et al., 1999). In a study by Jee (2018) among Korean as a foreign language student at an Australian public university, it was revealed that foreign language anxiety demonstrated high and significant correlations with all four skill-based anxieties, i.e. speaking, listening, reading and writing. The four skill-based anxieties explained approximately 70% of the foreign language classroom anxiety as independent constructs. More importantly, it was shown that speaking anxiety was the most powerful predictor of foreign language anxiety and reading was least powerful predictor with writing and listening occurring in between.

As for writing apprehension and self-esteem, they are directly and significantly related (Cheng et al., 1999; Choi, 2013; Daly, 1985; Daly & Wilson, 1983; Hassan, 2001) since writing apprehension affects a students' beliefs about his own writing skills when performing a writing task in that a lower level of writing apprehension causes weaker beliefs about one's capability in writing skills. In addition, writing apprehension marginally predicts personality measures such as alienation and tolerance for ambiguity (Daly & Wilson, 1983), general self-esteem (Daly, 1985), students' attitudes to writing classes (Gkonou, 2011; Karlina & Pancoro, 2018), fear of negative evaluation, and self-derogation when writing. This implies that teachers should develop strategies that encourage enjoyment of EFL writing (Gkonou, 2011).

Researchers have even noted the correlation between the two major types of writing apprehension, namely dispositional writing apprehension and situational writing apprehension. Dan and Sylvia (1987) demonstrated that these two kinds of writing apprehension are positively related but independent constructs. They also demonstrated that the role of apprehension reducing intervention is evident in decreasing dispositional apprehension as is the role of apprehension producing intervention in increasing dispositional writing apprehension.

Researchers interested in psychological factors influencing writing have also shown the correlation between writing apprehension and writing self-efficacy. Self-efficacy simply refers to a person's beliefs regarding his or her capability to obtain a goal or master a skill. It is a learned trait that can be affected by several factors involving motivation, interest, perceived value of task, and disposition (Troia et al., 2012). Studies have displayed that writing anxiety is negatively and significantly associated with writing self-efficacy, among Iraqi EFL undergraduate students (Sabati et al., 2019), fifth grade elementary students (Pajares & Valiante, 1997) and Turkish undergraduate students (Erkan & Saban, 2011). An inverse negative and significant connection between self-efficacy and writing apprehension has also been noted among 176 graduate students at a large research-intensive university in the United States (Huerta et al., 2017). Therefore, it is necessary for university instructors to develop students' writing self-efficacy and concentrate on students' perceptions regarding their personal competence (Sabati et al., 2019).

Another psychological factor that can be under the influence of writing apprehension is self-confidence. Book (1976) affirms that writing apprehension gravely restricts or alters an individual's capacity to function with confidence and perform his aspirations. Understanding this debilitating phenomenon, writing experts and instructors should help reduce their anxieties and improve their confidence and performance in writing.

Daly (1985), based on the literature he has reviewed, has revealed a number of significant correlations of writing apprehension to individual variables. He has revealed that writing apprehension is significantly associated with test anxiety. However, he (1985) revealed no largely significant associations between apprehension and individual differences in locus of control, Machiavellianism, dogmatism, and achievement motivation. Although Karlina & Pancoro (2018) stated that writing apprehension can affect student's motivation to writing. Furthermore, Daly (1985) stated that a small inverse relation exists between apprehension and tolerance for ambiguity. More importantly, a positive correlation was observed between writing apprehension on the one hand and communication apprehension and receiver apprehension on the other. Most importantly, he drew the conclusion that writing apprehension is somewhat independent of other individual difference variables. He revealed a positive correlation of writing apprehension to oral communication anxiety and attitudes toward reading.

Writing apprehension has not been only reported to be connected with psychological variables, rather it has connections with linguistic variables such as linguistic competence, linguistic performance, and achievement. One such connection is the association of writing apprehension to writing competence. By definition, writing competence refers to students' capability to perform on tests of writing-related skills that test how much a student can identify as correct or incorrect in samples of writing such as words, phrases, or sentences separated from the context or passages of extended discourse (Faigley et al., 1981). Writing competence in the form of compositional and grammatical skills are demanded for successful message encoding for sufficient writing performance (Daly, 1978). Research associated with the connection between writing apprehension and writing competence has its roots in (Daly & Miller, 1975b). Following this, most research has tested the connection and revealed a significant and negative relation between them. It has been shown that a significant inverse relation exists between writing apprehension and self-reported SAT-Verbal test scores (Daly & Miller, 1975b). This means that writing apprehension causes students to score lower on competency tests, particularly on objective tests of grammar, mechanics, and larger concerns in writing skills. It also causes them to avoid writing and; therefore, hinders their development of writing competency (Daly, 1978). In the same vein, Faigley et al. (1981) demonstrated that apprehension leads to obtaining lower scores on tests of skills related to writing, such as assessments of general verbal ability, and objective tests of writing ability that are utilized as placement tests in colleges. More importantly, they demonstrated that apprehension causes students to have less command over written conventions and usage. Vukelić (2011) confirmed the same negative connection between writing apprehension and self-evaluation of writing competence among Croatian students when writing both in English and German. Cheng (2002) demonstrated the otherwise directional connection between foreign language writing competence and writing anxiety that foreign language writing competence is regarded as the best predictor of writing anxiety. According to Faigley et al. (1981), the relationship is bidirectional, i.e. writing apprehension and writing performance perhaps reinforce one another.

More fruitful and relevant is the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance. Writing is a productive skill that requires students to consider word choice, grammar, and word order as well as organization of ideas among many others to perform well in their written productions. Much research can

be recounted on the association between writing apprehension and writing performance. Three facets of second language writing proficiency can help increase writing performance including writing accuracy, writing fluency, and writing complexity (Skehan, 1996). In addition, there appears to have individual difference factors, affective, and psychological factors that need to be taken into account when examining the association between writing apprehension and writing performance. To illustrate, freshman students might experience more anxiety than senior students owing to the experience they have had with writing and the amount of knowledge they possess (Ekmekci, 2018). Writing apprehension is reflected in students' tasks related to writing (Daly, 1985), i.e. it affects students' writing performance. According to the most recent study carried out among Iraqi EFL undergraduate students, it has been revealed that the majority of Iraqi students recorded a high level of apprehension that led to an unsatisfactory writing performance making students avoid writing in English. The connection between writing apprehension and writing performance among Iraqi students was demonstrated to be statistically significant and negative, meaning that students with high apprehension of writing performed more poorly than those with lower writing apprehension levels (Sabati et al., 2019). In a similar fashion, a negative correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance has been found among Turkish university students (Erkan & Saban, 2011), Iranian EFL students (Jebreil et al., 2015), and among Kurdish EFL university students (Sulaimani et al., 2020). According to Daly (1985), the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance is rather small but it appears to be negatively significant. He also said that one should expect no more than a modest relationship between apprehension and performance. Somewhat similar to this, Choi (2013) observed no correlation between English writing apprehension and writing performance. However, he did not deny the absolute insignificant correlation; he said students with high apprehension demonstrated poor performance on the writing portfolio assignments. Lastly, a negative correlation between writing apprehension and readiness to do writing tasks has been found, meaning that high apprehensives were less ready to do writing tasks (Rahim et al., 2016).

According to Daud et al. (2016), writing apprehension is negatively and significantly associated with language-related dimensions such as vocabulary and language use. Nonetheless, no correlation exists between apprehension and aspects concerned with content, organization, and mechanics. This presupposes that essay

writing ability is affected by apprehension. Further exploration of the nature of the connection was carried out by (Daud et al., 2016) to identify which one causes the other. For this purpose, participants were divided into a high-proficiency group and a low-proficiency group. Statistic calculations showed that there was a non-significant correlation between writing apprehension in all the dimensions of language-related aspects in writing for the high proficiency group while a significant positive correlation existed between writing apprehension and language-related dimensions of writing performance for the low-proficiency group. This suggests that poor performance is the cause of a high level of writing apprehension (Daud et al., 2016). Yet, at the most extreme ends, other studies detected no statistically significant correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance among Saudi female undergraduate students of English in three higher education institutions (Alluhaybi, 2015).

Writing apprehension, in addition, can be a predictor of writing achievement. They are negatively and significantly connected (Cheng et al., 1999; Sabati et al., 2019). Vukelić (2011) in a comparative study of the foreign language writing anxiety of English and German came up with the result that a small negative correlation exists between writing apprehension and grades among Croatian students when writing in English as a foreign language while a moderate negative correlation exists between writing apprehension and grades among the same students when writing in German as a foreign language. Steve (1999) investigated the correlation between writing apprehension and scores on the TOEFL test of written English among 687 EFL Japanese students and found a significant negative relation between them. This means that higher levels of apprehension caused lower grades.

One of the significant findings of previous research is that writing apprehension can be a significant predictor of syntactic language choice and the structure of students' writing. It has been found that writing apprehension is negatively correlated with their structure in writing. In this connection, high apprehensive individuals might employ passive voice in place of active voice in writing (Daly, 1978). In addition, syntactic maturity and syntactic development are influenced by students' level of writing apprehension in that high apprehensives might write shorter and less complex sentences and use less various syntactic structures. Book (1976) stated that writing apprehension plays a significant role in the structures, the language used, and the amount of information conveyed in written

messages. Higher levels of apprehension cause written messages to impart less information and contain fewer words and weaker structures owing to the lower level of self-confidence possessed by high apprehensive people in their views and judgements and revealing less about their views. The low amount of information that is conveyed by high apprehensive students' written messages can be accounted for by their less use of nouns and pronouns as nouns and pronouns convey the main ideas of a sentence. However, even high apprehensive writers' messages occasionally incorporate long prepositional phrases as well as stringing prepositional phrases. This, according to Book (1976), is known as reticence that, in turn, leads to avoidance of writing tasks and upcoming underdeveloped writing skills. More interestingly, Book found that high apprehensive writers' messages contained three times more spelling errors and more non-sentences and elliptical structures than low apprehensive writers that reflects underdeveloped writing skills as a result of lack of experience and avoidance of writing tasks. Finally, Hassan (2001) noted a moderate and negative correlation between writing apprehension and writing quality.

What is more, the connection between focus on form and writing apprehension is inconclusive and it has been suggested that further research is required to confirm the results while the connection between focus on content and writing apprehension when writing is evident that it appears to be negative, i.e. the more focus goes to content, the lower the level of writing apprehension would be. Additionally, students who do not mind writing in English, who have had some degree of success in writing in English in the past, tend to focus their attention on shaping their ideas rather than the superficial form of their ideas (Gungle & Taylor, 1989).

Writing apprehension bears no correlation to stress and coping behaviours such as seeking social support, accepting blame, and tension reduction among university students. The proof for the inexistence of correlation between tension reduction and writing apprehension is that tension reduction might remove writing apprehension only temporarily and it does not alter intrapersonal conflict. On the contrary, a weak positive correlation to academic rational beliefs, more specifically to beliefs pertaining to evaluation of self-responsibility for academic work and rational beliefs pertaining to work habits has been noted (Atkinson, 2012).

To conclude, writing apprehension has not been examined as the predictor only, rather it has been examined as a predicted variable. For instance, it has been

found that no correlation exists between emotional intelligence and writing apprehension (Huerta et al., 2017). However, a significant correlation of reading frequency and perceptions towards composition writing to writing apprehension was found in which an increase in reading frequency and positivity in perceptions towards writing led to a decrease in writing apprehension levels among Turkish Cypriot students since reading and writing skills can develop simultaneously (Güneyli, 2016). Lastly, the type of an assignment bears an inverse negative correlation with writing apprehension and even syntactic choice (Faigley et al., 1981).

Demographic Variables and Writing Anxiety

One of the factors that influences the experience of writing apprehension and that has been the concern of a few researchers involves demographic variables or student characteristics. By student characteristics, the researcher means the effect of age, gender, socioeconomic status, and education level on the students' writing anxiety. Research on student differences in anxiety has produced inconclusive findings and few studies have probed into the field. Therefore, the correlates of writing apprehension to these variables will be discussed.

The Effect of Age on Writing Apprehension

One of the significant demographic variables that is assumed to clearly account for apprehension involves age. Huwari and Abd Aziz (2011) showed in their study that age could predict writing anxiety of Jordanian postgraduate students, with younger students undergoing more writing anxiety due to the lack of experience. Consistently, McAllister (2014) observed the same result in his investigation concerning the role of age in anxiety with black undergraduate native writers of English. He revealed that students who were between the ages of 18-21 experienced a high amount of writing anxiety, whereas those who are 22 and over experienced a low level, i.e. younger students experienced more anxiety. Nevertheless, older people are not necessarily to have more experience and knowledge as this relies to a great extent on how much one devotes his time to reading and writing (Qadir et al., 2021). Incongruently, Marshall and Varnon (2009) noted no statistically significant differences in writing anxiety scores among undergraduate seniors of accounting majors who were native writers of English in the accounting information system

course. Similarly, Rosen and Maguire (1990) concluded in a meta-analysis of 81 research reports concerning computer phobia and anxiety that was not significantly connected to age. This is, in turn, supported in the literature by Simons et al. (1995). When the role of age is considered in writing apprehension, no conclusions can be drawn as very few studies have taken age group differences into account. As a result, despite Britt (2011) stated that age proves a strong determinant in accounting for writing anxiety, he thought that more research is needed in this respect. In this study, since the age of the participants is homogenous, no accounts of the aftermath of age on writing apprehension will be tackled.

The Effect of Gender on Writing Apprehension

Another demographic variable that might affect apprehension involves gender. It concerns psychological, social or cultural distinctions. It is associated with maleness or femaleness and it should be distinguished from the more known and biological term 'sex' that refers to physical or physiological differences between males and females (Diamond, as cited in Omar, 2020). A host of studies featured gender differences in the accounts of writing anxiety. Some studies showed that gender could account for writing apprehension, with female students possessing comparatively lower levels of apprehension than their male counterparts (Elias, 1999; McAllister, 2014; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Shang, 2013; Simons et al., 1995; Zorbaz, 2010) since they obtain more positive teacher feedback to their writing than do males (Daly, 1985; Daly & Miller, 1975b & c; Zorbaz, 2010). Additionally, Daly and Miller (1975c) stated that this finding fitted with previous research that proposed males were typically less successful than females in elementary and secondary school writing endeavours and that there was a particular bias for females in those grades on the instructors' part. As a result, they manipulated the sex of the student being assessed. The expectation was that instructors would respond based on this stereotype; they consider the low anxious female as the most positive, followed by the high anxious female and then low anxious male as the least positive. Hunzer (1994) asserted that gender stereotypes can definitely pervade and can subsequently impact on the upshot of writing instruction. To explain, Meier et al. (1984) found that women were typically better writers than men, and Whites were better writers and possessed higher efficacy than Blacks. These gender or racial stereotypes can influence students' self-efficacy and minimize the intensity of their writing anxiety.

Daly and Miller (1975c) further stated that positive reinforcement for writing is crucial to the level of writing anxiety. Therefore, it was considered plausible that since males have often been rated poorer than females in writing assignments over the years, that is, not positively reinforced, they would have increased levels of writing apprehension. Spielberger (1983) examined apprehension in diversified conditions and thought that the reason for why women were less anxious was attributed to females being more emotionally stable than males in their reactions to highly stressful or relaxing circumstances. Jebreil et al. (2015) acknowledged the above accounts by showing that gender affected writing anxiety among 45 Iranian EFL students, with males undergoing a rather greater amount of apprehension. The extent of cognitive anxiety was higher in males. Nevertheless, the extent of somatic anxiety and avoidance behaviour did not change in relation to gender. Güneyli (2016) revealed the same result among 721 Turkish Cypriot secondary school students with male students experiencing more writing anxiety. He verified this by virtue of the fact that male students express less interest in and less positive attitudes towards writing. Furthermore, he showed that male's personal attributes and teachers' behaviour must be considered when tackling the impact of gender on writing anxiety.

Inconsistently, a second line of studies revealed that female students were more anxious than male students. In this regard, Cheng (2002) showed significant effects for gender, with females experiencing significantly elevated levels of writing anxiety. She thought that first language writing anxiety differs from second language writing anxiety and that females experience higher anxiety in a second language. This result is consistent with (Abdul-Fattah, 1995; Cocuk et al., 2016; Huerta et al., 2016; Masny & Foxall, 1992; Rodriguez et al., 2009; Thompson, 1981). This high level of anxiety experienced by female students is influenced by such factors as female students' hypervigilance to negative evaluation and overcorrection, apprehension about committing errors and their incapability in striking a balance between their own expectations and their teachers' expectations (Larson, 1985). Kim (2006) also showed that Korean EFL female students were more apprehensive than their male counterparts, with female students self-assessing their writing capability in English more negatively. They felt more anxious regarding the evaluation of their writing and they less enjoyed writing in English than males. He reckoned that suffering this higher level of anxiety by females is associated with females' negative

self-evaluations that may cause their reluctance to attend advanced writing courses. He also revealed that females were more vigilant to teachers' feedback. Xu (1993) attributed the lower level of writing anxiety by men compared to women to the dominant role men traditionally play in the Chinese society, which constitutes their higher self-esteem than women. Considering the literature reviewed by Reeves (1997), female students suffered longer and more distressing writing blocks owing to the loss of a considerable amount of self-confidence at the beginning of puberty which may continue throughout females' lives. Another reason for more anxiety experienced by females, based on Reeves (1997), involves the appropriation of voice, with female students taking a passive approach in writing while male students an active and authoritative approach in which the male was the centre of all actions in writing. Reeves (1997) further stated that writing anxiety had to do with growing up poor, rural, female, and the plantation of the seeds of apprehension from the onset of basic education by the teacher. Although Abu Shawish and Abdelraheem (2010) observed no correlations of gender to the overall writing anxiety level and causes of writing apprehension among 265 Palestinian undergraduate students, they revealed that gender could account for some discrete causes and remedies of writing apprehension. They revealed that gender distinctions were shown in feedback as a cause of apprehension with females suffering more anxiety because females in the Palestinian culture view their significance in others' attitudes towards them and they are hypervigilant to receiving negative feedback. Contrarily, males think that they have the capability to do things on their own disregarding others' attitudes towards them. Thus, this makes female writers withdraw from writing classes or and disinclination writing. Finally, Abdel Latif (2015) considered gender as a cause of writing apprehension. Put it another way, he reckoned that gender should be considered when discussing the causes of apprehension.

Yet incongruently, other research detected no significant differences between males and females in writing apprehension. Kostić-Bobanović (2016), in a longitudinal study, revealed that gender did not have any role in writing anxiety among Croatian EFL undergraduate students neither in their first year nor in their third year. He believed that the causes that make them feel apprehensive in writing seem to be similar. This is congruent with much prior research (Abu Shawish & Abdelraheem, 2010; Al Asmari, 2013; Faris et al., 1999; Karakaya & Ülper, 2011;

Popvich & Massé, 2005; Qadir, et al., 2021; Reed et al., 1983; Schultz & Meyers, 1981; Zerey, 2013).

Thus, it is clear that the findings of previous studies suggest no conclusive evidence of the association between gender and writing anxiety (Abdel Latif, 2015; Kostić-Bobanović, 2016). Considering the detailed review provided above, it can be conjectured that the results are inconsistent due to the rather small magnitude of difference between males and females in the studies that have investigated the topic (Daly, 1985). This hints that there is still not enough evidence to support the connection between writing anxiety and gender in favour of one of the genders and this does not allow to draw firm conclusions. In this study, the only demographic variable that is considered is gender.

The Impact of Academic Level on Writing Apprehension

Academic level refers to the educational level of a student whether he is freshman, sophomore, etc. or he is a master or a doctoral student. The three trends described for the effect of gender on writing anxiety can also be true for the impact of students' academic level on writing anxiety. The first group of studies showed that higher education levels lead to lower writing anxiety. Kostić-Bobanović (2016) showed that there was a substantial difference in writing anxiety owing to students' academic level. Third year students had more inclination to write than first year students; as a result, they experienced a lower level of writing anxiety than the first year. Nevertheless, they ascribed this to using strategies of reducing writing apprehension. Marshall and Varnon (2009) contrasted their fourth-year accounting major sample to Daly's (1978) sample of first- and second-year students and produced significant results. They observed that fourth year students accounting majors produced lower average writing anxiety scores than first- and second-year students. To illustrate, lower-level students experienced more anxiety than fourth-year students due to the experience they have had with writing and the amount of knowledge they possessed (Ekmekci, 2018). Similarly, Cocuk et al. (2016) demonstrated that writing anxiety varied according to academic level, with fifth graders being more anxious than sixth, seventh, and eighth graders.

However, other studies reported that higher level students were more anxious. Al Asmari (2013) showed significant differences between second and eighth graders and indicated that eighth graders were more anxious although the difference was not

great. Abdul-Fattah (1995) also found that more advanced students suffered more anxiety and vice-versa. In the same way, Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) found that participants who were at three different foreign language levels, i.e. beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, demonstrated a relatively consistent rise in anxiety as they advanced through the years of study, i.e. freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Totally contradictory to the above results, Cheng (2002) noted no substantial differences between freshmen, sophomore, and junior EFL Taiwanese students. Although a statistically significant difference was not found, first year students experienced lower levels of writing apprehension. Similarly, Qadir et al. (2021) demonstrated that there were no significant differences in writing apprehension between master and doctoral students. Based on MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), language apprehension levels would be the highest at the initial stages of language learning and then they drop as proficiency increases. Nevertheless, according to Cheng (2002), it is not abnormal for students with high competence to possess self-doubt of their capability to meet the requirements of utilizing the L2, thereby experiencing great anxiety. Put another way, proficiency might not be the only factor in determining the rise or fall of writing anxiety based on Cheng (2002). She also proposed that a complex system of contextual, social, and student variables should be integrated in a comprehensive description of language anxiety development. Yet other research that produced no significant differences in writing apprehension and in the causes and remedies of writing apprehension based on academic level includes Abu Shawish and Abdelraheem (2010). Likewise, Shang (2013) detected no statistical significances between year of writing learning, i.e. writing experience and anxiety.

The Effect of Socioeconomic Status on Writing Apprehension

Socioeconomic status is also another demographic variable that depends on an amalgamation of variables such as education, occupation, wealth, income and place of residence (McAllister, 2014, p.8). Reviewing the literature makes it obvious that very few studies have tackled it. Huwari and Abd Aziz (2011) demonstrated that students' socioeconomic status is negatively correlated with writing anxiety among Jordanian postgraduate students, i.e. students with higher socioeconomic status were less apprehensive and vice-versa. Socioeconomic status did not only affect writing

anxiety, rather it affected math anxiety among Nigerian primary students in favour of students with a higher socioeconomic status (Adimora et al., 2015). Furthermore, African American black students in the US had fear of writing owing to low socioeconomic status that led them to be underprepared (McAllister, 2014). Studies have also revealed that parents' education level, which is a socioeconomic status variable, played no role in experiencing writing anxiety (Karakaya & Ülper, 2011).

As for other demographic variables, the literature has demonstrated that high school writing experience influences the apprehension of Japanese students, indicating that less experience with writing in high school causes a decrease in the level of apprehension experienced by students at university (Steve, 1999).

Writing Performance

Written competence is a component of students' language competence that requires writing-specific and language-specific abilities such as the effective use of a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures (Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998). Written competence is complex and comprises of the interaction of different facets of language proficiency including accuracy, complexity, and fluency with variations in one component being associated with variations in another (Skehan, 1998). Accuracy is also regarded by applied linguists as one of the triadic components of second or foreign language performance along with complexity and fluency to measure second language development. Studies have reported a trade-off correlation among these three components in which a higher performance in one component leads to a lower performance in another, which means that a student cannot perform well in all the three components concomitantly. However, longitudinal studies have reported quite opposite results, i.e. all measures of accuracy, complexity, and fluency can display development simultaneously (Foster & Skehan, 1998; Vercellotti, 2012). Thus, applied linguists measure writing proficiency and performance by employing three dimensions: complexity, accuracy, and fluency (Skehan 1998). In this study, only one component of written competence or performance, i.e. accuracy will be investigated.

The accuracy construct seems to be the most easily defined term due to the agreement that exists among researchers in conceptualizing it. Richards and Schmidt (2010) define it as the students' ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, but not their ability to speak or write fluently because, as stated above, both these

two dimensions of language proficiency might not grow concomitantly. Likewise, accuracy, based on Richards (2015), refers to the student's ability to produce discourse that is free of grammatical errors. Yet similar, Foster and Skehan (1996, 303-304) define it as "freedom from errors" that concerns control at a certain interlanguage level. On his part, Brown (2001) indicates that accuracy means being clear, articulate, and grammatically correct. In other words, accuracy can refer to the degree of deviancy from the second language norms, i.e. the poorer the quality of the second language, the less accurate the piece of writing and vice-versa (Wolfe-Quintero et al. 1998). That is, it is the extent to which the language produced conforms to target language norms (Tavakoli, 2012). Based on the above definitions, accuracy can straightforwardly be defined as the students' capability to employ the language correctly or as a piece of error-free writing and is measured specifically (e.g., accuracy of verb forms) or generally (e.g., overall number of errors or error-free units). Although, according to (Vercellotti, 2012), there might be slight variations in speech due to dialectal differences that can result in problems in accounting for accuracy, this dialectal variation is not so prevalent in writing.

Allusions have been made to explain the causes of students' inaccuracy in writing. Notably, Richards (2015) states that grammatical inaccuracy or errors might result from gaps in the students' knowledge of grammar. They may also be caused by the amount of planning or reviewing time available, the extent to which the student is concentrating mainly on meaning as opposed to grammatical form when employing language, or the extent to which the student is employing controlled or automatic processing (Richards, 2015). It can, in addition, be concerned with a student's belief in norms, and to performance which is native-like through its rule-governed nature. The cause of inaccuracy has also to do with inadequate or transitional interlanguage system or the result of competence-performance relationship or communicative pressure (Skehan, 1996). Accuracy is desired for several reasons. It can stigmatize, fossilize, and impair communicative potency. Students who dislike risk-taking will perhaps be drawn to accuracy due to a reluctance to use language they are not sure of. Such a conservative strategy would evoke accuracy at the expense of complexity (Skehan, 1996).

Based on the literature reviewed by (Lahuerta, 2018), a number of approaches have been used for studying and assessing second language writing accuracy. One common method is the analysis of the frequency of errors that occur in production

units such as words, clauses, or T-units. Another method is to investigate whether a structural unit of some sort, e.g. clauses, sentences or T-units is error-free. Other methods focus on specific error categories such as collocations and a number of other errors. Built on Tavakoli (2012), a typical measure of accuracy is percentage of error-free clauses.

Notwithstanding the fact that most researchers set aside accuracy and regard it as growing when students' language develops, Choi (2013) confirms that students set a high value on producing error-free English writing in the Korean context and linguistic accuracy was deemed one of the criteria for assessing students' writing performance in his study (Choi, 2013). Although nowadays the communicative potency of a text is more common than other text features while rating essay quality, accuracy or lack of errors is deemed as an essential component in writing assessment as reflected in (Hawkey & Baker, 2004) who state that even in a language teaching and testing world in which communicative methods run the show with focus on message rather than form, accuracy plays a crucial part in the effect of communication on interlocutors. Based on Richards (2015), communicative language teaching normally focuses on both accuracy and fluency in language teaching. However, the natural approach suggests that accuracy will take care of itself once the student has developed the capacity to monitor his or her language use. Brumfit (1980) confirms that maximally potent communication is the upshot of working on and enhancing accuracy. Siti Rohani (2007) also asserts that a student needs to grasp both fluency and grammatical accuracy in order to communicate potently.

According to Leki and Carson (1997), teaching of writing in an ESL context needs to supply students with linguistic and writing skills. Tavakoli (2012) states that the main purpose behind instructing grammar in any language teaching and learning program is uplifting accuracy in students for potent communication. In addition, for one to achieve his educational as well as professional goals, grammar instruction to advanced second language students is fundamental and a reasonable amount of grammatical accuracy is demanded in academic writing. It is also believed that a high frequency of grammatical errors in second language students' academic writing most probably makes it unacceptable to the university lecturers (Celce-Murcia 1991).

Studies that have evaluated EFL students' university writing skills in the Kurdish context have detected a high number of errors with grammatical errors topping other types of errors. Although the reasons behind those errors have been

reported to be due to the influence of the first language or developmental errors (Abdulmajeed, 2016; Mahmood, 2016), nothing has been mentioned regarding the effect of affective factors in the Kurdish setting. Thus, this current study would be the first attempt at expounding the issue in question.

It has been reported in previous studies that mere exposure to second or foreign language grammar, vocabulary, and discourse is not the most efficient means of obtaining academic second language proficiency, i.e. accuracy, complexity, and fluency (Hinkel, 2002). Accordingly, affective factors need to be accounted for when tackling accuracy in writing, particularly grammatical accuracy in writing as it has been shown in prior studies that the frequency of grammatical errors is high in writing (Abdulmajeed, 2016). Previous studies, in settings other than the Kurdish context, have revealed a negative correlation between accuracy and anxiety. Turnuk and Aydın (2020) investigated the correlation between interlanguage errors and writing anxiety in the Turkish context among 106 students of English studying English at the preparatory school of a state university using a writing anxiety questionnaire and a writing task. The study showed that students who committed more interlanguage errors experienced higher levels of writing anxiety. In the same way, Zabihi (2018) who dealt with the effect of cognitive factors (working memory capacity) and affective factors (writing anxiety and writing self-efficacy) on the accuracy, complexity, and fluency of upper-intermediate English students' writings, using a working memory capacity task and a timed narrative writing task as well as two self-report questionnaires, showed that all three measures of second language writing were directly predicted by students' writing self-efficacy. He revealed that writing self-efficacy affected complexity, accuracy, and fluency indirectly through writing anxiety. Furthermore, the direct paths from writing anxiety to all measures of L2 writing were negatively significant.

Investigations of writing apprehension have thrown some contradictory evidences of the influence of apprehension on writing capacity. Some researchers reckon that writing apprehension plays a significant role in writing ability since it triggers students' concentration and accuracy (Brown, 2014). Further evidence has demonstrated that anxiety results in poor writing performance (Sabati et al., 2019). Conversely, other researchers think that a moderate amount of writing anxiety can enhance EFL students' writing ability (Brown, 2014; Negari & Rezaabadi, 2012). Empirical studies have revealed that EFL students who undergo a certain amount of

anxiety in writing will concentrate more and write more accurately (Brown, 2014). Concentration and accuracy in writing are among the contributing factors for better writing performance (Skehan, 1996). These irreconcilable impacts of writing anxiety make it an enthralling topic to investigate. Thus, the purpose behind this study is explaining the nature of this connection.

Finally, any piece of effective writing requires the application of an accurate grammar and employing a number of advanced complex structures as well as a well-organized flow of ideas. Notwithstanding the fact that most non-native university students of English cannot be one hundred percent accurate in writing, i.e. produce an error-free piece of writing, they constantly need to enhance their accuracy in writing, particularly grammatical accuracy so as to make their written production as readable and effective as possible. The present study uses an error frequency method to account for students' writing performance.

Writing Assessment

Assessment is a quintessential component of the teaching and learning process and fundamental to students' progress in writing (Harmer, 2015; Hyland, 2004). Evaluating student performance is an essential dimension of teaching. Evaluative feedback and grades vigorously promote individual students' learning and advancement of a potent writing course. Having an insight into assessment procedures is needed to make sure that teaching has the desired effect and that students are assessed fairly. Without the knowledge obtained from assessments, it may be strenuous to recognize the gap between students' present and future performances and to aid them in their progress. Therefore, assessment renders information that can be employed to measure student progress, pinpoint the problems, hint instructional solutions, and evaluate course efficacy (Harmer, 2015; Hyland, 2003, 2004).

Assessment refers to the diversity of systematic methods employed to gather information about a student's language capacity or achievement. It is an umbrella term that involves various practices such as short essays, class tests, writing portfolios, large-scale standardized examinations, long project reports (Hyland, 2003, 2004; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). One term that is relevant involves 'testing' that is often related to large-scale standardized tests, while the term 'assessment' is

employed in a much broader sense to refer to a diversity of approaches in testing and assessment (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

There are five main reasons for evaluating students, including allocating students to appropriate classes (placement test), identifying students' writing strengths and weaknesses (diagnostic test), pinpointing students' progress made in a writing course (achievement test), providing information about students' capacity to perform certain writing tasks (performance test), and assessing students' level of competence with the aim to provide certification for university study or employment (proficiency test) (Hyland, 2003, 2004; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Similarly, and related to writing, Ghalib (2018) states that writing ability is evaluated for several purposes including assigning grades, verifying proficiency, testing appropriacy for a given profession, placing students in a suitable component of a language program, and allowing students to exit a program.

Students usually have a strong feeling of anxiety about assessment and the way grades seem to substitute learning. Therefore, instructors can diminish student anxieties during tests and exams by making their assessment tasks and scoring procedures fair and transparent by informing students about the content of the assessment and the way the assessment will be scored. In addition, discussing the assessment criteria with students, making assessments relevant, purposeful and specific, and providing students with feedback on results and highlighting their progress are among the strategies that can be used to decrease assessment anxiety among students (Hyland, 2003).

Summative and Formative Assessment

Any assessment can be either formative or summative. These two terms were coined by Scriven in 1967 (Moser, 2020). Formative assessment is designed to recognize students' strengths and weaknesses to undertake remedial and preventative action. The concentration is on the learning process and how to support students enhance their performance; therefore, it is sometimes called assessment for learning. This type is strongly associated with teaching and issues of instructor response (feedback), allowing the instructor to monitor learning, advise students, and fine-tune teaching. Summative assessment is associated with summing up the extent of student learning at the end of a module. The results of formative assessment feed back into instruction while the results of summative assessment offer information on individual

achievement or program outcomes, i.e. testing to grade students (Harmer, 2015; Hyland, 2003, Hyland, 2004; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Moser, 2020; Richards, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Thus, assessment has both an instructional and testing function (Hyland, 2004). While formative assessment should have an effect on learning, summative assessment does not instantly have one, but can have a delayed impact on the students' personal and educational decisions (Moser, 2020).

Approaches to Scoring

There are various methods or approaches to scoring that are selected by a rater or a teacher to pass judgements on students' writing ability or for teachers to respond to students' writing performance. These approaches, which reflect three types of rubrics, can take up one of these three forms, viz. holistic, analytic, or trait-based (Hyland, 2003, 2004; Ghalib, 2018).

First, holistic scoring, a global approach to scoring, is so-called because it provides an overall impression of a piece of writing and is based on a single score of writing behaviour. This approach assumes that writing is a single entity which is captured by a single scale that combines the intrinsic qualities of writing. Reliability with this approach enhances when two or more experienced and trained teachers with guidance score the essays to agree upon the relative quality of essays by using rubrics that aid raters by supplying bands of descriptors, with most rubrics having four to six bands (Hyland, 2003; 2004; Ghalib, 2018; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Second, analytic scoring is built on individual scales of overall writing attributes that are viewed significant to good writing by using rubrics that contain grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, content and organization components, with each having descriptors. The benefit of this approach is that assessors would give a score for each component that ensures features are not merged into one and provides more information than a holistic scoring that can relate teaching to testing and provides a clearer framework for feedback and revision. It is more effective in specifying weaker essays because it defines and weights the features clearly (Hyland, 2003, 2004; Ghalib, 2018; Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Third, trait-based scoring determines performance traits such as effective argument, reference to sources, etc. relative to a specific task that clearly defines the specific topic and genre features of the task being judged. The goal is to create criteria for writing that are unique to each prompt and the writing produced in

response to it, using either primary-trait or multiple-trait systems. One drawback of this method is that it consumes much time to devise and administer (Hyland, 2003, 2004; Ghalib, 2018).

In a study by Ghalib (2018) among 30 Yemeni undergraduate English majors, the difference in efficiency between holistic scoring and analytic scoring was compared. As a result, it was found that the use of an analytic scoring was more effective because it pinpoints students' weaknesses and strengths and that using rubrics of any type can increase consistency.

Mistakes, Errors and Error Analysis

Learning virtually any skill or expertise is intrinsically a process that incorporates the making of errors. Learning swimming requires one to first jump into the water and flail arms and legs until he realizes that there is a structured pattern that can keep him afloat and propel him through the water. The first errors made in learning to swim are gigantic ones. Nevertheless, they gradually shrink because he can learn by benefiting from them, by employing errors to gain feedback from the environment, and to make new endeavours with that feedback. L1 learning is similar to any other type of learning in this regard, so does L2 learning in its trial-and-error nature (Brown, 2014). Thus, it appears from the above accounts that making errors is an unavoidable part of L2 or FL learning process in error analysis and one cannot learn a language without making errors (Keshavarz, 2012). It has also been confirmed by Hattie (2012) that errors should not be viewed as embarrassments, signs of failure, or something to be avoided, rather they are signs of opportunities to learn and they ought to be embraced.

A distinction is usually made between two different though very similar concepts, namely mistake and error. Everyone makes mistakes in both L1 and L2 written performance. A mistake can be defined as a performance error that occurs as a result of a random guess, a slip, or the inability to use a system correctly. It does not result from inadequate written competence, rather from a provisional breakdown (Brown, 2014) such as lack of attention, carelessness, fatigue, and other facets of performance (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). In contrast, an error refers to a discernible deviation from a native speaker's adult grammar or the rules of the target language that mirrors the student's lack of competence (Brown, 2014; Ferris, 2011), i.e. inadequate knowledge of the language system, violating literate adult native

speakers' expectations. In addition, an error can be defined as "a linguistic form or combination of forms, which in the same context and under similar conditions of production, would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speakers' native speaker counterparts" (Lennon, 1991, p. 182). More precisely, errors reflect students' competence level, i.e. what students actually know about the language while mistakes reflect the performance level of students, i.e. students know the language system but have problems when performing language.

Thus, it is apparent that students can self-correct their mistakes but not errors because they do not result from their dearth of written competence or inadequate learning (James, 2013). Ellis (2012) states that the distinction between error and mistake corresponds to the dichotomy between systematic and non-systematic errors.

Fundamental to the notion of error involves error analysis (EA). EA is the arena of applied linguistics that is deemed an essential tool for tackling errors in L2 or FL learning and teaching. It originated in the 1960s to propose that students' errors do not only result from the interference of the mother tongue, rather from certain universal strategies; therefore, EA was suggested to be an alternative to contrastive analysis (CA) (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). It is simply the observation, analysis, description and categorization of L2 or FL language student's errors to reveal something about the system used by the student (Brown, 2001). Previously in CA before 1960s, errors were viewed as a wicked sign of failure because it was thought that they would become a habit and their correction would be difficult. Nevertheless, a better and more positive attitude toward students' errors was developed with the emergence of EA (Keshavarz, 2012).

EA is significant in teaching and learning English language owing its capacity to highlight the weaknesses in the students' performance. It can be implemented to identify the methods students use while learning the English language, study causes of students' errors, and determine the difficulties in language learning (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Most importantly, EA was distinguished from earlier approaches to the investigation of errors by its examination of all plausible sources of error, and not merely those caused by L1 interference, including intralingual errors within the L2, the socio-pragmatic context of communication, various and many strategic techniques, and numerous affective variables.

Various categories of errors have been identified and described in the literature. Brown (2014), based on the literature he has reviewed, presents a number

of different categories. First, he distinguished between overt (form) and covert (covert) errors, with the former being apparently ungrammatical at the sentence level while the latter being grammatical at the sentence level but uninterpretable in the context of communication. Second, global and local errors are also two other categories that are distinguished on the basis of comprehensibility. Global errors are incomprehensible while local errors are the opposite, i.e. do not impede communication. Another classification of errors, which is a process-based classification, according to Brown (2014) and Keshavarz (2012), includes addition, omission, substitution, and permutation errors. Another categorization of errors involves the one made by (Brown, 2014; Keshavarz, 2012; Lennon; 1991) based on language levels, i.e. phonological, orthographical, lexical, grammatical, lexico-semantic, morpho-syntactic and discourse errors.

In addition to the categories, a number of sources of errors have been suggested including L1 transfer, intralingual transfer, markedness and universals, context of learning, strategies of communication, input and frequency, and fossilization (Brown, 2014). Keshavarz (2012) also mentioned interlanguage, intralingual, teacher-induced, and communication strategy errors as sources of errors. Most importantly, affective factors such as anxiety might affect students' making of errors.

One detailed study regarding error analysis of Kurdish university students involves the one conducted by Abdulmajeed (2016). Although the main objective of her study was to devise a proper method of measuring accuracy and complexity, one of the methods she applied is error analysis to indicate the most and least prevalent errors in a corpus of 48 essays written by third- and fourth-year students. As a result, she revealed that the most common errors involved spelling, article, and punctuation errors. The second most common group errors included punctuation confusion and run on sentences, wrong noun pluralization, wrong lexical phrase, wrong use of prepositions, and ill-formed stretches. The third group endorsed sentence incomplete, sentence unclear, and redundant punctuation.

Additionally, very few studies have looked into the correlation between students' written errors and writing anxiety. Recently, Turnuk and Aydin (2020) investigated the connection between interlanguage errors and writing anxiety among 106 Turkish EFL students in a preparatory school of a state university. The findings demonstrated that Turkish EFL students who made more interlanguage errors

experienced a higher level of writing anxiety. Consistently, Zhang (2011) and Miri and Joia (2018) attributed the causes of writing anxiety to grammatical errors and insufficient mastery of vocabulary as well as linguistic difficulties among Chinese and Afghan students respectively. Additionally, students make more errors in test-taking situations because it is anxiety-provoking (Zhang, 2011).

Feedback and Error Correction

Recently, the topic of feedback and error correction has attracted the attention of many language education researchers. Much research has been carried out comparing the diversified techniques of feedback and error correction and the result has been that there appear to be more expressions of opinion than of fact (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). In this regard, research has addressed a number of questions, such as whether errors should be corrected or not, and when, which, how, and why they should be corrected. Therefore, treating errors in L2 or FL writing is an intricate and spiky process that requires care and concern on the instructors' part and instructors need to be equipped with the theoretical premises of treating students' errors as well as their students' needs, preferences, emotions and psychological states.

Attitudes to students' errors and error correction have dramatically changed recently. Behavioural models concentrated on the avoidance of error at all costs through repetition, memorization, and overlearning; they considered error a sin; therefore, they attempted at an assiduous correction. However, more recent models after 1970s adopted a *laissez-faire* approach to error, assuming that natural processes within the student would ultimately result in acquisition. Current approaches, involving communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based teaching (TBT), show more tolerance, i.e. support an ideal balance between concentration on form (errors) and concentration on meaning (Brown, 2014; Johnson & Johnson, 1999). This means that since CLT and TBT realize the need for fluency practice, there are situations in which they allow errors pass uncorrected temporarily. Other approaches propose that since mistakes go uncorrected in L1 acquisition, error correction seems to be unnecessary (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Feedback, which is a curtain-raiser to error correction, generally refers to the provision of information on the result of behaviour. It can simply be defined as comments or other information that students obtain regarding their success on learning tasks or on writing from a teacher or other people (Richards & Schmidt,

2010). It is notifying students that there is an error and leaving it to them to locate it and repair it themselves (James, 2013). Furthermore, it is as an element of a process approach to writing that involves input (comments, questions, and suggestions) from a reader (teacher) to a writer (student) with the aim of providing information to the writer for revision through which the writer knows where he has confused the reader by not supplying adequate information, lack of development of ideas, illogical organization, or something like inappropriate word-choice or tense (Keh, 1990). Based on Krashen (1982), feedback, along with rule isolation, i.e. the procedure of tackling language points one at a time, is one of the characteristics of language learning. In addition, Error correction, which is a form of feedback (Johnson & Johnson, 1999), is a reaction by a knower (usually a teacher) or a writer himself to all or part of a writer's (usually a student) utterance that is linguistically or factually wrong and it is form-based or accuracy-oriented (James, 2013; Johnson & Johnson, 1999) rather than truth-value. More clearly, error correction is the strategies used by a teacher or more advanced student to correct errors in a student's writing (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Thus, according to (James, 2013), the dichotomy between feedback and correction is that feedback merely indicates that there is an error but does not tell how or why it is wrong while correction does more than the indication of wrongness, explaining the nature of the wrongness. Finally, written corrective feedback can be defined by Bitchener and Storch (2016, p. 1) as "a written response to a linguistic error that seeks to either correct the incorrect usage or provide information about it".

Instructors have a number of options when aiming to treat students' errors in the classroom, including correcting or ignoring, correcting now or later (delayed correction), encouraging other students to initiate correction, and testing the efficacy of the correction (Brown, 2014). According to Gass (2003), there are two categories of input through which the teacher can provide students when giving feedback: positive and negative evidence. Positive includes informing students about forms that are acceptable while negative evidence informs about the incorrectness of utterances made by a student. Furthermore, Moser (2020) states that theories related to Chomsky's Universal Grammar propose that negative corrective feedback has no position in L2 learning while cognitive interactionist theories assert that it can assist students to obtain structures similar to the target language. More importantly, sociocultural theories opine that there is no single type of corrective feedback that is

best for learning, because students' needs ought to be considered (Moser, 2020). One odds-on outcome, if students are not provided with the category of feedback they need, may be losing interest and disengagement from the written corrective feedback they gain (Pitt & Norton, 2017). Nonetheless, to Brown (2014), the amount of feedback is essential. He states that excessive negative cognitive feedback causes students to abandon their endeavours at communication. Whereas, excessive positive cognitive feedback causes students' error reinforcement and persistence.

Additionally, Ellis (2009) focuses on categories of corrective feedback and distinguishes six categories, including direct corrective feedback (providing the correct form), indirect corrective feedback (indicating that there is an error but not providing the correct form such as underlining or circling), metalinguistic corrective feedback (providing metalinguistic clues to the error such as codes or short grammatical explanations), focused and unfocused written corrective feedback (correcting all or choosing one or two kinds or errors), electronic corrective feedback (providing a hyperlink to the error that shows correct usage of the error), reformulation corrective feedback (a native speaker making changes to the original version). More importantly, there are agents in correcting errors, i.e. who should correct errors, including the teacher (teacher feedback), the student himself (self-correction), and other students (peer feedback, peer review, peer editing).

In terms of the difficulty of correction and feedback, Ferris (1999) identified two types of errors, namely treatable and untreatable errors. The first involves, for example, subject-verb concord or missing article that can be repaired by students while the second includes word order problems that are much harder or sometimes even impossible to be repaired by students themselves as students cannot simply consult a rule book, a dictionary, and so on to correct such errors.

Studies have generally questioned the issue of whether error correction has any value. It has already been observed that there is little influence of error correction for L1 acquisition (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Krashen (1982) assumes that this can also apply to L2 acquisition. On his side, Ferris (1999) claims that grammar correction is ineffective. However, many studies currently provide evidence of written corrective feedback assisting students to acquire target language features (Ferris & Kurzer, 2019). Totally different, James (2013) reckons that errors ought to be researched and prevented before they are corrected, i.e. focus should be directed towards teaching rather than correction (prevention rather than cure). He further

states that turning a blind eye to errors prevents them because students will be less inclined to concentrate on them if they are ignored. Another way of preventing an error that he mentions is ensuring that newly instructed materials are repeated a lot. Yet another strategy involves reducing the material to be taught through which students can search for meaning.

Finally, considering anxiety and feedback, it can be stated emotional characteristics of students play a part in feedback and correction. Moser (2020) states that attitudes, anxiety, and self-confidence are essential for student responses to written corrective feedback. Accordingly, feedback creates issues for students and cannot support L2 competence, if not appropriately and carefully provided based on the students' needs, preferences, and the educational context. For instance, peer feedback might lead to anxiety because most students reckon that their privacy will be intruded if they show their writing to others and, anxiety, in turn, might influence students' involvement in feedback because, although students knowing each other for many years, they still feel anxious when wanting to exchange their work with others. In addition, when exchanging papers, only some students might benefit due to diversity in students' proficiency levels. So, high proficient students might be demotivated by feedback (Moser, 2020). Consistently, James (2013) stated that one of the principles of error correction is that students' affective states need to be taken into account and the correction should not be threatening to students.

Who Can Reduce Writing Apprehension?

Most studies have confirmed that building overall written communicative competence and reducing writing apprehension are the teachers' responsibility and should be their primary concern (Pimsarn, 2013). Teachers should make students gain control over their attitudes towards writing (Bloom, 1981; Reeves, 1997). Be that as it may, other studies have proposed that reducing writing apprehension is not merely the teachers' responsibility to do this, rather students should play their role, too (Clark, 2005; Vielhaber, 1983). To illustrate more, apprehensive students can become less apprehensive if they focus on positive experiences rather than negative experiences (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991) and having adequate knowledge of language and mechanics are important components of effective writing that can help students both improve their writing skills and change the severity of their writing apprehension (Popovich & Masse, 2005). According to Güneyli (2016), students'

own behaviours and characteristics play an essential role in the development of anxiety. Moreover, the role of teachers should not be disregarded. For instance, when conducting writing activities, teachers should take precautions to minimize the anxiety levels of students across the teaching process when selecting a topic, during pre-writing, writing order, and evaluation. Zhang (2011) confirms the same proposition that strategies for reducing writing apprehension can be explored from both instructors' and students' perspectives. Therefore, reduction of apprehension should be made by both teachers and students. Below, more details will be given in this respect under each specific strategy.

Related Research

Previous studies have evidenced a host of notable educational programs and/or research methods for removing or at least reducing writing apprehension among students of various contexts. The studies that have been conducted in this arena have utilized a number of different research methods ranging from quantitative to qualitative and most prevalently experimental studies. The impact of educational programs on writing apprehension has been shown in a number of those studies.

Notwithstanding the fact that EFL/ESL writing instructors cannot entirely eliminate writing apprehension in their students (Vielhaber, 1983), one of the exhausting tasks of writing instructors is at least reducing it by creating a positive environment in their classrooms and offering strategies that will assist them in reducing their fears and building confidence in their writing skills (Hassan, 2001) as well as certain educational methods. Although experiencing a normal level of anxiety is imperative for university students, i.e. the facilitating function of anxiety (Stapa, 1998), writing instructors, researchers of the field of foreign language anxiety as well as psychologists recommend that reducing unusual amounts of writing anxiety is essential due to the detrimental impacts that writing anxiety exerts on writing success. Genç and Yaylı (2019) state that instructors should realize the effect of writing apprehension in their classes and find ways to reduce it. In the same way, Abbas (2016) recommends that instructors need to control their students' apprehension because it might seriously debilitate the promotion of their writing skills.

Throughout the past five decades, an army of researchers have concentrated on the modification of writing apprehension with the presumption that a positive

attitude toward writing is a desirable property and that highly apprehensive individuals should be assisted in reducing their anxiety (Daly, 1985, Vielhaber, 1983). Studies have demonstrated that there exist many ways in which second or foreign language writing apprehension can be managed. Based on their recommendations, writing apprehension should be reduced. In this regard, remediation methods for assisting apprehensive individuals generally take two forms, with the first researching the impact of certain educational programs on apprehension in which the researcher examines the amount of writing apprehension of a group of students before and after they complete a composition course, and the second, being clinical in nature, testing a diversity of therapeutic strategies for the purpose of mitigating writing apprehension (Daly, 1985). According to Masny and Foxall (1992), teaching strategies in the classroom are influential variables in apprehension reduction. In addition, based on Horwitz et al. (1986), there are two options when dealing with anxious students, one is to assist them to manage the existing anxiety-provoking situation, and the second is to make the language learning context less stressful. Under the auspices of these two options, some strategies are presented based on what previous literature has documented. The effect of educational programs, methods or approaches and recommended anxiety-reducing strategies pertinent to the current study will be presented and discussed below.

Doing Reading and Writing for Modifying Writing Anxiety

For the apprehension caused by lack of ideas and poor performance in writing fluency, one of the suggestions made by many researchers is doing reading before writing and increasing writing frequency. Reeves (1997) suggests doing writing activities at all levels of schooling by students themselves rather than lecturing that should take the back seat. More importantly, Reeves (1997) and Huwari and Al-Shboul (2016) suggest doing more reading and writing that is reflected in writing for five to seven minutes each day that can effectively reduce apprehension. Krashen (1993) argues that one single influential method to develop and enhance the quality of students' second language writing as well as reduce apprehension in writing is to do reading. He insists that, "Writing style does not come from writing or from direct instruction, but from reading". Altukruni (2019) and Cobourne and Shellenbarger (2019) also revealed in their studies that integrating reading with writing can have the potential to supply a wide range of authentic language students would not come

across in their classrooms, textbooks, and everyday lives. One of the advantages of integrating reading with writing, based on Krashen (2004), is that students would have writing models, ideas, and language structures that they can apply in their writing, develop their writing styles, and enrich their vocabulary. Smith (1988) further argued that "...to learn to write for newspapers, you must read newspapers; textbooks about them will not suffice. For magazines, browse through magazines rather than through correspondence courses on magazine writing. To write poetry, read it" (Smith, 1988, p. 20). This is supported by (Qashoa, 2013) who found in his qualitative study that more practice and training on writing essays, and imitating some writing model samples can help reduce apprehension. Consistently, Zorbaz (2015) examined the impact of variables of reading-writing frequency on freshman students' writing apprehension. He showed that students who conducted more writing activities, had taken more writing assignments during secondary or high school education, read more books in the past year, and were high on the scales of reading habits had lower levels of writing apprehension. Additionally, giving and attending public readings was one of the many strategies suggested by Reeves (1997) in his study.

Conversely, it has been reckoned that doing more writing, especially by high apprehensives may lead to adverse effects. Consistently, Smith (1984) argued that doing more writing may receive traditional and detailed red-inking, the type of teacher-written response that could be the cause of the increase in writing apprehension. In contrast to this, Daly (1977) stated that it is the adverse response and evaluation of the writing that leads to the increase in the apprehension rather than doing the writing. According to McAndrew (1986), when high apprehensive students are asked to do more writing, instructors should be heedful as these students may view it as an increase in punishment. Bloom's (1980) advice might work well who states that instructors should begin small and build the amount and frequency of writing over time, by increasing writing as writers slowly become more comfortable. Finally, McAndrew (1986) states that students must write if they want to learn to write. He further suggests that writing should be increased progressively, but this increase should be appropriate to high apprehensive students adopting peer-group writing workshops, emphasizing positive reinforcement and evaluation, and concentrating on the writing process.

As such, two of the strategies employed in this study for reducing writing apprehension and enhancing writing performance involve doing reading before writing and writing one paragraph biweekly. Other strategies that were used in this study will be expounded below.

The Effect of Psychological Variables on Modifying Writing Anxiety

It is especially noteworthy that adequate consideration be given to student variables such as self-confidence, self-esteem and so on in the account of second language writing anxiety (Cheng, 2002). Raising the level of certain personal characteristics of students that are in themselves the cause of the apprehension can help reduce writing apprehension, for instance if students' writing apprehension is caused by poor writing skills, the best way to help students is to work on that skill. However, if it is caused by lack of self-confidence, instructors should raise their self-confidence (As clearly shown in Cheng, 2004; Vukelić, 2011). Based on Kusumaningputri et al. (2018), since the causes of writing apprehension in their study was language difficulties, time pressure, and insufficient writing practice, they suggested that classroom instructions should focus on improving students' linguistic capabilities and writing techniques through modelling.

One of the personal characteristics that has been reported to play a vital role in apprehension reduction involves self-confidence as discussed earlier. One strategy recommended for teachers is to reduce students' writing apprehension by building and raising writing self-confidence (Qashoa, 2013; Clark, 2005; Zhang, 2011) by not directing all energy on errors, recognizing students' writing strengths, providing positive feedback (Cobourne & Shellenbarger, 2019), providing indirect feedback (Yao, 2019), applying heuristic strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, looping, branching and clustering, outlining, cubing by describing, comparing, analysing, associating, applying, and arguing that help students both generate ideas on the topic and increase writers' self-confidence as well as reduce students' apprehension (Vukelić, 2011). Furthermore, the level of self-confidence can also be promoted and anxiety stemming from lack of self-confidence be reduced through helping students identify their writing success areas, setting realistic and attainable goals that is an important fertilizer of self-confidence (Cheng, 2004), using dialogue journal writing (Liao & Wong, 2010), and by drafting, peer responses, journaling, and sequenced writing projects (Qashoa, 2013). Students should also promote their

self-confidence by enhancing background knowledge, creating positive attitudes toward committing errors, doing peer correction and relaxation exercises (Qashoa, 2013). In addition, apprehension could be reduced and self-confidence be raised by designing lessons well, developing clear objectives, preparing students adequately to meet the demands of an assignment in order to write with confidence, breaking down the writing task and prepare students for each element of the task (Smith, 1984) as well as providing peer feedback (Yastıbaş & Yastıbaş, 2015).

Another affective variable that influences students' writing apprehension has been reported to be self-efficacy. In this regard, Fischer, Meyer, and Dobelbower (2017) explored how the certain components of self-efficacy helped to reduce writing apprehension and build confidence in writing through the implementation of pedagogical strategies and the instructor interventions in a one semester writing course for agricultural science majors and found that they were very influential. The self-efficacy components included performance accomplishments carried out through multiple assignments across the semester, vicarious experience through following a guide, verbal persuasion through constructive criticism, and psychological states carried out through the teacher being considered a coach. Their work further showed that having more opportunities to practice writing through assignments and activities can improve students' writing apprehension. According to Liao and Wong (2010), the teacher plays an important role in facilitating the English writing process to be accomplished in a relaxed atmosphere in order to reduce students' English writing apprehension and promote their English writing efficacy. Abbas (2016) states that teachers should encourage students to frequently practice writing and not evaluate every writing performance in order to help reduce the effect of students' low level of writing self-efficacy.

In the same way, McGee (2019) recommends reducing writing anxiety through improving self-efficacy by providing thoughtful feedback, engaging students, and creating collaboration among students during the writing process. This, in turn, promotes cognitive growth through affective means by making students feel better about writing. Such feedback directly affects their self-efficacy because it influences how a student perceives his ability to successfully complete a task. Blasco (2016) observed a negative correlation between metacognitive writing strategies use by students, self-efficacy and writing anxiety. Therefore, he believed that teachers should encourage students to use metacognitive writing strategies and they should

raise students' level of self-efficacy and that teachers should reduce both personal and environmental factors that may cause writing anxiety and decrease students' self-efficacy, ultimately enhancing students' writing skills.

Yet another affective strategy or characteristic concerns students' motivation for writing. Based on Vukelić (2011), if the cause of writing anxiety is lack of motivation, instructors should choose the right topic and make students experience writing as a relevant and challenging activity that has a purpose. Consistent with this, Cheng (2004) states that one of the ways of increasing students' motivation and to gather more information about the topic and reduce teacher-assigned topic anxiety includes giving freedom to students in choosing topics they care about or have interest in because she believes that this brings a personal connection to writing assignments. Yet consistently, Abbas (2016) recommends teachers to employ a variety of interesting writing activities to encourage students to freely write about interesting topics to help them develop a positive attitude toward writing and reinforce their motivation to write which are also regarded as possible influential factors accounting for students' apprehension. Finally, Hassan (2001) recommends instructors to encourage students to employ word processors that may help in their effort to write and to improve their self-images as writers, and consequently, lessen their level of apprehension.

The Significance of Feedback and Collaboration in Writing Anxiety

Previous studies have acknowledged the impact of providing feedback to EFL students' apprehension, particularly providing clear feedback (Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Pimsarn, 2013), systematic feedback by instructors (Popvich & Masse, 2005), and arranging peer response groups (Pimsarn, 2013). Yastıbaş and Yastıbaş (2015) examined the effect of peer feedback on 16 Turkish university students' writing anxiety and perceptions towards it. They showed that the students held positive perceptions towards it and the students believed using peer feedback in writing classes decreased their writing anxiety, and improved their writing by collaborating with and learning from each other. The quantitative results of the study indicated that the use of peer feedback in writing classes reduced their writing anxiety in terms of cognitive, somatic, and avoidance components of anxiety. Congruently, McGee (2019) thought that group work and frequent feedback can assist students in relieving writing anxiety. Likewise, another experimental study by Yao (2019), who examined

the effect of direct and indirect written corrective feedback on the writing anxiety of 80 secondary school students in China in which participants were divided into two groups, one group being given direct feedback and the other indirect feedback, revealed that direct feedback had a more positive impact on mitigating anxiety of making mistakes.

Jahin (2012) investigated the effect of peer reviewing on writing apprehension and essay writing ability of 40 Saudi prospective EFL teachers, being divided into two equal experimental and control groups. The experimental group was taught through peer reviewing while the control group was taught through traditional teacher-based feedback. The analysis indicated that peer reviewing positively influenced students' writing apprehension and essay writing. Similar findings were also observed in Kurt and Atay's study (2007), who examined the effect of peer feedback on Turkish prospective teachers of English, with the experimental group receiving peer feedback working in pairs, giving feedback to each other's essays and discussing their feedback with each other before handing them to their instructors. The study revealed that the experimental group with peer feedback became aware of their mistakes and they received opinions from their friends to elaborate on. Peer feedback had a great effect on reducing writing apprehension. This kind of collaboration helped them gain a different perspective for their essays. Compatible with this, Cheng (2004) recommended carrying out peer response activities to create a supportive community among students. Hassan (2001) and Cobourne and Shellenbarger (2019) also recommended for Egyptian instructors to use peer review because, based on Hassan (2001), it fosters a feeling of equality between the writer and the reader and thereby reduces the students' apprehension. Abbas (2016) recommended for Iraqi instructors that should encourage and train students to self-correct their writing performance errors and mistakes so as to overcome any negative emotions toward teacher correction and feedback which may also provoke students' writing apprehension. However, from the perspectives of Afghan students, receiving feedback from teachers was one of the major strategies they used to overcome their writing anxiety (Miri & Jola, 2018). In the same vein, Sabati et al. (2019) suggested that affective factors of EFL learning must be nurtured and that beliefs of students regarding their writing capabilities should be fostered by providing positive feedback from teachers and peers to minimize anxiety in writing.

Cornwell (1998), on his side, examined the effect of peer editing groups on 29 first year Japanese university students' writing apprehension and grades over an English writing course. Students were divided into four peer editing groups including high apprehensive, low apprehensive, mixed apprehensive, and control (moderate apprehensive). The findings showed that most groups' apprehension levels dropped. However, the low apprehensive students' apprehension rose. The mixed apprehensive group showed the largest decline in apprehension. The high apprehensive group's apprehension level also dropped significantly.

Huwari and Al-Shboul (2016) interviewed 21 Jordanian students to identify the strategies they used to reduce their writing apprehension. They found that the commonest adopted strategies included behaviour strategy and expert review and feedback strategy. Compared to expert review and feedback strategy, behaviour strategy was more common among students that included, using technology programs such as google translator, dictionaries as well as Internet websites, and peer seeking. As for expert review and feedback strategy, getting guidance from lecturers through constructive feedback was used by students as a strategy.

Yet another effective study involved the one conducted by Jeon (2018) who tackled the impact of student-centred EFL writing instruction on Korean university students' writing apprehension and perception enrolled in a practical English writing course to trigger the students' participations in the writing process through student-driven feedback, portfolio, peer feedback, and group writing using surveys and in-depth interviews. He used a pretest and posttest experimental design. It revealed that this approach was effective in reducing writing anxiety, particularly somatic anxiety. Students' perception of the order of the student-centred instruction appeared to be ordered from student-driven feedback, portfolio, peer feedback, and group writing in its impact to minimize apprehension.

With regards to the impact of collaboration on writing apprehension, Jalili and Shahrokhi (2017) investigated the effect of collaborative writing on 60 EFL Iranian students' writing apprehension through composing a story based on a provided picture sheet by dividing participants into two groups, with one group working individually and the other group working in pairs. The results showed that collaboration had a significant effect on reducing writing apprehension. Similar findings were also reported by Jawas (2019) who conducted a study regarding the strategies that can be employed to manage writing anxiety among 80 EFL Indonesian

students based on an open-ended questionnaire. It showed that working collaboratively in pairs or small groups for idea development and essay construction were among the most prevalent strategies adopted by the university students. The study affirmed that providing the opportunity to students to use their preferred strategies for managing their apprehension can be effective.

Abbas and Al-bakri (2018) tested the effect of pair writing technique on 78 Iraqi EFL university students' writing anxiety and performance. They were taught writing and practiced it conventionally or individually and were taught writing and practiced it in pairs. The results showed a positive effect of pair technique on writing performance and writing apprehension reduction.

Tighe (1987) revealed that in-class assignments reviewed in small group discussions, and discussing evaluation procedures in the form of peer evaluation in an English writing course at an Alabama university among sixteen students throughout a course influenced students in a way that 13 students were less apprehensive at the end of the course than at the beginning.

Based on (Choi, 2013), lessening anxiety levels through collaborative writing can establish a student-friendly classroom and create a positive environment for English writing without much apprehension or stress among students. In addition, specialized teacher training and good implementation of collaborative writing tasks are not only important but absolutely necessary to guarantee successful outcomes (Choi, 2013). Finally, instructors need to encourage students to work in groups and pairs when writing to create a non-threatening environment in which students work with, support, and encourage each other, and ultimately learn from each other (Abbas, 2016).

Minimizing Anxiety through Portfolios, Diaries, and Journaling

Three other strategies the literature has shown to be efficient involves keeping portfolios and diaries as well as writing journals. Taking the educational importance of portfolio keeping into account, Öztürk and Çeçen (2007) explored the effectiveness of portfolio keeping on the writing anxiety of Turkish students, with two instructors working to overcome the anxiety of their students. It revealed that portfolio keeping is useful in overcoming anxiety and that it may affect students' future teaching practices. So, the study suggests including portfolios in the program of English language departments since the students declared that they highly

benefited from the process in terms of learning ownership, vocabulary expansion, critical thinking and creativity as well as creating some positive changes in their emotional states.

As regards writing diaries, it has been found that they can affect apprehension. Writing diaries is considered a channel through which theme-based instruction can be executed. Phonhan et al. (2016) employed diary writing as an instrument to examine the effect of theme-based instruction on relieving EFL third year Thai university students' descriptive writing apprehension and develop their writing proficiency enrolled in a narrative and descriptive composition course. The study concluded that the use of diaries to apply the theme-based instruction reduced writing apprehension and increased writing ability. Based on Zhang (2011), one of the ways of taking one's emotional temperature can be administered by writing a language learning diary. Additionally, one of the reading-writing frequency variables that was effective in apprehension reduction from students' perspectives in Zorbaz (2015) involved keeping diaries. He found that freshmen students who kept diaries in their previous education reported a lower level of apprehension.

Writing journals and projects can also assist students become less apprehensive and provide another channel of communication to EFL teachers (Cheng, 2004). One of the recommendations offered by Hassan (2001) is to gradually increase students' writing activities such as journal writing to make them less apprehensive. Liao and Wong (2010) examined the impact of dialogue journal writing on students' writing anxiety among 41 EFL students in Taiwan who were required to write two journal entries in a week, thus writing 24 journal entries throughout a semester, with all the students producing 984 journal entries. They found that dialogue journal writing reduced their apprehension, and students had a positive attitude towards it. They believed that journal writing was an important tool for self-growth and self-understanding. They further reckoned that journal writing is a non-threatening writing activity in English writing classes for L2 student writers that is essential to reducing their English writing apprehension and for students who write only for exams which is the case with the context of their study. Most importantly, they believe that creating a writing context which is anxiety-free may encourage students' willingness to explore their thinking and express their ideas. Qashoa (2013), Vielhaber (1983) and Tighe (1987) agree with them that keeping writing notebooks and journals can help students become less apprehensive because,

according to Tighe (1987), it would be a chance for students in journal writing to talk about their own experiences. Another study that examined the impact of dialogue journal writing on 207 EFL Korean freshmen university students' writing apprehension included Song (1997). Experimentally, he tested students in two groups writing dialogue journals and two other groups not writing dialogue journals. The results revealed that the dialogue group performed better in writing quality and proficiency, reading comprehension achievement, and most importantly reducing writing apprehension as well as writing attitudes.

The Effect of Teaching Methods or Techniques on Writing Anxiety

In order to modify students' writing apprehension, Hassan (2001) recommends teaching writing skills improvement courses in non-traditional ways. Masny and Foxall (1992) state that the concern for writers' block corresponds to the desire to see a reduction of students' apprehension through modified teaching practices. Built on them, the more traditional approaches to writing instruction lay heavier emphasis on grammar. This approach is claimed to be the cause of writer's block (Zamel, 1982). A process writing approach to writing has been evidenced as a strategy for alleviating anxiety. Thus, if apprehension is to be minimized, instructors need to apply a process writing approach in writing instruction (Clark, 2005; Qashoa, 2013; Masny and Foxall, 1992; Abbas, 2016) that focuses on a multi-draft model of instruction (Cheng, 2004; Clark, 2005) in which writing should be taught as a process rather than a product, meaning that writing should be viewed as a creative art entailing planning, editing, drafting, peer correcting, chunking and working in groups instead of giving students a topic and receiving it as a product without any discussion during the writing process (Clark, 2005; Qashoa, 2013). Consistently, teaching writing as a process requires due attention to be given to all phases of writing, namely prewriting, writing, and post-writing and not only the product of writing (Abbas, 2016). For instance, students need to be encouraged to read others' writing drafts that assist them garner writing ideas and discern good writing habits (Cobourne and Shellenbarger, 2019). In teaching writing as a process, a greater emphasis should be placed on content and content-based process-writing classroom strategies should be used (Masny and Foxall, 1992). Moreover, this approach emphasizes the division of writing tasks or assignments into digestible chunks (McGee, 2019). In a study by Bayat (2014) who examined the effect of the process

writing approach on EFL Turkish first year university students' writing success and anxiety by using a quasi-experimental design through a period of 10 weeks revealed that teaching writing as a process exerted a significant effect on students' writing success and writing anxiety, i.e. students' writing anxiety decreased. Qashoa (2013) states that one of the most effective strategies by teachers to reduce writing anxiety was reported to be adopting a process writing approach to writing. This, in turn, is confirmed by Hassan (2001) that adopting a process writing approach in writing instruction plays a vital role in reducing writing apprehension and indicating to students that learning to write is a multi-step process.

Having learned that instructors adopt a process writing approach, students should be corrected in their misconceptions that most of what they see in their writing process as problematic, i.e. not being able to get it right in the first draft or viewing revision as proofreading for mechanics, i.e. putting proofreading in the early stages, might not be truly so (McAndrew, 1986). Thus, it is the task of writing instructors to dispel these misconceptions. In addition, writing instructors can discuss their present writing projects, the problems they face during the writing process, and the treatments so that students identify their own problems, too and understand the process of writing. Based on Craven (1980), inviting professional writers to class to lecture about how they write, displaying the intricacy of the writing process can assist in lowering students' apprehension regarding their own processes.

Each step of teaching writing as a process requires certain anxiety-reducing strategies. Based on Genç and Yaylı (2019), the most common strategies employed by Turkish EFL students for reducing writing anxiety in the planning stage of writing involved expanding vocabulary knowledge, doing research on the topic to be written, and practising. Vielhaber (1983) also asserted that one of the ways of reducing writing apprehension is practicing more in the planning stage. In the same way, in Qashoa (2013), strategies before writing or writing tests include well preparedness, practice, the use of checklists to review their writings with peers. Cheng (2004) adds brainstorming in groups with other prewriting practices such as clustering and free writing to help reduce anxiety caused by lack of generating ideas. Congruently, Miri and Joia (2018) revealed that Afghan university students reported doing extensive reading, developing vocabulary knowledge and practicing writing as major strategies to overcome writing anxiety before writing. During writing, strategies involve outlining, prompt division, guessing the meaning, realizing that fluency is more

important than accuracy that helps students get rid of fear of the mistakes they commit in grammar and spelling, teachers' assistance and role as well as encouragement. In addition, providing the opportunity to students to revise their writing in the revising stage is fundamental to apprehension reduction (Popovich & Masse, 2005; Veit, 1980).

Jawas (2019) also conducted a study regarding the strategies that can be employed to manage writing anxiety among 80 EFL Indonesian students based on an open-ended questionnaire. The study showed that students employed developing essay outline, building better background knowledge, finding supporting references, making some pauses during the writing process by taking a deep breath and stretching the body, taking breaks, discussing problems with peers and seniors as well as the lecturer, and staying focused and calm to reduce their apprehension.

Furthermore, previous research has acknowledged the application of the process-genre approach on both relieving writing apprehension and improving writing performance. On such study involves Amjal and Irfan (2020) who investigated the role of the process-genre approach in writing apprehension reduction and found that it was effective among Pakistani students. Additionally, Janenoppakarn (2017) who, in a quasi-experimental study, tackled the impact of the process-genre approach on the development and process of 37 EFL students' writing. He revealed the effectiveness of the approach on improving high and low proficient students' writing development and process. Nevertheless, lower proficient students showed less development in terms of writing content. He also stated that low proficient students with this approach require a longer period of time to enhance their writing. More importantly, high and low proficient students in his study developed better attitudes at the end of the course due to the application of the process-genre approach. Consistently, Alabere & Shapii (2019) compared the effects of the process-genre approach to the product approach on undergraduate students' writing performance. As a result, students taught through the process-genre approach outperformed those taught through the product approach revealing that the former was more efficient.

Finally, writing apprehension cannot be tackled in a single unit of instruction or in an occasional activity. To tackle it effectively, instructors must consider it in all of their planning. A number of practical approaches to reduce writing apprehension

have been recommended. The researcher assumes that combining a number of strategies can be influential in taming apprehension.

The Role of Technology in Taming Writing Anxiety

In addition to education methods, the integration of some sort of technology into them has been found to be anxiety-reducing. Cheng (2004) states that writing instruction that utilizes communication technology can be promising in reducing writing apprehension, for example carefully guided e-mail and chat-room communication activities can establish a more relaxed and authentic communication environment without being worried about the consequences of committing grammatical or mechanical errors. Bailey and Cassidy (2020) examined the impact of an online peer-to-peer feedback on students' writing anxiety among 41 EFL South Korean English education majors attending a compulsory English writing course over a period of a semester employing an experimental approach and revealed a decrease in writing anxiety levels and produced better writing assignments.

Similarly, Zhang (2019) investigated the effect that online resources and systemic functional linguistics exert on students' writing anxiety. The study was conducted through interviewing students and their reflections, in-class discussions and their written pieces at a university in China. The study demonstrated that students could control their fears concerned with lack of knowledge. They could use the knowledge conveyed through online resources confidently and actively. They could effectively construct their own writing. The study confirmed that systemic functional linguistics being used as a linguistic technique and online resources can relieve students' apprehension because it provides students with knowledge needed for effective written communication.

In the same way, Cequena and Gustilo (2014) stated that an instructional setting where it uses computer-mediated communication helps in reducing writing apprehension. They found that the use of online portfolios through weblogs influenced students' level of writing apprehension among seventeen university students in Philippines in an English communication course, using discourse completion tasks and focus group discussions by analysing students' blog comments. They stated that online portfolios through blogging can relieve writing apprehension because students can have more time for essay writing and do it in the comfort of home as well as benefit from additional input of peers.

On his part, Murnahan (2010) also demonstrated the significance of communication technology. He aimed at reducing writing anxiety through paper-based diaries and journals and computer-based e-mail and weblogs among 165 college students through the application of a questionnaire and a pretest and posttest experimental design. The study showed that personal writing in paper-based journals and diaries did not reduce writing anxiety and personal writing in computer-based weblogs and e-mails was more effective than personal writing in journals and diaries. By the same token, Thevasigamoney and Yunus (2014) experimentally tested the use of e-mail dialogue journal writing and demonstrated that it was influential and decreased gifted students' apprehension levels to a certain amount. This, according to them, shows the significance of incorporating technology into EFL writing programs in reducing writing apprehension. Chuo (2007) also experimentally tackled the effect of WebQuest writing instruction on Taiwanese EFL students' writing apprehension among two junior university student classes, with one group receiving traditional instruction and the other WebQuest writing instruction, results indicated a significant reduction in writing apprehension through WebQuest instruction. Yet similar, Iksan and Halim (2018) explored the influence of e-feedback via wikis on ESL students' writing anxiety by using an experimental method where students were divided into two groups. Students in the control group were given feedback traditionally using face-to-face interaction while students in the experimental group were given e-feedback through wiki. While both face-to-face feedback and e-feedback were effective in lowering writing anxiety, e-feedback was more effective.

Contrary to the literature on the integration of technology, Zaid (2011) who tackled the impact of web-based prewriting activities such as concept mapping and online reading on college students' writing apprehension by dividing participants into three groups, namely two experimental groups and one control group, with the first experimental group being conditioned by concept mapping using blackboard facilities, the second experimental group being conditioned by online reading before writing, and the third control group being given no treatment, revealed that the two treatment groups unexpectedly increased students' writing apprehension. However somewhat a similar study but without the integration of technology, Zarei and Faizollahi (2019) investigated the effect of concept mapping and brainstorming on the lexical and grammatical accuracy and writing anxiety of Iranian EFL students' argumentative essays. One experimental group received instruction through concept

mapping, another experimental group through brainstorming, and the third being control group through conventional instruction. Both experimental groups did better than the control group. In lexical accuracy, both experimental groups had almost the same scores while in grammatical accuracy and writing anxiety the concept mapping group obtained the highest mean followed by the brainstorm group. Overall, it was shown that the concept mapping was a more helpful strategy in reducing writing apprehension than brainstorming and conventional teaching.

In addition, Mohseniasl (2014) examined the effect of explicit strategy instruction, particularly pre-writing strategies such as brainstorming, concept mapping, and free writing on reducing writing apprehension. He found that it was very influential and could lessen writing anxiety levels. This presupposes prewriting activities such as concept mapping, brainstorming, and reading before writing might reduce writing apprehension and optimize writing performance if they are used face-to-face in class, yet they might not reduce it when used online.

Congruent with the previous study that technology might not be influential, Altunkaya and Topuzkanamış (2018) who, in a quasi-experimental study, inspected the effect of Facebook in writing education on writing attitude and anxiety and concluded that Facebook use did not impact Turkish EFL students' writing anxiety while it impacted on their writing attitudes. Another experimental study by Bailey et al. (2017) that aimed to detect the influence of blended versus traditional writing environments and second language proficiency on 75 South Korean English majors' cognitive, somatic, and behavioural components of writing anxiety. The blended learning students completed assignments through canvas while the conventional group completed assignments by hand. The application of post-SLWAI showed that blended learning students reported an increase in behavioural anxiety while the conventional pen-and-paper group reported an increase in somatic anxiety. No decreases in anxiety were detected between the two groups. Having reviewed the impact of the integration of technology on writing anxiety, ambivalent findings could be observed; therefore, one of the strategies employed in this study involved the use of Google Classroom and e-mail for providing positive and negative feedback and uploading material.

Support as a Strategy of Apprehension Reduction

Writing instructors can provide sundry categories of support to relieve apprehension such as cognitive, informational, instrumental, appraisal and emotional support to students in several ways. First, instructors can help students improve their linguistic capabilities and writing techniques through modelling (Kusumaningputri et al., 2018) and by providing them with various writing resources including books, video lectures, and PowerPoint files via email and certain platforms such as Google Classroom (Cobourne & Shellenbarger, 2019). Second, they should allocate more time for writing courses and for the writing process (Genç and Yaylı, 2019) in which they have to encourage students to complete their writing tasks or assist them in solving the given problem or be involved in students' composing by helping them with grammar and vocabulary; teaching vocabulary separately and in an isolated way (Daud et al., 2016; Genç & Yaylı, 2019). They can use different strategies for developing students' vocabularies, teach writing as a fluency rather than as an accuracy, and ask students to correct themselves (Daud et al., 2016). Third, repetition, imitation, memorizing, and reproduction of existing knowledge, if adequately practised, can be effective and can have positive effects on ESL writing improvement and apprehension because students become familiar with various genres of English writing through these. Providing sufficient information and materials, providing guided practice to students, encouraging creating ideas and successful communication instead of focusing on grammar and vocabulary can also help reduce apprehension and can all be considered among the cognitive or informational support provided to students (Zhang, 2011). listening to fearful writers, contextualizing and customizing grammar and errors through teaching grammar in context of writing rather than in isolation (Reeves, 1997). Fourth, instructors can create a convivial classroom atmosphere that is both positive and supportive by emphasizing the possibilities of success rather than the probabilities of failure; a classroom that the apprehensive student feels more relaxed in practising his writing skills and permits students to take risks that are essential to all language learning (Vielhaber, 1983). Fifth, teachers' response to student drafts and the class climate will do a great deal to reduce the level of apprehension, allowing for the practice essential to enhancing writing skills and reducing apprehension. Once this positive approach is established, instructors can encourage students to control their writing environment, eliminate mental distractions that impede writing, prepare materials

before writing, divide writing into stages, and keep daily journals for free writing exercises (Vielhaber, 1983). Sixth, instructors need to establish a student-centred and less-threatening classroom by valuing students' contribution, leading activities to feelings of achievement, and offering more encouragement (Zhang, 2011). Last but not least, teachers can help students reduce apprehension by allowing them to self-disclose their feelings and themselves to raise their voices in a forum (Reeves, 1997). More clearly, the instructor can also allow students verbalize their fear of writing by organizing group discussions or in small groups or with the whole class (Cheng, 2004).

Systematic Desensitization as a Writing Apprehension Reliever

Systematic desensitization, a graduated exposure therapy, is a term that was devised by Wolpe in 1958. It is a category of behaviour therapy that can be utilized for treating phobias based on the assumption that it can change behaviour, with the major principle being that what is learned could be unlearned. Another principle is that when one adapts to apprehension in the imagination, he can also adapt to it in the real situation. The main element in systematic desensitization is the application of relaxation strategies while visualizing anxiety-stimulating situations or writing problems. Thus, students will have the chance of being exposed to the feared stimulus which is significant in the treatment of anxiety (Noureen, 2019).

One experimental study conducted in this area involves (Noureen, 2019) who tackled the effect of systematic desensitization on writing apprehension and writing performance among 40 students of the National University of Modern Languages in Pakistan by following three steps relaxation training, followed by the construction of anxiety hierarchy and systematic desensitization. As a result, she revealed that systematic desensitization was influential in curbing students' apprehension and enhancing their writing performance. Another comprehensive and detailed review study concerned with the influence of listening Quran recitation on anxiety by Ghiasi and Keramat (2018), reviewing 28 articles on this subject, all but one article revealed the positive effect of listening to Quran recitation on reducing anxiety. Based on these two and many other studies, it can be conjectured that systematic desensitization, whether it be through relaxation or religion, can have powerful effects on anxiety.

Remedial Teaching

Remedial teaching, an integral part of the teaching arrangement component of the 5-dimensional model of differentiation, can be considered as a significant strategy for both reducing apprehension and improving performance. The behoof of remedial teaching is to prevent and remove learning difficulties. It can be provided to all students who have certain difficulties. In some countries such as Finland, teachers are obliged to provide all students who have fallen behind with remedial teaching. A dominant method of providing remedial teaching can be through extra guidance when specific difficulties are observed (Roiha & Polso, 2021).

Diagnosis and remediation are the tools that can help instructors to pinpoint students' strengths and weaknesses in a lecture or a course through observation, tests, and even questionnaires. It can serve as the foundation for students' needs analysis and provide essential information to the instructor to correct his methods, modify content and take into consideration students' individual differences (Oyekan, 2013). In his study, Oyekan (2013) who investigated the impact of a diagnostic remedial teaching on students' achievement in a biology course among 427 students and 12 teachers, with the students being grouped into three groups of experimental, conventional and control groups. The findings demonstrated the application of diagnostic remedial teaching was more influential in enhancing students' achievement and retention than the conventional method in biology classroom practices. Furthermore, Yolak et al. (2019) showed that remedial teaching not only contributed to students' achievement, rather it influenced students' academic, psychological, social, economic lives. Furthermore, they stated that such category of teaching caused students to obtain higher grades, be more self-confident, and not be afraid of earning low marks on exams. Incongruently, Al Othman and Shuqair (2013) revealed in their study that remedial teaching in the Arab world has been uninfluential in enhancing students' English language skills. Therefore, although most prior has produced results revealing positive effects of the impact of remedial teaching, its effect in certain contexts seems to be indecisive.

Evaluation Strategies for Modifying Writing Apprehension

As discussed earlier, strategies can be recommended based on the causes. This means that if the cause of students' writing apprehension is prior negative experience with writing, e.g. low grades or negative self-evaluation which is the

concern of this section, teachers should conceive writing tasks in a way that this type of student has success in writing. Researchers recommend a change in traditional methods of teacher-written response to student papers (Daly, 1977). Accordingly, teachers should be aware of providing feedback in a way that they should have a friendly tone, praise the good work, and encourage students for further writing (Vukelić, 2011). Instructors need to engage students in low-stakes and ungraded writing activities. The feedback they provide should be purposeful, specific, be couched in praise, and linked to the writing process, be positive for both genders, and frequent (McGee, 2019). Instructors need to reduce apprehension by lessening the tyranny of grades (Veit, 1980). In the same way, Yao (2019) states that indirect feedback can reduce the fear of negative evaluation and even improve writing accuracy (Yao, 2019). Yet consistently, Hassan (2001) recommends altering the context of foreign language learning, assessing student writing samples in non-threatening ways and using positive reinforcement when doing so, selection of error correction techniques based on a sound instructional basis in order to reduce students' defensive reactions, abandoning grammar correction in foreign language classes because it is ineffective, harmful, and unhelpful. According to (Daly, 1977), history of instructors' negative responses to students' pieces of writing can be a primary cause of writing apprehension. The high apprehensive student usually expects his writing to be red-inked. Consequently, he avoids situations that require writing that causes him to have less practice at it which, in turn, results in more negative evaluations.

According to Qashoa (2013), focusing on fluency and development of ideas rather than accuracy, training students on how to guess the meaning of difficult words in the prompt through context and neighbouring words, instructors limiting keywords in writing prompts to acquainted words, translation as a tool to make students understand the writing prompt because they believed in writing tests the main objective is testing writing abilities rather than vocabulary, exposing students to test-like situation under time constraints are strategies that can reduce students' fear of tests. More importantly, rehearsing some tests and training students to take writing tests under time constraints, providing students with a list of common English words, tolerating a few spelling and grammatical mistakes, learning the task of outlining, taking mock exams, and using dictionaries in writing tests can be helpful. Although,

Cheng (2004) does not agree with Qashoa (2013) and recommends avoiding timed second language writing examinations.

Teachers' provision of positive evaluation to students is recommended in the literature to shrink students' fear of evaluation and grades. Importantly, it has been recommended that instructors should stress the significance of positive evaluation, i.e. demonstrate strengths in students' papers since positive evaluation is a crucial element in having fear of evaluation and writing apprehension generally (Zimmerman and Silverman, 1982). Likewise, Smith (1984) supports laying emphasis on positive evaluation. He recommends three strategies to reduce fear of evaluation. In the first place, he thinks instructors should not grade every piece as students can benefit from some opportunities to write without the additional pressure resulted from grades. This is supported by Clark (2005) who confirms providing students with ungraded assignments to reduce the fear of negative evaluation. In the second place, instructors should not mark every error because principal comments on higher order discourse concerns are lost in the flood of red ink (Smith, 1984). In the third place, the use of a few directed comments that concentrate on the particular objectives of the assignment has been proved to be more influential.

Related to evaluation, Arindra and Ardi (2020) examined the impact of students' use of assessment rubrics on writing anxiety among EFL Indonesian students in a compulsory critical reading and writing class. The study demonstrated that students' use of writing assessment rubrics affected their amount of writing apprehension in a way that an increase in the use of writing assessment rubrics resulted in a lower level of apprehension. According to (Cobourne & Shellenbarger, 2019), assessment rubrics help teachers to be clear about expectations, e.g. removing subjectivity by providing clear directions and guidelines.

Finally, one more last strategy relating to evaluation involves substituting teacher evaluation for peer or self-evaluation (Hassan, 2001). Opposed to this, Zhang (2011) argues that the replacement of teacher evaluation for self-evaluation or peer evaluation among Chinese English majors is not effectual since teacher evaluation is valued by Chinese students, peers are not trained teachers, and their comments may be vague and not constructive, especially for low-proficiency level students. Nevertheless, it can work for high-proficient students. Altering teacher evaluation system, e.g. assessing students' writing self-confidence when assessing their writing competence, teachers' positive response to student writing, providing constructive

criticism, keeping a balance between being realistic in pointing out errors and problems of students' writing and being motivating to them (Zhang, 2011).

The Impact of Compulsory Writing on Modifying Writing Anxiety

Daly and Miller (1975a) think that compelling students to write is presumably the wrong option of treatments, i.e. obliging them might buttress the punishing nature of the writing act. In the same vein, Powers et al. (1979) who examined the impact of compulsory writing on 57 college students' writing apprehension level at a Midwestern university enrolled in the required basic English composition course, with 28 students being admitted to the university under a specialized program not meeting university entrance requirements, and twenty-nine students being admitted under normal admission procedures. The results showed that compulsory did have an overall effect in the form of increased writing apprehension. Moreover, the students who met university requirements increased in their apprehension. Students that were initially classified as low apprehensives reported an increase in writing apprehension while those classified as high apprehensives did not report an increase nor a decrease. They also affirmed that compulsory writing caused more apprehension in writing and finally recommended that the most common apprehension reduction method used with both oral and writing communication apprehension is to require the student to take a speaking and/or composition class where the student is trained and forced to engage in the communication activities of which they are fearful.

Oppositely, Fox (1980) found that required writing tasks actually reduced students' apprehension. According to him, the way students are compelled to write may be the most significant factor, i.e. coercive or punitive methods may enhance anxiety and collaborative assignments may reduce it. Cheng's (2004) recommendation might support instructors' need to refrain themselves from emphasizing too much the approach to composing texts based on certain fixed rules or techniques. Smith (1984), however, argues that compulsory assignments may be unrelated to anxiety, but that the method of evaluation is responsible for increases in writing apprehension. Teachers who have a reputation among their students for harsh evaluations may provoke greater anxiety with compulsory assignments than teachers who use gentler evaluation strategies.

The Role of Instructors' knowledge in Modifying Writing Anxiety

The role of instructors' knowledge of students' apprehension is also deemed one of the many ways of reducing writing apprehension. In other words, instructors need to systematically analyse the level of writing apprehension in their classes by administering a writing apprehension questionnaire (Vielhaber, 1983) and give writing apprehension tests at the beginning of a course to realize fearful students so that they can be helped (Hassan, 2001). In addition, writing instructors need to develop their theoretical and practical knowledge regarding the best ways of dealing with externally and internally oriented students in their academic locus of control and how to minimize the negative effects of external orientation of academic locus of control (Abbas, 2016). When identifying high-anxious students, teachers should monitor the classroom climate to identify possible classroom-related sources or causes of their students' anxiety and treat them accordingly (Hassan, 2001; Abbas, 2016). Apawu and Anani (2017) sought to examine the role of instructors' knowledge of students' writing apprehension in teaching, using a survey among 20 academic writing instructors, from both public and private universities in Ghana. The aim was to understand instructors' awareness of writing apprehension. Data were collected through Writing Apprehension Awareness or Knowledge on a 3-point scale of *limited, moderate, and adequate*. In all of them, instructors rated limited, i.e. they had a limited amount of knowledge regarding their students' writing apprehension.

Finally, some forms of writing apprehension, such as severe writer's block require treatment beyond the classroom by trained therapists, these strategies are not within the scope of this current study (Boice, 1985).

The Role of Language Learning Strategies in Reducing Writing Anxiety

Based on the literature reviewed by Zhang (2011, p. 15-17), language learning strategies can be helpful in coping with writing anxiety. These strategies engender cognitive strategies, affective strategies, and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies incorporate interactions with the material to be learned such as repetition (e.g. revision), rehearsal, translation, and transfer that can be useful for reducing writing anxiety caused by linguistic difficulties. Affective strategies endorse recognizing students' feelings, anxiety, and contentment and being aware of the learning circumstances or tasks that evoke them can be useful in managing writing anxiety, e.g. asking for clarification for a task, cooperation, self-talk, self-

reinforcement, progressive relaxation, meditation, deep breathing, encouraging oneself by self-rewarding, discussing one's feelings with someone else are all affective strategies for managing writing anxiety caused by emotional difficulties (Zhang, 2011). In the same way, Qashoa (2013) states that providing a less fear-inducing environment in writing classes and tests, practising some relaxation exercises, setting achievable realistic goals, changing the negative perception towards committing errors and error corrections as relieving strategies, and creating positive attitudes can reduce writing apprehension. Metacognitive strategies include realizing one's own needs, interests, and learning style preferences, e.g. visual students may respond better to reading source texts or information from graphic material. So, if students are taught in the preferred learning style might experience a lower level of writing apprehension (Zhang, 2011).

Of particular interest are the findings of Masriani et al. (2018) who examined the writing anxiety and writing strategies of 41 third year EFL students. The study displayed a moderate level of anxiety among students and most interestingly that the level of using writing strategies was high with affective and metacognitive strategies. This, according to the study, means that participants are proficient due to the high level of writing strategies used by them. However, they used the affective strategies to regulate their emotions, motivation, and attitudes.

In an experimental study to tackle the impact of writing strategy-based procedural facilitative environment on students' foreign language writing apprehension, Tsiriotakis et al. (2017) showed that the experimental group exposed to metacognitive skill development through explicit strategy-based instruction that fosters procedural facilitation and cognitive apprenticeship performed better than the control group not exposed to this among 177 Greek students.

Qashoa (2013) also revealed a number of various cognitive, affective, and metacognitive writing strategies that can assist in reducing writing apprehension from both students' and instructors' perspectives in a qualitative study of Emirati university students by interviewing ten low-apprehensive students and six instructors. The cognitive strategies he found to be effective from students' perspectives involved interactions with writing compositions or genres, much practice and training on writing English essays and compositions outside classroom, imitating writing model samples, rehearsing writing essays/ paragraphs, practising writing through establishing friendship through blogs and some social networks,

frequent use of new words to overcome fears resulting from poor vocabulary, and identifying weaknesses in grammar and spelling. Based on (McGee, 2019), teachers should give students with ample writing practice in formal and informal tasks. Regarding affective strategies, Qashoa (2013) showed that developing a positive view towards committing errors and error correction, instructors encouraging students to accept positive criticism, and relaxation exercises can assist apprehension reduction. According to Cheng (2002), students' perceptions of their competence is more important than their actual competence and, because of this reason, teachers should develop students' self-perceptions of their competence in writing.

Transforming Negative Feelings into Positive Ones

On the students' part, Cobourne and Shellenbarger (2019) suggested some strategies for writing apprehension reduction. They stated that students should reflect on previous and current writing experiences to recognize what went wrong to improve it and increase success and confidence. They further stated that students need to develop a writing log where they can record common problems and errors that they commit. They should journal their thoughts and feelings regarding writing that may provide insight into their emotions and feelings about writing. After realizing negative feelings, students should transform them into a more positive feeling, for instance transforming "I am a poor writer" to "I can do this perfectly" or "I will not pass the exam" to "I will pass and obtain high grades". This is known as self-affirmation and positive mood that can aid in developing creative writing. In addition, students should remove their ego from writing by realizing that not everyone will love their writing and evaluate it positively. Most importantly, students need to complete pre-writing activities such as brainstorming, free writing, concept mapping, and outlining that aid in developing ideas as well as disregarding myths about writing by thinking that it is not an innate skill, rather it can be developed through hard work (Cobourne & Shellenbarger, 2019).

Other Miscellaneous Strategies for Relieving Writing Anxiety

In addition to the educational methods adopted, mostly being experimental in nature, the literature has also examined and recommended certain strategies to modify writing apprehension that cannot be accommodated in the above categories. Such strategies involve engaging students in more communicative writing tasks

utilizing, for example the currently available technology, computers and the Internet (Hassan, 2001). Additionally, other strategies could focus on carrying out writing across the curriculum, writing in the discipline, discussing writing apprehension with students and raising awareness of the problem, and providing ungraded writing exercises (Cobourne & Shellenbarger, 2019). Based on Clark (2005), taking breaks when feeling unwell, asking for help, learning from others, creating the right environment, going over the instruction and understanding it, completing the assignment before the last minutes of submission, choosing a suitable topic, learning more about writing strategies, and not having fear of making mistakes can be helpful for apprehension reduction. Significant strategies have also been proposed by Reeves (1997), incorporating discouraging appropriation of voice through encouraging students to write about their experiences and personalize knowledge, talking about previous writing experiences, finding patterns in students' errors, coaching peers for effective response, varying writing modes, being aware of gender differences, validating intrapersonal communication, and sharing writing as well as talking about writers you like and introducing discourse communities. Finally, Qashoa (2013) classifies writing apprehension reduction strategies into those related to writing tests, the process writing approach, affective strategies, error correction, and vocabulary knowledge strategies.

Conclusion

This chapter provided the theoretical foundation of the study and the definition of the major concepts as well as an extensive body of the studies related. It began by defining the related concepts, incorporating writing, anxiety, foreign language anxiety, writing anxiety, and many more, with writing anxiety being a category of situation-specific anxiety. Then, it described the origin of the term 'anxiety' and distinguished it from fear. It appeared that although the terms 'anxiety' and 'fear' have many things in common, they differ in many respects, the most important being that the source of the former is unknown but that of the latter is known. Additionally, this chapter explained that the levels, types, and causes of writing apprehension should be identified before applying anxiety-reducing strategies. For this purpose, it provided a detailed review of the levels, types, and causes of writing apprehension and then it moved on to the correlates of writing apprehension, revealing that writing apprehension is associated with many linguistic

and non-linguistic or psychological variables. Then, it provided a blow-by-blow account of the strategies recommended by and/or applied in previous studies as well as those that will be employed in this study. The next chapter explains the methodology employed discussing the design, the participants, the tools of data collection, and the data analysis techniques.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the literature available on the topic. This chapter at issue intends to detail the research methods and approaches adopted in the present study looking into the influence of the process-genre approach and certain anxiety-reducing strategies as well as the correlation between university students' writing anxiety and writing performance. The first section will provide information regarding the design of the study that, similar to most experimental studies, involves three steps, namely pretest, intervention, and posttest. The chapter will fully explain the research type, the context of the study, the design of the course, the process of data collection, and the data analysis techniques as well as the pilot studies conducted.

Research Design

The primary goal of the current study was to experimentally examine the effect of certain anxiety-reducing strategies and the process-genre approach on both writing apprehension and writing performance among Kurdish students in a public university (see Appendix C for the detailed description of the experimental procedures, explaining the weekly lesson plans and the application of the strategies). To this end, the study adopted a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design to answer the research questions posed in the first chapter. To illustrate more, nine strategies were devised through pilot testing the population and gleaned from the literature available.

Like any other experimental study, the purpose of a quasi-experimental research design is to evaluate the impact of a treatment on a dependent variable. However, unlike a true experimental, a quasi-experimental study can be used in contexts where randomization is impossible for practical or ethical reasons. The quasi-experimental design resembles an experiment in all respects except that it lacks an appropriate control group and/or it incorporates a quasi-independent variable. In other words, when a researcher is not able to manipulate a factor in settings that are restricted by pre-existing factors, the study is said to be based on a quasi-experimental research design. More clearly, the participants' conditions and experiences lack some control; the assignment of participants to different groups is

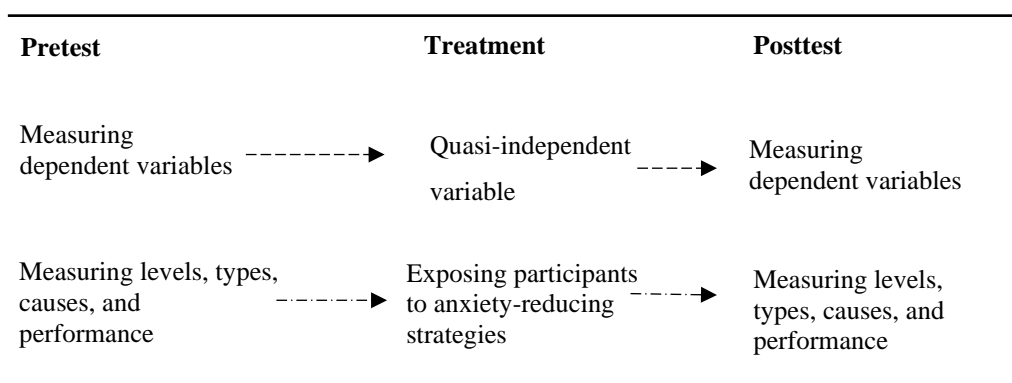
not under the researcher's control (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Dezell, 2019). Although incorporating a control group and random assignment of participants to groups is the more preferred design for conducting an experiment, the study employed a quasi-experimental design. It was applied to two intact groups of students where the assignment of the students to the different groups was not random and was out of the researcher's control. That is, the two intact classrooms were in place from the start of the university academic year to the end. Additionally, the study lacked a control group as the setting including both the particular time (the time of Covid-19) and the educational context (political instability) in which the study was conducted constrained the applicability of a control group. These constraints involved not being able to teach traditionally in the control group as the system that was required by the particular institution was blended learning. Additionally, the assignment of the students to different groups was predetermined by the institution. On top of these, I was not familiar with the groups to ensure the homogeneity of the groups and one of the requirements of a quasi-experimental study with a control group is to have proximity to the students to be aware of their homogeneity. Above all, student's requirement to attend the university was only one hour in class and the other had to be spent with students doing their own work. Yet, another reason was that students could change their classes and even their place of education from one city to another based on the ministerial decision. This caused some confusion on the instructor's part. Thus, this was the rationale behind not having a control group. The study also included merely one quasi-independent variable that was gender which the researcher did not manipulate and the participants controlled which group of gender they belonged to because these characteristics are inherent in the participants; therefore, the current researcher termed it quasi-independent variables. Another point that made it impossible to include a control group was that most students might participate in the pretest; however, after a few weeks the number of participants would dramatically decrease that might make the number incomparable. Furthermore, one more reason for the quasi-design is the availability of the classes for input.

The one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design is said to be better than the other types of designs including, e.g. the one-group posttest-only design in that it can reduce problems associated with having no control or comparison group. This design is utilized to measure a dependent variable in a group of participants

before (pretest) and after (posttest) a treatment. Thus, this study examined the impact of certain anxiolytic strategies on undergraduate students' writing apprehension and writing performance before and after applying certain writing and anxiety-reducing strategies in a semester of twelve weeks and then the scores of the pretest and the posttest were compared. According to (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019), the advantage of a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design is that the researcher can compare scores after a treatment to scores before a treatment using the same measure in the same participants. However, like any other experiment, including a true experiment, this design is prone to many problems such as the problem of causal control, internal validity, reactivity, the nature of certain participant groups, and poor measurement. Yet, another issue with, e.g. a quasi-experiment with a control group, is that the researcher needs to ensure that the two groups are exactly similar so that there will no bias in the results. Although, this is not the case in a quasi-experiment with no control groups. In addition, a problem with control group true or quasi experiments is that even if students are assigned to different groups, they might still be prone to certain variables that we have never measured at all when assigning them, such as motivation, background, and so on. Yet, another problem with experiments is when participants discontinue their participation for which it might not be easy interpreting the results. The following figure illustrates the design of the current study.

Figure 4

One-Group Pretest-Posttest Quasi-Experimental Design



As illustrated in Figure 4, the current study is a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental study that is primarily based on a quantitative method triangulated by qualitative interpretations with lesson plans and observation to ensure the validity of the data collection and validate the results.

The current study combined both quantitative and qualitative methods and thus, employed a mixed-methods approach, which is a design that collects quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions where one sort of data reinforces the other (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Dezell, 2019). The quantitative part of the study included investigating students' level and types of writing apprehension by adapting Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). This writing apprehension questionnaire was employed as a pretest and posttest to indicate the level and type of writing apprehension, i.e. to observe the data quantitatively. In addition, Rezaei and Jafari's (2014) Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety measure, which was adapted and expanded, was used to identify the common causes of students' writing anxiety. The scores from the students' pretest and posttest essays were also used to identify their writing performance by marking them through a rubric taken and adapted from the English language teaching department of at a private university in North Cyprus (see Appendix D). Additionally, the students' essays were also used to recognize students' level of writing performance through conducting error analysis and students' performance scores. This method also made use of a writing essay test that served as a pretest and a posttest to indicate students' writing performance in writing essays (see Appendix H for a sample essay). The quantitative part of the study is deemed important as it will be manipulating the progression of participants throughout the course. Questionnaires can be employed in educational research to assess attitudinal variables and they allow subjects to speak for themselves (Vierra et al., 1998). The application of quantification is significant and common for describing attitudes and emotions. Above all, writing tasks were also assigned to students and observations were built upon. In addition, students' reflective writing and the instructors' diary were also used as qualitative tools. To put it all together, this study was a quasi-experimental study carried out in the course period of a twelve-week semester in an English Writing Skills II course in two intact groups of students with each group measured simultaneously on two dependent variables before and after the treatment.

As regards the type of variables used, the present study utilized the anxiety-reducing strategies and essay writing as independent variables as treatments to reduce the anxiety level of students and increase their writing performance. As for the dependent variables, writing anxiety and writing performance were assumed to be affected by the strategies. As for the demographic variables, the study included

only gender as a demographic variable to see if these can bear any significant correlation to the writing apprehension construct.

Context of the Study

Since the 1990s, KRI has taken significant steps to enhance and reform the education system. Nevertheless, these reforms began particularly after the collapse of Saddam's regime in 2003. The reforms involved dispatching people abroad to obtain higher degrees, changing the curriculum in both high schools and university, and opening up more schools and universities to accept more students. Dispatching students to complete their higher degrees placed a higher demand on students and they were required to meet the language requirements of the program.

In KRI, English is taught in university and pre-university education as a foreign language where students are given on average five English 40-minute class periods per week in both basic and high schools from the first moments of their entrance to school until they graduate from high school. After being admitted to the English departments, students will typically be given four compulsory writing courses, two of which are normally integrated courses with reading, and the other two are separate writing courses, called English Writing Skills I and English Writing Skills II that are given in the first, second, third and fourth semesters of the first and second years respectively. Two hours are normally devoted weekly for each course. However, only one hour was spent in class teaching writing in the current module due to the repercussions of the virulent virus. As explicated earlier in chapter one, the curriculum for high schools has been updated and has led to many changes in the way English should be taught. Nevertheless, the teaching practices do not accord to the updated curriculum (See the background section above).

In addition, the Ministry of Higher Education – KRG, in turn, has committed changes in the system of education in most universities in KRI for the last three years. The most particular one encompasses changing the traditional system to the Bologna process system. The Bologna Process (BP), previously called the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), is named after the Bologna Declaration signed in Bologna, an Italian city, in 1999 that was supported in Kurdistan in 2015 with the principal objective of internationalization of universities. TIGRIS Transfer of Good Practices and Reinforcement of Internationalization Strategies in Kurdistan), an EU-funded project, started in cooperation with four European partners, 10 universities in

Kurdistan, and the ministry of higher education and scientific research – KRG to boost capacity in higher education. The TIGRIS Project's objective was to function at three different levels: institutional, national, and international – to support the accessibility, modernization and internationalization of higher education ("ECTS User's Guide," 2015; Kumar, 2019). It allows teaching and learning to be more transparent and facilitates the recognition of studies by revealing the curriculum design and ensuring the quality of education. In addition, the catalogue of courses shall be presented on the web, incorporating descriptions of study programmes, units of learning and university regulations and much more ("Bologna Information System", (n.d.), "ECTS User's Guide," 2015).

In spite of all those amendments that are, in essence, positive and radical amendments, the system as a whole has not witnessed a remarkable change in the way it was expected to be in the first steps of its implementation. Many reasons can be reported behind why these changes were not so much positive. Importantly, the negative impacts of the Corona Virus (Covid-19) have shaken the world and prevented from all life activities, in particular academic activities and development. In most parts of the world, a remedy to reduce the repercussions of Covid-19 has been sought and pursued which lies itself in applying other modes of education such as electronic, online, and blended learning. Although this was applied in KRI, too, neither university instructors nor students were fiercely and genuinely committed to it due to several reasons including lack of instructors' experience with technology in general and education platforms in particular, not accustoming to the methods of online teaching or learning, the poor quality of the internet and the lack of electricity as well as students' complaints against the quality of classes given online. More importantly, another reason behind the ineffective or unsubstantial changes might be associated with the unstable political situation in KRI and its surrounding areas. It has been for seven or so years that Kurdistan and Iraq have been the battle-field for most neighbouring and superpower countries. This has resulted in the instability even between the local parties and the local governments and has made everyone disappointed to leave the country. Teachers and students alike have been affected by the situation that is currently a matter to everyone. Most importantly, people have generally become frustrated due to the financial crisis since 2014, the lack of job opportunities and the unavailability of employment in the government sector since that year. Students in particular are preoccupied with their future and have become

hopeless when they see no opportunities for working after their graduation. Furthermore, Since the government has cut employees' salaries into nearly a half, demonstrations began to arise every now and then. One of the negative consequences of this was that the government closed universities and schools for one week. What was reported above can be considered among the internal and external factors that have directly or indirectly laid an impact on education in general based on the researcher's observation and on the module taught in that particular year.

The present study was conducted at the English department of the college of basic education of a public university in Iraqi Kurdistan. This university is accredited by both the Ministry of Higher Education – KRG and the Ministry of Higher Education – Iraq. In order for students to be admitted, they must obtain a baccalaureate grade of more than 70 in the twelfth grade in high school. In this context, undergraduate students need to successfully study and complete 60 modules, 240 credits, and 6000 hours to be able to qualify for graduation and become basic school teachers during their four years of undergraduate education of which 67.33 % are department modules, 20 % are college modules, and 12.67 % are university modules. Among the modules, 65.9 % of them concern teaching and learning, 21.6 % concern linguistics, and 12.5 % are associated with literature (see Appendix A). It has been for three years, i.e. since 2018 that the Bologna system depicted above is in use in the context in question. However, the traditional system was employed before that date. The assessment scheme varies from module to module but the grades earned by students in each module are calculated in the way presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

The Assessment Scheme

Level	Points %	Numeric Value	Letters
Excellent	95-100	3.8-4	A+
	90-95	3.6-3.8	A
	85-90	3.4-3.6	B+
Very	80-85	3.2-3.4	B
Good	75-80	3-3.2	C+
	70-75	2.8-3	C
Good	65-70	2.6-2.8	D+
	60-65	2.4-2.6	D
Pass	55-60	2.2-2.2	E+
	50-55	2-2.2	E
Fail	>50	>2	F

As displayed in the table, students need to obtain a Grade Point Average of 2 in each module to pass a semester, i.e. they should obtain E or above that is

equivalent to 50 or above. They should also attain the same Cumulative Grade Point Average to pass a semester. If they fail to attain the required GPA, they will be given the chance to perform the second attempt one week after announcing the results. If they are still not able to pass, they will be given the chance to retake exams for the third and fourth attempts at the beginning of the next academic year.

English Writing Skills I was the focus of the present study that was taught to second year students for which none of the other modules were the prerequisite including Reading & Writing. However, the module itself was prerequisite for the writing module that was intended to be taught in the second semester. According to the department regulations, instructors had to teach students upper-intermediate material. Nevertheless, students' writing skills were so poor that they had to be taught pre-intermediate material. This might have been associated with a number of reasons, particularly the repercussions of Covid-19 that made everyone remain in a state of growing anxiety, particularly students as the government would not reach a firm decision on how and when to start the 2020-2021 academic year. One day, it would have obliged the universities to start teaching classes and would have obliged them to close it the other day; it was a period of extreme instability and anxiety. For instance, one of the decisions that the government made included accepting students as visitors in other universities so that students would be able to continue their education in the place of their residence in the same department and college due to curfew laws. For this reason, the 2020-2021 academic year commenced on the 17th of October, 2020, i.e. 47 days later than the start of a normal academic year. Another reason that was reported by the students themselves involved the last years' experience with the writing course. Although it was not essentially a writing course, rather it was an integrated module with reading focusing more on reading, based on the evidence that it is a prerequisite for the second years' reading course. The reason for why students were not satisfied with the first years' writing experience was again attributed to Covid-19 as they were taught online and electronic. Because of the reasons discussed earlier, students did not benefit from the online courses provided. Furthermore, students who were accepted as guests reported that they had not taken any writing courses in their first-year education. Therefore, the instructor of the present study had to teach them from scratch, i.e. teaching paragraph structure, types of paragraphs, and steps of the writing process. Furthermore, most instructors teaching this group of students complained against their low level of proficiency in

English. Above all, the present writing module was an obligatory module which according to many authors, compulsory writing is, in itself, a source of apprehension as discussed earlier in chapter two. It was because of these reasons that the instructor of the present writing module determined a one-group pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design.

Another contextual factor that is worth mentioning concerns the type of method implemented in teaching for the module. According to the regulations of the university, the writing module needs to be taught in two hours per week. However, since the Ministry of Higher Education – KRG demanded the universities to apply a method in which the minimum amount of contact should be allowed between students as far as possible, the university imposed blended learning in which one hour had to be taught electronically and one hour in class. This affected the amount of time that has to be spent on practising writing in class. The university's intention was that students had to study theory at home and practise in class, i.e. students were given assignments online via Google Classroom and students had to do them online. Based on the researcher's observation, students would not have studied the material at home and wanted to be given this in class. In an informal questionnaire asked by the instructor of the present module as to whether students would prefer to be taught the theory in class or scrutinize it at home, all except for three students responded that they would prefer to be taught the material in class rather than studying it at home by themselves as they said that they could not comprehend the material and the time devoted to writing is not sufficient. The reason behind this is that students would not study the material if they were not obliged; this has been made like a mini-culture. Furthermore, students have not been accustomed to this method of teaching as it is new to them. If students are trained and accustomed to this method of teaching, it can considerably influence their learning achievement, in the researcher's point of view. However, writing needs to be practised in class and requires lots of time. Thus, devoting one hour to teaching in class might not make so much difference in students' writing performance.

Although merely two types of essays were taught to students due to time constraints, the overall and major goal of the present writing module was to enable sophomore students to distinguish and write different types of essays (see Appendix B). Additionally, reducing writing anxiety and enhancing writing performance were two other aims of the module. More specifically, students were retaught the first

rudiments of writing including writing a topic sentence correctly, developing it, and editing and proofreading it. Then, they were taught essay writing and made aware of the structure and different types of essays. Later, they were taught coherence, cohesion, and unity. It seemed that students had theoretical information regarding these concepts, yet they were not able to rewrite an incorrect paragraph with lots of transition signals. Thus, what is most problematic in the context of this study, is that students learn theories and they are interested in it, but when it comes to practising it, they either avoid it or they are capable of doing it. After all, students were taught the stages of the writing process and one paragraph was practised.

Students in this study were exposed to various anxiety-reducing strategies. One of the writing strategies employed included the Process-Genre Approach (PGA) by Badger and White (2000). Based on the researcher's observation and most of the course syllabuses borrowed, this approach has not obviously been implemented in teaching writing earlier. This approach has already been researched and has been shown to be effective in a similar educational setting (Bensen, 2014). Therefore, this was one of the motives behind using this approach. In addition, when conducting the pilot study, a number of approaches and strategies were recommended such as the process approach, content-based approach, providing students with writing models, doing pre-writing activities, and so on that all together more or less expressed the Process-Genre Approach without being aware of or suggesting the term. This approach was used together with blended learning in which most of the pre-writing activities were carried out outside of the class and the writing itself was carried out in the class.

One problem with the assessment in particular involves assessing writing. First, assessing writing in pre-university education is generally absent. Having included no questions in the final exam to assessing writing in baccalaureate examinations can bear witness to that. Additionally, assessing writing at the English departments is again problematic since most of the focus goes to recognition than production. More importantly, most of the assessment in this context has already been determined by the authorities. That is, 50 percent of the grades is devoted to the final exam and twenty percent is devoted to the midterm exam. In addition, only thirty percent of the grades is remained for the formative assessment, i.e. quizzes, assignments, portfolio, and attendance and daily participation. This information was

already given to the students at the beginning of the semester through their course syllabuses (see Appendix B for details about the assessment scheme).

Participants and Sampling

Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) distinguish between human groups and subjects. Human groups in a study should be referred to as participants while nonhuman groups should be referred to as subjects. A subject presupposes that an individual is subjected to the study without considering his consent. This is quite opposite with human groups as they should grant consent before participation and they will only participate in a study after granting consent. More importantly, humans choose to voluntarily participate but nonhuman groups do not volunteer. Instead, researchers determine if these groups will be subjected to the procedures in a study or not. Thus, this section is devoted to a description of those human groups that participated in the study voluntarily with their full consent (see Appendix E).

The target population incorporated EFL sophomore students at the English department of a public university located in the KRI. They have been studying English for almost twelve or more years in basic and high school and one year at college. All of them have been studying English as a foreign language and have limited exposure to native speakers of English, even to foreigners as it is located at the outskirts of Sulaimaniyah province, i.e. a border city. The identified site for this study was a public university in KRI because it was more convenient for the researcher. The students had not been exposed to the process-genre approach to teaching before nor to the strategies employed in the present study. In addition, all the students took the course as it was a compulsory writing course. This sample is assumed to be representative of the population of the study that includes all second year university students at the English departments. The selection of the participants from the population is built upon convenience sampling that is the most common and popular kind of nonprobability sampling utilized in behavioural research when it is not easy to recognize all the members of a target population and sampling occurs from an accessible population. A convenience sample, as indicated in the name, is selected out of convenience or ease. This means that participants are chosen based on their availability to participate. A commonly utilized sampling method in experimentation is to select university students, who are the most convenient sample available to many behavioural researchers. College students are the most convenient

group to sample from since university instructors can conduct their research better at the university or college they are employed. Convenience sampling is a method of sampling participants that are selected for a research study based on how easy or convenient it is to reach or access them and based on their availability to participate (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Dezell, 2019).

In total, the department had 63 second year students, of which 54 students participated in the study in the pretest and the other nine were last year's failing students or they were guest students from other universities who were excluded from the study despite taking the pretest. These nine students were first included, yet after they were given the option of not attending classes by the department, they were excluded as they attended the class one day but not the next day. Later, the students decided not to attend the class after two weeks. In addition, some of those visiting or guest students who came from other universities were also excluded because some of them came after the fifth week. However, even this number 54 reduced to 39 students in the posttest which, according to what the students disclosed, was caused by the high number of the assignments they were given in all the modules in general during the semester. Fortunately, no participating students went beyond the attendance limit during the course. Thus, the sample consisted of a total of thirty-nine sophomore students from two intact groups of a public university in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, who were enrolled in the English Writing Skills I module during the Fall semester of 2020. Nonetheless, these two classes were combined into one group to investigate the topic in question.

In terms of the structural demographics of the participants, most of the participants came from the suburbs of the city where the university is. However, a small percentage of them came from out of the suburbs of the city. Based on the pretest questionnaire, the majority of them ranged from 18 to 22 except for four students who were between 22-30 years of age. In addition, all of them had been studying English for almost 10-15 years apart from four students who had studied English for 15-20 years. All of them were native speakers of Kurdish, knowing no additional languages, and were English majors. Moreover, 21 students were female and 18 were male. These students were selected as they had already studied an integrated writing course in their first year and had taken one grammar course that is essential for writing. In addition, the researcher was more familiar with the structure and the methods implemented in teaching in that particular institution, i.e. the

institution is in close proximity to the researcher. Thus, easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a specific time, and the willingness to participate were among the reasons for why the researcher determined to select this group of participants. Above all, these students were selected with the assumption that their English writing skills is in the intermediate level so that the process-genre approach could be applied more easily. They were also chosen as they were assumed to have done many writing activities in their basic and high school education regarding writing.

These students are adults that can be characterized as being autonomous and can broaden their knowledge as well as experience in learning a second or foreign language (Abdel Latif, 2015). Adult students can further be characterized by having virtue of the fact that they can employ conscious grammar and general abstract rules of language (Krashen, 1998) that is quintessential for the present module and the methodologies as well as the strategies employed.

The researcher inspected students' writing achievement, proficiency and performance at the beginning of the module to understand the areas of students' difficulties through their first-year grades and the essay they wrote in the pretest. As a result, in terms of proficiency, although these students were assumed to have had an intermediate level in writing and to be taught the upper-intermediate, their actual proficiency in writing seemed to be pre-intermediate and they needed to be taught the intermediate level, based on the researcher's observation for the essay writing test in the pretest. As for their writing achievement in last year's writing module, students' scores were distributed in this way: As it can be seen in Table 2, out of 57 students, 24 failed, 20 passed with a grade less than 60, 4 passed with a grade between 60 and 69, 7 passed with a grade between 70 and 79, and only two students obtained a high grade between 80 and 89. As for the students' performance in writing in the second semester, students' performance improved. Out of 57 students, only four of them failed, nineteen achieved a grade less than 50 and nineteen less than 60, twelve students obtained a grade between 70 to 79 and only five students obtained a grade between 80 to 89. This shows that even in the second semester, students' writing performance was not high. Accordingly, and based on the researchers' observation, students' writing performance was assumed to be pre-intermediate and should have been taught the intermediate level. Table 2 offers information about the participants.

Table 2.

Students' Writing Achievement in the First Year

WA -1 st Year/1 st Semester		WA – 1 st Year/2 nd Semester	
Grade Range	No. of Students	Grade Range	No. of Students
Fail > 50	24	Fail > 50	4
50-59	20	50-59	22
60-69	4	60-69	19
70-79	8	70-79	12
80-89	2	80-89	5
90-100	0	90-100	0
Total	58	Total	62
Mean of the Total	52	Mean of the Total	61.77

Note. 1. The mean calculation is based on students' actual grades but it is unethical to present them here due to the examination committee's disallowance to reveal students' grades even if students' names are pseudonymised; 2. WA= writing achievement.

Designing the Syllabus

According to (Hyland, 2003), constructing a writing syllabus begins with analysing students' needs, i.e. "the means of establishing the how and what of a course" (p. 58). He defines 'syllabus' simply as "a coherent plan for a course of study, providing a map for both teachers and students which specifies the work to be accomplished by students based on explicit objectives" (p.54). A syllabus aids teachers plan and organize their teaching, makes teachers responsible for what they do in their classrooms, provides a basis for assessment, for selecting materials and evaluating textbooks, provides students with a sense of direction, establishes goals for learning, and provides moral support to teachers (Hyland, 2003).

When designing syllabus for a writing course, Hyland (2003) states that teachers need to analyse student needs, pick content based on the identified needs, concatenate content for efficient learning, offer opportunities for writing, observe student advancement in writing and provide efficacious treatment. According to (Hyland, 2003), students cannot learn everything they need all at once and they cannot learn efficiently from a randomly selected body of assignments and exercises.

For these reasons, the researcher began borrowing several course syllabuses in the area prior to the start of the course and reviewed them to have a knowledge of how a course syllabus should be prepared and what should be included taking into account the objectives of the study and the needs of EFL students in the context in question. The purpose behind collecting these syllabuses was further to be aware of the different approaches employed by instructors and adapting from the different

approaches and materials adopted as well as build a unique syllabus for the course based on both others and the researcher's experience in the field in the particular context in question.

Having reviewed virtually eight syllabuses from different universities and departments, the researcher observed significant differences among the syllabuses. They differed substantially in three arenas, namely the choice of the primary and secondary textbooks depended on for the course, the teaching approach adopted, and the topics and subtopics included. Most of the course syllabuses reviewed indicated the instructors of those courses have selected the process approach for teaching writing, with some not disclosing a clear approach. This implies most of our instructors might not be aware of the process-genre approach to teaching writing or at best they probably do not wish to employ it or they may find it impractical to use as employing this approach requires much time spent in class. Another variation that was observed involved instructing paragraph writing to first- and second-year students and essay writing to third year students in some departments; whereas, paragraph writing was taught to first year students and essay writing to second year students in other universities. This variation occurred according to the college, i.e. whether the college was basic education, education, languages, or arts and according to the system as to whether the system was traditional or Bologna system as the future career of each of these colleges and systems in principal differs. As for the selection of the textbooks, as aforementioned most of them were based on a process approach to teaching writing except for one that was more or less associated to the process-genre approach. Thus, the researcher carefully examined the course syllabuses borrowed and tried to observe how they have been organized and what elements peculiar to the context have been taken into account. One noteworthy point to mention here is that most university instructors propose that they use a process approach; however, what is observed is quite opposite, as explained in the first chapter, there exist still many that do not even provide feedback to their students and some still employ traditional approaches to teaching writing, as confirmed by Chaqmaqchee (2015b).

Therefore, students' needs were partially recognized before designing the syllabus and before beginning with the course. For this purpose, the researcher questioned the instructor of the Reading and Writing module taught in the previous year and the head of the department to obtain information regarding the students and

the course. Furthermore, the researcher observed the students' ability through asking them some open-ended questions in the first week and the pretest to correctly set the scene for the course and the syllabus and these were recorded in the teacher's diary. Despite designing the course syllabus beforehand, the researcher modified both the content and the order of the content according to students' needs and progress of the course as well as the objectives of the study as Hyland (2003) reckons that a strong and effective syllabus must be under constant evaluation and modification.

The researcher modified and adapted from the pre-existing syllabuses to suit the purposes of the study and the module for sophomore students that was composed of a review of what they have studied about paragraph writing and paragraph structure and then teaching them essay structure and essay types. Although essay writing was the focal concern and the organizing principle of the course, the researcher helped in practising paragraph writing more because, to the researcher's observation, students still had problems with constructing topic sentences, providing supporting details and other issues related to the rhetorical structure of paragraph writing. A serious attempt was made to accommodate enough space for discussion regarding the topics of the syllabus, feedback, and work on written language. Most importantly, the type syllabus utilized in this study was a skill-based syllabus that was concerned with the writing skills aforementioned (see Appendix B for the contents of the syllabus).

Since the decision about the course content was under the control of the researcher, i.e. no institutional constraints, he was free to include whatever might be fruitful for the students. Nonetheless, the researcher did not have complete freedom to incorporate what he wished to teach as the lack of students' practice in certain materials obliged him to spend an amount of time on re-teaching what has not been practised thoroughly due to the interruption of the education process in the previous year via the emergence of Covid-19. Most importantly, the content of the course was also discussed with the head of the English department, an assistant professor, to affirm its suitability and validity.

Weekly Lesson Plans Followed in Class

Below is a description of what the researcher did in each lesson. Information about the application of the strategies and their inclusion within the lesson plans will be provided in the Appendix O in full details.

Week One and Two: The Questionnaires and the Essay Test

The principal objectives of the first session of any module in the context in question is customarily to strike up an intimate and genuine rapport between the teacher and the students, familiarize students with the course syllabus, and explain the assessment scheme to students as well as set an assignment to them or ask them to read about a certain topic related to the module. Similarly, the same objectives were to be attained in the first session of the present module. The instructor introduced the course syllabus point-by-point to the students and explained the content as well as the assessment scheme to them (See appendix B for the course syllabus). He provided them with some guidelines to know what to do for the course to be successfully coping with the difficulties that they might encounter. This was done to help students undergo a smooth transition from the first stage to the second, on the one hand, and from one method of teaching to another, on the other. The instructor was curious to know about their background knowledge in writing and sought to discern their responses to some general questions. What emerged from their responses was that they had not been taught writing with the process-genre approach and that adequate practice had not been possible in their first year due to the reasons mentioned earlier. Then, the instructor explained the nature of the study and the treatment and distributed the consent forms and the questionnaires along with the essay test among the students. The students were given 50 minutes for the essay test and 30 minutes for the questionnaires to answer. They were free to ask whatever questions they had about the test, the questionnaires, and the course syllabus. Since only a few students returned to the university the first week – less than a half, the instructor devoted the second week to the pretest, too. Devoting the second week to the pretest was also an opportunity for the remained students and guest students from other universities to join the module and not to be deprived of the lectures given. More importantly, students were also informed about the key references of the module and were told to download them from Google Classroom as they would need them for doing certain activities. The instructor did not start classes in the first two weeks but asked them to study and review the first chapter of “Writing Academic English” by Oshima and Hogue (2006) concerned with paragraph structure. For more details, (see Appendix Q).

Week Three: Paragraph Structure

One of the suggestions made by the participants of the pilot study and even the literature has been to move from simple to complex when teaching a second or a foreign language. Even the participants of this study and the head of the department asked for a review of paragraph structure. Therefore, paragraph structure was reviewed and the instructor checked if students were able to write a comprehensible paragraph with an identifiable rhetorical pattern and a few guest students reported that they had not taken paragraph writing in their first year. For this purpose, the instructor asked students various questions about paragraph and the component parts of a paragraph such as topic sentence, the elements or characteristics of the topic sentence, position of a topic sentence, supporting sentences, the distinction between main points and supporting points which the students did not know, and the concluding sentence. Furthermore, the instructor first explained to students that they were going to write a logical division paragraph and then gave them a model paragraph, titled “Gold” taken from the key reference, to analyse and identify the linguistic and rhetorical features of the paragraph. Both theory and practice were equally emphasized. For the theory, the instructor depended on all the references of the course syllabus designed for this module and selected certain exercises. As for the practice, students practiced the step-by-step composing of a paragraph from the topic sentence to the concluding sentence. They were advised on how to write the topic sentence for their paragraph and develop it. For this purpose, students were given several topics and they were free to select one. Then, they were given some time to brainstorm ideas and were provided with the chance to compose the paragraph. Finally, they peer edited their classmate’s paragraph. At the end, an online quiz was assigned to students to practice and review what they have studied regarding paragraph structure.

Week Four: Characteristics of Paragraph and Essay

This session involved the instruction of unity and coherence as two significant characteristics of both paragraph and essay writing. Students had been told to study the chapter concerned with the topic in question earlier at the end of session three and via Google Classroom. Information concerning the various aspects of unity and coherence was reviewed together with students first, asking them questions about the chapter. Then, students practiced unity and coherence in certain

model essays borrowed from the reference textbooks of the course syllabus. Next, an assignment was set for students in Google Classroom that was writing a paragraph, considering unity and coherence in writing their paragraphs.

Week Five: Steps of the Writing Process

The major objective of this session was to help students be acquainted with the steps of the writing process and gradually guide them to the process-genre approach rather than immediately moving to the approach as students had not been taught with the approach earlier. For this purpose, students were told to read the first chapter of Longman Academic Writing Series by Oshima and Hogue (2016) the previous session that is concerned with the steps of the writing process to help students realize that writing requires them to go through a number of steps. Students were later asked questions about the chapter to ensure understanding of the material. After they were instructed the steps, a model, titled “Someone Who Has Made a Difference” was written together with the students in class following all the steps of the writing process including prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising and editing, and then the students were told to write on the same topic but to choose someone else other than the one in the model and the one written jointly together and were advised to consider the model, the steps of the writing process, and the linguistic and the rhetorical features of the logical division paragraph.

Week Six: Logical Division Essay (Classification Essay)

This week exposed students to an overall description of what an essay is and its component parts, the comparison between paragraph and essay, parts of an introduction, writing the body paragraphs, and writing the conclusion. Students were asked certain questions about essay and its structure. Certain exercises taken from the references of this module were done relating to the parts of an introduction, the parts of a conclusion such as catchy hooks, correctly structured thesis statements, and types of both introductory and concluding paragraphs. A quiz had already been assigned to students through Google Classroom about the issue in question.

Another objective of this lesson was to teach students the logical division essay, which is essential even for teaching the opinion essay later, through the field of driving, with the aim of identifying the purpose, the structure, and the language features as well as composing an effective logical division (or classification) essay.

For this purpose, the nature of the logical division essay and how this type of essay would be beneficial for students was explained in addition to the purpose of such type of essay. Then, the instructor introduced the students to two logical division model texts so that they can realize the structure, the organization, and the language features as well as the transition signals employed with this type of essay. The instructor explained to students that they were going to read two models regarding logical division essay, titled “Native American Influences on Modern US Culture” and “Body Language” (See appendix G). Before reading the model essays by the students, the instructor checked their prior knowledge by asking them some questions regarding the logical division essay to activate students’ prior knowledge, involving what a logical division essay is, what its purpose is, how it is organized, what transition signals can be employed with it, and so on. Next, the instructor distributed the model essays and introduced the context of the models. Students were told to read the texts and respond to questions such as: what the topic of the essay is, i.e. what the essay was about, its purpose, the audience, and the organization. Students discussed the answers with the whole class. Following this, students were demanded to read the models again and analyse the generic structure of the model essays. Thus, they were asked to identify the number of paragraphs in each text, the issue discussed in the text, the topic and its subtopics, the location where the subtopics have been discussed, the type of supporting details given to support the subtopics, and whether the writer summarizes the main points of the body paragraphs or paraphrases the thesis statement and whole discussion classes were initiated for provision of the answers.

After ensuring understanding the overall structure of the texts on the students’ part, the instructor asked more specific questions pertinent to the generic structure of the texts, involving enquiring about the most important statement in the introduction, the number of the paragraphs in the body, the first sentence of each body paragraph, the information given by the rest of the sentences in the body paragraphs, the information given in the last paragraph, and other information expressed in the concluding paragraph of the essay. The instructor explained to students in detail that the logical division essay has a particular generic structure. In addition, students were told that the thesis statement of a logical division essay should contain two main elements including the specific topic and its subtopics with each being discussed in a specific body paragraph. It should also mention the subtopics themselves. More

importantly, particular transition signals should be utilized to guide the reader from one subtopic to the next when composing a logical division essay. The use of transition signals was explained to students that there are three types of them syntactically, including transition words, transition clauses, and transition sentences. Most importantly, students were informed about some language features in this kind of essay such as using paired conjunctions (both ... and, not only but also), using certain punctuation marks such as commas and semicolons, parallelism when organizing the subtopics (this means that when one subtopic is a noun, the others should be a noun, too, or when one is a gerund, the others should be the same, and so on), and the use of the conjunction 'and' between the subtopics. Students were asked to identify the tenses used in each model essay and to discuss certain grammatical aspects such as subject verb agreement and connectors between the sentences in each paragraph as well as certain aspects of both coherence and cohesion earlier described in week four. For the two model essays given to students, see appendix C.

Week Seven: Logical Division Essay (Classification Essay)

After the modelling stage, students were shown a few pictures of aggressive drivers downloaded from the Internet and were asked to describe them. They were later encouraged to share their ideas with the whole class. Then, they were divided into groups of four students and were required to answer a few questions about aggressive driving including whether they have heard anything about aggressive driving earlier, what aggressive driving is, who an aggressive driver is, what some of the ways of aggression in driving are, whether there were any differences in showing aggression in driving between now and ten years ago, what the causes of aggressive driving are, and what the consequences of aggressive driving are, and so on. Some contributions of students were written on the board. Next, students were provided with a five-minute video, titled "Dealing with Aggressive Drivers" and were asked to predict the content of the video. After that the instructor told students to share their ideas about how to deal with aggressive drivers and to discuss the issue in pairs. To ensure understanding, a few infrequent vocabulary items that were already drawn out from the video clip were written on the board and students were asked about their meaning. Following this, the video clip was played for them and they were encouraged to listen for the main ideas rather than all the details. After all, students

were asked to do a one-paragraph freewriting on one of the topics of aggressive driving presented to them.

Another step involved the joint construction of a short essay within the class concerning a topic selected together with the students on “exercise”. The purpose of the activity and the essay was explained to them. For this purpose, the instructor brainstormed ideas from the students from which three ideas, called subtopics, were selected. Students were told to form three groups and each needed to develop one idea for which the instructor was available to help when needed. Then, both the teacher and the students constructed a logical division essay about exercise that became the first draft. Therefore, the instructor asked students to work in pairs and provide feedback to the essay. Although some feedback was helpful in enhancing the draft, one complete essay without any faults was impossible to produce due to time constraints. However, it was deemed essential to guide students on how to develop their essays for the next step, which is constructing independently.

Week Eight: Midterm Exam

This week was devoted to the midterm exam according to the rules and regulations of the department.

Week Nine: Logical Division (Classification Essay)

The last step involved producing a logical division essay independently by the students on any topic related to aggressive driving or any other topic of their own interest in class. For this purpose, one class hour was devoted to this stage and this was followed by both peer and teacher feedback. Students were guided but not limited to a number of self- and peer-editing worksheets taken from the key references to assist them in providing feedback and were asked to provide both direct and direct feedback to errors. Provision of feedback was carried out at home, not in class due to time constraints.

Week Ten: The Opinion Essay

This lesson endeavoured to instruct students the opinion essay genre through the field of technology including such as areas as prohibition of mobile phones in college classes, the impacts of social networking sites, and so on. The behoof of this lesson was twofold: to succour students to understand the purpose, language and

structure of the opinion essay and to help them out compose a well-organized and coherent opinion essay. For this purpose, the objectives of the lesson, the nature of the opinion essay, and the behoof of this genre of opinion essay were explained to students. Then, the instructor provided students with two model texts of opinion essays with the aim of recognizing the organization and the language features of this genre. Students were informed that they were going to read two model essays and answer some questions about them. However, before asking questions about the model essays, the instructor asked them a few questions regarding the opinion essay such as what the opinion essay is, what the aim of an opinion essay is, how it is organized, who the audience is, and so on. After that, the model essays were distributed among the students and were asked to respond to discuss the answers to a few questions about the models in pairs including the purpose of each essay, the topic discussed, the audience, and the organization and share their ideas with the whole class. Next, students were asked to read the model essays again and analyse the overall structure of each opinion essay by responding to such questions involving the number of the paragraphs in the essays, the issue being discussed, what side of the issue the writer is for or against, what supporting details does the writer provide to support his opinion, the location of the summary of the text, whether the writer paraphrases the thesis statement or summarizes his opinions mentioned in the body paragraphs, and whether he has given an advice, a recommendation, or a prediction in the conclusion. The students discussed these questions in pairs and shared their ideas with the whole class.

After having acquainted students with the overall structure of the model essays, the instructor asked students more specific questions regarding the generic structure of each model essay. The questions involved: What should be included in the introduction of an opinion essay, what the most important statement in the introduction is, how many paragraphs there are in the essay and the body, what the first sentence of each body paragraph is called, what information the rest of sentences give in each body paragraph, what kind of information is included in the concluding paragraph of a sentence, and so on. Thus, the instructor aimed to explain to students that the opinion essay has a specific generic structure different from the other types of essays.

In addition to the generic structure, the instructor strived to teach students the language features of the model essays such as the usual tense used in the model

essays, the specific connectors employed to connect the paragraphs and the clauses of the thesis statement, expressions employed to show that someone is arguing for or against something, and that informal expressions and words such as abbreviations should not be used in an opinion essay. Thus, students were asked to look for the tenses and the transition signals used in the texts as well as certain associated vocabulary. For model essays, see appendix C.

Week Eleven: The Opinion Essay

This lesson intended to check students' own experience regarding the topic they selected to write about to activate the schemata. For this purpose, the behoof of the activities that were going to be done in this lesson was explained to students. First, the instructor introduced a number of photos to students concerning social networking sites and the use of mobile phones in schools and college classes and asked them to discuss and share their ideas with the whole class. Next, the instructor wrote the two topics in question on the whiteboard and asked students to brainstorm ideas about them by benefiting from some questions such as what the benefits of mobile phones and social networking sites are, what their negative impacts are, whether these two have changed students' lives, if so, how they have changed their lives, whether they like the changes or not, and several other follow-up questions. Then, the instructor asked students to use word webs to illustrate the two topics. Following this, the instructor asked students to watch a video pertinent to the topics and were asked to predict the content of the video by thinking about the title of the video before watching it and share it with the class. Students were taught certain vocabulary words before watching and then the video was played for them and students were advised to take notes and listen for the main ideas. Later, students were told to write a short paragraph about the video, as a freewriting activity, summarizing the ideas of the video.

After the planning stage, a topic together with the students was selected and the instructor gave the students some time to think about the topic and brainstorm ideas individually. Then, he divided them into two groups, students who are arguing for the topic and those arguing against the topic, with each providing reasons for their opinions. Furthermore, the instructor asked them to share their ideas with the whole class. After that, the instructor based on the details that were given by the students chose the arguing for the topic and helped them choose three ideas as

reasons for the body paragraphs. This time students were divided into three groups and were asked to develop the body paragraphs. After the construction of the body paragraphs, the instructor together with the students produced an opinion essay. This functioned as the first draft. Then, the instructor asked students to provide feedback using the worksheets found at the end of the key reference and correct any errors found in the completed text.

Week Twelve: The Opinion Essay

After the joint construction of the essay, the instructor devoted one-hour class for students to independently compose a text on a number of topics given to them or on a topic of their own interest. After composing the text, feedback was given by both peers and the teacher. The provision of feedback depended on the editing worksheets found in the key references of the key reference and the correction of any error students could observe.

Piloting the Instrument and the Strategies

This section will provide adequate details regarding the pilot studies (see Appendix I) conducted to bring the study into sharper focus. Before inaugurating the course and the data collection, adequate literature regarding strategies of reducing anxiety was reviewed and two pilot studies were conducted within a timespan of one year to lay a firm foundation for the full scale study and establish its feasibility. According to (Privitera & Ahlgrim-DeLzell, 2019), a pilot study or test is “a small preliminary study used to determine the extent to which a manipulation or measure will show an effect of interest”. Below is a precise description of the pilot studies conducted. The first study was conducted to collect preliminary data to test the reliability and validity of the instrument that was quantitative in nature. A total of 37 male and female students took part by filling in Daly and Miller’s Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) that was composed of 26 statements. The second study being qualitative in nature was conducted to explore causes of students’ writing anxiety that served to design Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Scale and establish efficacious writing anxiety-reducing strategies employed later in the course as a treatment. It was initially intended to interview the participants. However, it was carried out online and sent through Google Forms to more than 300 EFL students, instructors and psychologists. In total, 87 participants from different universities took

part in the study. The participants involved 38 students studying English as a foreign language, 35 EFL teachers, and 14 psychologists because the researcher assumed all these three parties are directly and closely relevant to the issue of remedying anxiety. The purpose behind including students in the pilot study is recognizing on the students' part the strategies they employed to reduce their anxiety. This would help the researcher and the instructor of a course of study to apply the strategies that are, in the researcher's terms, student-oriented strategies. EFL instructors and psychologists from different universities in Iraqi Kurdistan were included for the same purpose, i.e. to identify the strategies that are instructor-oriented strategies and psychologically oriented strategies.

The study focused on the strategies employed for reducing writing anxiety and it consisted of seven open-ended questions and one question was a free question for the participants to add what was not asked in the questions (see Appendix I for the questions). Furthermore, the participants, particularly the psychologists and the EFL instructors were asked to comment on the questions if they had any. Only one English language professor suggested making a few modifications in the questions although the questions had already been rated by the supervisors. The questions were placed into Google Forms and separately shared to students, instructors, and psychologists through a specific Viber group whose members were only EFL instructors, called TESOLERS, through email to the students, instructors, and psychologists, and through other Viber, WhatsApp, and Messenger groups specific to EFL students and instructors as well as psychologists. To ensure understanding of the questions, a Kurdish version of the questions was also provided to the participants together with the English version. The participants proposed a multitude of anxiolytic strategies that were later organized into a word document and the recurring strategies were taken into serious account, i.e. each time the strategy occurred, a number was added to the strategy. The strategies suggested by EFL instructors were placed in a specific word document, and the same was applied to the strategies suggested by students and psychologists. The selection of the strategies was based on three criteria, namely the frequency of the strategy as suggested by the participants, the recurrence of the strategy in the literature, and the application and appropriacy of the strategy in the specific Kurdish context. Following this, the researcher sent the strategies to his supervisors to be rated by them and, with some

suggestions, they were approved. After making these amendments, the researcher began applying the strategies in a twelve-week semester to sophomore students.

Devising the Anxiety-Reducing Strategies

Some students have the potential to manage their anxiety on their own by developing strategies depending on their maturity. Whereas, other students might encounter a severe level of anxiety and might be difficult for them to recognize and manage the anxieties and stresses they encounter. Therefore, it is essential for instructors to be aware of their students' anxiety and its causes as well as remedies. For this purpose, they need to teach students strategies of reducing anxiety or students themselves practise strategies of reducing anxiety in class or even at home.

The present study invented 10 anxiety-reducing strategies, some of which have already been investigated in contexts other than the Kurdish context and have been found to be effective. However, neither the separate nor the combined effect of such strategies has been examined in the Kurdish context. Therefore, a number of strategies were invented based on a pilot study conducted among Kurdish psychologists, teachers and students. In this section, minute details regarding the strategies will be provided.

Doing Reading Before Writing

The first strategy that was seen to be effective incorporated doing reading before writing. Students were provided with useful link addresses, PDF files, and videos relevant to the essay they were supposed to write in class via Google Classroom and were required to read prior to entering the class. The next class students were asked questions about these readings and at times were quizzed about them. The grades of these contributed to class participation and attendance grades as well as quiz grades. The application of this strategy was both student and instructor oriented, i.e. its application was lodged by the students and the instructor.

Writing One Paragraph Each Two Weeks

The second strategy to attempt at reducing students' writing apprehension was writing one paragraph biweekly that was often relevant to the essay topics and done as freewriting prior to writing the essays. Students were required to upload their written paragraphs to Google Classroom via the Classwork tab. More importantly, an

embedded and subsidiary strategy included passing, on the students' part, one positive comment to their classmate's paragraph focusing on content and enclosing this comment on their own paragraphs. Most importantly, the instructor's feedback was also provided to students on those paragraphs focusing on rhetorical, organizational, paragraphing, content, and vocabulary as well as grammatical issues. This functioned as a confident enhancing strategy. All these were part of the assessment and contributed to assignment grades.

Improving Self-Confidence

Improving and raising the students' confidence level was also among the strategies deemed to relieve apprehension. This constituted recognizing strong points of the work done by the students both in class and at home and praising them in public and making the writings a model for the other students to benefit from. Furthermore, the positive comments provided by the students via Google Classroom to the writings and the principal focus on content rather than form and format were again considered to be confidence enhancers. More importantly, heuristic strategies such as listing, freewriting mentioned above, brainstorming, and outlining were, as suggested by the literature and the participants of the pilot study, essential elements for improving students' confidence. This was again part of the assessment and contributed to the assignment and the daily participation grades. Another point that contributed to raising the students' level of confidence emanated from reflective journal writing on the course. Although it was supposed that students should record their feelings and problems they have in writing, they were not motivated enough to write it every week because it was not a graded activity. Thus, one bold conjecture that can be largely correct for most students is that students would not do an activity that is ungraded. Although anxiety is a matter of grading, i.e. graded assignments might provoke more anxiety according to the literature, ungraded assignments can cause students not to obtain enough information. Embedded to confidence strategy included collaboration on the students' part in class and guiding them by the instructor in class activities such as when analysing the structure of the model essays in pre-writing stages. Students were also advised by the instructor and the psychologists to transform negative feelings into more positive ones through positive self-talk i.e. developing a positive mood, stating that "I am strong, I can", "if I commit errors this time, I will learn from them and those who learned the language

were like me”, “If I try more, I will become less apprehensive”, and “I have the power to pass the writing test”. Students were advised to repeat and say these statements to themselves during writing and exams. For this strategy, Google Meeting and in-class interaction with the students played a role.

Inviting Psychologists

A fourth and important strategy involved inviting psychologists to talk to students about how to reduce stress and how to treat the difficulties they encounter during exams. Two psychologists with a PhD degree, with one being a social psychologist and the other an educational psychologist, were invited. The former spoke about developing a positive attitude and teaching students strategies of reducing stress and anxiety during writing and exams. The latter aimed to teach students think positively about evaluation and consequences and believing that they can write well. This was carried out online via Google Meetings and attendance was required that contributed to attendance grades.

Feedback

Another significant strategy included the provision of feedback at the post-writing stage, provided by both the teacher to students and the students to each other. After writing the first draft of each essay, students were required to provide feedback to their classmate’s essays and to write the second draft. Following this, the teacher provided feedback to students and they were required to submit the last draft of their essay. This strategy was again part of the assessment and it contributed to the portfolio grades. As for the type of feedback, direct feedback was provided to students since the students were low proficient and indirect feedback might have troubled them understanding the feedback given. Although students were made free to provide the feedback they preferred and they were even provided with some codes in the first week to realize if students would have been able to correct themselves. More importantly, students were guided to the self-editing and peer-editing worksheets provided at the end of the references of the course.

Support

The sixth strategy employed was supporting students cognitively and emotionally. By supporting students cognitively, the researcher means uploading

material containing information about related vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, certain expressions to Google Classroom or teaching these in class. Furthermore, provision of samples written by natives was also considered to be supporting students cognitively. Another part of this strategy involved supporting students emotionally which was considered to be highly related to the investigation of anxiety in the context in question. To illustrate more, the emotional support strategy consisted of creating a convivial environment inside the classroom free from frightening and terrifying in which students feel safe and secure by (not blaming them or criticising them severely on mistakes, assuring students that making mistakes is okay, being friendly, facilitative, motivating, patient, empathetic, sociable, and courteous with them, and using motivating words and expressions in the class. The strategy also encompassed not disclosing students' errors to anyone in class; neither the teacher did this nor the students were allowed to do this. In addition, the instructor devoted a specific time so as to permit students to verbalize their fears, reveal their feelings about writing, and present the writing problems they have. This was carried out through the online meetings the instructor held with the students and the time after the class period. Above all, students were taught strategies of keeping themselves away from stress and anxiety during writing and exams.

Systematic Desensitization

The seventh strategy involved systematic desensitization through deep breathing and prayers. Students were trained by the instructor and the social psychologist to do deep breathing exercises while closing the eyes and visualizing the problems they have in writing. They were also instructed to say a prayer before exams and before writing, which is specifically employed in Islam for difficulty and for making things easy, "O Allah! There is nothing easy except what You make easy. And You make the difficult become easy, if You so will!". Students were taught these online during Google Meetings and on campus in class.

Doing Remedial Teaching

The eighth strategy, which was a teacher and in-class oriented strategy, included doing remedial teaching, i.e. monitoring students' writing difficulties, writing confidence, writing attitudes, writing weaknesses, and treating them accordingly. This strategy was applied through teacher's reflection in and on action,

keeping a diary on the teacher's part, and students' writing two journals verbalizing their fears and writing difficulties.

Keeping Portfolios

The ninth strategy was keeping portfolios on the students' part. Throughout the course, students were required to do their portfolio work in which they had to keep the model essays, the drafts they produced, and the feedback they provided to each other as well as the feedback provided by the instructor. Since students did not know how to provide feedback to each other, they were informed about the peer editing and self-editing sheets found at the end of the textbook for this course and necessary explanation was provided to them on what aspects of their essays need to be focused. These sheets contained questions regarding the rhetorical structure for an essay of a specific genre. Furthermore, it demonstrated to students that certain types of errors need to be focused such as lexical, grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. In addition, students were provided with a complete list of transition signals. All these carried grades and were taken into serious account for the assessment.

The purpose behind portfolio keeping for the students was to help them review what they have studied and, according to most studies, to name just a few (Cequena & Gustilo, 2014; Jeon, 2018; Öztürk & Çeçen, 2007), portfolio keeping, even if it is online through blogging, together with feedback can help students overcome their writing anxiety, expand their vocabulary, develop their critical thinking and creativity, improve their future teaching practices as well as provide them with a sense of learning ownership and as a whole transform their emotional states more positively.

The Process-Genre Approach

For teaching the course, the researcher employed the process-genre approach as a tenth strategy, attempting at improving students' writing and reducing their anxiety, by following Badger and White's (2000) version of the approach. Accordingly, the approach is a combination of the product, process, and genre approaches and involves six steps that are preparation, modelling, planning, joint construction, independent construction, and revision (See the previous chapter for more details on the approach). The preparation phase included defining a situation that needed a written text, as the approach dictates, such as writing for or against an

issue. The modelling phase involved the provision of simple and comprehensible model essays to students and asking them to analyse them for their rhetorical structure, paragraphing, transition signals within and between paragraphs, and certain expressions peculiar to the specific genre. It is worth mentioning here that the analysis was carried out collaboratively by the students, i.e. either in pairs or in groups. Furthermore, this phase was considered essential as, according to Krashen (1981), this can work as comprehensible input that is deemed essential for later stages. The planning phase included meaningful activities such as reading, more explanation of the specific genre, brainstorming and listing, freewriting and providing students with videos and pictures stimulating their minds regarding the topic in question. Joint construction step involved constructing a text about a certain topic in the class that, in turn, involved brainstorming, drafting, and revising, i.e. a text produced by both students and the instructor was written on the whiteboard that functioned as a model for students to depend on for their independent construction. In the independent construction phase, students constructed their own essay on a different topic but a related genre. In the revising phase, students provided feedback to each other's essays. Then students wrote a second draft and teacher feedback was given to this. For this purpose, both direct and indirect feedback was provided.

Using Blended Learning

Last but not least, two hours were devoted to the course of which one hour was carried out electronically via Google Classroom. This included the active use of technology including Email, Google Classroom, Google Meetings, Google Chats, Google Forms, and Messenger for applying all the above strategies excluding strategies seven and nine (see Appendix J).

The Experimental Data Collection Procedures

At the start of the module, students were informed about the study and were requested to fill in and complete a consent form (see Appendix E). As with any experimental study, the present study followed these three steps (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019): First, administering a pretest to students in which they were required to fill in two questionnaires and take an essay writing test. The questionnaires and the test were in English and the researcher was there for any questions raised by the students about the meaning of any items. The students

completed the scales and the test in approximately an hour and a half. A syllabus that had already been prepared including a number of lesson plans was ready to be taught together with the strategies (see Appendix B). The second step included applying the strategies as a treatment to relieve students' writing apprehension when writing essays in English. The third step involved administering a posttest at the end of the module by applying the same questionnaires again to see if there would be any difference in students' writing apprehension levels, types, and causes as well as taking the same essay writing test. Thus, through statistical methods the differences between before and after the treatment were assessed and the researcher tried to observe the impact of the strategies used as a treatment in the course (The results will be reported in the next chapter).

Data Collection Tools

The present study made use of four major data collection tools, namely the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI, Cheng, 2004, see Appendix F), Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (CSLWAI, Rezaei & Jafari, 2014), see Appendix G), writing essay tests (adapted from the IELTS tests, see Appendix H), and the anxiety-reducing strategies (See sections above and Appendix 4). This section aims to detail some aspects of the data collection tools utilized in the study and to justify why these instruments rather than others have been used.

Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI)

Daly and Miller (1975a) were among the first researchers to systematically formulate a writing apprehension scale called writing apprehension test (WAT) in which a self-report procedure is the predominant assessment mode, where respondents demonstrate their anxiety replying to a number of statements regarding writing (Daly, 1985). They defined apprehension or anxiety as a unitary or unidimensional construct. The WAT, which is an oft-cited instrument and is still being frequently cited, tackles, as explicated earlier, anxiety about writing in general, tendencies to approach or avoid writing, attitudes towards written communication, and feelings experienced when writing, peer evaluation of writing, professional evaluations, and self-evaluations of writing (Daly & Miller, 1975a).

Previous studies with this instrument have reported the stability, reliability and validity of the instrument to be high in more than 30 studies as reported by (Aljafen, 2013), and low correlations with other constructs, both of anxiety and personality (Daly & Miller, 1975c). The WAT costs less, it is quick and easy to administrate, and is more general (Daly & Miller, 1975b). The statements of the instrument are short, simple and clearly worded; therefore, this is preventive of different interpretations on the participants' side (Aljafen, 2013). Furthermore, the WAT can display various levels of apprehension for participants to select from (Aljafen, 2013). Thus, the scale now offers a quick and accurate way to evaluate students' writing apprehension (McAndrew, 1986). Last but not least, the instrument can measure feelings of apprehension similar to those experienced by participants in the EFL/ESL settings (Aljafen, 2013).

Although the Daly-Miller's WAT (1975a) as a whole has been proclaimed to be an instrument with satisfactory internal consistency reliability and concurrent and predictive validity, it is suggested by prior research to be further improved if the WAT is to be utilized in second language writing studies. It is believed that the WAT was originally designed for first language students, particularly English native speakers and it might not touch upon the most essential elements of second language writing anxiety. Furthermore, several studies have raised questions about the construct validity of the WAT. Above all, the WAT is also accused of not distinguishing between self-confidence and anxiety or cognitive anxiety and somatic anxiety (Cheng, 2004). Therefore, Cheng (2004) devised a multidimensional scale to tackle the anxiety experienced by students of English as a second or foreign language. She characterized anxiety as having three different and relatively independent components, namely cognitive, somatic, and behavioural avoidance. Thus, she holds a tripartite view of anxiety accordingly anxiety is viewed as "a relatively stable anxiety disposition associated with L2 writing, which involves a variety of dysfunctional thoughts, increased physiological arousal, and maladaptive behaviours" (Cheng, 2004, p.319). Morris et al. (1981) define cognitive anxiety as the experience of anxiety mentally, such as negative expectations, preoccupation with performance, and concern about others' perceptions. They also refer to somatic anxiety as experiencing anxiety physiologically as reflected in increased "autonomic arousal and unpleasant feeling states such as nervousness and tension" (Morris et al.,

1981, p. 541). Based on Cheng (2004), avoidance behaviour includes such behaviours in writing as procrastination, avoidance and withdrawal.

Initially, the Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) or questionnaire designed by Daly and Miller (1975a) was intended to be utilized in the present study. However, after reviewing more research and consulting supervisors as well as the suggestion of the pilot study participants for using a more recent scale, the researcher was convinced that the scale be replaced by another one. The first and most significant reason behind the researcher's conviction was that the scale, although being both valid and reliable in various educational settings, was originally devised for native speakers, particularly native speakers of English. Furthermore, the scale has been said to be unidimensional rather than multidimensional dealing with various types of anxiety, i.e. not distinguishing between the different dispositional variables.

For this reason, SLWAI was adapted from Cheng (2004) and employed to gather data regarding the students' anxiety levels and types in writing English as a foreign language in the Kurdish setting. This scale was administered at the beginning and end of the experiment as pretest and posttest to see if there would be any difference in students' anxiety levels and types before and after the strategies were applied. The SLWAI scale originally consists of 22 statements but it was converted to 23 statements after being reviewed and adapted. It is organized on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree for positive statements (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21) and 1 strongly agree to 5 strongly disagree for negative statements (1, 4, 7, 18, 19, 22, 23). The scale consists of three sub-categories: Cognitive anxiety including statements (1, 3, 7, 10, 15, 18, 21, 22), somatic anxiety including statements (2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 20), and avoidance behaviour including statements (4, 5, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23). The scale can be applied to both second and foreign language students because Cheng (2004) tried to include aspects of both second and foreign language settings. This particular measure was selected because it was particularly designed for anxiety encountered by L2 students and for the recognition of writing anxiety. Furthermore, it holds a multidimensional view to anxiety as having three dimensions (cognitive, somatic and avoidance behaviour). Above all, it is continuously in use by different researchers and studies and it has been shown to be both valid and reliable.

Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (CSLWAI)

The second measure employed in the study as a pre-posttest instrument involved the Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (CSLWAI) originally invented by Rezaei and Jafari (2014) to measure the reasons behind students' apprehension in writing as a second or foreign language. The borrowed measure consisted of ten items organized on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree being 1 to strongly agree being 5 for all the statements. The researchers designed the scale based on the proposition of previous literature. After reviewing plenty of research (See the previous chapter for a thorough review of research on the causes of writing apprehension) and conducting a pilot study (See the previous section for details about the pilot study and Appendix I) on the causes of writing apprehension, the researcher of the current study expanded the scale into 22 statements organized on a 5-point Likert scale. It was later delivered to supervisors for rating. As a result, the researcher converted the wording to make statements more precise and understandable (see Appendix 8 for the expanded and adapted scale). The scale was applied in the pretest and posttest to see if there would be any change in the causes of students' writing apprehension both before and after the intervention.

Writing Performance Test

To measure students' writing performance before and after the treatment, two essay writing tests were utilized, one as a pretest and the other as a posttest. Although students studied two essays in the course, only one essay type was considered for the analysis, i.e. for the pretest and the posttest. Since students were exposed to an opinion essay in the pretest and were not acquainted with essay writing, the first essay was not regarded for the analysis. Thus, this study measured aspects of writing performance through the actual written samples produced by sophomore students of English majors. The writing samples were first scored by two scorers and then were analysed for errors. The internal characteristics of the essays, i.e. the frequency and type of the errors committed by the undergraduate students were identified and categorized.

Anxiety-Reducing Strategies

Another data collection tool employed in the study included the ten anxiety-reducing strategies arising from the literature and the pilot study which were applied

throughout a writing course period lasting twelve weeks. These strategies also incorporated in them the instructor's diary and the students' journals as well as the open and close-ended questions that were asked at times. The details of the invention of the strategies and how they were applied has been provided above.

Data Analysis

There appear four major types of data in the study, namely the data collected from the first questionnaire called Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory, the second questionnaire called Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory, and the essays as well as diaries, journals, instructor's reflections, asking students questions throughout the course, and in-class observations.

When considering the first questionnaire, the data were analysed quantitatively using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), version 23.0. More specifically, means, frequencies, percentages, and standard deviations were employed to identify students' writing apprehension levels. Thus, the analysis of the scale concentrated on the identification of the levels of writing apprehension among the students in the pretest and posttest. The students' level of writing apprehension was divided into three levels, namely high, moderate, and low. The higher the score was on the scale, the higher the level of writing apprehension it designated. More clearly, a score of 80 or higher designated a high level of writing apprehension, a score of 57 or lower designated a low level of writing apprehension, while an intermediate score between these two extremes designated a moderate level of writing apprehension. Furthermore, one-sample t-test was employed for the recognition of the writing apprehension levels experienced by students in the pretest and posttest to compare between the calculated mean of the scores and the standardized mean. Based on Ali and Bhaskar (2016), one-sample t-test is employed to test if the mean of a sample differs substantially from a specific population mean. Thus, this statistical test was employed to identify the level of writing apprehension. To identify the change that occurred, the researcher utilized paired sample t-test to compare between the means of the pretest and posttest. A usual setting for paired t-test is when measurements are performed on the same participants before and after an intervention (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). So, paired sample t-test can be used to compare two applications of the same test in two different points of time.

Additionally, means were also used to identify the ranking order of the categories on the scale. The score of each subscale, i.e. cognitive, somatic, and avoidance was calculated and summed; accordingly, they were ordered. The higher the mean, the more common the type it was among the students. In the same way, paired sample t-test was employed to recognize the substantial difference that existed between the pretest and the posttest in the ranking order of the categories.

The same statistical analysis was carried out for the commonness of the causes of writing apprehension among the students. That is, means and standard deviations were utilized to account for the mean of each cause on the scale. The total score of each cause was calculated and summed. The higher the mean score, the more common the cause was considered to be on the scale. Furthermore, paired sample t-test was employed to observe any changes in the ranking order of the causes of writing apprehension from pretest to posttest.

When considering the essays that were written by the students, they were analysed in different ways. First, the length of the essays was calculated by counting the frequency of the words contained in each essay and then the mean length of the essays was calculated both in the pretest and the posttest and the fluctuation that occurred to the pretest was analysed by applying paired sample t-test to understand if substantial differences occurred to students' essays in terms of length. Then, each essay was analysed by employing Université Catholique de Louvain's Error Taxonomy (As cited in Abdulmajeed, 2016) to measure writing accuracy as a quintessential dimension of writing performance. This error categorization was employed because it is a detailed and comprehensive categorization of the errors. In addition, it assisted raters to be consistent. All the essays were inspected for errors and both the type and the sub-type of the error were identified, classified, and counted, see (Appendix K) for a detailed description of the error taxonomy employed in this study along with examples for each category and subcategory from the students' essays.

Another method that was used to analyse students' writing essay tests included the analytic scoring of the essays. Analytic scoring, as explained earlier, involves teachers' focus on the components of an essay such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and mechanical accuracy in which each component was scored separately and then the total grade for each essay was

calculated. The same statistical tool, i.e. paired sample t-test was employed to account for the substantial difference between pretest and posttest errors and scores.

In addition to levels, categories, and causes of writing apprehension as well as writing performance, certain correlations among the variables of the study were computed through SPSS. To indicate the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance as measured by grades and errors, Pearson correlation coefficient, known as (Pearson's r or simply correlation coefficient) was run. This tool is a measure of linear association between two groups of data. It is the ratio between the covariance of two variables and the outcome of their standard deviations. Therefore, it is essentially a normalised measurement of the covariance. Thus, it was used for two purposes: first, to explain the association between writing apprehension and writing performance as measured by grades and; second, it was used for establishing the correlation between the same variables, with the second variable being measured by the frequency of the errors in each essay.

Finally, the data obtained from open-ended questions asked in class, the teacher's diary or students journals as well as portfolios and in-class observations were employed to support the obtained results.

Reliability and Validity

There are three methods to achieve an instrument to use: creating an instrument by yourself, finding one and adapting it, and reusing an instrument in its entirety (Creswell, 2015). This study reused two instruments, namely (SLWAI) and (CSLWAI). However, it culturally adapted both of them to suit the purposes of the study and the context and to (see Appendix 3 and 4 for the adapted versions of the measures). There are certain criteria for selecting a good instrument, namely recency, citedness, reliability and validity scores from past studies, appropriacy with the research questions (Creswell, 2015). Considering these criteria, it appears that our instruments can satisfy all of them.

Two overlapped or sometimes mutually exclusive significant attributes of any instrument are reliability and validity. If an instrument is not reliable, it is not valid. Reliability involves the degree to which participants consistently respond to the statements of that instrument. Put it another way, it refers to the stability and consistency of scores from an instrument. When the instrument is administered multiple times at different times, virtually similar scores should be produced

(Creswell, 2015). Furthermore, Reliability is “the consistency, stability, or repeatability of one or more measures or observations” (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019, p. 165). Thus, it simply refers to the consistency of a measure. Nevertheless, validity refers to the accuracy of a measure and the ability of an instrument to measure what is intended to measure (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019).

One of the measures deployed in the present study included Cheng (2004)’s Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) to measure writing apprehension levels and categories. This scale has been designed to specifically measure writing apprehension among second or foreign language students. It is the most extensively used and accepted, i.e. cited instrument among researchers, to mention some (Genç & Yayli, 2019; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Rabadi & Rabadi, 2020; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Sabati et al., 2019). The instrument is extremely reliable because the first study conducted by Cheng (2004) revealed that SLWAI has a high internal consistency ($\alpha=0.91$) and a temporal stability of (0.85) for test-retest reliability. Later research employing this instrument has always manifested reliability scores that were quite close to that number. For instance, Genç and Yayli, (2019), Kırmızı and Kırmızı (2015), and Rezaei and Jafari (2014) all produced a reliability score of ($\alpha= 0.89$) for SLWAI and Rabadi and Rabadi (2020) produced a reliability score of ($\alpha =0.88$) for the measure. The above and many other studies have proved that the instrument is highly reliable. Cheng (2004) also confirmed that the separate subscales were also reliable, with Cronbach’s coefficient being calculated for the first and second administrations, being ($\alpha= 0.87$) and ($\alpha= .88$) for the somatic anxiety subscale, ($\alpha= .85$) and ($\alpha= .88$) for the avoidance behaviour subscale, and ($\alpha= .82$) and ($\alpha= .83$) for the cognitive anxiety subscale. Thus, previous research suggests that the measure has sufficient internal consistency and test-retest reliability. To determine the reliability of the scale, the researcher of the present study similarly employed Cronbach’s Alpha to show the internal consistency. As a result, the researcher obtained a reliability score of ($\alpha=0.71$), which is acceptable, though not very high.

As for the validity of SLWAI, Cheng (2004) asserted that both the measure and its subscales possess adequate convergent, discriminant and criterion-related validity. In the same way, Rabadi and Rabadi, (2020) measured the construct validity of SLWAI through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and found that it was valid, i.e. it had an acceptable overall model fit. In terms of validity of SLWAI, it was

established through face validity in this study. This means that the scale was reviewed by two experts in the field to assess its validity. After a while, the experts sent back the forms and offered a few suggestions. Accordingly, I made some amendments based on their suggestions such as rephrasing a few items, though no items were required to be removed and the degree of agreement was (81%). Most importantly, SLWAI was also revised by the supervisors and suggestions were made to rephrase a few items. Thus, the measure was seen to measure what it intended to measure before its application.

The second scale (CSLWAI) was also reported to be both reliable and valid. Rabadi and Rabadi (2020) showed that the scale was internally consistent, with the Cronbach alpha being ($\alpha = 0.80$) which demonstrates that it has good reliability. Similarly, the present study demonstrated the reliability of the scale by employing Cronbach's alpha recording ($\alpha = 0.83$) which is a good degree of reliability. As for validity, the researcher followed the same procedures mentioned above for SLWAI and showed that the degree of agreement was (85%). The statements of the scale were reworded and expanded by the researcher and the supervisors. Furthermore, it was provided a committee of experts and checked for its appropriacy to the context and the topic in question. Thus, the scale was shown to be both internally consistent and valid.

Another tool that needed validation involved the essay writing test. The writing test consisted of two questions for which students were required to answer one of the questions. The questions were general topics and related to students' lives. Before beginning with the module, the researcher discussed the questions with instructors who had taught writing and colleagues regarding the suitability of the question for the exam and the study (see Appendix H for the questions). Students were required to write down (250) words in (50) minutes and were guided on how to answer the questions. The instructors (see the acknowledgements section) approved the validity of the questions that can be used to measure the topic under investigation. What is most relevant, however, is the reliability of the assessment (see Appendix B for the assessment scheme details) as well as the error analysis. To account for the reliability of the assessment, the researcher scored both the pretest and the posttest employing a rubric taken from the website of the English department of Near East University that has already been utilized by (Bensen, 2014) and its application seems to be easy and simple. Later, a colleague (see the

acknowledgements section), who had been teaching at university for more than five years and had the experience of teaching writing, scored the students' essays using the same rubric. The researcher trained the colleague on a few samples and guided on how to use the rubric and error categorization scale. Additionally, students' essays were also inspected for errors employing Université Catholique de Louvain's error tag set (As cited in Abdulmajeed, 2016). This error categorization was employed because it is a detailed and comprehensive categorization of the errors. It provides superordinate categories as well as subordinate categories and describes them with examples. In addition, it assists raters to be consistent. This taxonomy is a hierarchical linguistic categorization that embodies eight major categories, namely grammatical, lexical, lexico-grammatical, spelling and capitalization, punctuation, sentence, word, and infelicity errors. These main categories are further divided into subordinate categories, including article, noun, verb, pronoun, etc. In turn, these subcategories are subdivided into tense, agreement, possessive, and so on. More details on error categories and subcategories are provided in the (Appendix K). Turning back to reliability, the reliability of the scoring and the error analysis turned out to be (98%) and (78%) among the raters respectively, which demonstrates a high level of reliability. In cases of disagreement, the raters attempted to discuss the issues together. In addition, the researcher consulted his colleagues when uncertain about error identification and categorization.

Ethical Considerations

The author went through receiving a number of approvals from various authorities. First, an ethical approval form for conducting the study and obtaining ethical clearance was submitted to the ethical committee of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences of Near East University via email (see Appendix L). The researcher obtained written consent from the author of the scales via email (See Appendix M). In addition, written permission was also granted by the institution where the study was conducted. First, the researcher wrote a signed petition to the head of the English department and he was informed about the nature of the study and its procedures. The head granted permission and a formal letter was delivered to the dean of the college for whom adequate details about the study were also provided. Following this, the official letter was sent to the directorate of international relations and the president of the university and all granted permission (see Appendix

N). Finally, the purpose and procedures of this study, the confidentiality of data and the students' identity, the effect of participation on their grades, and the use of the data for research purposes were explained to all the students enrolled in the English Writing Skills I module. Written consent was obtained from the participants through a consent form approved by the supervisors prior to data collection and filled in and signed by the students (see Appendix E). Consequently, 54 students consented to participate in the study. After the students knew what they were required to do, the questionnaires employed as pretests to identify the level of anxiety and its causes were applied respectively and the essay writing test was also done to recognize writing performance and the errors they might commit in their essays.

Another point that is worth mentioning is pseudonyms were used instead of students' names as they were informed at the beginning that their identity would be kept confidential and that their information would not be revealed to anyone and that the anonymity of their identities would be protected. The names of the participants were modified into codes, more specifically into borrowed names; this was done to make sure the privacy of the research data and according to Creswell (2015), it is suggested that names of participants should be removed from all forms and pseudonyms should be used instead.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the methodology adopted by first shedding light on the design which is a one-group pre-posttest quasi-experimental design. Then, it provided information regarding the context and the experimental procedures that involved carrying out the pretest, followed by the implementation of nine strategies, and then the posttest. The chapter also explained that a syllabus was designed for sophomore students from a public university in Iraqi Kurdistan from pre-existing syllabuses already designed for essay writing instruction. Furthermore, it precisely described the data collection tools that two questionnaires and an essay test were employed. Then, it went on discussing the validity and reliability of those tools and proved that they were both valid and reliable. This was followed by explicating pilot testing the instrument and the invention of the strategies. Last but not least, certain ethical procedures that were followed for carrying out the study were presented. The next chapter will present the findings and discuss them.

CHAPTER IV

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the researcher spelt out and vindicated the methodology adopted, by first explicating the design and context of the study, then proceeding to providing information about the participants, going through the methods, and confirming validity and reliability of the study. The behoof of this chapter is to unequivocally identify the trends and patterns that emerged from the study's quantitative data as well as additional qualitative data stemming from (e.g., students' responses to specific open-ended questions, field notes recorded during class observations in the teacher's diary, students' writing up two writing journals verbalizing their fears and difficulties, and notes recorded during the application of the other strategies through reflection in and on action). Included in the chapter, hence, are a) the results obtained from the quantitative data, b) highlighting qualitative data vindicating the quantitative one, c) accounts of classroom observation sessions verifying both kinds of data, and d) interpretation of the results and findings based on the literature reviewed, the specific context of the study, and the researcher's own personal and professional experience. All of these were then utilized to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do Kurdish undergraduate students of English experience anxiety in writing?
2. What is the most and least common category of anxiety experienced by Kurdish students in writing?
3. What are the factors that trigger Kurdish students' writing anxiety?
4. To what degree are Kurdish students accurate in writing essays in English as measured by:
 - a. analytic scoring
 - b. the number of the errors?
5. What are the most and least common error categories in Kurdish students' writing?
6. Is there a statistically significant correlation between:
 - a. writing anxiety and writing performance as measured by analytic scoring?

- b. writing anxiety and writing performance as measured by error frequencies?
 - c. analytic scoring and error frequencies?
 - d. gender and writing apprehension?
7. Would the strategies influence:
- a. writing anxiety levels?
 - b. writing anxiety types?
 - c. Writing anxiety causes?
8. Would the strategies influence:
- a. writing performance as measured by grades?
 - b. writing performance as measured by error analysis?

Thus, the objective of this chapter is to report and discuss as well as establish a logical ground for the major findings obtained for the research questions. For this purpose, the results will be presented and discussed based on titles or themes associated with the research questions.

Kurdish Students' Writing Apprehension

The amount of writing apprehension experienced by a certain group of students, as discussed earlier, varies according to a number of different factors. These factors might be associated with the personal attributes of the students, the major, and most importantly the context of the study and many others. The level of apprehension might vary from one study to another even within the same cultural context. These factors will be discussed later in this chapter. However, of particular interest in this section involves the level of apprehension experienced by Kurdish students. Ergo, the first question addressed in the present study included the following: "To what extent do Kurdish undergraduate students of English experience anxiety in writing?". Below is the presentation of the results for the apprehension experienced in writing by Kurdish students both in the pretest and posttest, i.e. before and after the application of the strategies.

Writing Apprehension Levels in the Pretest

To deduce the results for the writing apprehension level in the pretest, the collected data from the 39 participants were computed through SPSS and the analysis

revealed a moderate level of writing apprehension among the participants, as displayed in Table 3.

Table 3.

Kurdish EFL Students' Writing Anxiety Levels in the Pretest

WA	No.	%	M	SD
High	6	15.38	68.66	10.72
Moderate	28	71.79		
Low	5	12.82		
Total	39	100		

Note. WA= writing apprehension

Featured in Table 3 are the findings for the amount of writing apprehension experienced by Kurdish students in the pretest by applying means, standard deviations and percentages as well as frequencies for the targeted sample. This revealed an overall moderate level of writing apprehension among Kurdish EFL students that is the borderline between the moderate and the high level if the scores on the scale are divided into two poles, saying high and low. The table further presents the number of high, moderate, and low apprehensive students. It indicates that six (15.38%) students experienced a high level of apprehension, 28 students (71.79%) a moderate level, and only five (12.82%) students experienced a low level.

Based on Cheng (2004), a higher score on the scale designates a higher level of second language writing apprehension, meaning a higher intensity of fear or worry, physiological arousal, and/or avoidance tendency in writing. According to Daly and Miller (1975a), scores of the mean that demonstrate a moderate writing apprehension level are not abnormal. Nevertheless, students in this range or at this level might show certain symptoms of writing anxiety in accomplishing certain writing tasks, in writing essays for diverse purposes and for diverse kinds of audiences, or in writing theses and dissertations. Furthermore, students at this level might suffer from excessive apprehension when writing an essay for a placement test for faceless evaluators or in writing an in-class essay exam for a writing instructor. This is due to the mean score which is ($M = 69$), being closer to the high level limit. Based on Daly and Miller (1975a), the higher the level of writing apprehension, the more severe the signs would be. To illustrate, since the students' apprehension approached an elevated level, one indication of high apprehensive students was observed and recorded in the teacher's diary which is being nervous about writing before and after exams and fearful of evaluation. According to Clark (1985), even

writing teachers and graduate students feel some sort of writing apprehension as aforementioned. Furthermore, writing apprehension will never entirely dissipate (as cited in Friesen, 1990, p. 20; Qadir et al., 2021). The findings of the present study are supported in the pretest by several other studies in EFL contexts (Aljafen, 2013; Alluhaybi, 2014; Kostić-Bobanović, 2016; Pimsarn, 2013). They all revealed a moderate writing apprehension level among their participants. Nonetheless, the findings of this study in the pretest are not consistent with (Abbas, 2016; Hanna, 2009; Huwari & Abd Aziz, 2011; Ismail et al., 2010; Noureen, 2019; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014) who all revealed that the level of writing apprehension was high among their participants. The diverse results produced in the literature regarding the levels of English writing anxiety might be due to a number of factors. First, these studies have been conducted in various educational settings where different teaching methodologies are in use. For instance, the communicative approach has been in use long ago in a European context while the opposite might be true for the Arabic, Kurdish or Iranian context in which traditional approaches are still employed and a number of classes are yet teacher-centered, and most importantly, emphasis is less likely to go to language skills in the latter setting. Second, the experience of the different writing anxiety levels by the various participants of prior studies might also be related to the way one is grown up, as Reeves (1997) elucidates, “despite advanced degrees and publications, I remain an apprehensive writer . . . I imagine it has something to do with growing up poor, rural, and female. It has to do with marginality, with being different” (p. 44). The third and most important factor involves variation in the other affective determinants that we can call them ‘self’ factors, such as self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy as described above. Even though the participants of this study did not rate their self-confidence as a determinant factor of their writing apprehension level as will be explained later, Rezaei and Jafari (2014) proved that it was a major cause of Iranian students’ writing apprehension. Thus, the identification of the anxiety level gave a rationale for the application of the devised anxiety-reducing strategies as the level of apprehension in the pretest was rather close to the high level limit.

Writing Apprehension Levels in the Posttest

One of the principal objectives of the current investigation was to examine the influence of certain sundry anxiety-reducing strategies on students’ writing

apprehension levels. For this purpose, the researcher devised strategies through pilot-testing and applied them to the sample in a semester of twelve weeks. The results of the posttest questionnaire application will be reported below. Thusly, the purpose of this section is to first describe the apprehension levels in the posttest and explain the fluctuations that occurred to writing apprehension levels in Kurdish students and contextualize as well as logicalize the obtained results in connection with the strategies. Thus, this section was aimed to answer the seventh research question, “Would the strategies influence anxiety levels?”. The following table reports writing apprehension levels of Kurdish students in the posttest.

Table 4.

Kurdish Students' Writing Anxiety Levels in the Posttest

WA	N	%	M	SD
High	1	2.56		
Moderate	29	74.35	62.71	8.67
Low	9	23.07		
Total	39	100		

Note. WA= writing apprehension

Table 4 shows that Kurdish students, similar to the pretest, experienced a moderate level of writing apprehension, recording a calculated mean of ($M= 62.7$) with the standard deviation being ($SD= 8.67$). Nevertheless, the table further explains that, out of the 39 participants, 29 (74.35%) students recorded a moderate level, 9 (23.07%) students a low level, and merely one student (2.56%) recorded an elevated level of writing apprehension. Accordingly, although this level of apprehension is not unusual, the students might indicate the same symptoms of the pretest, e.g. feeling anxious in doing certain writing tasks or writing for diverse audiences but the anxiety experienced might be to a lesser degree, because the lower the writing apprehension level, the less severe the apprehension.

As explained earlier in the previous section, Kurdish students experienced a moderate level of writing apprehension that was rather close to the high level limit. After the application of the strategies, students experienced the same level but the mean distanced from a higher to a lower level. To identify whether this decline from the mean scores of the pretest to the posttest was significant, the researcher ran t-test for paired sample to compare between the mean scores that led to a statistically significant difference at ($Sig= 0.00$), with the t-value (3.04) between the pretest ($M= 68.76$) and the posttest ($M= 62.71$)

Table 5.*Paired t-test for the Difference between Pretest and Posttest Anxiety Levels*

WA	N	M	SD	t-value	t-critical	Sig.
Pre	39	68.76	10.72	3.04	2.021	0.00
Post	39	62.71	8.67			

Note. WA= writing apprehension.

This result indicates that the strategies yielded a considerable influence on the level of writing anxiety from the pretest to the posttest, with the difference between them being six mean scores that is substantial. This finding seems both logical and plausible as, based on a short survey conducted online via Google forms, with one of the questions inquiring if students were satisfied with the course at the tenth week of the term, all but nine of them (76.92%) out of the 39 students showed their satisfaction to the course. This presupposes that the majority of them were satisfied with the course and its teaching methodologies. Previous studies (Daly & Miller, 1975b) have shown a negative correlation between student satisfaction and writing apprehension, i.e. students who are satisfied with a course have lower writing apprehension levels. This validates the result that students' writing apprehension scores decreased due to the effectiveness of the strategies.

Experiencing this moderate writing apprehension level might not be so severe that leads to avoidance behaviours such as avoiding writing classes or writing exams neither before the treatment nor after it according to Daly and Miller (1975a). Nevertheless, students with this level might show certain indications of writing apprehension in performing certain writing tasks or in writing for different purposes for different sorts of audiences. Furthermore, you may experience extreme apprehension when writing for a placement test for faceless evaluators, or in writing an essay in the class (Smith, 1984).

One point that seems to be directly associated with the obtained result is initially diagnosing students' writing apprehension levels and the aspects of the construct through the application of SLWAI (as recommended by Buley-Meissner, 1989) can corroborate the decrease in the apprehension as most improvement that occurred in the students' apprehension was associated with the areas that the researcher concentrated on in the pretest. The researcher was soon familiarized with what was going on with students' apprehension. This means that he diagnosed the areas of writing anxiety that need to be improved. Although discussing the results of the diagnosis with students would lead to pinpointing the areas of weaknesses and

strengths, the researcher did not do so in the pretest with the students as suggested by (Buley-Meissner, 1989) so as to avoid reactivity by the participants that was considered to have been a threat to the validity of a study.

The problem of students' proficiency might interfere in the obtained result. According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), apprehension diminishes when the students' English proficiency gets higher. However, it has been revealed in many studies that higher proficient students underwent higher levels of writing anxiety (Genç, 2017). Cheng (2002) asserts that it is more substantial how students perceive their writing competence rather than their actual competence. This means that having accurate judgments about themselves is as quintessential as their competence in writing. Based on Cheng (2002), proficiency is merely one of the factors that increases or decreases language anxiety similar to the other factors such as institutional requirements, teaching and evaluation procedures, self-confidence, motivation, students' beliefs, personality, gender and many other factors. This vindicates the fact that students' progress throughout the course has not been due to the effect of students' proficiency development.

All in all, the interpretation for the significant decrease in apprehension is that the combined effect of the strategies has succoured Kurdish EFL students to flee and free themselves from the stresses they encountered throughout the course and develop as well as maintain more self-confidence in their writing abilities. Most importantly, supporting students both cognitively and emotionally led the students to cope with the difficulties they encountered in their writing. Students would have been immediately guided throughout the course that was deemed essential to the students because if students are not guided deftly and professionally, they will be tired of blended learning. This explanation was reinforced with qualitative attestation through an open-ended question asked online via Google Classroom. The result can also be associated with the effect of feedback that focused on both form and meaning and writing one paragraph biweekly focusing on meaning and fluency only. Focusing on form and meaning through feedback and biweekly writing was aimed at both developing students' writing performance and reducing writing anxiety simultaneously as focusing on one and not the other might have negative consequences. Most importantly, students were encouraged to say repetitive prayers before the exam and do deep breathing when stressed out. More details regarding the

effect of the strategies on how they contributed to the course will be offered in the upcoming sections.

Types of Writing Apprehension Experienced

Closely intertwined with discerning the level of writing apprehension is the type of apprehension. Not all students experience the same type of apprehension in writing and different students might apparently experience different types of apprehension due to the different backgrounds and knowledge they possess in writing as well as variety in the level of their self-factors. To illustrate, theoretically, students with plenty of knowledge in writing and sufficient command of vocabulary and grammar as well as mechanics of English writing might not experience cognitive writing anxiety because these are more or less associated with the mentally provoking aspect of the mind. Whereas, the reverse could be true for those who do not have this such problem (Genç & Yaylı, 2019; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), because, according to (Rabadi and Rabadi, 2020), students with a limited range of vocabulary, insufficient grammatical knowledge, and inadequate writing practice tend to overthink the form of writing that causes them to be mentally anxious. Other students probably experience anxiety by displaying certain somatic symptoms such as heart pounding, sweating, and so on. Still others might convey anxiety through behavioural avoidance by avoiding writing classes, avoiding situations that require writing or showing less preference for writing. Therefore, it is substantial to tackle the types of writing apprehension to be able to accurately diagnose dimensions of this psychological construct as confirmed by Scovel (2001) that language researchers ought to be sufficiently specific about the category of anxiety they are measuring and that anxiety research take note of the myriad categories of anxiety that have long ago been identified so that more consistent results are produced. This section aims to answer the second question posed in the study: “What is the most and least common category of anxiety experienced by Kurdish students in writing?”. To this intent, the results of the pretest will first be presented and discussed and then those of the posttest to understand the effect of the strategies on both the order and the treatment.

Types of Writing Apprehension in the Pretest

As explicated earlier, SLWAI is one such measure that provides this multi-dimensional conceptualization of writing apprehension vividly described above that

incorporates several different but interconnected dimensions, namely cognitive, somatic and behavioural avoidance anxieties. Thus, SLWAI involves several subscales that aim at accurately measuring the various facets of anxiety. The scores of the statements on each subscale can be summed to obtain a score, vividly demonstrating the intensity of reaction in each dimension of anxiety on the scale (Cheng, 2004). Accordingly, the score for each category on each subscale in the present study was succinctly summed and Table 6 reports descriptive statistics for each category. The categories of anxiety in the pretest were ranked based on the means as follows.

Table 6

Categories of Writing Anxiety Aroused in Kurdish EFL Students

TWA	N	M	SD	Rank
Cognitive Anxiety	39	24.53	5.05	1
Somatic Anxiety	39	24.23	5.17	2
Avoidance Anxiety	39	19.89	3.82	3

Note. TWA= type of writing anxiety

As seen in the table, a comparison of the means patently reveals that the most prevalent category of writing apprehension experienced by Kurdish EFL students is the cognitive anxiety, recording the highest mean of ($M= 24.5$). The second dominant category of writing anxiety, though not much lower than the former, includes somatic anxiety with a slightly lower mean of ($M= 24.2$). However, the least frequent category of anxiety is the avoidance anxiety with the lowest mean of ($M= 19.8$), much lower than the two former categories.

It essential to mention here that, based on the teacher's (hence researcher's) diary, the same ranking order of the categories of writing anxiety was precisely observed. Correspondingly, the teacher noted most students lacked knowledge in English writing, particularly knowledge of grammar and mechanics of writing and most importantly knowledge of the topic given for which the implementation of the process-genre approach seems to have been significant in the posttest, as it affected students' overall writing progress by writing more ideas and words in the posttest as it will be revealed in the next sections. The essays that the students wrote in the pretest also confirmed the same result as they had committed many errors even in the rudiments of English writing, such as not capitalizing the initial letter of a sentence or using comma improperly. This, in turn, might be associated with their level of education that they were second year students (their first semester) and they have not

had the opportunity to be exposed to plenty of linguistic-related knowledge and according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) and Rabadi and Rabadi (2020), language anxiety drastically decreases when the students' English proficiency and experience increase.

Students of the English departments should, in essence, not experience cognitive anxiety because they should basically have the knowledge required, and they do. However, since the participants of the present study were second graders, they have not acquired the required knowledge due to many reasons that are present in the context at the time of the study, mentioned earlier in chapter three. Students of other majors might more commonly experience cognitive anxiety because they essentially do not have the required knowledge necessary to communicate English confidently, as supported by Rabadi and Rabadi (2020) among first year medical students.

The pretest results of the present study are supported in the literature by many prior studies that cognitive anxiety occurred as the most recurrent category of anxiety experienced by ESL and EFL students, for instance among Arabic (El Shimi, 2017), Iranian (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014), Indonesian (Cheng, 2004; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017), Pakistani (Noureen, 2019) and Chinese (Zhang, 2011) students. These findings also echoed those of (Noureen, 2019; Syarifudin, 2020; Tupang, 2014; Zhang, 2011) and many others, whose results showed the same ranking order for the types of writing anxiety. This means that the students of those contexts, similar to ours, palpably struggle with cognitive anxiety. In other words, they fiercely struggle with the so-called category of anxiety known as worry and fear (Toth, 2010), i.e. the mental aspect of anxiety experience which is also known as the psychological component of anxiety that is largely reflected in negative expectations, preoccupation with writing performance, tests, negative evaluation, self-doubt, self-disapproval thoughts, and concern about the perception of others. To illustrate, students with cognitive anxiety predominantly concentrate on others' expectation, i.e. external factors, such as peers' or teachers' evaluation on their writing instead of their own writing. Expectation from peers and teachers can affect the way they construct their writing, e.g. Teachers hold high expectations of students and students, in return, will require to obtain high standards. This negatively affects students' writing because they focus on others' expectation rather than their own writing (Cheng, 2004). Furthermore, they are particularly concerned about their marks and other people's

perceptions of their writing performance. If they know they will be evaluated, they experience anxiety while writing in English. According to Rabadi and Rabadi (2020), when cognitive anxiety occurs as the dominant type among EFL students, it denotes difficulties with concentration on writing tasks due to the fear of tests and negative evaluation in English writing as well as being worried about the comments that teachers provide to their writing. Students with cognitive anxiety become worried or more anxious as they pressure or overburden themselves to write an essay empty of linguistic errors. They are preoccupied with and distorted by disapproval or self-deprecating thoughts, fear of failure in writing, and not knowing how to do a writing assignment. These worries and fears crowd and disturb the students' mind that arouses their apprehension while they are writing. Precisely, fearing evaluation, being worried about getting poor grades and fearing spelling and grammar errors can be accommodated in cognitive anxiety as these psychological constructs interrupt the process of writing and deteriorate it. The problems mentioned above in the present context are all confirmed by Rezaei and Jafari (2014) that the problems are deeply rooted in the nature of education in Iran which is quite similar to the educational context of the present study. Another point which they mention, being extremely significant in the present context, is that university instructors generally act as readers and evaluators of students' writing and their pressure on students to produce an error-free piece of writing results in this sort of anxiety.

Congruent with the foregoing accounts and central to our discussion is MacIntyre and Gardner's (1994) belief that anxiety consumes cognitive resources since when a student becomes apprehensive, he initiates negative self-related cognition involving 'thoughts of failure' as reflected in a statement like "I will never be able to do this", self-deprecation thoughts as reflected in a statement like "I am just no good at this", and avoidance thoughts as reflected in "I wish this was over". The researcher of the present study has recorded statements similar to the literature reported above such as, "writing is difficult and I will never be able to pass". In chapter two of this thesis, I explained the verbal expression of anxiety that one conveys anxiety through statements like, "That terrible event could happen again, and I might not be able to deal with it, but I've got to be ready to try" (Barlow, 2001) and "I constantly feel as if something dreadful is going to happen" (Rachman, 2004; See chapter two for more details). Therefore, the researcher strived to work on these

areas and the consequence was cognitive writing anxiety was reduced to a lower level.

Other investigations by MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) stated the same thing, i.e. they believed that anxiety or apprehension leads to cognitive interference while accomplishing certain writing tasks and high apprehensive students learn a list of vocabulary more slowly than low apprehensive counterparts. Rezaei and Jafari (2014) revealed that the experience of cognitive anxiety is due to teachers' negative feedback, high expectations, low self-confidence, and lack of adequate linguistic knowledge although, in the context of the present study, lack of self-confidence was not recorded to be the cause of their apprehension, as will be detailed in the following section. Thus, based on Rabadi and Rabadi (2020), students need to control their cognitive anxiety by learning to control their minds against certain negative external denominators that cause crowding the students' mind and they ought to practice positive self-talk and positive thinking to quieten their thoughts that was one of the strategies employed by the researcher of the present study. Creating a low filter environment by encouraging peer interaction and student-teacher interaction holds a significant contributing factor to cognitive anxiety arousal. Additionally, the sort of cognitive anxiety that was caused by discussing their essays in the class was also relieved by the instructor by ceasing this activity because it was observed that students, particularly the low proficient ones felt a twinge of discomfort and uneasiness or worry when realizing that their essays would be evaluated. They feared that their classmates might deride their essays and their English essays would be scored bad by the instructor. Although, since the cognitive behaviours of students seemed to be diverse, some students yet demonstrated liking for discussing the essays and, therefore, essays of those students, particularly of high proficient students was at times discussed and necessary comments and feedback was given.

Totally contradictory with this study's findings includes those of Genç (2017) that revealed an opposite ranking order of the types of writing apprehension, i.e. somatic anxiety was the most common, followed by avoidance behaviour and the least common was cognitive anxiety in the pretest. However, the types of anxiety in the posttest in Genç (2017)'s study were distributed in this way: avoidance anxiety, somatic anxiety, and cognitive anxiety. Variation in the findings may attribute to the divergent type of participants, i.e. participants having different backgrounds and

genders. One plausible explanation for this might have to do with whether students are English majors or not. Students of English majors might be able to better handle tension and nervousness when writing in English as they are expected to have the necessary writing skills.

The findings of the present study concerning the types are significant in connection with Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis as it is directly influenced by the hypothesis. The affective filter prevents from input reaching the language acquisition hemisphere of the brain. Creating a low-filter environment provides students with the best acquisition. Thus, the level of cognitive anxiety is highest here that illustrates the input does not reach the brain due to a high filter environment, i.e. disturbances in the students' minds. It is also worth mentioning that the stressfulness of the context as a whole played a significant role in this high filter of the environment owing to the unstable political situation and corona virus. One in-class first-hand observation associated with this point, based on the teacher's diary, might triangulate the results regarding the dominance of cognitive anxiety as students were preoccupied with the large number of assignments given not only in the writing course, rather in the other courses too that, in turn, created a source of stress, negative expectations, and negative evaluation for students. The reason behind this might be attributed to the fact that the students and the context as a whole are yet new to the new system 'Bologna Process' that has been being in force for three years now and students should be exposed to a large number of assignments compared to the traditional system. This fear of assignments on the students' part becomes anxiety-provoking if left unresolved according to (Labar, 2016). Therefore, the instructor of the present study devoted time to students to verbalize the fears they had out of class via email or during online meetings.

The second component or type of apprehension that was prevalent among Kurdish students involved somatic anxiety which is also known as the physiological component of anxiety experience that is reflected in a blank mind at the start of writing and petrification when unexpectedly asked to write as well as jumbling thoughts, heart pounding, trembling, perspiring, feeling panic, and body being rigid and tense when writing under time constraints. This type of anxiety is predominantly associated with writing under time restrictions. Put it another way, students experience somatic anxiety when they feel they do not have sufficient time to complete the response to a question, particularly during exams or when they are

abruptly asked to write during classes. Even during exams and classes, students who do not plan their writing or who have had negative past writing experience typically undergo this sort of anxiety to the researcher's observation because impromptu writing causes students to run out of ideas and their thoughts become messy, consequently feeling somatic anxiety in the different ways mentioned. In the pretest, the statements, "I tremble when I write under pressure" and "I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write English essays" recorded the highest mean scores. The interpretation for this, as said earlier, is the negative writing experience or poor writing performance they had in the past, as confirmed by the researcher by dissecting their writing achievement of their previous year because, according to Daly and Miller (1975b), writing apprehension results from repeated negative writing experiences in the past. Although students have not had the experience of writing an essay in the past, they might see writing an essay in the lenses of paragraph writing that has been difficult for them. Studies have reported various results regarding this sort of anxiety. Genç and Yaylı (2019) revealed that somatic anxiety was the most common category in the pretest but went lower in the posttest to the second position. Consistently, Atay and Kurt (2006) came up with the result that somatic anxiety was the highest with statements, "My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English essay" and "My thoughts become jumbled when I write English essays under time constraints" recording the highest mean scores. However, Nugroho and Ena (2021) found that somatic anxiety was the least common category of anxiety among their high school Indonesian students.

The least common category involved avoidance anxiety that is the behavioural aspect of anxiety in which students eschew themselves from writing. This kind is mirrored in students' tendency to approach or avoid the writing class, doing a writing task, or writing English essays. The majority of the participants rated this statement high, "I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English", i.e. it recorded the highest mean, which is the severest form of writing anxiety. Inconsistent with our result is Yaylı and Genç (2019) who demonstrated that avoidance anxiety was the most common in the posttest. One noteworthy point here, recorded in the teacher's diary, involves students' behaviour during the pretest. When they were asked to fill in the questionnaire, they did; however, when it came to the writing section, a few of them tried to avoid writing the essay.

Types of Writing Apprehension in the Posttest

Different categories of writing anxiety manifest different ways of displaying anxiety in writing. This means that cognitive anxiety represents the mental aspect of anxiety, somatic the physiological aspect, and avoidance behaviour represents the avoidance behavioural aspect, as detailed in the previous section. However, one noteworthy point relevant here involves the fluctuation that might occur in the ranking order of the categories through the application of certain strategies. When these strategies are applied, certain aspects of writing anxiety might be more affected by a particular style or method than others; for this reason, the ranking order of the categories would be affected. To explain, asking students to verbalize their fears some minutes before the exam would predominantly influence cognitive anxiety because it is associated with tests and helps students defenestrate disturbances and worries out of the exam hall. In this section, the alterations in the categories and their ranking order in the posttest will be presented and observations will be offered aiming at answering to the seventh question, “Would the strategies influence writing anxiety types?”.

To identify the order of anxiety categories in the posttest and to observe if there were any statistically significant differences between the pretest and the posttest, the researcher applied paired sample t-test to deduce the results by comparing between the means, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7.

The Effect of the Intervention on Categories of Writing Anxiety

Type	Test	N	M	SD	t-value	t-critical	Sig.
Somatic anxiety	Pretest	39	24.23	5.17	1.86	2.021	0.07
	Posttest	39	22.48	3.78			
Cognitive anxiety	Pretest	39	24.53	5.05	3.33	2.021	0.00
	Posttest	39	21.88	4.26			
Avoidance anxiety	Pretest	39	19.89	3.82	1.70	2.021	0.09
	Posttest	39	18.33	3.91			

To recall, the pretest revealed that cognitive anxiety was the commonest category, followed by somatic anxiety and behavioural avoidance anxiety in the pretest. Due to the in-class intervention, minor changes occurred to the order of the categories. This means that the order of cognitive anxiety and somatic anxiety was reversed. Somatic anxiety with the mean score (M= 22.48) ranked first while cognitive anxiety with the mean score (M= 21.88) ranked second in the posttest and

avoidance behavioural anxiety with the mean ($M= 18.33$) retained its position, as demonstrated in the table. Furthermore, there was a highly statistically significant difference exclusively in cognitive anxiety at ($Sig= 0.00$) with the difference between pretest and posttest valuing (3.33). This means that the treatment significantly influenced cognitive anxiety only. With regards to somatic and avoidance behavioural anxiety, the results revealed no statistically substantial differences between the mean scores of the pretest and posttest although slight changes occurred to them in favour of the posttest. Somatic anxiety was reduced from ($M= 24.23$) to ($M= 22.48$) and avoidance behavioural anxiety was again reduced from ($M= 19.89$) to ($M= 18.33$). In other words, the intervention did influence even somatic and avoidance behavioural anxieties but it did not reach the significance level ($Sig= 0.05$). Again, this fluctuation indicates the impact of the combined effect of the strategies on reducing writing apprehension over the course.

Although fluctuation in the apprehension occurred to the physiological and avoidance behavioural aspects of anxiety, the substantial fluctuation was significantly reflected in the cognitive aspect of anxiety. Accordingly, negative expectations, perceptions, and evaluation were transformed into positive ones to a great extent while petrification, heart pounding, trembling or perspiring under time constraints as well as indulgence or avoidance in writing essays were improved to a lesser extent. This finding seems logical and plausible as all the strategies used in this course have individually been reported to be effective in reducing writing apprehension, for instance doing reading before writing (Krashen, 1993), writing frequency (Reeves, 1997), improving self-confidence (Vukelić, 2011), providing feedback (Tanveer, 2007), providing support (Cobourne and Shellenbarger, 2019; Vielhaber, 1983), repetitive prayer and deep breathing (Asbill, 2015), the process-genre approach (Krashen, 1982), keeping portfolios (Öztürk & Çeçen (2007), and using the Internet and technology (Cheng, 2004). Most importantly, the above strategies are among the most frequent ones suggested by the participants of the pilot study that involve EFL students and teachers as well as psychologists. Based on the researcher's observation and diary, the most effective strategies for apprehension reduction can be arranged on a scale from most effective to least effective in this way: providing support, the process-genre approach, Internet and technology, reading before writing, writing frequency, providing feedback, improving self-confidence, repetitive prayers and deep breathing, and keeping portfolios.

One of the strategies that was seen to be effective in this respect was devoting on the teacher's part half an hour prior to the exam to the students to resolve their minor and quick queries about the style and form of the questions, relieve the worries and the fears they had and show the teacher's presence that presumably reduces their anxiety about exams, evaluation, and grades. This was carried out as many students expressed their uncertainty regarding success in the exam. One peculiarity of the educational context of the present study that is relevant here to be mentioned is that students typically have the type of anxiety known as test anxiety that is largely associated with cognitive anxiety, as it was revealed in the pretest. Nevertheless, since the instructor of the present module employed the aforementioned strategy, cognitive anxiety was reduced to a remarkable degree of significance. Thus, for one to successfully and effectively diminish apprehension in the current context is to inform students about the style of the questions and support them both cognitively and emotionally because students' apprehension is generally aroused before, during, and even a short time after the exam, as observed by the instructor. Although the ministry of higher education of the Kurdistan Region has set a course syllabus format in which instructors need to inform students about the type of the questions, very few instructors explain the type of the questions in their course book expected in the exam, even those who do so, their questions of the course syllabus greatly differ from the exam questions. Nevertheless, magnificent changes have been made in the teaching methods and assessment since the introduction of the Bologna Process. This has led to instructors to constantly expose students to formative assessment and devote more grades to it rather than expose them to summative assessment like before.

In the present study, the reduction of somatic anxiety, though reduced to a lower level, was not significant. One of the causes, as explained in the foregoing section, included writing under time restrictions. That is, the pressure of time would lead to students experience this sort of anxiety in writing. Several strategies can manage somatic anxiety. Importantly, reading before writing and free writing were seen to affect somatic anxiety because they trained students to develop fluency by focusing on meaning rather than form, as noticed in the length of the students' essay in the posttest and will be detailed in the next section. When students will have more topical knowledge and are less worried about errors, they can rarely suffer from the time limit set for them. More importantly, training students to write under time

constraints can also reduce the level of somatic writing anxiety. Although the instructor tried to train them to be able to write under time constraints, students experienced this sort of anxiety due to time limitations of the course. Most importantly, not setting a time limit as observed by the researcher can fix a twinge of their somatic anxiety. It is also worth mentioning that it is not only time limits that cause students to experience somatic anxiety, rather other factors such as lack of topical knowledge can be considered as a major provocation of somatic anxiety. Therefore, reading before writing, free writing and practising writing under time limits, based on the researcher's experience in the course, can relieve this sort of anxiety.

Finally, avoidance behavioural anxiety, which is the most severe form of anxiety and through which students avoid writing, writing classes, or doing tasks, recorded the lowest mean in the posttest. Although students rated this manifestation of anxiety as the lowest, few participants still showed some indications of this sort of anxiety, for instance, the statement "I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English essays" recorded the highest mean score. This might be due to the Bologna System which is yet new to the current educational context and the frequency of the assignments set for them in a week in different courses. This inconvenience was reflected in their daily verbalization denoting that they were not capable of doing so much homework. The results of the posttest are supported by Atay and Kurt (2006) as well as Genc and Yayli (2019) that somatic anxiety was the commonest type. However, Nugroho and Ena (2021)'s study contrast our results in which somatic anxiety was the least common type.

To recap, students manifest anxiety in various ways for which the application of specified strategies seems to be essential. Although each manifestation of anxiety might create problems for EFL students, avoidance behaviour might be more severe than the other two categories. Most importantly, certain strategies might be more efficacious in relieving certain aspects of apprehension and performance. Therefore, strategies of various sorts should be formulated in this regard.

Causes of Writing Apprehension

Tackling the triggering factors of writing apprehension is acknowledged in the literature as it helps students abstain themselves from its detrimental effects prior to becoming apprehensive. Therefore, when treating writing apprehension, according

to (Abdel Latif, 2015), key priority should be given more to inhibiting the causes of writers' anxiety than to removing its symptoms. Causes of writing apprehension are many and vary. In the foregoing section on the causes of writing apprehension, many causes were cited to construct the survey. This was needed to identify and rank the causes of writing apprehension in the Kurdish context, being one of the main questions addressed in this study. The survey extensively drew out of Rezaei and Jafari (2014) and the literature as well as the pilot study conducted before the start of the current study considering the purposes of the study that resulted in a questionnaire of twenty-two items with each representing a cause of writing apprehension. Nonetheless, the researcher updated the causes of writing apprehension in its current form to adapt the purposes of the study and applied it to 39 participants. Thus, the third question raised in this study included: "What are the factors that trigger Kurdish students' writing anxiety?". To answer the question, the results of both pretest and posttest will be presented and discussed separately below.

Causes of Writing Apprehension in the Pretest

Responses from 39 students were inserted into SPSS and descriptive statistics for the causes revealed the ranking order by calculating the means for each statement or cause in the following manner.

Table 8.

Causes of Writing Apprehension in the Pretest

N	Item	N	M	SD	Rank
1	pressure for writing a perfect essay.	39	3.82	0.88	1
2	fear of not getting the grade I want.	39	3.74	1.11	2
3	time pressure.	39	3.64	1.08	3
4	teacher's behaviour in the writing class.	39	3.56	1.14	4
5	problems with topic choice.	39	3.53	1.31	5
6	insufficient English writing practice.	39	3.51	1.02	6
7	inadequate vocabulary.	39	3.41	1.01	7
8	the high frequency of writing assignments.	39	3.41	1.06	7
9	the nature of writing assignments.	39	3.38	1.09	8
10	my low level of motivation.	39	3.30	1.28	9
11	fear of the negative comments of the teacher.	39	3.28	1.35	10
12	fear of writing tests.	39	3.20	1.10	11
13	fear of grammatical errors.	39	3.20	1.26	11
14	fear of spelling and punctuation errors.	39	3.17	1.18	12
15	not understanding the requirements of the writing question.	39	3.17	1.18	13
16	fear of the evaluation of the teacher.	39	3.10	1.02	14
17	my insufficient command of English writing.	39	3.05	0.99	15

18	my writing experience in English in the past.	39	3.02	1.34	16
19	fear of lexical errors.	39	3.00	1.05	17
20	not knowing what to write on the topic.	39	3.00	1.33	17
21	fear of my writing being scorned by classmates.	39	2.82	1.48	18
22	low confidence in English writing.	39	2.79	0.92	19

Table 8 explicitly indicates that the tabulated causes are all real causes of writing apprehension in the Kurdish setting because the average for each cause recorded a mean greater than 3 apart from two items whose means did not reach 3 that revealed their limited impact on writing apprehension. The lowest mean for each cause is 1 which means students strongly disagreed with the item and the highest mean for each item or cause is 5 which means students strongly agreed with the item. Three of the most prevalent causes of Kurdish EFL students' writing apprehension, as revealed in the table, included pressure for writing a perfect essay, fear of not getting the grade they wanted, and time pressure. Whereas, the least common cause was low confidence in writing. For the purposes of succinctness, only the first three common causes and the last least common cause would be detailed meticulously.

The commonest cause, pressure for writing a perfect essay, considers among the student-related causes that includes self-imposed pressure for perfect work on the students' part and this is known as perfectionism which is supported in the literature (Bloom, 1981; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014). Perfectionism is a personality trait that is conceptualized as "striving for flawlessness and setting exceedingly high standards for performance, accompanied by tendencies for overly critical evaluations" (Stoeber, 2011, p. 128). There have been recently some arguments over perfectionism that is considered to be a purely negative characteristic that provokes self-defeating outcomes and unhealthy behaviour patterns that may result in detrimental performance repercussions (Flett & Hewitt, 2005). Stoeber (2011) states that perfectionism can be looked at two contradictory angles, namely perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns. The former is associated with achieving high standards of performance while the latter is associated with others' evaluation, fear of performance (e.g. concerns about mistakes and uncertainty about one's ability), and meeting personal expectations (Stoeber, 2011). The majority of the participants in the present study can be classified under the second type of perfectionism, i.e. they were worried about teacher's and peers' evaluation in the pretest and they were concerned about mistakes and their ability, more specifically fear of performance as

reflected in the rated statements. This coincides with cognitive anxiety that was rated to be the commonest category. Furthermore, students became apprehensive and considered perfectionism as the most dominant cause as they have tried to write a perfect essay. Pressure for writing a perfect essay might also, in turn, be caused by the instructor as a number of instructors might want their students to write an essay free from errors or outstrip in their expectations of students or might be tough with the students' essay assessments, e.g. students might lose grades for a minor error in their essay. A little perfectionism can be helpful for most student writers and propel their writing skills to a stellar essay. Yet, perfectionism probably has a dark side as explained above, i.e. the perfectionist writer might agonize over every word when writing an essay, resulting in anguish or worry. The perfectionist writer would probably revise and rewrite many times and even shy away from sharing his writing because he is convinced of his essay being inadequate; thus, instead of enjoying writing, the student might be fraught with apprehension. As observed, most of students' perfectionism in the present study would stem from their belief that their essay should match the standards of what has been taught in the class, particularly the essay models given to them. Most importantly, it is associated with error-committing, i.e. "excessive concern for mistakes" (Frost et al., 1990, p. 449) in which students believe that if they commit an error, it would be catastrophic. The use of informal or colloquial expressions in their essays and the use of difficult words incorrectly in their essays can apparently be the evidence for confirming the result in question. Therefore, the researcher tried to advise students, being a part of the support strategy, that committing errors is normal and students can fix them through time, trying and feedback. Behaviourally, based on Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), perfectionist writers demonstrate perfectionism in their behaviour by postponing their actions, i.e. writing assignments. Furthermore, other symptoms involve students' reluctance to volunteer to respond to questions unless they are sure of the correct answer, overly emotional and disastrous reactions to unimportant failures, and low productivity owing to procrastination or excessive start overs. Similarly, three of the symptoms of perfectionist writers catalogued in Brophy (1999) that are relevant and seem to be counterproductive involve measurement of one's own worth based on accomplishment and productivity, procrastination, and delays in completing assignments that seem both plausible and logical in the context in question. One last symptom of perfectionist writers includes students' demonstration of unsatisfactory

achievement progress as they are more worried about avoiding mistakes than about learning (Brophy, 1996). All in all, this finding buttresses the theoretical considerations of previous research that suggest perfectionism as a predictor of writing apprehension (Bloom, 1981; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Salikan, 2019; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017).

The second most common predictor of writing apprehension is related to fear of not getting the desired grade, i.e. fear of negative evaluation. This means that students are obsessed with committing errors in their writing if they know they will be evaluated that clings them to the belief that they will obtain low grades. This is again a student-related cause that is supported in the literature. According to Altukruni (2019), students were afraid to have their compositions evaluated and were concerned about getting poor grades. Echoing these results, El Shimi (2017) revealed that one of the two prime causes of writing apprehension based on both teachers' and students' responses was fear of negative evaluation. Congruently, Nigari and Rezaabadi, (2012) revealed in their study that preoccupation with achieving low grades was the most triggering factor of apprehension in writing. One way they proposed for preventing from the detrimental effects of fear of negative evaluation involves teachers ensuring that students' essays would not be scored. This way students feel less apprehensive in writing (Negari & Rezaabadi, 2012; Smith, 1984). Other ways for reducing anxiety caused by fear of evaluation or grades include focusing on positive evaluation, i.e. strengths in students' drafts and not marking every single error (Smith, 1984). According to Jennifer and Ponniah (2017), test-takers undergo three phases of writing anxiety in test taking situations, namely pre-composing anxiety, during composing anxiety, and post-composing anxiety. Unfamiliar topics, overdependence on explicit grammar rules and obsessions with grades and evaluation elevate writing apprehension levels in the aforementioned phases respectively. This cause of writing apprehension is connected to cognitive anxiety according to (Cheng, 2004). Fear of negative evaluation or apprehension about not obtaining the grade one desires seems a logical triggering factor of apprehension in the Kurdish setting as majority of the participants typically betray nervousness before exams and expect poor grades even if they feel that they have overcome the subjects of the course. Above all, the otherwise direction, i.e. the impact of anxiety on grade achievement has also been proven to be true. Many studies have reported that students with higher anxiety received lower grades on

essays, and their writing tests (Daly, 1985). Additionally, Negari and Rezaabadi (2012) demonstrated that students with higher levels of anxiety had higher marks in all the components of their writing and this is associated with their concentration in general and their writing skill in particular. To encapsulate, fear of not obtaining the desired grade is a student-oriented factor of apprehension that is largely influenced by teacher's positive feedback. To prevent from its effects, the researcher of the present study endeavoured to provide them with positive feedback, encouraged student-to-student positive feedback through writing one paragraph each week on a familiar topic and provision of feedback on those paragraphs as well as advising them not to focus on explicit grammar rules while composing. This, as a common cause of apprehension, vindicates the validity of the obtained result for the commonness of the cognitive anxiety category.

The third most common reason behind writing apprehension includes time pressure in which students are required to write under time constraints. Writing is a process that requires students to undergo the major steps of planning, drafting and revising and this requires extra time. In addition, students need to assume the additional burden of pondering over the writing components while writing such as vocabulary, grammar, organization, content, and mechanics of writing and cudgel their brains about the appropriate choice of certain vocabularies and structures. They all require sufficient time for all writers, particularly for student writers. Accordingly, time limit impacts students' word choice, creating ideas, finishing on time, writing an effective essay, and the quality of their sentences. These negative consequences of time limit all cause low grades and failure (Genç & Yaylı, 2019). Thus, writing in a foreign language requires more time than writing in one's own first language (Wahyuni & Umam, 2017) and the majority of students reported feeling nervous while writing in their second language in (Altukruni, 2019). When students are required to write under time constraints in a second or foreign language, particularly during exams, they feel more apprehensive because they concentrate on the limited time they have instead of concentrating on their writing. Writing under time pressure as a predictor of writing apprehension has been acknowledged in the literature (El Shimi, 2017; Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Heaton & Pray, 1982; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Ningsih, 2015; Tupang, 2014; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017). It has been revealed that writing under time constraints was ranked the second cause of writing apprehension in (El Shimi, 2017), the fourth cause in Wahyuni and Umam (2017),

and the sixth cause in Rezaei and Jafari (2014). Consistently, time restriction was the number one source of students' writing anxiety in (Lee, 2003) as timed writing was seen to prevent students from going through a powerful thinking process which is quintessential for writing (Lee, 2003). Apprehensive writers feel uneasy when they have to write English essays under time restriction; therefore, it negatively influences writing performance. This cause can be associated with the first two common types of anxiety, namely cognitive and somatic anxiety that were most common, particularly with somatic anxiety because students undergo the symptoms of somatic anxiety when they are demanded to write under a time limit such as the mind going blank at the start of writing, the body being rigid and tense, among the others.

Time pressure affects students' writing essays as some students by nature are not capable of writing an effective essay under time constraints. To minimize the effects of this cause or prevent from causing apprehension in students, based on the students' remarks during the course and supported in the literature, one can help them by practising writing in class under time constraints and according to (Wahyuni & Umam, 2017), the provision of journal writing to students can give more training for students to be fluent in writing. Finally, all the three causes of writing apprehension mentioned above confirm the results obtained for the types of writing apprehension as these are associated with cognitive and somatic writing anxiety.

The least common cause of writing apprehension reported by second graders in the present study was low confidence in English writing. Confidence, with respect to writing, simply means having the belief or self-knowledge that you can write effectively and successfully. In the present study, the students rated self-confidence as a weak predictor of writing apprehension. This might be attributed to their overall self-confidence in English as a whole. Furthermore, the students in the present study reported a moderate level of writing anxiety that might have an effect on their confidence as, in some studies (Pajares & Johnson, 1994), it has been shown that writing self-confidence is negatively associated with writing apprehension. In other words, reporting not a high level of apprehension may exert an impact on their rating self-confidence as a weak predictor of writing apprehension. Consistent with our result includes (Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Wahyuni & Umam, 2017)'s studies who found that the least common cause was low confidence in English writing. However, Rezaei and Jafari (2014)'s results are in stark contrast to our study because low confidence was one of the most common causes. One further plausible explanation

for this result is that students usually consider themselves to be confident in writing in English as they are not aware of all the minute details of writing that need to be considered. Nonetheless, when it comes to the practical side of the matter, they encounter many difficulties in a twinkling, as observed in the feedback passed to them as well as the number of the errors recorded both in the pretest and posttest.

As for the other causes, all of them are deemed as real causes as confirmed in the literature (See the causes of writing apprehension section for more details) and Altukruni (2019) for consistency of the results.

One point pertinent to the causes of writing apprehension is that the causes vary with varying educational levels. To explain, the most common causes of writing apprehension in the present study with undergraduate students were pressure for writing a perfect essay, fear of not getting the grade students wanted, and time pressure of which the first is associated with instructors' high expectations of students and their toughness with students' grades and the second and the third causes are concerned with evaluation and tests. All of these are congruent with cognitive anxiety that occurred as the most prevalent type. However, the causes of writing apprehension for PhD students, for instance, might be quite different. According to one study, the causes of writing apprehension for Jordanian PhD students included lack of knowledge in English structure, lack of motivation and fear of evaluation, negative writing experience in the past that is reflected in insufficient practice in English writing, and inadequate knowledge in academic writing (Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2015).

One challenging question that is pertinent to this section and raised in the preceding sections involves the question of whether anxiety serves as a cause or ensues as a consequence. In connection with this, there appear two theories that are relevant, namely the deficit model (Daud et al., 2016) and the interference model (Daud et al., 2016) or the debilitating anxiety model (Carey et al., 2016). The deficit model dictates that the students' cognitive and linguistic disabilities or inabilities lead to poor achievement, and this in turn leads to anxiety (Sparks et al., 2000). One argument advanced in the literature regarding the deficit model is that anxious students demonstrate low performance owing to deficiency in the acquisition stage, i.e. because they are deficient, they are more apprehensive (Naveh-Benjamin, 1991). According to a study (Daud et al., 2016), the deficit model was proven to be true by correlating writing apprehension and writing performance for two subgroups, high

proficiency group and low proficiency group. The study revealed that there was no significant connection between writing apprehension and all dimensions of writing performance for the high proficiency group while there was a significant relation between the two variables for the low proficiency group. This serves to prove that poor performance caused anxiety not vice-versa, i.e. students who had low proficiency were more anxious. Contradictory to this, Horwitz (2000) opposed this idea and she put forth the idea that anxiety interferes with learning. The interference model is contradictory to the deficit model and explains that students' low performance is a result of difficulties in retrieving information and not because of inadequate knowledge of the subject matter (Daud et al., 2016). This study supports both tendencies, though not supported with empirical data but based on the theories reviewed and logic, that a bidirectional cyclical correlation based on Reciprocal Theory (Carey et al., 2016) exists between writing anxiety and writing performance based on the social cognitive theory proposed by Bandura (1986). This means that either increased writing anxiety leads to poor writing performance or poor writing performance may elicit writing anxiety. The significance of the direction of the connection between the two variables in question lies in the implication of these two variables for psychology and education research (Carey et al., 2016). The literature provides some evidence on the bidirectional correlation between the two variables as supported in (El Shimi, 2017). For instance, if poor writing performance caused elevated writing anxiety, alternative teaching methods could be employed to enhance writing performance and result in lower writing anxiety. However, if writing anxiety is seen to debilitate writing performance, classroom strategies that attempt at reducing writing anxiety should be applied. In the context of the present study, although the results obtained reveal that most of the students' anxiety stemmed from students' grades and evaluation, the instructor's observation within the class proves that students suffered from the lack of linguistic and topical knowledge as well as ideas. Accordingly, lack of linguistic competence leads to anxiety. In turn, the anxieties they had about evaluation and grades led to their poor performance.

Causes of Writing Apprehension in the Posttest

Understanding the change that occurred to writing apprehension causes was aimed in this section to see if there were any significant differences in the causes between the pretest and posttest and to see if the change in the causes was associated

with or corresponded to the change in the apprehension levels and types. Before discussing this, however, it is essential to determine the order of the causes in the posttest and present the most and least common causes after the application of the strategies. Thus, this section attempted at answering the seventh question addressed in this study, “Would the strategies influence writing anxiety causes?”. For this purpose, the order of the causes will first be presented below in Table 9 and comments will be made on the order in the posttest. The ranking order of the causes, similar to the pretest, will be based on means and standard deviations.

Thus, the ranking order of the causes slightly transposed based on the means recorded in Table 9.

Table 9.

The Ranking Order of the Causes of Writing Anxiety in the Posttest

N	Items	N	M	SD	Rank
1	fear of not getting the grade I want	39	3.84	1.13	1
2	not knowing what to write on the topic.	39	3.58	1.14	2
3	time pressure.	39	3.53	0.99	3
4	the nature of writing assignments.	39	3.53	0.85	3
5	fear of lexical errors.	39	3.51	0.99	4
6	the high frequency of writing assignments.	39	3.41	1.14	5
7	fear of writing tests.	39	3.41	0.93	5
8	fear of grammatical errors.	39	3.33	1.30	6
9	fear of the negative comments of the teacher.	39	3.30	1.34	7
10	not understanding the requirements of the writing question.	39	3.25	1.18	8
11	pressure for writing a perfect essay.	39	3.20	1.23	9
12	inadequate vocabulary.	39	3.15	1.01	10
13	problems with topic choice.	39	3.12	1.47	11
14	fear of the evaluation of the teacher.	39	3.10	1.09	12
15	fear of spelling and punctuation errors.	39	3.07	1.20	13
16	my insufficient command of English writing.	39	3.02	0.84	14
17	insufficient English writing practice.	39	3.00	0.94	15
18	my writing experience in English in the past.	39	3.00	1.12	15
19	my low level of motivation.	39	3.00	1.16	15
20	fear of my writing being scorned by classmates.	39	3.00	1.16	15
21	low confidence in English writing.	39	2.79	1.19	16
22	teacher's behaviour in the writing class.	39	2.71	1.25	17

As the table reveals and based on the mean calculation of each cause, the three commonest causes of writing apprehension based on the mean scores included fear of not getting the desired grade ($M=3.84>3$), not knowing what to write on the topic ($M= 3.58>3$), and time pressure ($M= 3.53>3$). Accordingly, two causes virtually retained their pretest positions and one new cause was introduced as the

most frequent, namely not knowing what to write on the topic ($M = 3.58 > 3$).

Furthermore, one of the least frequent causes, i.e. low confidence in English writing went higher one level in the table, i.e. it became the penultimate least frequent cause of writing apprehension in the posttest whose mean score ($M = 2.79 < 3$) reveals that it is not a cause of writing apprehension. Nevertheless, the cause which students rated as the least effective cause in the posttest involved teacher's behaviour in the writing class ($M = 2.71 < 3$) whose rank served as the fourth commonest factor of apprehension in the prettest. This is considered to be a significant finding that will be detailed later in this section. Regarding the other causes, all of them seem to be real causes of writing apprehension (means > 3), with each to a certain extent.

Thus, the results of the posttest for the causes of writing apprehension signalled a number of changes both in the mean scores and order of the causes due to the intervention and the specificities of the educational context. As regards the mean, roughly half of the statements were rated as having less effect on their apprehension after the treatment, i.e. the mean scores decreased. Three causes retained the same mean score and the other nine causes' mean scores increased, i.e. students rated them as having more effect on their apprehension in writing.

Taking into account the first and most frequent cause, 'fear of not obtaining the desired grade' which precisely means students' fear of judgement that will be rained down upon them in the form of poor grades as explained earlier, Kurdish students at high schools, particularly at public ones are relatively not proficient in English that is reflected in both their grades in national tests (Sofi-Karim, 2015) and the researcher's observation as a high school teacher for more than five years. Very few public high school graduates are capable of communicating in English (Sofi-Karim, 2015), particularly in writing. More specifically, when it comes to the writing component of the program, nothing except for practising grammatical rules is taught to students. Most are not even capable of writing one intelligible paragraph. On top of all this, the baccalaureate assessment is based on only multiple-choice items that can rarely test writing appropriately. Thus, when they are admitted into the university, they should be taught writing from scratch. Most of them expect instructors to teach them the language because they have not been taught the primary skills related to writing at high school (Sofi-Karim, 2015). Oppositely, what is taught at university is more concerned with linguistics and literature, rather than language. In addition, the grades they have obtained before entering the university are normally

high to be admitted to the English department, particularly in English because it is one of the requirements. Thus, when they unexpectedly encounter the workload of college and obtain low grades, they feel anxiety due to the mismatch between the expectation resulting from the disparity between past and current education experience and outcome. More importantly, another interpretation for why students selected grades as the commonest cause of their apprehension in the posttest, and even in the pretest, can be associated with the fact that central and greater focus is anchored on grades by both students and teachers and the education system as a whole rather than learning which should be the reverse. This is not based on opinion or fallacy, rather confirmed and observed by educationalists on a daily basis in the universities of the present context. Most importantly, participants of the present study and students in general rumbled the worries they encountered throughout the course due to the stress they exerted on themselves for obtaining the required or the desired grade as students as a whole are expected high by their parents and the home since obtaining this grade is the basis for getting job opportunities, being admitted into master programs and much more. Above all, teachers' too much concentration on grades and error correction, particularly error correction of form and harsh treatment of them can account for the pressure caused by evaluation practices at university. Moreover, one of the essential elements suggested in the quality assurance of our universities when designing course books or syllabuses, as mentioned earlier, is to inform students about the form and type of questions expected in the exam. However, most instructors either do not include this component or they provide questions that are not similar to the questions expected in the exams as noticed from the course books or syllabuses borrowed. To support this, Hyland (2003) states that since students usually have a strong anxiety about assessment and the replacement of learning with grades, "Teachers can reduce student anxieties by making their assessment tasks and scoring procedures as fair and transparent as possible and by fully preparing students for what the assessment will involve and how it will be scored" (p. 232). Thus, familiarizing students with the type or format of the questions, one can relieve their uncertainty about grades and evaluation, thus, relieving their test anxiety. The instructor of the present module, although provided students with this treatment, this cause still remained the most common cause because it is characteristic of most students' personality inherent in them in the educational system of Iraqi Kurdistan from, maybe, primary school due to the

unsound environment created during evaluation for students and most attention is, on the one hand, directed towards exams. On the other hand, uncertainty about grades and evaluation does not only depend on pre-evaluation procedures and treatments, rather it largely depends on the characteristics of the evaluation itself, e.g. students find open-ended questions more stressful in the exam (Hull et al., 2019). In addition, in essay assessments students are not certain about the consequences of their grades as it is a subjective test. Lastly, this cause's mean score very slightly increased in the posttest that may be related to the fact students filled in the questionnaires for the posttest during the final exam dissimilar to the pretest that was administered before the start of the course in which there were no exams and tests. In addition, students might have used this as a tactic for the instructor to be sympathetic and empathetic with them. Last but not least, most of the students' fears in the current study stemmed from fear of failure rather than fear of not obtaining a high grade, particularly low proficient students.

The second most frequent cause of writing apprehension rated by the students involved, 'not knowing what to write on the topic', i.e. lack of topical knowledge which simply means a writer's information regarding the topic he writes about. It is referred to as knowledge schemata or real-world knowledge that is loosely described as knowledge structures stored in the long-term memory (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Adequate topical knowledge is deemed a prerequisite for effective composition (Alico, 2016; Hussein, 2013). It is an essential schema to elicit the performance of a student writer and an allayer or stimulator of writing apprehension. Students with poor topical knowledge perform less well in tests of writing and cannot deliver their optimal performance without it even if they have a high level of English proficiency (He, 2010). They may possess adequate vocabulary and know the rules of writing but this knowledge would be unavailing without awareness of topical knowledge. Furthermore, topical knowledge has been considered a common cause of apprehension in the literature (Zhang, 2011). The level and specificity of topical knowledge is presupposed of the second language writing student that can have an impact on their affective responses to writing tasks (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) because topics or prompts beyond students' topical knowledge or beyond their proficiency level make students apprehensive (Alico, 2016; Hussein, 2013). Students may normally have more information about a topic that is general and; therefore, may perform better when they encounter a general topic (He, 2010), consequently

feel less apprehensive. Congruently, Hyland (2003) and Hussein (2013) confirm that students with inadequate relevant topical knowledge feel much more anxious and nervous particularly if they do not receive complete effective feedback. Therefore, providing students with a topic that suits their level of proficiency and the specificity of their age may be a significant factor of apprehension in writing.

In the context of the present study, students were given a general and relevant topic to their lives so that their anxiety would not increase. However, knowledge of the subject was still rated as a common cause because writing is a productive skill for which students need to produce and develop ideas and when they do not have information about the topic, they would be under too much pressure. In addition, the participants were second graders who possess limited information of most subject matters, even in their mother tongue as was confirmed by most students in the module. Dearth of topical schemata in the present study, as observed, resulted from writers doing little extensive reading, particularly in English and in pre-university education that is partially responsible for the difficulty in idea generation, as supported by Hussein (2013). Furthermore, this is confirmed by Sofi-Karim (2015) that pre-university education materials contain content that burdens Kurdish students with processing foreign language aspects and foreign content which slows down the advancement of learning the language and these topics are a source of boredom for Kurdish students because they have no background knowledge about these topics. This result sounds possible and even reasonable as our students in their past writing experiences were required to write a paragraph that does not need much topical knowledge. However, when writing an essay, they need to develop ideas and have sufficient knowledge of the subject matter. So, this trivial and abrupt transition from paragraph to essay might be associated with their writing anxiety due to lack of topical knowledge. This was confirmed by the students that they cannot write a paragraph well, how they can produce an essay with three paragraphs and this was noted by the instructor when he asked students to write an essay in the pretest, too. Another plausible reason is attributed to students studying and writing about a familiar topic but given an unfamiliar but relevant one in the exam. Therefore, students might not have information about the topic at issue. If they are given a familiar topic, previously specified and decided, they might memorize a previously written essay. To treat this, appurtenant and appropriate feedback with positive comments can produce a good backwash and relieve the feelings of apprehension

resulted from dearth of topical knowledge. Although feedback was provided to students in the present course, they still rated this cause as the second most common cause that might be associated with the time limit of the course and previous writing experience that was prevented from being effective due to covid-19 and the poor and ineffective teaching methods applied online. According to Hyland (2003), the time frame within which a writing course is taught can have an essential role in relieving or stimulating anxiety. In addition, overemphasis on linguistic accuracy, which is an inherent property of the current educational context including the instructor of the present course, can prevent students from creative and extensive thinking that is essential and associated with topical knowledge. Owing to this, students have been accustomed to focusing on accuracy rather than the development of ideas at a high text level; therefore, they may have nothing to say about the topic of an English essay, particularly in a situation of time control, such as a timed writing tasks. Furthermore, when evaluating the essays, instructors mostly focus on linguistic accuracy and; therefore, most students' focus tends to shift to this area of essay writing. All in all, since the participants of the present study are second graders, they are not expected to have high knowledge of the topics given to them.

The third most common cause of writing apprehension is time pressure whose mean score decreased but retained its third position. Writing is a productive activity that is strongly affected by time pressure; even the brightest students often feel much more apprehensive than usual (Horwitz et al., 1986). Writing under time pressure is in itself a source of anxious feelings, particularly when writers do not have topical knowledge. They need to think about ideas that requires time and effort to elicit one's own ideas and when they are incapable of collecting sufficient ideas, they will be under pressure to complete the essay. Our results are supported by (Cheng, 2002; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Zhang, 2011) who revealed that composing under time constraints can provoke anxiety, particularly somatic anxiety during essay writing tests. The unchanged position of the cause as revealed in the table can indicate that time pressure is a serious problem rated by the students before the intervention and after it. Therefore, specific strategies need to be devised focusing on this aspect of writing anxiety provoking factor, such as training students to write more under time constraints, not only during tests, but also in class and out of class. Although the position of this cause in the present study did not change, its mean score decreased due to training students to write under time pressure during class sessions. The

instructor offered opportunities to students to practice free writing at home, particularly about the topics they were going to write about; however, students would not have practiced it at home due to the large number of assignments they had in the other subjects during the week owing to the change that occurred to the teaching methodology, with all of the courses being taught with blended learning that obliged students to do most of the work at home and all two-hour classes reduced to a one-hour class due to Covid-19. This had a great effect on their feeling of anxiety due to the pressure of time transmitted to them from the pressure of the other courses as a whole. Therefore, one bold conjecture concerning blended learning can be not much time should be devoted to online workload.

In addition to the most common causes being reported by the students, two causes were rated as having no effect on their apprehension including teacher's behaviour in the writing class and low confidence in English writing. These two factors will be detailed below.

The first cause, which was rated as having least effect on their apprehension, included teacher's behaviour in the writing class, i.e. teacher's behaviour was rated as the least frequent cause of writing apprehension. Its mean score dramatically decreased from ($M = 3.564$), ranking fourth in the pretest, to ($M = 2.717$), ranking seventeenth in the posttest that led to a very statistically significant difference at (0.002), valuing (3.13). The way teachers behave with and react to students and their possible disruptive behaviours such as asking irrelevant questions, dearth of willingness to participate, and use of cell phones for purposes other than the lesson play an essential role in tuning the affective states of students, not only in the writing classroom, but also in other foreign language classrooms and other subjects. Teacher's behaviour in the classroom, in addition, includes the skills and techniques that keep students organized, focused, attentive, and academically productive. To put this in a picture, if teachers see students in a low-energy state, they need to provide them with high stimulation activity. However, if they see them anxious or hyperactive, they need to give them a low stimulation activity. Teacher's sensitivity to students' amount of energy and responding properly is essential because they get their needs satisfied, feel their class is more enjoyable and responsive, and are closer to a state of relaxed alertness, consequently optimal for learning which, according to Krashen (1981), this kind of environment can impact on the Affective Filter to be set low. Another example for the effective behaviour of teachers in the classroom

essential to anxiety is, during exams, when students handing in their answer sheets, a “Thank you” would be an anxiety-ridden experience (Tauber, 2007). In addition, anxieties and antagonisms might not only stem from the classroom, rather from the home or other lectures, therefore, the teacher’s approach and behaviour can primarily determine and set the prevailing mood in the classroom (Smith & Laslett, 1993). In connection with the present study, the principles accommodated in the emotional support strategy were totally applied throughout the course with caution that vindicates the result obtained for the effect of the strategy in question (see Appendix J for the principles of emotional support).

The second reason rated by the students as having least effect on their apprehension was low confidence in English writing that retained the same mean score of the pretest ($M = 2.794$), i.e. was not considered as a cause of writing apprehension neither in the pretest nor in the posttest. The reason for why it retained the same mean score might be associated with the fact that more attention was directed towards the other aggravating and determining factors of writing apprehension by the instructor as it was not recognized as a factor predicting writing apprehension in the pretest. As stated earlier, since the participants’ writing apprehension level was not high, this might be one reason for why they rated self-confidence in writing as a poor predictor of writing apprehension, as confirmed by Pajarees and Johnson (1994) that writing self-confidence is negatively connected to writing apprehension. Another reason is that writing self-confidence is mostly associated with individuals’ behaviours; since avoidance behavioural anxiety was the least common type of anxiety among the participants, this again might account for why they did not rate confidence as a common cause of writing apprehension, because according to Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory, the beliefs that people hold about their capacities and about the outcome of their efforts strongly affect the way they behave.

Now that sufficient details were given about the order of the causes in the posttest and the most and least prevalent causes, the gentle undulations that occurred to the overall mean scores of the causes from the pretest to the posttest ensuing the application of the strategies will be presented. To this intent, the researcher applied paired sample t-test to compare the means and the results revealed no statistically significant differences, as clearly shown in Table 10.

Table 10.

T-test for the Comparison between Pretest and Posttest Anxiety Causes

Test	N	M	SD	t- value	t-critical	Sig.
Pre	39	72.17	12.05	0.51	2.021	0.61
Post	39	70.94	10.77			

Although the data exhibited in Table 10 revealed no significant differences by using the paired sample t-test, the overall mean score of the pretest for the causes (M= 72.17) slightly dropped to (M= 70.94) in the posttest that presupposes that students' writing apprehension reduction levels corresponded to a reduction in the overall mean score of the causes. This means that students rated the causes as having less effect on them as a whole that can, in turn, prove the validity of the results obtained for the reduction of the apprehension levels.

The reasons for the non-significant results relating to the causes abound. One of them concerns the low effect of the intervention on the categories of writing apprehension because certain causes seem to be associated with certain categories. So, the non-significant results of the categories can be said to have laid an impact on those of the causes. Another reason might be associated with the fact that most of the causes presented here in the table can be considered as inherent properties of the context recognized by the students and their removal might require more time and effort. For instance, lack of topical knowledge requires time and effort, not only on the instructors' part, rather students will need to do lots of extensive reading to acquire such knowledge.

Students' Writing Performance

In the foregoing sections, the levels, types, and causes of writing apprehension as well as the fluctuations that occurred to them were discussed. Two other principal questions examined in the present study, being the fourth question, queried, "To what degree are Kurdish students accurate in writing essays in English as measured by: analytic scoring and the number of the errors?" and the eighth question, querying "Would the strategies influence writing performance as measured by grades and errors?", i.e. whether there would be a statistically significant difference in students' posttest intervention writing performances. It was assumed that students could enhance their writing performance by obtaining higher grades and committing fewer errors in their writing in the posttest being exposed to a number of strategies. The results will be presented below.

Results of the Analytic Scoring

In this section, the results relevant to students' performance in writing an opinion essay will be reported in the pretest and posttest and the changes that occurred will also be interpreted. As illustrated earlier, students' writing performance, in this section, will be measured based on students' grades for writing an opinion essay in the pretest and posttest. Students' grades can relatively adequately and objectively represent their abilities in writing an essay. In addition, they can measure various facets of writing assessment, including scale descriptors such as content, vocabulary, mechanics, and so on. By applying this scale (see Appendix D), the researcher together with a colleague rated the papers. The obtained scores from the 39 participants were computed through SPSS and the application of paired sample t-test yielded the results reported in Table 11.

Table 11.

Students' Writing Performance in the Pretest and Posttest

WP	N	MN	MX	PSS	M	SD	t- value	t-critical	Sig.
Pretest	39	10.00	73.33	25.6%	36.06	17.99	10.06	2.021	0.00
Posttest	39	33.33	90.00	82.5%	61.02	14.61			

Note. WP= writing performance, MN= minimum, MX= maximum, PSS= percentage of successful students.

Results suggest participants remarkably progressed throughout the course, with their minimum and maximum grades in writing the essay in the pretest ranged from (10.00) to (73.33) in the pretest and from (33.33) to (90.00) in the posttest. Furthermore, the mean score fluctuated from (M= 36.06) to (M= 61.02) that again demonstrated a dramatic increase in students' writing performance leading to a highly statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores at (0.00) significance level valuing (10.06). Considering that (50) is the passing score or the success criterion in the present study, the percentage of successful students in the pretest who obtained a score of (50) or more did not exceed (25.6%) while the percentage of successful students in the posttest who obtained a score of 50 or more reached (82.05%).

The improvement made in students' writing can be associated, based on the researcher's observation and diary, with the application of the strategies, particularly the use of the process-genre approach embedded in it the provision of feedback. One aspect of the approach that was seen to be highly efficacious was students' progress of the essay length that will be detailed later. This means that students more freely

expressed their ideas in writing about a certain topic. This seems logical and possible as apprehension dropped to a lower level and students were able to write more. In addition, writing one paragraph once every two weeks could also play a significant role in improving students' writing fluency because it was an opportunity for the students to express themselves in English without thinking and being concerned about form and errors too much, as will be validated in the coming sections of this chapter. Both positive peer and positive teacher feedback were given to their paragraphs for the purpose of encouraging them to improve their writing. The feedback given by the teacher focused on both form and meaning. Most importantly, students were supported both cognitively and emotionally via email, and online meetings before and after class. This means that the instructor was ready to respond to their questions within minutes that assisted them in enhancing their writing. The provision of support to students, whether it be cognitive or emotional, was seen to be effective as writing is a productive skill that requires individual work with which students sense that they are alone and deprived of instructor encouragement and support and need to create ideas and thinking on their own which, in turn, causes stress, and that providing support is quintessential, according to (Tsui, 1996). This result may also be associated with motivating students to take part in the study because a new approach will be used that has not, according to the course books borrowed, been employed in the current educational context before. The students' comments and the teacher's diary can also bear witness to improvement because the majority of the students had not even heard the term 'essay' and when they were asked to write an essay in the pretest, the majority of them questioned about it and they were told that an essay should consist of at least three paragraphs, they said that they would not be able to provide this amount of writing (again self-deprecating thoughts). Above all, students were provided with topics that was interesting to them as confirmed by them in the class, such as 'aggressive drivers' and 'social networking sites'. These topics are deemed by many students as hot topics that are controversial and arouse plenty of discussion. Although analytic scoring can objectively measure students' writing performance, one should take into account other aspects of students' essays such as the number and types of errors they have committed, which will be detailed later in this chapter because analytic scoring is merely an overall picture of writing performance and minute details are essential. The results of the present study are supported by much research in the literature

(Altukruni, 2019; Erkan & Saban, 2011; Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Sabati et al., 2019; Sulaimani et al., 2020; Zhang, 2011). Other research showed otherwise results, i.e. poor performance caused higher writing apprehension levels (Alluhaybi, 2015). Yet, studies have detected no impact of apprehension on writing performance (Dracopoulos, 2012). Finally, the progress and findings of the current study under Krashen (1981)'s Affective Filter Hypothesis are deemed significant as it dictated that anxiety hinders the student's capacity to process incoming language and short-circuits the process of acquisition as well as achieve lower grades in writing. Based on the hypothesis, since apprehension was reduced in this study, performance in writing was enhanced and higher grades were achieved.

Error Analysis of Students' Essays

Words are like flying birds in the spoken form of language because they typically go unnoticed when they are spoken. Therefore, speakers do not ponder over what is left behind them. However, these flying birds are engaged when written as their fingerprints will be recorded on a surface and will remain. As a result, writers would ponder over what is left behind. This can cause a sort of stress and anxiety, particularly for student writers as they are concerned about their accuracy, the ideas they introduce, and their overall language performance and outcome. Therefore, ensuring students that committing errors is an unavoidable part of the writing process and flawless writing is impossible can unburden the load that students have burdened on themselves. One of the strategies employed in the present study was providing both positive and negative feedback for enhancing the number and severity of the errors committed by them. The positive feedback was aimed at encouraging students and the negative feedback at improving their accuracy. This section presents the number and types of errors being a measure of students' writing accuracy, hence performance in a corpus of essays written by 39 students and discusses the findings aiming at responding to the fifth question of the study, "What are the most and least common error categories in Kurdish students' writing?". To answer the question, error analysis was employed.

Error analysis is an essential method of measuring accuracy through identifying, classifying, and describing those errors. The researcher analysed the students' essays in the pretest and posttest relying on Université Catholique de

Louvain's error tag set (As cited in Abdulmajeed, 2016). The Kurdish student corpus analysis resulted in the identification of a total of 1888 errors in the pretest.

However, the frequency slightly dropped to 1793 errors in the posttest, with the difference between pretest and posttest being merely 95 errors, that is not a substantial difference disregarding the length of students' essays. However, when students' length of the essays is considered, the difference would be substantial, as seen in the following table.

Table 12.

Essay Length from Pretest to Posttest

Test	N	TNW	ML	SD	t- value	t-critical	Sig.
Pretest	39	6440	165.12	69.36	10.17	2.021	0.00
Posttest	39	11623	298.02	75.06			

Note. TNW= total number of words in the essays; ML= mean length

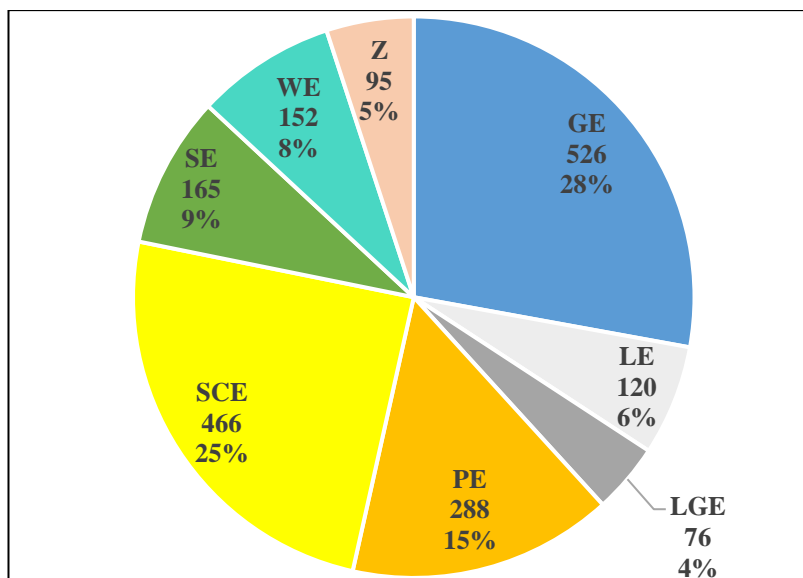
As the table demonstrates, the pretest essays featured (6440) words in total, with the mean being (165.12) words per essay. However, this frequency dramatically rose to (11623) words in the posttest, with the mean for each essay being (298.02) words. The application of paired sample t-test revealed an extremely statistically significant difference in the length of the essays from the pretest to the posttest at the significance level (0.00) and the t-value (10.17). This indicates students produced much longer essays in the posttest.

The essays were further analysed to inspect the categories and subcategories. The former featured eight superordinate labels including grammatical errors, lexical errors, lexico-grammar errors, punctuation errors, word errors, style/sentence errors, spelling and capitalization errors, and infelicity errors. However, the latter included 52 subordinate category labels for which details are found in (Appendix K).

In both the pretest and posttest, errors of all kinds, belonging to the various superordinate categories, were observed. Figure 5 shows the frequency and the categories of errors for the sample essays in the pretest.

Figure 5.

The Frequency and Proportion of the Errors in the Pretest



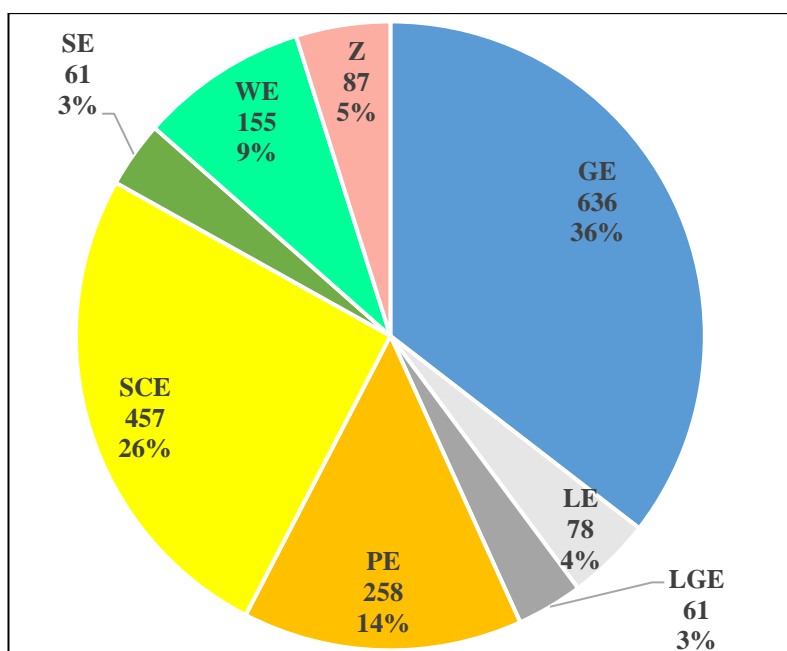
Note. GE= grammatical errors; SCE= spelling and capitalization errors; PE= punctuation errors; SE= sentence errors; WE= word errors; LE= lexical errors; Z= infelicities; LGE= lexico-grammatical errors.

Figure 5 clearly demonstrates, based on the frequency count and the percentages, that grammar category recorded the largest number and proportion of the errors 526 (28%), followed by spelling and capitalization 466 (25%) and punctuation errors 288 (15%). Other less common errors incorporated sentence errors 165 (9%), word errors 152 (8%), and lexical errors 120 (6%). However, the least common errors that occurred in the Kurdish students' writing involved infelicities 95 (5%) and lexico-grammatical errors 76 (4%).

However, the frequency and proportion of the errors as well as their ranking order underwent a few alterations in the posttest. Figure 6 shows the results for the frequency and percentage of the superordinate categories in the posttest.

Figure 6.

The Frequency and Proportion of the Errors in the Posttest



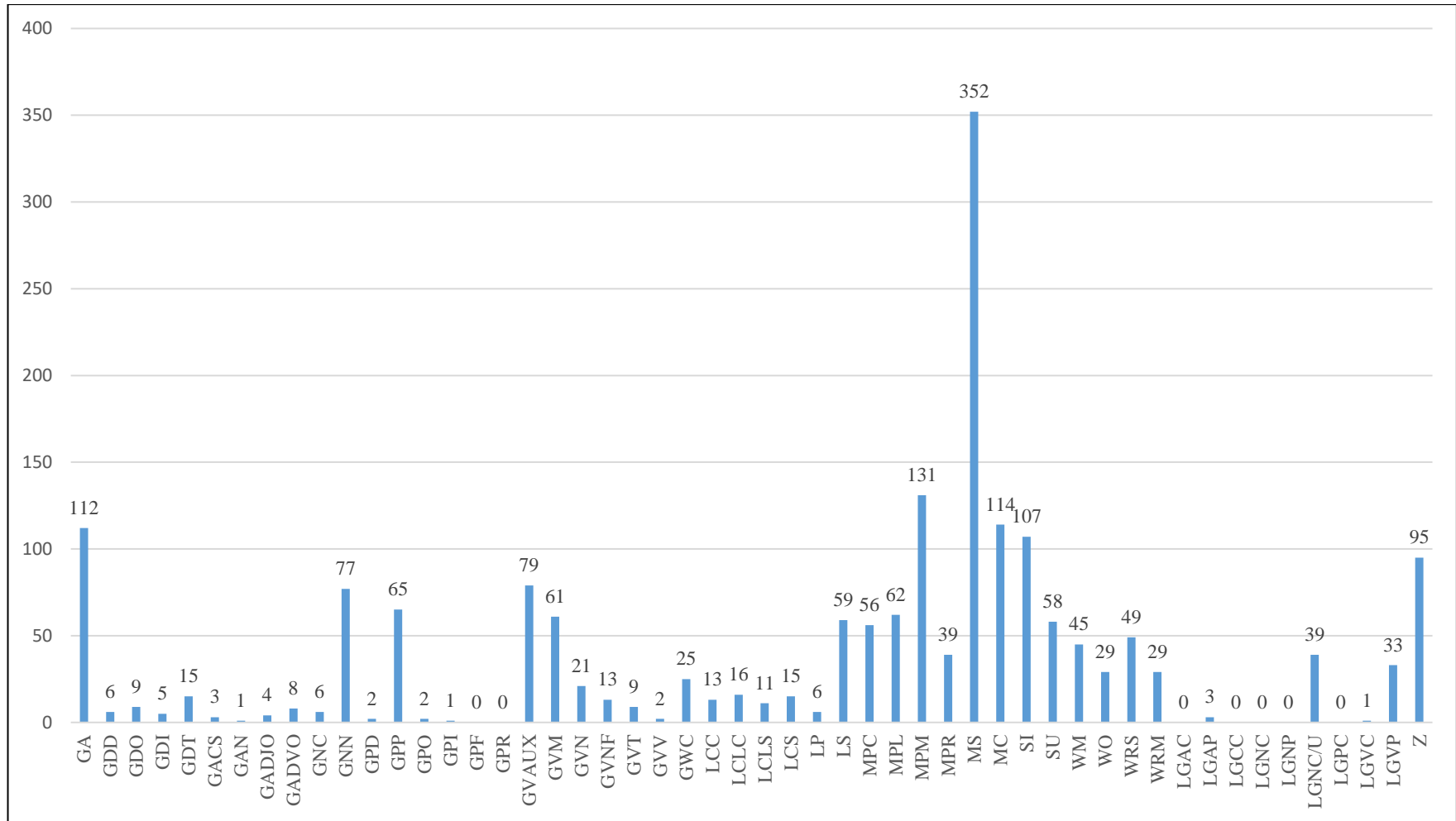
Note. GE= grammatical errors; SCE= spelling and capitalization errors; PE= punctuation errors; SE= sentence errors; WE= word errors; LE= lexical errors; Z= infelicities; LGE= lexico-grammatical errors.

A cursory glance at the figure reveals the most and least common errors in the posttest. Accordingly, grammatical errors 636 (35.47%) were the most common category of errors occurred in students' essays, followed by spelling and capitalization 457 (25.49%) and punctuation errors 258 (14.39%). A closer look at the figure further reveals that word errors comprised approximately one-eleventh of the total errors 155 (8.64%). Following this included infelicity 87 (4.85%) being relatively similar to lexical errors 78 (4.35%). Nevertheless, sentence and lexico-grammatical errors scored lowest on the chart, with scoring 61 (3.40%) of the total errors observed.

Further categorization of the errors into subcategories was also conducted to identify more specifically the areas of students' difficulty in the students' writing and observe the alterations that occurred after the application of the strategies. Figure 7 shows the frequency of the subordinate category of errors.

Figure 7.

Frequency of the Subordinate Category Errors in the Pretest



As evidenced in Figure 7, mechanical spelling (MS) 352 (18.64%), mechanical punctuation missing (MPM) 131 (6.93%), mechanical capitalization (MC) 114 (6.03%), articles (GA) 112 (5.93%), and incomplete sentence (SI) errors 107 (5.66%) usurped the lion's share among all the error categories and occupied the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth positions respectively that all recorded a number over 100. The second most frequent errors involved infelicities (Z) 95 (5.03%), wrong use of auxiliaries (GVAUX) 79 (4.18%), errors in the use of nouns, e.g. addition or omission of the plural morpheme (GNN) 77 (4.07%), personal pronoun errors (GPP) 65 (3.44%), the use of punctuation in place of a lexical item or vice-versa (MPL) 62 (3.28%). The third most common group of errors covered these areas: erroneous use of verb forms (GVM) 61 (3.23%), wrong use of one lexical item (LS) 59 (3.12%), unclear sentences (SU) 58 (3.07%), confusion of punctuation marks (MPC) 56 (2.96%), and the unnecessary use of a word (WRS) 49 (2.49%). In addition to these common errors, some error subcategories were attached to the baseline of the figure, not recording more than five errors, including errors of indefinite determiners (GDI), comparative or superlative use of adjectives (GACS), wrong order of adjectives (GADJO), demonstrative determiners (GPD), possessive pronouns (GPO), indefinite pronouns (GPI), verb voice (GVV), dependent prepositions with adjectives (LGAP), and complementation of verbs (LGVC). Above all, merely 45 error types were realized in the essays out of the 52 error subcategories featured in the measure, and seven error categories were not, namely errors in the complementation of prepositions (LGPC), erroneous use of a wrong dependent preposition of a noun (LGNP), erroneous complementation of nouns (LGNC), erroneous complementation of conjunctions (LGCC), erroneous complementation of adjectives (LGAC), errors on relative or interrogative pronouns (GPR), errors of reflexive or reciprocal pronouns (GPF).

In contrast, slight noteworthy alterations in the posttest occurred. Figure 8 shows frequency of each subordinate category in the posttest.

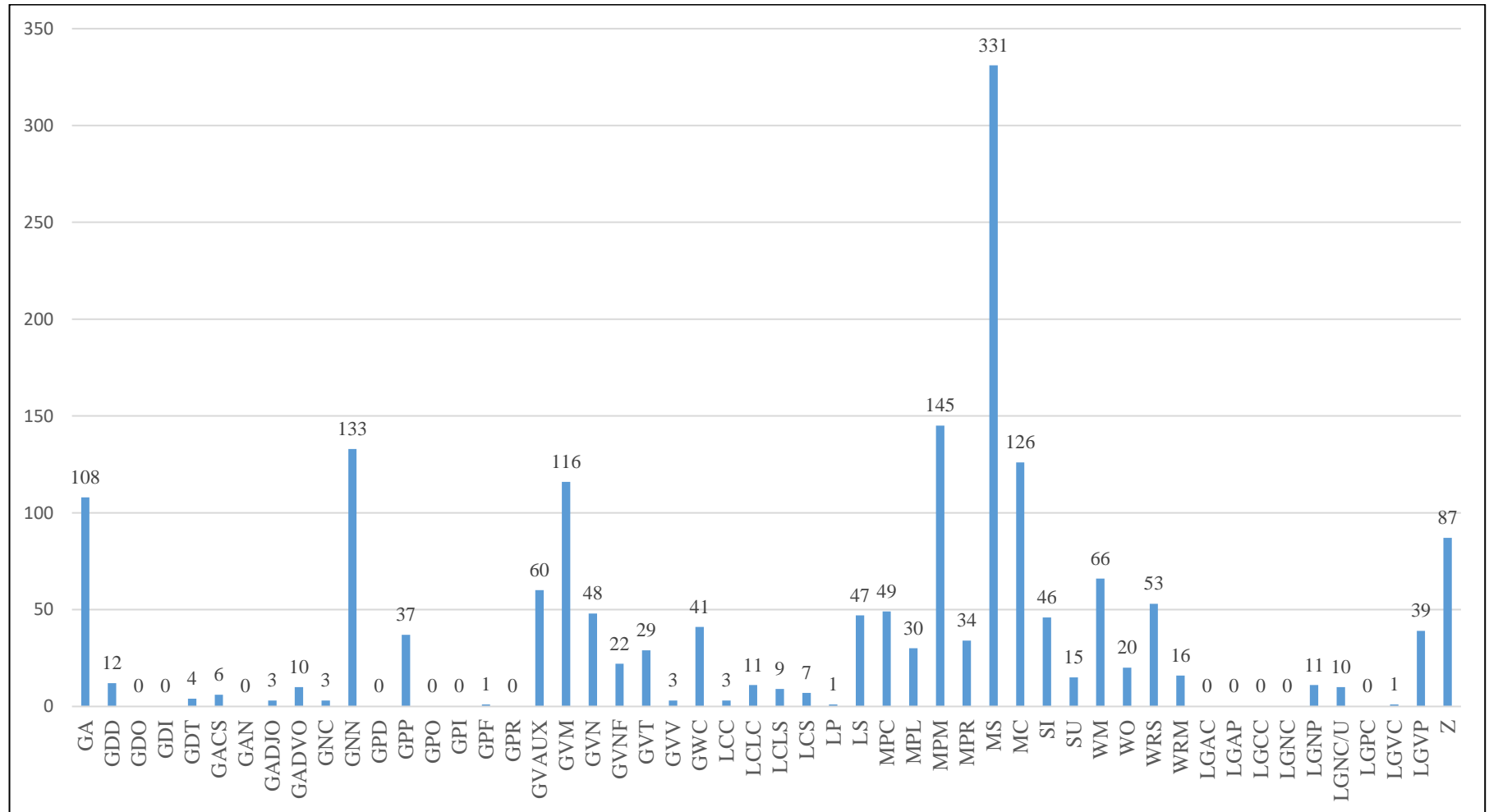
Figure 8.*Frequency of the Subordinate Category Errors in the Posttest*

Figure 8 sketches further categorization of the errors into subcategories in the posttest. As shown, the first five most common errors, quite similar to the pretest, involved mechanical spelling (MS) 331 (18.46%), mechanical punctuation missing (MPM) 145 (8.08%), addition or omission of the plural morpheme on nouns (GNN) 133 (7.41%), and capitalization (MC) 126 (7.02%). The second group of errors that were rather common among students included errors on articles (GA) 108 (6.02%), infelicities (Z) 87 (4.85%), word missing errors 66 (3.68%), errors on auxiliaries (GVAUX) 60 (3.34%), and the unnecessary use of a single word 53 (2.95%). The third group of errors involved errors whose occurrence was very limited and its number was very small, lower than even 50 errors. These included confusion of punctuation marks (MPC) 49 (2.73%), subject-verb agreement errors (GVN) 48 (2.67%), the erroneous use of a single lexical word (LS) 47 (2.62%), incomplete sentences (SI) 46 (2.46%), and the erroneous use of word classes (GWC) 41 (2.28%). Yet, another group of errors, very limited in occurrence and attached to the baseline of the figure recording less than five errors in the corpus, included erroneous use of certain determiners (GDT), order of adjectives (GADJO), noun case (GNC), errors on reflexive or reciprocal pronouns (GPF), verb voice (GVV), errors on coordinating conjunctions (LCC), lexical phrase errors (LP), complementation of verbs (LGVC). The last group of errors that were not observed in the data collected endorsed twelve types of errors: erroneous use of possessive determiners (GDO), erroneous use of adjectives in the plural (GAN), errors on demonstrative pronouns (GPD), errors on possessive pronouns (GPO), errors on indefinite pronouns (GPI), errors on interrogative pronouns (GPR), complementation of adjectives (LGAC), wrong use of prepositions with adjectives (LGAP), complementation of conjunctions (LGCC), complementation of nouns (LGNC), and erroneous complementation of prepositions (LGCP).

In this section, the researcher presented the results of the error analysis with sufficient data from the student's essays. Discussing the results and providing qualitative interpretation to them would be the topic of the following section.

Qualitative Interpretations of the Error Analysis. The researcher conducted a qualitative analysis of the previous section results to offer further insights into the errors analysed and categorized. Qualitative analyses and interpretation can help unveil the ambiguities or insufficiencies often stemming from

statistics and numbers. For this purpose, the researcher will first shed light on the overall results of the pretest and posttest and then will discuss the alterations that occurred to the first five most common error subordinate categories after the intervention.

A comparison of the data between the pretest and posttest results demonstrates that the total number of the errors reduced and alterations involved in the category and subcategory of the errors. In spite of the small amplitude of error reduction in this study, the reduction is considerable when compared to the length of the essays from pretest to posttest. Considering the superordinate categories, the frequency of the errors reduced in all the categories, namely lexis, lexico-grammar, punctuation, spelling and capitalization, style/sentence errors, and infelicities, except for two major categories that are grammar and word errors. As for grammar errors, they are inherent in students' writing in the Kurdish context due to the wrong methodology employed in grammar instruction that will be detailed below. Furthermore, word errors seem to be associated with the lack of writing practice and writing in haste.

Further comparison of the data presented above reveals that the ranking order of the first three superordinate categories remained the same, i.e. the commonest was grammatical errors, followed by spelling and capitalization, and punctuation errors. The large number of grammatical errors in both pretest and posttest, can be associated with the teaching of grammar that is taught detached from context in both university and pre-university education. Although the title of the course is contextual grammar, for instance in the second year of college, it is instructed out of context, with the teacher explaining grammatical rules and demanding students to do certain exercises. No or sporadically very few real or meaningful activities or communication regarding a certain grammatical structure is generally observed for the student to be able to know how that particular structure can be used in real situations such as in speaking and writing. The instructor of the present course assisted students to improve their grammar in writing through the provision of feedback. As for spelling and punctuation, it is reckoned that the overuse of technology on the students' part can be one of the principal causes. Furthermore, transferring the spoken form of the English language, particularly language employed in English movies into writing can also be evident in that the majority of them constructed several sentences into a paragraph without punctuation. Staying on

the ranking order, several alterations were made in the other superordinate categories. In the pretest, sentence errors were followed by word and lexical errors. Dissimilarly, word errors were followed by infelicity and lexical errors in the posttest. What seems significant here involves the reduction of sentence errors, scoring lowest in the posttest because sentence errors seem to be the most severe form of errors among the other kinds of error, meaning that they were either incomplete or unclear. The instructor of this module assisted students throughout the course to construct sentences that are clear and complete by focusing on specific parts of their writing as a whole and their essays and when teaching them how to construct a strong topic sentence. Furthermore, the strategies that were used, particularly reading before writing, writing one paragraph biweekly, collaborative work, and employing the process-genre approach were observed by the researcher to have been efficacious in general and might have an impact on the construction of their sentences. Therefore, sentence errors became least frequent in the posttest. One further observation that is noteworthy is that lexico-grammar errors were of limited occurrence in students' writing. This can be attributed, as observed by the researcher, to two reasons: first, the limited occurrence of lexico-grammar patterns in writing as a whole and in specific genres in particular. Second, although no evidence was found in the literature, the researcher observed that lexico-grammatical errors were more common in higher proficient students' writing. This is, in turn, due to the wide range of grammatical structures higher proficient students utilize, including complex grammatical structures. Thus, since our students were low proficient in writing, they made less use of such structures and scored lowest on the accuracy measure.

Now moving on to the subordinate categories, spelling (MS) scored a large proportion of the errors. Spelling is a component of mechanical errors which ranked first both in the pretest and posttest. This error category, which includes a spelling error or a morphological error resulting in words not existent in English (see Appendix K), is responsible for 352 errors in the pretest and 331 errors in the posttest, i.e. (18.64%) and (18.46%) of the error occurrences respectively; a result that the majority of university instructors might expect. In connection with the results, sundry causes can account for this large number of errors in spelling detected in the students' writing. First, lack of writing practice, on the students' part, can be considered among one of the predominant causes of spelling errors in the context of the present study. Students generally do not do much practice in writing; even if they

do, they use their mobile phones which might make word suggestions for them, resulting in lack of concentration on the words, as explained earlier. Although the use of technology and the Internet might be useful, e.g. students can utilize them to correct their inaccuracies, they do not often focus on the nature of the correction. One of the strategies of the present study, for example, was writing one paragraph weekly. Nevertheless, students complained against writing it every week, they considered it to be too much workload for them. Therefore, this was reduced for them to write it biweekly and this might be one of the reasons of the dearth of efficiency of the course in this regard. Furthermore, this clearly shows that students have not done much practice in writing in their previous writing experience, i.e. they have not had sufficient exposure to English language words in their written form. Second, students typically consider some components of writing, such as spelling and punctuation less important than grammar and lexis; therefore, they ignore these areas. Although the severity of a spelling mistake might not normally equal to that of a grammatical one in writing, certain spelling mistakes, particularly the ones that result in incomprehensibility can carry no less weight than a grammatical error. For instance, the wrong sentence *'You will have background for your improve ower studay'* endorses three spelling errors, of which the second one *'ower'* is the most difficult to correct. Third, the considerable disparity between English orthography and pronunciation, i.e. between graphemes and phonemes, not only for Kurdish students of English, but also for other EFL students, has caused abundant difficulty. However, what has doubled the difficulty involves the one-to-one precise correspondence that exists between Kurdish orthography and pronunciation, i.e. between letters and phonemes. For instance, the pronunciation of Kurdish is clearly reflected in spelling errors such as (*Taim, musles, oposite, conected, ...*) in the students' essays, in which the first word indicates that the student has spelt the word as it is pronounced because there are no diphthongs in Kurdish and the latter two words lack a letter because one letter represents only one phoneme in Kurdish and vice-versa and there exist no double letters nor silent letters in Kurdish. Thus, transfer of the Kurdish orthographic system can be one of the major causes. Fourth, English and Kurdish scripts do greatly differ, with English employing a Latin-based alphabet while Kurdish a Persian-based Central Kurdish alphabet that are similar in no ways. Fifth, ignorance of English spelling rules such as orthographic or morphological rules when adding inflectional suffixes like (*-ing, -ed, -es, ...*) or

derivational suffixes such as (-ful, -less, ...) can also account for the large number of the errors. In this educational context, students seem to have been not instructed spelling rules sufficiently due to the lack of time available for teaching English in the pre-university education. Thus, on the one hand, EFL teachers can be responsible for this. On the other hand, students themselves do ignore such rules and underestimate them. In addition, although the instructor of the present course did not have sufficient time to teach such rules explicitly, students were guided to study certain pages in specific textbooks. Examples from students' essays due to ignorance of spelling rules or lack of orthography instruction include: (*activites, successfull, childern, usefull, familys, bigging, abilites, swimming, ...*). Last but not least, spelling errors can also occur as a result of writing in haste, known as slips of the tongue.

The second most common error subcategory involved missing punctuation marks (MPM), which is devoted to cases in which a punctuation mark that needs to be present is absent. Underestimation and lack of sufficient practice in this area in the context of the present study can be considered among the principal factors of punctuation errors. Although no sessions or activities were devoted to the instruction of punctuation marks, students were again guided through uploading certain pieces of information onto Google Classroom and feedback was given to them in this regard, and during teaching the other elements of essay writing, reference was at times made to punctuation rules and errors. The majority of the punctuation errors occurred in students' writing involved the omission of comma, particularly after transition signals and period because these are more common in writing than the other punctuation marks. Thus, one corroboration concerning the commonness of an error among students might be associated with the commonness of a particular pattern. To exemplify, a comma cannot be compared to an exclamation mark whose occurrence is very limited. Nevertheless, this does not belittle the value of indicating the commonness of an error as its commonness can show to both teachers and students the areas of difficulty to a particular group of students, and even that the pattern is common and more attention needs to be devoted to it. Below are some examples of the data for this error category.

First children should get homework every day.

However language is an important tool in our daily life.

My self esteem will be better.

The third most common category included capitalization errors in the pretest. Capitalization errors include errors such as not capitalizing the first letter of a sentence, pronoun I, proper names and so on. The number of these errors slightly increased in the posttest due to the length of the essays in the posttest. Although students were provided with handouts containing information regarding capitalization rules with clear examples, the number of the capitalization errors in the posttest was still high. The reason is that students, in the context of this study, generally focus on evaluation and grades rather than on the amount of knowledge they obtain; therefore, if part of the lecture notes that one has given is not included for the exam or is not graded, it is very likely that they ignore it, the statements “it is included for the exam” or “it is graded” can awaken all students.

Erroneous use of articles, in addition, was commonly observed among the students, ranking fourth among all the error types and ranked first among the other grammatical errors. This error category resulted from the wrong use of the definite, indefinite, or zero articles. The number of these errors decreased in the posttest, particularly when the length of students’ essays is considered. In addition to provision of feedback in this course, the instructor guided students to certain reference grammar books such as ‘Longman English Grammar’ that contains detailed information about the use of articles. Although the number was reduced, this error category was still prevalent among students. This indicates the use of articles is an area of difficulty for EFL students, particularly for Kurdish EFL students. Reasons for inaccurate uses of articles might concern the insufficient instruction they have had in their first year due to covid-19 and their pre-university education. In addition, other causes of inaccuracies might be associated with the difficult system of the use of articles for Kurdish EFL students. In Kurdish, for instance the definite and indefinite articles are suffixed to the end of the word but they are separate morphemes in English used before the noun. Below are some examples of the wrong use of articles.

I think first reason is that humans can be fluent by reading books.

We have to relax most of time for getting better.

Giving assignments has good effect on students.

A lot of assignments make the students anxious.

Considering the first example given above, it can be apparent that the use of the definite article with a transition signal like ‘first, second, third, etc.’ is obligatory in

English when followed by a noun. In Kurdish, however, this is not needed if translated. Moving on to the second example, the use of the definite article is again obligatory in the fixed expression ‘most of the time’. When translated into Kurdish, no definite articles should be employed. The third and fourth examples, to the researcher’s observation, concern insufficient instruction because the student used the definite article but he meant students in general. Thus, it is not only the difficulty of the target language that causes errors, rather the insufficient instruction they have been given earlier.

The fifth most common error that commonly occurred in students’ writing involved incomplete sentences, i.e. sentences that were unanalysable because of containing many errors or the absence of the main verb or sentence fragments. The occurrence of such sentences in students’ writing reached 107 sentences which was reduced to only 46 sentences that is a substantial difference. Students were provided with much information during the course on how to construct a sentence. In addition, the provision of feedback, reading before writing, writing one paragraph biweekly, and the utilization of the process-genre approach, as was confessed by a few students during the course, the researcher opines that they have been effective. The following include examples of a few incomplete sentences.

Childern who are brought up in fimily that do not have large amount

Some student’s mind not can’t exactly exrcise be carefully when have a lot of assignment

If they give homework every day in order to be successful at school

This was an account of the ranking order of the superordinate errors in the pretest and posttest as well as the ranking order of the five most common subordinate category errors that occurred in the participants’ writing. The appendix K provides a complete list of all the error categories and subcategories in addition to more examples about the subcategories.

Correlations between the Variables

In addition to the accounts of writing apprehension and writing performance provided above, a number of correlations were examined in the present study being the sixth and last question of the study, querying: “Is there a statistically significant correlation between: writing anxiety and writing performance as measured by the

analytic scoring, writing anxiety and writing performance as measured by error frequencies, analytic scoring and error frequencies, and between gender and writing anxiety? The results of these correlations will be presented and discussed below.

Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance (Grades)

Anxiety about one's own writing performance involves fear or apprehension about his ability to do a writing task successfully and efficiently even prior to beginning with the task because he reckons that he is not capable of doing the task. Thus, a question addressed in the present study was to recognize if writing apprehension was statistically significantly associated with writing performance. To tackle this, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was employed to calculate the association between the total score of writing apprehension and writing performance and the results produced are summarized in Table 13.

Table 13.

Writing Anxiety and Writing Performance (Grades)

Variable	Indicator	Correlation Value with			
		WA	CA	SA	AA
WP	<i>R</i>	-0.39	-0.42	-0.17	-0.28
	<i>Sig.</i>	0.01	0.00	0.28	0.07

Note. WP= writing performance; WA= writing anxiety; CA= cognitive anxiety; SA= somatic anxiety; AA= avoidance anxiety.

The table demonstrates a weak negative linear correlation between overall writing anxiety and writing performance at the significance level ($\text{Sig} = 0.01$), valuing (-0.39). Further analysis revealed a moderate negative linear association of cognitive anxiety with writing performance at ($\text{Sig} = 0.00$), with the correlation value (-0.42). However, neither somatic anxiety nor avoidance behavioural anxiety was associated with writing performance since the scores did not reach the significance level.

These results support previous research that writing anxiety weakly and negatively affects and impedes writing performance (Abbas, 2016; Altukruni, 2019; Britt, 2011; Daly, 1978; Erkan, & Saban, 2011; Sabati et al., 2019; Tola & Sree, 2016). This study's results are also not sharply contrasted with (Hassan, 2001) who reported an insignificant correlation and Daly (1985) who affirmed that the correlation between the two variables is no more than a moderate correlation. Nevertheless, much prior research supported the existence of a significantly inverse correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance. The primeval

work conducted by Daly and Miller (1975a and b) showed that students who experienced higher levels of writing apprehension scored lower on SAT verbal tests and produced shorter as well as less intense and less qualified compositions. Yet consistently, as confirmed by Faigley et al. (1981), high apprehensive students produced shorter and less syntactically mature or fluent essays and were incapable of developing their ideas as well as putting as much information in communicative units such as T-units and clauses as low apprehensive students. More importantly, high anxious students supplied a more limited stock of syntactic constructions.

One reason that can be reported for the weak correlation might be attributed to the multi-faceted nature of both writing apprehension and writing performance, particularly the latter. By comparison, the correlation between cognitive anxiety and writing performance is slightly stronger than the correlation of the overall writing apprehension, avoidance anxiety, and somatic anxiety to writing performance. Therefore, this may confirm the fact that, due to the multidimensional nature of both variables, the correlation between them is not always straightforward and more intricate theories need to account for the correlation.

Another reason for the weak or moderate correlation between writing anxiety and writing performance is that writing anxiety does not merely have a debilitating function in relation to writing performance, as explained earlier in chapter two. A certain amount of anxiety can embolden students to put more energy in writing and enhance their writing performance. This means that anxiety cannot only negatively be associated with writing performance. Therefore, a few studies mentioned above have produced either insignificant or positive connections between writing performance and writing anxiety, as argued by (Scovel, 1978) that previous research has produced mixed results and these confusing results can only be unravelled by distinguishing between the two functions of anxiety, namely facilitating and debilitating functions. However, inappropriate teaching styles and methods that do not match students' level and difficult writing prompts and essay questions as well as writing tasks can trigger writing apprehension that would negatively influence writing performance. Therefore, another reason for the weak correlation can be associated with the facilitating function of writing with the possibility that a certain amount of students' anxiety and in certain situations in this context perhaps serves a facilitating function.

Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance (Errors)

Writing apprehension has been reported to be associated with a number of variables in different contexts in the literature. Some of its correlates have been negative and others positive. Theoretically and logically, there should be a positive correlation between writing apprehension and written errors. This means that students with higher amounts of apprehension should commit more errors and the reverse is also true. In this section, this correlation will be revealed and discussed. The objective behind recognition of the correlation was to test the hypothesis that, according to Daly and Miller (1975b), and even the results of the analytic scoring presented and explained in the previous section, the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance is weak. However, since writing performance is multidimensional, i.e. it is measured in different ways, recognizing the measure that bears correlation with writing apprehension is significant. To fulfil this, the researcher tested the correlation using Pearson correlation and the results are reported in Table 14.

Table 14.

Writing Anxiety and Writing Performance (Errors)

Variable	Correlation with Number of Errors		
	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Writing Anxiety	39	-0.28	0.07

As featured in Table 14, there is no statistically significant connection between writing anxiety and number of errors ($r = -0.286$) although the significance level of the correlation ($\text{Sig} = 0.07$) is relatively close to the significance level ($\text{Sig} = 0.05$). This demonstrates that, when testing the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance, the measure of writing performance should be taken into consideration. By comparison, the present study revealed a weakly significantly negative correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance when measured by students' grades. However, the correlation was even weaker when measured by number of errors. Three reasons can be associated with this result: first, previous research has shown a rather weak correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance (Daly, 1985). Daly said that one should not expect more than a modest connection; second, studies that have measured writing apprehension through students' grades, i.e. used a holistic or analytic approach to assessment have usually shown a negative correlation between

them (Erkan & Saban, 2011; Jebreil et al., 2015; Sabati et al., 2019; Sulaimani et al., 2020); third, the area of error or severity of error, which is beyond the scope of the present study and can be dealt with in future studies, is significant, not only the number of errors. This means the category, whether it is a grammatical error, lexical error, punctuation error, and so on is significant to understand the nature of the correlation between writing apprehension and writing performance as measured by the number of errors. Qashoa (2013), who conducted a qualitative study, is in contrast with the results obtained in this study because he revealed that one of the reasons of making a large number of errors in students' essays is attributed to writing anxiety, i.e. anxiety causes students to make all these errors in their writing. However, he did not reveal the nature of the correlation, i.e. no details about the categories were given. Unless a detailed account of the correlation is provided, fruitful and firm correlations might not be able to be established with a high degree of certainty.

Analytic Scoring and Error Analysis

Another correlation that is essential to be established is the correlation between writing performance as measured by grades and writing performance as measured by number of errors. To respond to the research question related to this correlation, the researcher similarly employed Pearson correlation and the results are reported in Table 15.

Table 15.

Analytic Scoring and Number of Errors

Variable	Correlation the Analytic Scoring		
	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
No. of Errors	39	-0.44**	0.00

Note: Correlation is significant at 0.01.

The results of the application of Pearson correlation demonstrated that there was a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -0.44$) between the analytic scoring and the number of errors at the significance level (0.00). This means that students who scored higher on essay exams based on the analytic scoring committed less errors in their writing. Conversely, those who obtained lower grades committed more errors. One of the benefits of establishing this correlation can be employed to confirm the reliability of both the scoring and the error analysis.

Gender and Writing Apprehension

A plethora of research has revealed that males and females respond to measures of writing apprehension differently. In contrast, other research has shown that students experience writing apprehension regardless of their gender (see chapter two for more details). Most of such studies have treated gender as a causal factor of writing apprehension (see e.g. Abdel Latif, 2015). Furthermore, experimental studies have included gender to see if it would lay any impact on writing apprehension fluctuations throughout a term or a year. The purpose of demonstrating the effect of gender in the present study is the same, i.e. to identify the correlation between gender and writing apprehension and explain if the strategies that were applied affected both genders in terms of writing apprehension. For this purpose, the researcher utilized t-test for independent samples in both cases to indicate the correlation between gender and writing apprehension and the changes that occurred to apprehension from pretest to posttest. The obtained results from the data are reported in Table 16.

Table 16.

Differences in the Anxiety Level According to Gender

Gender		N	M	SD	t-value	df.	Sig.
Pretest	Male	18	66.55	11.12	1.14	37	0.26
	Female	21	70.47	10.28			
Posttest	Male	18	61.72	8.77	0.65	37	0.51
	Female	21	63.57	8.70			

As evidenced in the table, the results produced no statistically significant differences between gender and writing apprehension neither in the pretest nor in the posttest because the scores (0.26) and (0.51) are higher than the significance level (0.5), valuing (1.14) and (0.65) respectively. The mean scores (M= 66.55) for males and (M= 70.47) for females in the pretest considerably dropped to (M= 61.72) and (M= 63.57) in the posttest successively, indicating that changes occurred to both gender's writing apprehensions mean scores. This result is supported with much research in the literature that no statistically significant differences were detected, namely (Abu Shawish & Abdelraheem, 2010; Al Asmari, 2013; Faris et al., 1999; Karakaya & Ülper, 2011; Popvich & Massé, 2005; Reed et al., 1983; Schultz & Meyers, 1981; Zerey, 2013). However, this study is in stark contrast to prior research stating that females were less apprehensive, including (Daly & Miller, 1975b and c; Elias, 1999; McAllister, 2014; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Shang, 2013; Simons et al.,

1995; Zorbaz, 2010). Although Daly and Miller (1975b & c) showed that first language student females were more apprehensive, built on (Cheng, 2002), the results of such a study cannot be applied to second language students. Thus, the effect of gender on writing apprehension does not prove to be so straightforward as it might seem, as explained earlier in chapter two. Since the educational contexts to which the construct has been applied vary, studies have produced varying results.

More importantly, some studies, similar to ours, reported no statistically significant differences between length of study and gender differences in writing apprehension. In this regard, Kostić-Bobanović (2016) showed, in a longitudinal study, that gender did not have any role in writing apprehension among Croatian EFL undergraduate students neither in their first year nor in their third year. He thought that the causes that make them feel anxious in writing seem to be the same. In contrast to this and our results, Campbell (1999) detected no impact of gender on foreign language class anxiety among American participants in its first application of the construct. Nevertheless, significant gender differences in anxiety levels were found in the second application of the survey after two weeks of intensive instruction, with male students experiencing a higher level of apprehension than female students. In other words, apprehension in male students increased significantly but it slightly decreased in female students. Again, even the length of a study, as observed, is not a true indicator of second language writing apprehension because contradictory results of prior research presuppose that there is a need for a more complex theory expounding the writing anxiety construct. Built on Cheng (2002), a more thorough model of language anxiety development should involve “a complex system of social, contextual, and student variables, such as institutional requirements, parental or societal expectations, teaching and evaluation procedures, motivation, personality, self-confidence, students’ beliefs, [and] L2 proficiency, ...” (p. 653).

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the study and discussed them based on the context of the study, the literature available, and the researcher’s own observation benefiting from his teaching experience, particularly in this course. The major finding was that Kurdish EFL undergraduate students experienced a moderate level of writing apprehension in the pretest and posttest with the intervention producing

statistically significant differences in the apprehension level. However, the intervention seemed to have no strong effect on the apprehension categories and causes apart from the cognitive anxiety category. In addition, writing apprehension was correlated with writing performance in terms of grades and errors. Writing apprehension was found to be weakly correlated with grades but uncorrelated with errors. Writing performance was also measured by grades and errors in the pretest and posttest and it was found that fluctuations occurred. Finally, the impact of gender on writing apprehension was tackled. The results produced no statistically significant differences in apprehension due to gender and was explained that a more complex theory should take into account other variables. The next chapter offers a summary of the findings and the conclusions arrived at.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

While chapter four presented the results and discussed them based on the literature available on the topic and the particular context in question, chapter five anchors on three major points, involving imparting a summary of the findings together with concluding points arrived at, discussing some of the essential issues that arose out of the study and spotlighting the pedagogical implications. Finally, the chapter will come to a halt with a few suggestions for future research. Thus, the goal of this chapter is to further understand the nature of the findings reported and expand on the constructs that were examined.

Summary of the Findings

The present study investigated the combined effect of the process-genre approach and a number of anxiety-reducing strategies on students' writing apprehension and writing performance. Most of the strategies employed in this study have been used separately to reduce writing apprehension producing various results. However, their combined effect is yet unknown. For this purpose, the present study aimed at identifying the overall impact of all these strategies that are interdependent, with the presumption that they reinforce each other. Thus, the study probed into the extent of the apprehension experienced in writing in a new setting, namely the Kurdish setting and further analysed the types and causes of their writing apprehension before and after the application of the process-genre approach and the strategies in a term of twelve weeks. More importantly, the study also elaborated on students' writing performance and evaluated students' essays based on two approaches, one being the analytic scoring approach and the other error analysis. The participating students were all Kurdish EFL students with the English being taught to them for almost twelve or more years in their pre-university education.

An extensive body of the reviewed literature revealed that anxiety in general and writing anxiety in particular were common among participants in various educational settings and various educational levels (See chapter two for a detailed account of this), with participants mostly experiencing a moderate or a high level of apprehension in most ESL/EFL contexts. Horwitz (2013) indicates that virtually one-

third of students customarily feel moderately to strongly anxious about language learning and students with higher amounts of apprehension receive poor grades, as will be confirmed later in this section. The studies reviewed were all in complete agreement that writing anxiety should not be ignored by instructors and necessary steps need to be taken. Furthermore, anxiety has witnessed a long and chequered history and the two terms ‘anxiety’ and ‘apprehension’ can interchangeably be employed. Therefore, reasons behind this psychological construct abound and stem from various sources and strategies need to be devised accordingly, particularly based on certain variables such as proficiency level of students and their educational settings. The literature, in addition, demonstrated that writing apprehension is in a strong correlation with a number of other psychological constructs, including self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-esteem.

Moving to the field work of the study, the results of the investigation revealed that writing apprehension was a prevalent phenomenon among Kurdish students of English in both the pretest and posttest. Nevertheless, the participants experienced a moderate level of writing apprehension in both cases, which is not an elevated or abnormal amount of apprehension. One reason for the anxiety experienced by undergraduate students of English, according to (Aljafen, 2013), might be the prodigious and unbridgeable gap between the way students were instructed writing in high schools and the seriousness of writing English at the university level that can, in turn, cause weak writing skills. The level experienced by students in the present study would generally manifest certain indications of writing apprehension in their writing such as fear of their writing being evaluated and not getting the grade they want or when writing essays for different types of audiences, or when they are exposed to harsh feedback by instructors. Although the apprehension in the pretest was not considerably elevated, this level reduced to a lower moderate level, being close to the low borderline as a result of the application of the strategies invented. According to Daly and Miller (1975a) and Cheng (2004), the lower the writing apprehension level, the more efficient and successful EFL students’ writing would be. Although no interviews were made, built on both the researcher’s observation and the quantitative results as well as the students’ comments at the end of the module and an informal questionnaire delivered to students via Google Classroom, it was revealed that the students were satisfied with the course and felt more comfortable with the strategies implemented and the approach utilized. This is

because apprehension is inclusive of such feelings as worry, excruciation, inclination towards a particular course or skill, and anguish. This means when students are observed inclining towards a particular course or approach, this often denotes their relieved apprehension which, in turn, might denote their motivation. In other words, disturbances in the mind lead to students suffering from high levels of anxiety and these worries are caused by the inappropriate approach used in teaching writing. Although the apprehension level reduction was significant, the researcher believes that the course and its strategies as well as the writing approach would have been more efficient if the repercussions of the time frame within which the study was conducted had not constrained their applicability because it is not only the strategies that have an impact on reducing writing apprehension, rather the way one applies the strategies, the timeframe within which the strategies are applied are also quintessential. In addition, the researcher started small and simple with the participants, meaning that he began from reviewing the rhetorical structure of paragraph and paragraph writing and then smoothly and steadily moved to the instruction of essay and its rhetorical structure. However, one noteworthy point that needs to be mentioned here is that students needed time to be able to improve the rhetorical structure of their paragraphs and essays.

Apprehension is a multidimensional construct that endorses three dimensions, namely the cognitive dimension, the somatic dimension, and the avoidance behavioural dimension. Although one dimension might seem more severe for some researchers than others, the present study conjectures that all these categories are severe and affect participants in different ways. To elaborate, the cognitive anxiety category causes mind disturbances that, in turn, lead to students being afraid of writing evaluation, evaluation from peers and teachers, and negative expectations. Somatic anxiety affects the body, i.e. students feel anxious because they see themselves under pressure and display their anxiety through certain bodily indications such as sweating, palpitations, and heart pounding. In addition, avoidance behavioural anxiety is more connected with students' indulgence or avoidance of writing essays in English. Therefore, anxiety categories or dimensions are more concerned with how anxiety is expressed than to its severity. Considering the participants of the current study, the participants rated cognitive writing apprehension the highest, followed by somatic anxiety, and avoidance behavioural anxiety in the pretest. However, the sequential order slightly fluctuated in the posttest

with the position of cognitive and somatic anxieties being reversed. The dominance of cognitive anxiety in the context of the present investigation seems both logical and plausible as fear of negative evaluation and tests is an inherent property that requires care and concern. More specifically, this confirms Rezaei and Jafari's (2014) studies that fear of teacher's negative comments show that students do not compose to reflect their own voices, rather they compose to the teacher only to get a good score and pass their exam. After the application of the strategies and the process-genre approach in the course, the order changed. This can demonstrate the effectiveness of the course as a whole. Two points can confirm the results in connection with the categories of apprehension, namely providing both cognitive and emotional support to students as well as positive feedback to them which the majority appreciated in an open question asked to them. Furthermore, the researcher believes that creating a convivial environment is as much significant as the provision of linguistic information to students, if not more.

To be able to handle writing anxiety, one needs to discern the triggering factors, i.e. what effectuates apprehension. Although the literature is filled with studies tackling the causes, certain causes might be more common than others. For this reason, a questionnaire was adapted from a nearby context. The study revealed that pressure for writing a perfect essay was the commonest reason behind students' apprehension about writing in the pretest. Based on the findings achieved regarding the categories of apprehension, one productive corroboration is that apprehension due to perfectionism stemmed from the harsh treatment of university instructors with students' writing rather than students attempting at perfectionism on their part. Following perfectionism, trepidation regarding not obtaining the desired grade was the second common cause of writing apprehension in the pretest which is consistent with the previous one and reinforce and supplement each other. The third common cause of apprehension involved time pressure that is writing under time constraints. Again, this proves to be both a logical and plausible cause of writing apprehension in this educational context that, in turn, it is associated with the two other previous causes and more concerned with somatic anxiety because students display symptoms of somatic writing anxiety when being under time pressure in exams. However, the arrangement was slightly changed although the correlation between pretest and posttest was not significant. The three most common causes of writing apprehension in the posttest involved trepidation about not obtaining the desired grade, followed

by lack of topical knowledge and time pressure. The dulcet treatment of students' essays and provision of feedback should certainly have played an essential role in perfectionism being dropped among the common causes. However, one cause, that is lack of topical knowledge, replaced it. As explained in chapter four, unlike paragraph writing that does not require much topical knowledge, writing an essay does so. Therefore, not doing extensive reading, particularly in the target language, can be one of the deeply-rooted factors of apprehension in the particular context. Although one of the strategies of the current study, doing reading before writing, targeted at increasing students' topical knowledge, it only endorsed reading an essay rather than doing extensive reading. More importantly, it was expected that the implementation of the process-genre approach would treat students' anxiety due to time pressure through which students can organize their work, it seemed to have been not so much effective as expected in this regard. This can be associated with the brevity of the course and students' preoccupation with fear of evaluation and grades as the application of the process-genre approach requires much time to be effective. Additionally, low confidence in writing was rated to not predict writing apprehension both in the pretest and the posttest. As explained in chapter four, this can be associated with the level of writing apprehension that was not an elevated level.

In addition to the affective aspect, the study also tackled the combined effect of the approach and the strategies on writing performance. For this purpose, students' scores in essay writing and their errors were given consideration. The analysis of the students' scores of the essay writing test disclosed that students scored very low in the pretest and their scores significantly increased in the posttest. Although the increase was significant, the results were still not satisfactory. This means students' writing performance as measured by grades was poor compared to their level of education, being second graders. Another measure that was employed included error analysis of students' essays in the pretest and posttest. The purpose of the error analysis was fourfold: identifying the total number of the errors that students committed, recognizing the most and least common errors, the fluctuations that occurred from pretest to posttest, and the correlation between the analytic scoring and the error analysis. As a result, the study divulged a large number of errors in students' writing scripts in both the pretest and posttest, a positive change in the number of the errors from pretest to posttest, i.e. a decrease in the number of the errors, especially when the length of essay is considered, and the existence of a

negative correlation between errors and the analytic scoring. The identification of this large number of errors, even after the application of a significant approach such as the process-genre approach might not seem surprising, as explained earlier that students possess desperately weak writing skills, as confirmed by (Abdumajeed, 2016) that even third and fourth year students' writing skills are considerably weak. She revealed this by scrutinizing their essays. Although committing errors is unavoidable, certain errors seem to be more severe than others, e.g. an unclear sentence can definitely be more severe than an infelicity error. As for the commonness of the errors grammatical errors were found to be more common than the other types in both occasions of the test that can be associated with the teaching of grammar and writing that are bound together in that particular context. The existence of a negative correlation between the analytic scoring and the error analysis also confirmed the results of the analysis of the two approaches employed in evaluating students' essays. One point that requires scrupulous attention involves the distinction between writing performance and writing achievement. The two terms 'writing achievement' and writing performance have been used rather interchangeably in the literature. Writing performance can include the former while the former cannot include the latter. Writing achievement is measured by students' grades. However, writing performance is measured by grades, errors, rhetorical features of a text or by the three triads of language proficiency and performance including accuracy, complexity, and fluency. All these arenas belong to writing performance. Thus, measuring writing performance via writing scores has been customarily utilized by researchers as when using an analytic scale, one requires to give full consideration to all the contents of an essay.

In addition to the effect of the process-genre approach and the strategies on writing apprehension and writing performance, a set of correlations were also established between writing apprehension on the one hand and the analytic scoring, number of errors, essay length, and gender on the other hand with the assumption that students with a higher level of writing apprehension commit more errors, write shorter essays, and one of the genders differs from the other in writing apprehension. Additionally, correlations were also shown between the analytic scoring and the number of errors to understand their relationship and to further confirm the validity of both the scoring and the error analysis. As assumed, students with a higher level of writing apprehension obtained lower grades on the essay writing test and committed less

errors. However, the correlation between gender and writing apprehension was insignificant, meaning that students experienced apprehension regardless of their gender. Finally, the study found that there was a highly statistically significant and negative correlation between the analytic scoring and number of errors. This means, on the one hand, that students with higher grades committed less errors and, on the other hand, the analytic scoring and the error analysis were both reliable and valid measures of writing performance in the present study.

Pedagogical Implications

In the previous section, the researcher provided a summary of the findings produced and the conclusions arrived at. This section will discuss a number of far-reaching educational implications explored including both pedagogical implications and context bound implications.

Considering pedagogical implications, the study added to the literature available on the topic confirming the combined significance of the strategies applied to the participants of the present study. As a result, the strategies can be employed by embedding them in any future courses designed for ESL/EFL students. This necessitates college instructors to be aware of their students' affective states when teaching writing since writing is a productive skill that is anxiety-provoking if not taught properly and students' affective states are not tuned properly (Krashen, 1981). However, when supplementing a course with these strategies, one needs to be aware of the time devoted to the application of such strategies as they require sufficient time to be applied.

The strategies employed in the course helped the students feel less anxious, write more accurately, and write longer essays than before. This can be observed in the statistics provided in the previous sections and the comments of the students for the course as well as the teachers' diary and students' writing two journals. Having obtained these positive alterations with the participants of the present study may suggest using the strategies for reducing writing apprehension and enhancing writing performance because these strategies are a mixture of both psychologically-oriented strategies and writing-oriented strategies, meaning that some are specifically designed to diminish writing apprehension such as raising confidence (Qashoa, 2013; Zhang, 2011), inviting psychologists, supporting students (Coubourne & Shellenbarger, 2019; Genc and Yayli, 2019; Kusumaningputri et al., 2018), and deep

breathing and repetitive prayers (Zhang, 2011), while the others are specifically designed to improve writing performance such as reading before writing (Altukruni, 2019; Krashen, 1993; Reeves, 1997), doing writing once every two weeks (Reeves, 1997), remedial teaching (Al Othman & Shuqair, 2013; Oyekan, 2013; Roiha & Polso, 2021; Yolak et al., 2019), portfolio keeping (Öztürk & Çeçen, 2007), and using technology and the Internet (Bailey & Cassidy, 2020; Cequena & Gustilo, 2014; Zhang, 2019). Students, in an informal questionnaire carried out via Google Forms, beard the witness that reading before writing, as confirmed by Krashen (1982), providing support as suggested by the participants of the pilot study, and the process-genre approach inclusive of providing feedback as confirmed by the literature (Alabere & Shapii, 2019; Amjal & Irfan, 2020; Janenoppakarn, 2017), were among the most influential strategies and approaches of the course.

Another implication concerns the provision of feedback. Feedback provides students with the feeling that the teacher is interested in their writing. Therefore, the appropriate provision of feedback can be beneficial in two ways, one is improving students' writing, the other is tuning students' emotional states (Jahin, 2012; Kurt & Atay, 2007; McGee, 2019; Yao, 2019). Furthermore, when providing feedback, instructors need to ensure that their feedback focuses more on content and meaning than on structure and accuracy as the latter can be improved in a later stage during the writing process (Cheng, 2004). Therefore, instructors encounter the difficulty of not having enough time to manage all these activities. If this is the case, instructors can assign assistants to help them in the process of provision of feedback. In addition, when applying the 'reading before writing' strategy, instructors need to confirm if students have read what has been assigned to them through devoting some minutes to discuss the information; otherwise, it might not benefit them.

Additionally, the application of the second strategy 'writing one paragraph once every two weeks will also require instructors to not focus much on accuracy and pay more attention to writing fluency and content and provide more positive comments than negative. The course will further require writing instructors to encourage students to do reading before writing and do free writing as these can develop students' writing fluency as observed with the participants of the present study. More important is devoting sufficient time when employing the process-genre approach because if sufficient time is not devoted to each phase of the approach, it might provoke anxiety (Janenoppakarn, 2017). Although the process-genre approach seems

to teach the how of doing writing but not necessarily the what of writing, especially when the time span of a course is not long enough as is the case with this study as students might face various topics, and not the one that they have studied. When teaching them a topic, they might not have problems when writing about a relevant topic. However, when they are asked to write about a topic that is not related, they face problems with finding ideas.

It is also highly significant for instructors to direct positive comments and feedback together with negative feedback to writing, and not only pouring hatred over students' papers, as confirmed by the participants of the present study and the literature (Coubourne & Shellenbarger, 2019; Sabati et al., 2019). Additionally, it is also important for students to do the same because it can remarkably reduce their apprehension. Whatever was reported above can validate the application of all these strategies in the context of the present study.

Finally, one of the practical recommendations of the present study, in the researcher's belief and observation, is that essay writing in the second year be moved to the third year in the current context, as it is difficult for students and teachers alike to benefit each other. Students' proficiency levels are considerably low in this stage. In addition to the burden of encountering writing requirements, they need to master vocabulary, grammar, and idea organization, and they need to face the difficulties they encounter with regards to affect. Students' competence in the language as a whole is low and this affects students' writing performance. So, it is suggested that either the module be moved to the third year that can be more effective or reading be integrated with writing. Another reason for this is that students' topical knowledge will be better in the third year and might not have problems with topical knowledge that was rated as a common aetiological cause of apprehension by the participants.

As was claimed in the most sections of the current study and supported in the literature, anxiety experience, category, cause and treatment vary from person to person. Some students need sufficient time for their anxiety to be reduced, for other students it requires only a short amount time. Evidence for this stems from the students of the present study in which some students' writing apprehension was higher at the beginning of the term than at the end. Moreover, some students' progress was better throughout the course than others. The time period between the pretest and the posttest was fairly small; as a result, if the time period would have

been longer, much more effect would have been possible. Thus, this suggests that sufficient time needs to be devoted to a course with these strategies.

Recommendations for Further Research

A number of significant points that lie beyond the scope of this study could be considered in future research because they are directly associated with the applications of the current study. Thus, under the light of the results produced, the present study recommends the following studies to be conducted:

1. Given the fact that this study mostly produced non-significant or low correlations and a quasi-experimental design was used for the present study, a study with the same strategies be conducted with a true experiment to causally demonstrate the combined effect of the strategies on writing apprehension and performance or at least with a control group design.
2. The present study was limited both in time and scope; therefore, it was quite impossible to cover all the areas of writing performance to deeply probe into the different measures of writing performance and the correlations that exist between writing apprehension and writing performance. Hence, one further area of investigation in this regard could be employing the various measures of writing performance such as the use of the correctness analysis method presented in (Abdulmajeed, 2016), particularly in connection of writing performance with writing apprehension due to the low correlations that were observed in this study.
3. The present study was devoted only to the writing accuracy component of writing performance and the analytic scoring and error analysis alone might not cover all facets of performance. Therefore, the researcher recommends a study to be conducted regarding students' writing complexity as another component of writing performance, and its association with writing accuracy. This might again affect the correlation of writing performance to writing apprehension because not only the number of the errors and the type are considered in a such construct, rather the severity of errors can also be considered.
4. Another avenue of research could be to observe the application of the strategies with the ability to employ them in a longer period of time and with more than one genre. This may result in more fruitful results than the ones obtained in this study.
5. Additional future research on this topic should be extended to other populations due to the diversity that exists in anxiety levels, types, causes, consequences, and

correlations in different contexts. This can also be true for the application of the strategies with other populations.

6. As the present study was conducted to investigate the combined influence of the strategies in a semester of twelve weeks and their effects on writing apprehension reduction and writing performance enhancement was rather limited, particularly with regard to the categories and causes of writing apprehension, it would be useful for the teachers to conduct a longitudinal study on how the application of the strategies contribute to students' writing apprehension and performance over a longer period of time, particularly between the second and fourth educational levels.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

The Curriculum of the English Department

First Year							
Fall Semester				Spring Semester			
Modules	Theory Hours	Practice Hours	ECTS	Modules	Theory Hours	Practice Hours	ECTS
END101 Basic E. Grammar	3		4	END109 English Grammar	3		4
END102 Listening & Speaking (Pre-Intermediate)	2		3	END110 Listening & Speaking (Intermediate)	2		3
END103 Reading & Writing (Pre-Intermediate)	2		3	END111 Reading & Writing (Intermediate)	2		3
ENU105 Kurdology	4		5	ENU112 Environmental Conservation/ ENU117 Social Awareness	2	2	5
ENU106 IT Skills (Basics)	1	2	4	ENU113 IT Skills in Language Learning/Teaching	1	2	4
ENU107 Academic Debate I	2	2	5	ENU114 Academic Debate II	2	2	5
END104 Introduction to Literature	2		3	END115 English Pronunciation	1	2	3
ENC108 General Psychology I	2		3	ENC116 General Psychology II	2		3
Total	22		30		23		30

Second Year							
Fall Semester				Spring Semester			
Modules	Hours	Practice Hours	ECTS	Modules	Theory Hours	Practice Hours	ECTS
END201 Applied Grammar I	3		4	END209 Applied Grammar II	3		4
ENC202 English Writing Skills I	2		3	END210 English Writing Skills II	2		3
END203 Listening & Speaking (Upper-Intermediate)	2	2	4	END211 Listening & Speaking (Advanced)	2	2	4
END204 Reading & Comprehension (Upper-Intermediate)	3		4	END212 Reading & Literary Texts	3		4
END205 Literary Study	4		6	END213 Short Story	4		6
END206 Phonetics	1	2	3	END214 Phonology	1	2	3
ENC207 Child & Early Adolescent Psychology	2		3	ENC215 Counselling & Health Psychology	2		3
ENC208 Foundations of Education	2		3	ENC216 Second Language Learning	2		3
Total	24		30	Total	24		30

Third Year							
Fall Semester				Spring Semester			
Modules	Hours Theory	Hours Practice	ECTS	Modules	Hours Theory	Hours Practice	ECTS
END301 Intro to Morphology	3		4	END309 English Syntax	3		4
END302 Principles of Translation	1	2	4	END310 Literature in ELT	1	2	4
ENC303 General Teaching Methodology	2	2	5	END311 ELT Methodology	2	2	5
ENC304 Educational Measurement and Evaluation	2		3	END312 Language & Meaning	2		3
END305 Research writing & Methodology I	2		4	END313 Research Writing & Methodology II	2		4
ENC306 Educational Psychology	2		3	ENC314 Professional Development Skills	2		3
END307 Studies in Poetry	3		4	END315 Studies in Drama	3		4
END308 Classroom Management	2		3	END316 Language Testing	2		3
Total	21		30		21		30

Fourth Year							
Fall Semester				Spring Semester			
Modules	Hours Theory	Hours Practice	ECTS	Modules	Hours Theory	Hours Practice	ECTS
END401 Linguistics	3		4	END407 Sociolinguistics	3		4
END402 Studies in Novel	3		3	END408 Critical Studies in English Literature	3		4
ENC403 Observation & Teaching Practice		6	9	END409 ELT practicum		6	9
END404 Teaching the Four Skills		4	5	ENC410 Educational Management & Supervision	2		3
END405 Material Development	2		3	END411 Cross Cultural Communication	3		4
END406 Research Project I	2	4	6	END412 Research Project II	2	4	6
Total	26		30	Total	26		30

Total Study Hours	Total Credits	Number of Modules
6000	240	60

Percentage Weight percentage of different modules		
Department Modules	College Modules	University Modules
67.33 %	20 %	12.67 %

Percentage of Department Modules Distribution upon various topics		
Teaching/Learning	Linguistics	Literature
65.9 %	21.6 %	12.5 %

Appendix B

Syllabus for English Writing Skills I Course

		University of Raparin College of Basic Education Department of English Language 2020-2021 – Fall Semester			
Course Name English Writing Skills I	Course Code END202	Lecturer Sarkawt Muhammad		Teacher's Academic Profile -PhD Candidate in English Language Education -MA in English Language and Linguistics -BA in English Language and Literature -Scientific Title: Asst. Lecturer	
Weekly Course Hours 2	Office Hours Sat. 11:30-12:30	Contact sarkawt.en@uor.edu.krd			
Weekly Time Schedule Sat. 9:30-10:30 and 10:30-11:30		Year Second	Semester Fall	Attendance Minimum 85%	ECTS 3
Course Overview	Writing is deemed one of the essential skills of language that represents a continual demand and a valued commodity in the educational setting. Competency in writing is needed for academic success and for students' future careers as it is demanded in many professions. Students who are not competent in writing have been described as "not blessed" in Harmer's (2004) phraseology. This course is the continuation of the preceding Reading and Writing course that bridges over from paragraph to essay. It is designed for English major sophomores aiming to develop and sharpen their writing skills. More specifically and importantly, the course starts with a review of writing paragraphs. Then, it will move on to teach the way an essay is structured and the different types of essay writing including the logical division (classificatory) essay and the opinion essay. Both theory and practice are equally emphasized. The course will adopt the process-genre approach to teaching essay writing with both pair work and group work being the focal concern. Students will produce different types of well-organized as well as accurate essays confidently through extensive reading and research.				
Student Learning Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students will be able to write unified and coherent paragraphs.2. Students will learn to write well-organized essays.3. Students will be able to differentiate between different types of essays.4. Students will be able to write academic essays confidently.5. Students will be acquainted with various writing-related skills.				
Student's Obligation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students need to attend classes regularly and be punctual.• Students are required to do assignments and submit them on time.• Students' mobile phones must be turned off or at least be made silent.• Permission for postponing exams is given only in very urgent cases.• Students are required to prepare and actively participate in class sessions.				
Forms of Teaching	Lectures, practical sessions, assignments, individual work, pair and group work				
Course Reading List and References	Key reference: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2006). <i>Writing academic English</i> (4th ed.). Pearson Longman. Useful References: <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Davis, J., & Liss, R. (2006). <i>Effective academic writing 3 the essay</i>. New York: Oxford University Press.3. Zemach, D. E., & Rumisek, L. A. (2003). <i>College writing: From paragraph to essay</i>. Oxford: Macmillan.4. Savage, A. (2012). <i>Effective academic writing 2: The short essay</i>. Oxford University Press.5. Oshima, A., Hogue, A., & Ravitch, L. (2014). <i>Longman academic writing series: Essays</i>. Hoboken, NJ: Pearson Education.6. Lecturer's own notes.				

Weekly Outline and Course Content			
Week	Topics		
1 & 2	Introduction to the course: Pretest + explaining certain procedures		
3	A Review of Paragraph Structure: Defining paragraph/ The parts of a paragraph/ Identifying and writing topic sentences/ Developing a paragraph, identifying and writing concluding sentences		
4	A Review of the Characteristics of Paragraph and essay: Unity, Coherence and Completeness: Creating unity and coherence within a paragraph and developing paragraphs completely		
5	Steps of the Writing Process: Prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising and editing		
6	Logical Division Essay		
7	Logical Division Essay		
8	Midterm Exam		
9	Logical Division Essay		
10	The Opinion Essay		
11	The Opinion Essay		
12	The Opinion Essay		
14 & 15	Final Exam + Posttest		
Assessment Scheme	Assignments	10	
	keeping Portfolios	10	
	Quizzes	5	
	Participation and Attendance	5	
	Midterm Exam	20	
	Final Exam	50	

Appendix C

The Model Essays Given to Students

Model Essay 1: Logical Division Essay (Classification Essay)

Native American Influences on Modern U.S. Culture

When the first Europeans came to the North American continent, they encountered the completely new cultures of the Native American peoples of North America. Native Americans, who had highly developed cultures in many respects, must have been as curious about the strange European manners and customs as the Europeans were curious about them. As always happens when two or more cultures come into contact, there was a cultural exchange. Native Americans adopted some of the Europeans' ways, and the Europeans adopted some of their ways. As a result, Native Americans have made many valuable contributions to modern U.S. culture, particularly in the areas of language, art, food, and government.

First of all, Native Americans left a permanent mark on the English language. The early English-speaking settlers borrowed from several different Native American languages words for places in this new land. All across the country are cities, towns, rivers, and states with Native American names. For example, the states of Delaware, Iowa, Illinois, and Alabama are named after Native American tribes,² as are the cities of Chicago, Miami, and Spokane. In addition to place names, English adopted from various Native American languages the words for animals and plants found in the Americas. *Chipmunk*, *moose*, *raccoon*, *skunk*, *tobacco*, and *squash* are just a few examples.

Although the vocabulary of English is the area that shows the most Native American influence, it is not the only area of U.S. culture that has been shaped by contact with Native Americans. Art is another area of important Native American contributions. Wool rugs woven by women of the Navajo tribe in Arizona and New Mexico are highly valued works of art in the United States. Native American jewelry made from silver and turquoise is also very popular and very expensive. Especially in the western and southwestern regions of the United States, native crafts such as pottery, leather products, and beadwork can be found in many homes. Indeed, native art and handicrafts are a treasured part of U.S. culture.

In addition to language and art, agriculture is another area in which Native Americans had a great and lasting influence on the peoples who arrived here from Europe, Africa, and Asia. Being skilled farmers, the Native Americans of North America taught the newcomers many things about farming techniques and crops. Every U.S. schoolchild has heard the story of how Native Americans taught the first settlers to place a dead fish in a planting hole to provide fertilizer for the growing plant. Furthermore, they taught the settlers irrigation methods and crop rotation. Many of the foods people in the United States eat today were introduced to the Europeans by Native Americans. For example, corn and chocolate were unknown in Europe. Now they are staples in the U.S. diet.

Finally, it may surprise some people to learn that citizens of the United States are also indebted³ to the native people for our form of government. The Iroquois, who were an extremely large tribe with many branches called "nations," had

developed a highly sophisticated system of government to settle disputes that arose between the various branches. Five of the nations had joined together in a confederation called "The League of the Iroquois." Under the league, each nation was autonomous⁴ in running its own internal affairs, but the nations acted as a unit when dealing with outsiders. The league kept the Iroquois from fighting among themselves and was also valuable in diplomatic relations with other tribes. When the 13 colonies were considering what kind of government to establish after they had won their independence from Britain, someone suggested that they use a system similar to that of the League of the Iroquois. Under this system, each colony or future state would be autonomous in managing its own affairs but would join forces with the other states to deal with matters that concerned them all. This is exactly what happened. As a result, the present form of government of the United States can be traced directly back to a Native American model.

In conclusion, we can easily see from these few examples the extent of Native American influence on our language, our art forms, our eating habits, and our government. The people of the United States are deeply indebted to Native Americans for their contributions to U.S. culture.

Model Essay 2: Logical Division Essay (Classification Essay)

Body Language

Communicating effectively in a new country and in a new tongue requires more than just learning the language. Nonverbal communication, including body language, is equally important. A person's facial expressions, bodily gestures, and physical attitude transmit powerful messages that go beyond words. Therefore, anyone who intends to live, work, or study in another country should learn the body language of that culture, including the acceptable ways to use the face, gesture with the body, and make physical contact.

First, let's consider how people use the human face to communicate. Research shows that people everywhere reveal basic emotions, such as happiness, sadness, excitement, and confusion, through facial expressions. However, the amount of emotion people are comfortable showing varies from place to place. Take, for example, the extremely expressive faces of people in Italy and Spain. They are in constant motion and reveal feeling easily and often. In contrast, the faces of people from Asian countries tend not to reveal feelings as much or as quickly. Eye contact is a big part of facial expression, too. In the United States, speakers use their eyes to connect with others. People will look directly into a speaker's eyes to show interest. However, if listeners stare at a speaker with unblinking eyes, this can mean that they are bored, distracted, angry, or defensive. In some Latin American cultures, looking down instead of making direct eye contact is a show of respect.

The gestures that people make with their heads, shoulders, arms, and hands are another important means of communicating. In most—but not all—countries, shaking the head from side to side means "No" and nodding the head up and down means "Yes." In Bulgaria, the reverse is true. Nodding means "No" and shaking the head from left to right means "Yes." A shrug, with the shoulders raised and the

hands extended with the palms up, has various meanings in Western cultures. It often shows uncertainty but can also mean "I'm not interested." In many cultures, the thumbs up gesture means acceptance and approval. However, in places such as Iran and Iraq, the thumbs up is an insult. Similarly, in North America and many European countries, raising the hand with the thumb and index finger together so that they form the letter O means "everything is OK." However, in France and Belgium, the gesture means "zero," or "worthless." In Japan, the same gesture symbolizes money, and in Russia, Brazil, and Turkey, it is an insult. Clearly, typical gestures that people use every day can cause major misunderstandings depending on where and how they are used.

In addition to facial expressions and gestures, physical contact or the lack of it, is a key aspect of body language. Interestingly, people from the United States are thought of as open and friendly, but their body language may give the opposite message. Americans often seem cold and remote to people from other cultures because they prefer to keep their distance. They like to have approximately two to three feet of personal space around them. When individuals from other countries come too close, Americans tend to step back until they have enough distance to feel comfortable again. In addition, Americans will briefly shake and then release the right hand of a man or woman that they are meeting for the first time. They rarely hug someone in public unless they have a close relationship with the person. In addition, unless they are romantically involved, Americans rarely hold hands in public. A lack of awareness about the rules of physical contact can give the wrong impression of Americans and have a negative effect on cross-cultural communication.

In short, body language is an important form of communication that varies from place to place. When people travel, they should not presume that the rules for body language in their home culture apply everywhere else. In fact, just as people focus their attention on grammar and vocabulary to master a language, they should devote time and energy to learning the body language of a new country or culture.

Model Essay 3: Opinion Essay

In Support of Homeschooling

An increasing number of parents in countries such as Australia, Canada, and the United States have decided not to send their children to elementary or secondary school. Instead, the parents devote their time and energy to teaching their children at home. Opponents of homeschooling believe that students belong in a classroom with experienced professionals and other students of the same age. Although it may not be the best option for all students and all families, I am in favor of homeschooling for three reasons.

First of all, homeschooling makes effective use of time. In Australia, Canada, and the United States, the average school day is six to seven hours long. However, children who are homeschooled can finish their lessons in four to five hours. One explanation for this is that traditional classrooms often have more than 20 students. As a result, teachers spend a significant percentage of their time simply making certain that their students are paying attention and doing their work. In addition, students in a large class are likely to have different abilities and learning styles, and there is often not enough time to address the needs of each student. In contrast, students who are homeschooled are able to receive individual attention more easily. Their parent-teachers can see that they are completing their assignments and offer assistance if necessary. After homeschooled students finish their daily assigned work, they then have time to play sports, enjoy hobbies, or continue studying.

The second reason that homeschooling is a good idea is that it offers additional schoolwork and the opportunity for homeschooled children and teens to become independent learners. With the extra time they have, along with encouragement from their parents, homeschooled students can follow their interests and study subjects more deeply. They can choose some of the topics they want to investigate. For example, they might study such topics as ancient Chinese history, the physics of soccer (football), or computer animation. Through their research, which includes

online reading, library visits, trips to local museums, and family vacations, they learn more about their chosen topics. They also develop strong skills in areas such as math, science, reading, and writing. As one of the admissions counselors at our university, Andrew Muller, said during my interview with him, "We like students who are homeschooled because they do not wait for others to tell them what to do. They are able to think for themselves." He then added, "Homeschooled young people ask their instructors for help when they need it, but they generally take charge of their own learning."

Finally, homeschooling helps young people to develop socially. One of my friends was educated at home until the age of 18. He and his brother played on baseball and basketball teams and participated in activities with other homeschooled students, so they had a chance to make friends who were their own age. However, they also spent a great deal of time with their parents and older relatives who taught them the importance of strong family relationships and showed them how to act maturely. Furthermore, their education involved volunteer work at their local community center. There they met people of all ages while they learned about the responsibility of having a job and the importance of helping their neighbors. As a result of the education his parents gave him, my friend is now a well-balanced individual who knows how to be an adult and still have fun.

To summarize, homeschooling is not easy and may not be for everyone, but it has certain benefits. For the most part, homeschooled students can complete their basic lessons in less time than students in a formal classroom. Therefore, they have more time to pursue their own interests. Because they learn how to ask questions and find answers, and because they develop strong social skills, they become intelligent, responsible adults. As far as I am concerned, even more parents should consider the option of homeschooling.

Model Essay 4: Opinion Essay

In Support of Community Service for Criminals

Owing to the great variety of crimes that can be punishable by prison, some people argue that not all criminals are the same and it would therefore be more appropriate to give certain criminals community service instead. I agree that in some cases, prison may not be the best solution and community service would probably have more benefits.

One justification given for prisons is to keep society safe by removing criminals from the outside world. So, the first thing to consider is if someone who has broken the law is a danger to other people. In the case of violent crime, there is an argument to keep the perpetrator away from society. However, burglary or possession of drugs, for example, does not involve violence against other people so the criminal does not present a direct danger to anyone in the community. Keeping these types of criminals in prison is expensive for the taxpayer and does not appear to be an effective punishment as they often commit the same crime again when they come out of prison.

Personally, I also believe punishments should reform people so they do not reoffend. A further reason not to put these people in prison is that they may mix with more dangerous and violent criminals, potentially committing a worse crime when they are released. By keeping them in the community, helping others, they not only learn new skills, but they could also develop more empathy and care towards others. If this occurs, society can only benefit.

Critics of this more rehabilitative approach to crime believe that justice should be harsh in order to deter people from committing similar crimes and that community service could be less likely to have that effect. However, there is very little evidence to suggest that long prison sentences deter criminals.

In conclusion, putting criminals who are not a danger to society in prison is expensive and, in my opinion, ineffective, both as a deterrent and as a form of rehabilitation. Community service for non-violent crimes benefits both society and the offender. That said, it would be useful to have more data to work out whether community service or prison is more likely to stop someone reoffending. I strongly believe that decisions on how best to deal with criminals should be based on evidence of what actually works.

Appendix D

Assessing Students' Writing Performance

C	Band				Score
	0	2	4	6	
CTA	-No evidence of ability to perform the task.	-Task generally performed poorly -Poor description of topic with poor examples -Lack of supporting ideas -Irrelevant information and repetition	-Task performed somewhat competently -Somewhat description of topic with few examples -Focused on the topic	-Task performed competently -Relevant and necessary description of topic with various examples -Clearly presents a fully developed response.	6/6
OCC	-No organization of content -Comprehension is totally difficult -Sentences are not related to each other -Very little/no command of connectors -No command of the elements of composition	-Very little organization of content -Some difficulties in comprehension -Sentences are inadequately divided -Some problems in the use of connectors -Somewhat confident control over the elements of composition	-Logically organises information and ideas. -Very few difficulties in comprehension. -Poor arrangement of sentences -Very few problems with connectors -Good command of the elements of composition	-Effective logical organization of information and ideas. -Intelligible and comprehensible to read -Uses paragraphing appropriately -Effective and satisfactory use of connectors -Demonstrate a high command of the elements of composition	6/6
GA	Number and type of errors make comprehension frequently and totally impossible	-Frequent language errors, sometimes causing comprehension problems -Limited language structures	Very few language errors, rarely preventing comprehension	-Uses a variety of language structures -Frequent error-free sentences	6/6
VLR	Inadequate vocabulary even for the basic parts	-Limited vocabulary -Frequent lexical inadequacies -Excessive repetition	Active vocabulary almost no inadequacies or inaccuracies in vocabulary	-Uses a wide range of vocabulary accurately -Producing rare errors	6/6
MA	Lots of mechanical (punctuation, capitalization, spelling) errors causing incomprehension	Lots of mechanical errors (punctuation, capitalization, spelling) not causing incomprehension	Few mechanical errors	No or very few mechanical errors	6/6
T					30/30

Note. Number of Words= Students were required to write at least 250 words; C= Criteria; CTA= content (task achievement); OCC= organization (coherence and cohesion); GA= grammatical accuracy; VLR= vocabulary lexical resource; MA= mechanical accuracy.

Appendix E

Informed Consent Form

Title of the Research Project: “The Effect of Anxiolytic Strategies on Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance”

You are being requested to take part in an experimental doctoral study, titled “The Effect of Anxiolytic Strategies on Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance” that aims to demonstrate the impact of certain anxiolytic strategies over a period of a fifteen-week semester and the correlation of writing apprehension to English as a foreign language (EFL) on Kurdish students’ grammatical accuracy in writing essays. In other words, it employs certain strategies to reduce Kurdish EFL students’ writing anxiety when writing an essay. It further seeks to understand if high apprehensive students differ from low apprehensive students in terms of grammatical accuracy in writing essays. To achieve these aims, participants need to complete two questionnaires, do the tasks that will be given during the course and take one pretest and one posttest. Your participation in the study is voluntary, the data will be used for academic research purposes only and your information is strictly kept confidential and anonymized. Your withdrawal from the study is allowed at any time during the course of the study by contacting the researcher. If you opt out of the study, your data will be deleted and will not be included in any further steps of the study. No one apart from the experimenter will have access to the data collected from you. If you decide to take part, you need to sign the form in the next page. For any questions or concerns, please contact the researcher at:

Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir, PhD student

Near East University/ Department of ELT

E-mail: sarkawt.en@uor.edu.krd

Mobile No.: +964 750 161 0701

Consent Form

Thank you for taking the time to read the preceding information sheet and considering taking part in the study. The information sheet is for you to keep. Just to remind you, the data you will provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and you will never be identified in any outputs that arise from this project.

After reading and agreeing to the points below, you should sign the form:

- I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above experiment.
- I understand that there is no compulsion for me to participate in this experiment and its instruments.
- I confirm that the purposes and procedures of the study have been fully clarified to me.
- I agree to take part in this research and allow the researcher to use my data for the purposes of his study.

By signing below, you agree to take part in this study.

Name of Participant: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of Experimenter: Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir/ Signature: _____ Date: 17/10/2020

This consent form was reviewed and approved by the researcher's supervisors at Near East University/ Ataturk Faculty of Education/ Department of English Language Teaching on the first of October, 2020.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen Bostanci

hanife.bensen@neu.edu.tr

Supervisor

Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kurt

mustafa.kurt@neu.edu.tr

Supervisor

Appendix F

Second Language Writing Anxiety (SLWAI, Cheng, 2004)

Dear Student,

The purpose of this section of the study is to understand the amount and type of apprehension you experience when writing in English and its relation to your grammatical accuracy in writing. Below are a series of statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking (X) in the appropriate column. Just try to be as honest and accurate as possible. Kindly do not forget any of the items and select just a single response for every statement. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes.

Thank you in advance for your attention and participation.

A. Demographic Information:

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age: 17-22 years ☐ 22-30 years ☐
3. How long have been studying English? 10-15 years ☐ 15-20 years ☐
4. Your grade in writing in your first year:

First semester: 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐ 70-79 ☐ 80-89 ☐
 90-99 ☐

Second semester: 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐ 70-79 ☐ 80-89 ☐
 90-99 ☐

B. Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory

Note. SA= strongly agree; A= agree; U= uncertain; D= disagree; SD= strongly disagree

No	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	While writing in English, I'm not nervous at all.					
2.	I feel my heart pounding when I write English essays under time constraints.					
3.	If I know they will be evaluated while writing English essays, I feel worried and uneasy.					
4.	I often choose to write down my thoughts in English.					
5.	I usually do my best to avoid writing English essays.					
6.	My mind often goes blank when I start to work on an English essay.					
7.	I do not worry about my English essays being a lot worse than others' essays.					

8.	I tremble when I write English essays under time pressure.					
9.	I perspire when I write English essays under time pressure.					
10.	I would worry about getting a very poor grade If my English essay is to be evaluated.					
11.	I do my best to avoid situations in which I have to write in English.					
12.	My thoughts become jumbled when I write English essays under time constraints.					
13.	Unless I have no choice, I would not use English to write essays.					
14.	I often feel panic when I write English essays under time constraints.					
15.	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at my English essay if they read it.					
16.	I am petrified when unexpectedly asked to write English essays.					
17.	I would do my best to excuse myself if asked to write English essays.					
18.	I don't worry at all about what other people would think of my English essays.					
19.	I usually seek every possible chance to write English essays outside of class.					
20.	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write English essays.					
21.	I'm afraid of my English essay being chosen as a sample for discussion in class.					
22.	I'm not afraid at all that my English essays would be rated as very poor.					
23.	Whenever possible, I would use English to write essays.					

Appendix G

Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety (CSLWAI) (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014)

Dear Student,

The purpose of this section is to elicit from you the causes of your writing anxiety when writing in English. The statements below ask for your personal opinion regarding the causes of your writing anxiety. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes. The data that you provide will be kept confidential and will be anonymously used in analyses. Please express your degree of agreement or disagreement by marking (X) in the appropriate column. Thank you in advance for your participation.

A. Demographic Information:

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age: 17-22 years ☐ 22-30 years ☐
3. How long have been studying English? 10-15 years ☐ 15-20 years ☐
4. Your grade in writing in your first year:

First semester: 50-59 <input type="checkbox"/>	60-69 <input type="checkbox"/>	70-79 <input type="checkbox"/>	80-89 <input type="checkbox"/>
90-99 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Second semester: 50-59 <input type="checkbox"/>	60-69 <input type="checkbox"/>	70-79 <input type="checkbox"/>	80-89 <input type="checkbox"/>
90-99 <input type="checkbox"/>			

B. Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (Adapted and Expanded from Rezaei & Jafari, 2014):

Note. SA= strongly agree; A= agree; U= uncertain; D= disagree; SD= strongly disagree.

No	Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
	When I write English essays, I feel anxious because of:					
1.	fear of the negative comments of the teacher.					
2.	fear of the evaluation of the teacher.					
3.	fear of writing tests.					
4.	fear of grammatical errors.					
5.	fear of lexical errors.					
6.	fear of spelling and punctuation errors.					
7.	insufficient English writing practice.					
8.	my insufficient command of English writing.					
9.	not knowing what to write on the topic.					

10.	inadequate vocabulary.					
11.	problems with topic choice.					
12.	pressure for writing a perfect essay.					
13.	the high frequency of writing assignments.					
14.	the nature of writing assignments.					
15.	time pressure.					
16.	low confidence in English writing.					
17.	my writing experience in English in the past.					
18.	my low level of motivation.					
19.	teacher's behaviour in the writing class.					
20.	fear of my writing being scorned by classmates.					
21.	not understanding the requirements of the writing question or its difficulty.					
22.	fear of not getting the grade I want.					

Appendix H

The Essay Writing Test

Instructions:

- You have 50 minutes to complete this test.
- Choose ONE of the following topics to write your essay.
- You should write at least 250 words.
- Your essay will be assessed according to a rubric that includes (Task achievement (Content), Coherence and Cohesion, Lexical Resource, Grammatical Range and Accuracy, Mechanical Accuracy).

=====

1.

Children who are brought up in families that do not have large amounts of money are better prepared to deal with the problems of adult life than children brought up by wealthy parents. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

2.

Some people believe that children should not be given homework every day, while others believe that they must get homework every day in order to be successful at school. Do you agree or disagree?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Appendix I

Pilot Study Questions for Students, Teachers and Psychologists

1. For Students

Strategies of Mitigating Students' Writing Apprehension in the Kurdish Setting Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

Dear Student

You are requested to take part in a study to validate and improve the writing apprehension reduction strategies that will be utilized in an experimental doctoral research study. Thus, the objective is to elicit from Kurdish undergraduate students the strategies that can be utilized to reduce their writing anxiety when writing an essay. Your opinions and experiences are valuable to recognizing the strategies. If you agree to participate, you will need to provide answers to the open-ended questions below. Your answers to the questions will be kept by the researcher for 2 years after the completion of the study, after which they will be deleted. All identified information will be anonymized and your identity will not be revealed to anyone.

Please note that your participation in the study is voluntary, the data will be used for research academic purposes only and your information is strictly kept confidential. Your withdrawal from the study is allowed at any time during the course of the study. If you opt out of the study, your data will be deleted and will not be included in any further steps of the study. In case you have any questions or concerns, please contact me using the information below:

Name: Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir

Phone: 0750 161 0701

Email: sarkawt.en@uor.edu.krd

By signing below, you agree to take part in this study.

Signature _____

Date of consent: _____

The Interview questions for undergraduate students:

1. What are the causes or sources of your writing anxiety?
2. What can you do to reduce your writing anxiety when writing an essay?
3. What strategies do you use to reduce your anxiety before, while and post writing?

4. What should a teacher do for you in class or an exam so that you would feel less anxious in writing?
5. What teaching methods or techniques can reduce your writing anxiety when writing an essay in class or an exam?
6. What sort of activities or assignments can reduce your writing anxiety?
7. What behaviours of teachers can affect your level of writing anxiety to be lowered?

2. For Instructors

Strategies of Mitigating Students' Writing Apprehension in the Kurdish Setting Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

Dear Instructor

You are requested to take part in a study to validate and improve the writing apprehension reduction strategies that will be utilized in an experimental doctoral research study. Thus, the objective is to elicit from writing instructors the strategies that can be utilized to reduce Kurdish undergraduate students' writing anxiety when writing an essay. Your opinions and experiences are valuable to recognizing the strategies. If you agree to participate, you will need to provide answers to the open-ended questions below. Your answers to the questions will be kept by the researcher for 2 years after the completion of the study, after which they will be deleted. All identified information will be anonymized and your identity will not be revealed to anyone.

Please note that your participation in the study is voluntary, the data will be used for research academic purposes only and your information is strictly kept confidential. Your withdrawal from the study is allowed at any time during the course of the study. If you opt out of the study, your data will be deleted and will not be included in any further steps of the study. In case you have any questions or concerns, please contact me using the information below:

Name: Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir

Phone: 0750 161 0701

Email: sarkawt.en@uor.edu.krd

By signing below, you agree to take part in this study.

Signature _____

Date of consent: _____

Interview questions for instructors:

1. What are the causes or sources of your students' writing anxiety when writing an essay?
2. What can you, as a teacher, do to reduce their anxiety when writing an essay?
3. What can students do when writing an essay in class or an exam to reduce their anxiety?
4. What strategies should students use to reduce their anxiety before, while and post writing?
5. What teaching methods or techniques can reduce students' anxiety when writing an essay?
6. What sort of activities or assignments can reduce students' writing anxiety?
7. What behaviours of teachers do you think can affect their level of writing anxiety to be lowered?

3. For Psychologists

Strategies of Mitigating Students' Writing Apprehension in the Kurdish Setting Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

Dear psychologist

You are requested to take part in a study to validate and improve the writing apprehension reduction strategies that will be utilized in an experimental doctoral research study. Thus, the objective is to elicit from psychology experts the writing strategies that can be utilized to reduce students' writing anxiety when writing an essay. Your opinions and experiences are valuable to recognizing the strategies. If you agree to participate, you will need to provide answers to the open-ended questions below. Your answers to the questions will be kept by the researcher for 2 years after the completion of the study, after which they will be deleted. All identified information will be anonymized and your identity will not be revealed to anyone.

Please note that your participation in the study is voluntary, the data will be used for research academic purposes only and your information is strictly kept confidential. Your withdrawal from the study is allowed at any time during the course of the study. If you opt out of the study, your data will be deleted and will not

be included in any further steps of the study. In case you have any questions or concerns, please contact me using the information below:

Name: Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir

Phone: 0750 161 0701

Email: sarkawt.en@uor.edu.krd

By signing below, you agree to take part in this study.

Signature _____

Date of consent: _____

Interview questions for psychology experts:

1. What are the causes or sources of students' writing anxiety?
2. What are the strategies that can reduce students' anxiety when writing an essay during an exam or in class?
3. What are the strategies that students should use to reduce their anxiety when writing an essay during an exam or in class?
4. What strategies should students use to reduce their anxiety before, while and post writing?
5. What are the strategies that teachers should utilize to reduce their students' anxiety when writing an essay during an exam or in class?
6. What sort of activities or assignments can reduce students' writing anxiety?

Appendix J

A Precise Description of the Strategies

The strategies		How to apply
1. Doing reading before writing		Students were given link addresses, PDF files, or videos about the topic the students chose before writing anything via Google Classroom and they needed to read or watch them before they entered the class and this will be checked through asking questions about the topic, students' writing, and students' participation in pre-writing activities. (Graded: It affected only the participation and the attendance grades).
2. Writing one paragraph about a topic each two weeks (Doing free writing)		Students wrote a paragraph about a topic each two weeks and submitted it via the Classwork part of Google Classroom. Each student was required to pass a positive comment about one of those paragraphs in Classwork. Then, the teacher recognized students' strengths in those paragraphs and sent them via email to each student (All the writings and comments were graded and the grades went to the assignments grades).
3. Improving the level of confidence	A. Recognizing students' strengths (Last week's writing).	The teacher recognized strong points about the paragraphs written by the students in 2 and sent them positive feedback via email. (Graded, assignments) Every two weeks
	B. Finding a positive comment about each student's writing.	The students found a positive comment about the paragraphs written in 2 and posted it into Class Work. (Graded: Explained in 2) Every two weeks
	C. Commenting on content before correcting errors.	This was the main goal throughout the course.
	D. Providing general feedback on weaknesses.	The teacher provided feedback about the weaknesses in writings made in class and in 2 via email. (Whenever they wrote something).
	E. Applying heuristic strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and listing.	This was carried out collaboratively by the students before beginning with writing in class. (This was carried out in the planning stage and affected participation grades).
	F. Using journal writing to record feelings, and difficulties on the students' part.	Students wrote two journals (It affected assignment grades).
	G. Focusing on pair and group work.	This was carried out in pre-writing stages and through peer editing groups. (Participation grades).

		I. Transforming negative feelings into more positive ones through positive self-talk, e.g. stating that “I am strong, I can”, “if I commit errors this time, I will learn from them and those who learned the language were like me”, “If I try more, I will become less apprehensive”.	The teacher and psychologists did this in class and online via Google Meetings (Attendance is required).
4. Inviting psychologists (Twice throughout the course)		A. To know how to develop a positive attitude about writing in English.	Online via Google Meeting by psychologists (Attendance is required)
		B. To teach them think positively about evaluation and consequences and believing that they can write well.	Online via Google Meeting by psychologists. (Attendance is required)
		C. advising them on how to reduce their anxiety, i.e. teaching strategies of keeping themselves away from stress and anxiety.	Online via Google Meeting by psychologists. (Attendance is required)
5. Feedback		A. Teacher feedback	This was given for providing both positive and negative feedback. It was used for both essay and paragraph writings.
		B. Peer feedback	Students provided positive feedback via Google Classroom to writings in 2 and to the essays written (Graded, assignments, participation, and attendance). Students used peer editing worksheets at the end of the key reference.
		C. Self-evaluation	The students self-edited their essays in the post-writing stage by using the self-editing worksheets found at the end of the key reference. (Graded, assignments, portfolio)
6. Support	Cognitive support	A. Improving students’ vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling.	The teacher did this by adding link addresses, books, videos and other resources to Google Classroom concerned with writing-related grammar, vocabulary, expressions, spelling and punctuation or teaching them in the class, i.e. teaching them essential expressions at different steps of writing an essay.
		B. Showing them written samples, especially those written by natives.	The teacher did this in class.

	B. Emotional support	C. Creating a convivial environment inside the classroom free from frightening and terrifying in which students feel safe and secure by (not blaming them or criticizing them severely on mistakes, assuring students that making mistakes is okay, being friendly, facilitative, motivating, patient, sociable, and courteous with them, and using motivating expressions.	The teacher and the students themselves do this by providing positive feedback and using motivating words and expressions. Psychologists could also be helpful in that.
		D. Not disclosing students' errors to anyone in class.	Neither the teacher nor the students did this.
		E. Devoting a specific time to verbalize fears and reveal the writing problems they have.	The teacher did this online via Google Meetings for 10 minutes each week to listen to students' problems and after class sessions.
		F. Teaching to keep themselves away from stress and anxiety during writing and exams	This was done by the teacher and psychologists both in class and via Google Meetings. (Attendance was required)
7. Systematic desensitization	A. Deep breathing	The teacher and the psychologists trained students to do deep breathing and say two repetitive prayers before writing and exams. This required them to close the eyes and visualize the writing problems they had. These prayers are specifically used when one encounters difficulties.	
	D. Repetitive prayers		
8. Doing remedial teaching	Monitoring students' writing difficulties, writing confidence, writing attitudes, writing weaknesses, and treating students accordingly.	This was carried out by the teacher through: A. the teacher's reflection in and on action B. the teachers' diary and students' journal writings. C. open-ended questions. D. Google Meetings	
9. The use of the Process-Genre Approach in Teaching Writing: It has already been detailed in chapter two in the literature review.			
10. Doing Blended Learning Using -Email	A. Strategy No.1	Providing students with link addresses and websites to do reading before they write anything via Google Classroom.	
	B. Strategy No. 2	Providing feedback to the paragraphs they wrote, particularly weaknesses via e-email. This feedback was also provided by peers through the Classwork part of Google Classroom in which each student put the paragraph he had written into Classwork and asking others to pass a positive comment about his classmate's paragraph.	

-Google Classroom -Google Forms -Google Chats -Google Meetings -on hour in class and one hour electronic or online	D. Strategy No. 4	Psychologists and the teacher gave the talks via Google Meeting.
	E. Strategy No. 5	Most feedback was given via Google Classroom.
	F. Strategy No. 6	Uploading electronic books to Classroom concerned with writing-related grammar, vocabulary, and spelling and designing quizzes using Google Forms. Inviting psychologists to give talks to support them both cognitively and emotionally. The teacher also devoted ten minutes to listen to students to present the problems they have in writing and verbalize the fears and anxieties.
	G. Strategy No. 7	Eliciting writing problems from students and teaching them the exercises and repetitive prayers via Google Meeting.
	H. Strategy No. 8	The teacher surveyed students and asked them open-ended questions via Google Forms and invited psychologists to give talks via Google Meetings.
	I. Strategy No. 9	Google Classroom was used in providing the model text, and peer assessment.

Appendix K

Université Catholique de Louvain's Error Classification and Description: The Instrument Utilized for the Error Analysis (Error types, their Codes and descriptions, and examples) - *Note.* The examples are taken from the data of the present study.

Grammatical Errors (GE)	Code	Description of the Error	Example of the Error
Grammar, article	GA	Article errors including definite, indefinite, and zero article errors	-Wealthy families have incredible role to grow a healthy children. -Some of the situations need to have a money.
Grammar, determiner, demonstrative	GDD	Demonstrative errors	-This children study hard every day. -Teachers should give homework this three days.
Grammar, determiner, possessive	GDO	Errors on possessive determiners	-If they understand, they can be successful at school and our life. - To conclude children these day has a lot of anxiety for him/her homeworks.
Grammar, determiner, indefinite	GDI	Errors on indefinite determiners	-All teachers must give a few homework. -Finally, I can say that every children need to understand the lessons before doing homework.
Grammar, determiner, other	GDT	Errors on determiners other than those listed	-Others people believe that they must get homework every day.
Grammar, adjective, comparative/superlative	GACS	Errors on the comparative or superlative use of an adjective or adverb	-Their mind will be more wide. -Lessons will be more clear for them. -Humans are more stronger.
Grammar, adjective, number	GAN	Error on the use of an adjective in the plural	-The homeworks were easies for the children.
Grammar, adjective, order	GADJO	Misplaced adjective	-In conclusion, assignments and homework have effect good or bad on students.
Grammar, adverb, order	GADVO	Adverb used in a wrong position	If every day students receive homework, they learn more and new things.
Grammar, noun, case	GNC	Errors on the use of the genitive	Some colleges and universities capture students interest.
Grammar, noun, number	GNN	Addition or omission of the plural morpheme on nouns	-They struggle since the helping hands that were there most of the times aren't there anymore. -At the first homework is one of the imporetant way for testing children.

Grammar, pronoun, demonstrative	GPD	Demonstrative pronoun errors	Homework is an activity that helps students grow with those.
Grammar, pronoun, personal	GPP	Errors on personal pronouns	-I think children they cant and they not be able to do homeworks every day. -They can't think about what he or she studied.
Grammar, pronoun, possessive	GPO	Possessive pronoun errors	Anxiety for children its not good for our mind.
Grammar, pronoun, indefinite	GPI	Indefinite pronoun errors	Some is given for the purpose of grades. <i>Note.</i> Some= assignments
Grammar, pronoun, reciprocal/reflexive	GPF	Reflexive or reciprocal pronoun errors	When yourself do homework that is make you a good person.
Grammar, pronoun, relative/interrogative	GPR	Relative/ interrogative pronoun errors	No examples were observed.
Grammar, verb, auxiliary	GVAUX	Wrong use of primary, semi-, and modal auxiliaries.	If you shouldn't give home work, the children feel anxiety.
Grammar, verb, morphology	GVM	Wrong use of a pre-existing form, e.g. employing simple past form in place of a past participle form, or an infinitive in place of a past participle.	The children doesn't feeling bored.
Grammar, verb, number	GVN	Errors on subject-verb agreement	-It have the purpose to getting marks.
Grammar, verb, finite/nonfinite	GVNF	Finite/non-finite verb form errors	-Given homework, assignments has more benefit such as to be successful. -I think don't need give homework every day.
Grammar, verb, tense	GVT	Wrong use of tense or aspect	The second one said or believe that childrens that every time get homework this is not outcome.
Grammar, verb, voice	GVV	The wrong use of active voice in place of the passive voice and vice-versa.	This is damaged the students brain.
Grammar, word, class	GWC	Misuse of a word class, e.g. using a noun in place of an adjective, etc.	Assignments is oblige for students.
Lexical Errors			
Lexis, conjunction, coordination	LCC	Coordinating conjunction errors (and, or, but, neither ...nor, etc.)	Some people believe that children should not given homework every day and while others believe that they must get homework every day.
Lexis, connector, logical, complex	LCLC	Wrong use of multi-word logical connectors	-In the other hand , believing that homework should not given everyday.

			-In my openion , i believe that children should not be given homework every day.
Lexis, connector, logical, single	LCLS	Wrong use of single word logical connectors	Also these children suffer each day with the crule heart of life.
Lexis, conjunction, subordination	LCS	Errors on subordinating conjunctions (if, whether, that, etc.)	As a I said befor the one how do homework everyday , he is more responsible comper to the other one.
Lexical phrase errors	LP	Errors on multiword units such as lexical bundles, phrasal verbs, etc.	We should prepare to school activities because it causes to self-growth.
Lexical single errors	LS	Collocational, conceptual, connotative lexical errors on single existing English words.	-I hardly disagree with 2 nd thought. -One of the motevates is a good weather because it will help them to be relax
Mechanical Punctuation Errors			
Mechanical, Punctuation, confusion	MPC	Confusion between two punctuation marks, e.g. the use of a comma in place of a full stop called a run-on sentence or vice-versa.	If we make a pressure on children to do so many homework in a week. It will have negatie effect on them.
Mechanical, Punctuation, lexical	MPL	The use of a of a punctuation marker in place of a lexical item such as a conjunction of coordination or vice-versa.	a “poor” child has seen hardships and knows how to face them and is curious about life and strives to adapt and overcome their problems.
Mechanical, Punctuation, missing	MPM	Missing punctuation marker	To conclude children these day has a lot of anxiety for him/her homeworks.
Mechanical, Punctuation, redundant	MPR	Redundant punctuation marker	I agree. with this speech above.
Mechanical, spelling	MS	Errors of misspelt words	Openion, home work, diffrent, effictive, against, succsfull
Mechanical, capitalization	MC	The use of a lowercase letter in place of an uppercase one or vice-versa.	Also, It has good effictive.
Style/Sentence Errors			
Sentence, incomplete	SI	Fragments such as verbless sentences	I’m disagree this opinion because homework very important for students.
Sentence, unclear	SU	Incomprehensible sentence	Also if them work harder defenitely have knowing majority of the information about other level.
Word Missing/Redundant/Order Errors			
Word missing	WM	Omission of words apart from pronouns, dependent prepositions, articles, connectors, auxiliaries	First of all, must get homeworks and assignments every day.

Word order	WO	Problems with word order that do not fall into adjective or adverb order categories	I will be self-esteem is better.
Word redundant singular	WRS	Unnecessary use of a single word excluding articles (GA), pronouns (GPs), connectors (LSs), dependent prepositions, as well as auxiliaries (AVAUX).	in conclusion , we know that learn language is be easy if you everyday spend time with yourself.
Word redundant multiple	WRM	Unnecessary use of multiple words apart from articles (GA), connectors (LCs), pronouns (GPs), auxiliaries (GVAUX), and dependent prepositions	Homework or be given assignments can help students to be successful and can help the students to achieved that things they want.
Lexico-Grammar Errors			
Lexico-grammar, adjective, complementation	LGAC	Wrong complementation of adjectives	Many students are capable to do assignments. <i>Note.</i> No examples were observed.
Lexico-grammar, adjective, preposition	LGAP	A wrong dependent preposition employed with an adjective	Children are worried in homework.
Lexico-grammar, conjunction, complementation	LGCC	Wrong complementation of conjunctions	Assignments encourage students to study more rather than discouraging them. <i>Note.</i> No examples were observed.
Lexico-grammar, noun, complementation	LGNC	Erroneous complementation nouns	Assignments have the possibility to overload students.
Lexico-grammar, noun, preposition	LGNP	An erroneous dependent preposition used with a noun	Social media have good effect for students and society.
Lexico-grammar, noun, countable/uncountable	LGNC/U	Errors in the use of an uncountable noun in the plural	Assignments or homeworks in time good gives more information.
Lexico-grammar, preposition, complementation	LGPC	Wrong complementation of prepositions	Instead of encourage students, some assignments discourage them.
Lexico-grammar, verb, complementation	LGVC	Incorrect complementation of verbs	Some students cannot afford to doing many assignments.
Lexico-grammar, verb, preposition	LGVP	An incorrect preposition is used with a verb	-I agree for second opinion.
Infelicities	Z	Not full-blown errors, i.e. milder errors such as problems with register, stylistic problems, contractions, informal expressions or words, inconsistencies, etc.	-Children don't feel bored in school. -The use of 'cause' instead of because.

Appendix L

Approval Letter from Near East University



BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR ETİK

KURULU

24.04.2020

Dear Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir

Your application titled **“The Effect of Anxiolytic Strategies on Writing Apprehension and Writing Performance”** with the application number YDÜ/EB/2020/475 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Direnç Kanol'.

Note:If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

Appendix M

Permission to Use the Measures

Permission to use CSLWAI inbox x

Sarkawt Muhammad <sarkawt.en@gmail.com>
to rezaei.maliheh@gmail.com Thu, Sep 24, 2020, 3:05 PM

Dear Dr. Rezaei,

I am Sarkawt Muhammad, a PhD student at Near East University. I am conducting my thesis on writing anxiety. I wonder if you could allow me to use the questionnaire you have designed regarding the causes of writing anxiety, called "Causes of Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory" by Rezaei & Jafari, 2014. Thanks.

Kindest regards,
Sarkawt Muhammad.

Maliheh Rezaei <rezaei.maliheh@gmail.com>
to me Thu, Sep 24, 2020, 3:31 PM

Dear Sarkawt,

I'm delighted that you found the instrument contributory to your research. Feel free to apply the instrument and I'll be ready to offer any further suggestions or clarifications upon your request. Wish you all the best in your research.

Best regards,
Maliheh Rezaei

permission to use your scale inbox x

Sarkawt Muhammad <sarkawt.en@gmail.com>
to t22035, t22035 Wed, Mar 18, 2020, 1:24 AM

Dear Prof Dr Cheng,

I am Sarkawt Muhammad, a PhD student in English language education at Near East University. I wonder if you could grant me **permission** to utilize your measure 'The second language writing anxiety' measure for the purpose of collecting data for my PhD dissertation. Thanks.

Respectfully yours,
Sarkawt Muhammad.

Yuh-show Cheng <t22035@ntnu.edu.tw yjc@gmail.com>
to me Mon, Mar 30, 2020, 11:29 AM

Dear Sarkawt,

I'm sorry for this late reply!

I'm happy to grant you my **permission** to utilize the second language writing anxiety measure I developed if you mean the SLWAI published in 2004. Be sure to acknowledge my authorship of the SLWAI in the report of your study (be it oral or written).


I look forward to hearing more from you about your findings. Wish you a big success!

Best,
Yuh-show

Yuh-show Cheng 程玉秀
Professor
Department of English
National Taiwan Normal University
Taipei, Taiwan, ROC

Appendix N

Consent Letter from the University of Raparin



University of Raparin

Directorate of Relations
 Presidency Building, 3rd Floor
 Main Road, Rania, Al-Sulaimania
 Kurdistan Region – Iraq
 Email: relations@uor.edu.krd
 Tel: +964 (0) 7502659191
 Web: <http://www.uor.edu.krd>

October 13, 2020

No: 67

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

To: Near East University

Consent Letter

Hereby we confirm that our College of Basic Education in their letter No. (29-386) on (11-10-2020) have agreed on the request made by (Sarkawt Muhammad Qadir) who is an instructor at the English department of our university and he is currently a PhD student at Near East University to conduct his research on second year students of the English department/ College of Basic Education of our university for the purpose of data collection that includes applying questionnaires and holding experiments on his research topic for 14 weeks starting from the new academic year/ fall semester.

Should you have any inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Cordially:



Assistant Prof. Dr. Mofaq Khalid Ibrahim
University president



CC: 

- Office of University President
- Outgoing

 Main Road, Rania / Al-Sulaimania / Kurdistan Region – Iraq

 +964(0) 750 265 91 91

 relations@uor.edu.krd

Appendix O

Final Exam Questions

Presidency of University of Raparin
Bologna Process Examinations
Examination Committee
Year: 2020 – 2021
English Department



Final Exams –
Fall Semester

Subject: English Writing Skills I
Lecturer: Sarkawt Muhammad
Date:/.... /2021
Time: 1 Hour

Q. Choose ONE of the topics below and write a well-organized opinion essay:

Instruction: You should write at least 250 words.

Topic 1:

Some people believe that you can never become fluent in a language unless you have spent time living or working in that country.

To what extent do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Topic 2:

Some people believe that students must get homework or be given assignments every day in order to be successful as most students will not learn anything unless it is compulsory.

To what extent do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Topic 3:

Children who are brought up in families that do not have large amounts of money are better prepared to deal with the problems of adult life than children brought up by wealthy parents. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this opinion?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Appendix P

Essays Written by the Students

Topic 1:

Some people believe that you can never become fluent in a language unless you have spent time living or working in that country.

To what extent do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own knowledge or experience.

Written by a High Proficient Student

Nowadays, it has been common to know and speak in ~~the~~ other languages. Learning other languages can be challenging and fascinating experience, and ~~as~~ learning different languages increases the human capability of being flexible in different situations. Many people believe that ~~you~~ can never be in ^{over} advanced level in speaking different languages unless you live or work in that country, and I do agree with that belief for several reasons such as interacting with people and the need of language to run the work.

First of all, being fluent in other languages needs interaction with the people who speak that language natively. Interaction with native speakers leads you to improve your understanding and ability to speak without hesitating. In addition, the person can realize the weak ~~ness~~ points of his/her speaking level, and trying to improve and correct the mistakes while talking with natives which is an extreme beneficial motivation ~~for that~~ ~~to~~ for trying to show the best of your speaking level to the natives that leads to achieve fluent level of the language. And working is another reason to learn the ~~the~~ other language in the different country.

Secondly, language is the most desired ^{aspect} ~~thing~~ of ~~your~~ working in the other country. Usually, the place of working in most countries hire these people who ~~speak their~~ have capability to speak the ~~country's~~ country's language. Therefore, the learner attend to achieve a high level of speaking that language in order to find a proper place to work at. In addition, the level of the ~~language~~ learner's language would be increased by being with other native colleagues, and the person pushes him/her self to learn the language better to get promoted. For example, when I was in ~~a~~ Deutschland, being in ~~with~~ touch with native people and working at the hospital were interesting.

and powerful encouragement that affected me to improve my language skills noticeably. In order to run my working process better.

In brief, learning new languages and being a fluent of using them occurs better if you live or work in that country. ~~due~~ due to the facts that you would interact with natives and you need the language to run the working process. I suggest learners to visit the countries that they learn the languages of them in order to examine the main aspects of the language and improve their ~~know~~ language skills.

Written by a Low Proficient Student

Homework every day
if we do homework every day you will be a successful student. some kind to learn and get binfict education it have many difference way it have issue binfical. Althouth some people believe that student should be given assignments every day also I am agree with thier cause three reasons.
first of all, do homework to learn, if we do work at day and after day you will have a back ground for your improuve over studay.
also if you want to learn a language any

language in the world you must be work every day, and do this for improve.

second reason, spending your time at that a good things, today many people specially student spent time at on social media and a video gaming if they not get homework that is loss the time, moreover some student say it is a bad thing that every day we do assignment but it is bad, for example in canad and suden and USA student evry day do homework.

in finally, ~~as~~ ~~stude~~ make a student and be a succesful pearson. when yourself do homework that is make you a good person also get a key of succes. if yourself do homework you will be a smarter than a man not to it, it ~~may~~ may have a effect on you that every day do this.

in concluding

students must give a ~~homework~~ home work cause they will learn and spending time to a good thing also mak student a confidence or succesful pearson. every day work and then being a successful.

Appendix Q

Weekly Lesson Plans

Week One and Two: Administering the Pretest

Date: 17-10-2020 and 24-10-2020

Class: Sophomore students, Group A and B

Class level: Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: No previous classes, they are assumed to have some knowledge of paragraph writing.

Time Allowed: 90 mins. for each week

Number of students: First week: 18 students; Second week: 49 students

Objectives: Gaining familiarity with the students and diagnosing the areas of their weakness in writing through asking them questions about what they have studied before and through the pretest questionnaires and the writing essay test.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, pretest sheets, projector

Procedures

	Activities
STEP 1: Rolling out the red carpet for students 5 mins.	-The instructor greeted students. -The instructor introduced himself and asked them to introduce themselves at least to learn some students' names and give them a feeling of positivity from the first impression that is essential for removing students' worries caused by the fear of newness and transition.
STEP 2: Gaining familiarity with the students 10 mins.	-The instructor asked some general questions about what academic writing is, the difference between writing and other language skills, particularly speaking, what they have studied in their first year, and some other rudiments of language. -The instructor explained that academic writing is the type of writing that students do in college and that there are rules to follow. -Then, the instructor gave students information about the course, the syllabus, and the assessment scheme.
STEP 3: Administering the pretest 70 mins.	-The instructor explained the purpose of the study to students, their participation, and what they are required to do. -Then, he distributed the consent forms, the writing test, the questionnaires and was ready to answer any of their questions.
STEP 4: Assignment 5 mins.	-Students were invited to a class of Google Classroom and they were informed that the references of the course and the course syllabus are there for them to view and download. -They were asked to read the first chapter of Oshima and Hogue (2006) for the following week and were told that a quiz will be active on Google Classroom through Google Forms about the chapter the night before the next week's class. -They were told to read about these topics for their paragraph writing in STEP 6 of week three. < https://www.ieltsbuddy.com/mobile-phone-essays.html > < https://www.tailoredessays.com/samples/red-light-runners-essay > < https://www.ielts-practice.org/it-is-better-for-college-students-to-live-far-away-from-home-than-live-at-home-band-7-5-ielts-essay-sample/ >

Note	The essay writing test soon revealed that students' essays were very short, meaning that they lacked topical knowledge and needed more practice even in paragraph writing. Therefore, the researcher strived to give them link addresses where they could read about the topics before they wrote.
	Students also showed symptoms of negative feelings. At the very beginning of the course they said, as recorded in the diary, that they are not able to write a paragraph, so how they can write an essay that consists of at least three paragraphs. Therefore, the instructor advised them that learning is a process and requires time, effort, and practice and that they will easily learn to write through increasing their writing frequency and feedback. It is not a one-shot deal or attempt and the instructor began observing their areas of weakness

Week Three: Paragraph Structure

Date: 31-10-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students were assumed to have overall knowledge of the course and to have read the first chapter of the key reference of the course concerning paragraph structure.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 55 students

General objectives: Students will be able to understand the structure of a paragraph and write a well-organized paragraph.

Specific objectives: This lesson aims to teach students paragraph structure. At the end of the lesson, students will learn to understand and analyze the structure of a paragraph, structure a correct topic sentence and develop it, and know how to conclude a paragraph. Then, they will be able to put all this together to write a well-organized paragraph.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

	Activities
STEP 1: Opening 5 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Do the roll call. -Explain the objectives of the lesson to students. -Explain to students that they will write a paragraph at the end. -Explain to students how understanding the structure of a paragraph as well as the recognition and production of its parts will be fruitful for their essay writing later.

<p>STEP 2: Modelling 20 mins.</p>	<p>Textual organization of the model paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask students a few questions about paragraph and its structure and elicit answers from them. -Provide students with a model paragraph concerning “Gold”, taken from the key reference (Writing Academic English, see Appendix B) and ask them to read. -Ask students to work in pairs to answer a few questions about the textual organization of the paragraph, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the topic of the paragraph? 2. What two main points does the writer make about the topic? 3. What examples does the writer give to support each point? 4. What is the purpose of the paragraph? 5. Who would be the reader of the paragraph? -Discuss the answers with the whole class.
	<p>Generic structure of the paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -After realizing that students feel confident, ask more specific questions about the generic structure of the model paragraph: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify each of these: The topic sentence, the two parts of the topic sentence, i.e. the specific topic and the controlling idea, supporting sentences, and the concluding sentence. 2. Do all the supporting sentences relate to the topic sentence? 3. Does the concluding sentence paraphrase the topic sentence or summarize the main points of the paragraph? -Ask students to identify the transition signals used in the model paragraph.
	<p>Handy exercises about the components of a paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Point out to students that the topic sentence has certain characteristics. -Provide them with meaningful exercises that can help them construct a strong topic sentence for their paragraph writing later by explaining the features of a topic sentence that must be a complete sentence, must contain the topic and the controlling idea of the paragraph, and must be neither too general nor too specific. <p>Exercise 1: Circle the topic and underline the controlling idea in each of the following sentences. Work in pairs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Immigrants have contributed many delicious foods to US cuisine. 2. Driving on freeways requires skill and alertness. 3. Soccer is my favorite sport because it is exciting to watch. 4. Learning a second language creates job opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students that a topic sentence is important and should be written for a purpose such as describing, comparing, expressing an opinion, narrating a story and so on. For this purpose, give them an exercise. <p>Exercise 2: Recognize the purpose of the paragraph that follows logically from each of the following topic sentences.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I believe that high school students should not own credit cards. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. explain causes/effects b. tell steps in a process c. show an opinion 2. Owls differ from hawks in many important ways. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. describe a topic b. compare two subjects c. show an opinion. 3. There appear to have three principal causes of obesity in children. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. explain causes/effects b. tell steps in a process c. express an opinion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Next, explain to students that three types of supporting details should usually be given as supporting sentences to prove the topic including examples, statistics, and quotes. (For paragraph examples containing examples, statistics, and/or quotes, use the paragraphs of the key reference).

	-Finally, provide students with two paragraphs that have no concluding sentences taken from the key reference and ask them to work in pairs to add a concluding sentence.
STEP 3: Planning 15 mins.	-Provide students with a few topics and ask them to select a topic: 1. Cell Phone 2. Red-light Running in Kurdistan 3. Living Away from Home -Ask students with similar topics to form groups of three students to brainstorm ideas about the selected topics. -Finally, ask students to discuss the topics and the instructor should stimulate ideas by asking them questions about the topics. -These topics will become the ones that students should write a paragraph about later.
-Deep breathing exercise by closing the eyes while thinking about writing problems, inhaling slowly and deeply through the nose, holding it for a while, and then exhaling it through the mouth. (5 mins.) -Giving a few notes on how to succeed in the course and how to cope with the problems that they might encounter.	
STEP 4: Joint Construction 12 mins.	-Select one of the above topics, "Mobile Phone". -Write a topic sentence for it in groups of four and the instructor should write the best topic sentence on the board. -Each member of the group should add a supporting sentence and should put them together to write the whole paragraph. -Then, write a concluding sentence either by summarizing the main points and paraphrasing the topic sentence. -Invite students to pass comments on the paragraph produced.
STEP 5: Homework - Independent construction 3 mins.	-Assign the above topics to students to write a paragraph independently. -If there is enough time, students can write it in class (Not applicable in this lesson). -Therefore, ask students to upload the paragraph to Google Classroom.
STEP 6: Revising Not in class	-Students should read about the topics and then write their paragraphs. -Ask students to pass one positive comment on one of their classmate's paragraphs. -The teacher should also provide both positive and negative feedback on students' paragraph in Google Classroom.
Note	The majority of the sentences produced by the students were either incomplete or ungrammatical. Therefore, they were informed about some patterns of English sentences and were simply taught that an English sentence should at least contain a subject and a verb. This worked as a remedial teaching activity.

Week Four: Characteristics of Paragraph

Date: 07-11-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students were assumed to have learnt about paragraph structure in previous lesson and should know how to write a paragraph.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 55 students

General objectives: Students will be able to understand two characteristics of paragraph writing that are unity and coherence.

Specific objectives: This lesson aims to teach students both unity and coherence. At the end of the lesson, students will learn to understand these two characteristics and will be able to make their paragraphs more unified and coherent. To this intent, students should be acquainted with the ways of keeping unity and coherence through being exposed to model paragraphs and going through a number of activities pertinent to this.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Note: For the activities carried out in this lesson and information about unity and coherence, rely on Writing Academic English, Effective Academic Writing, College Writing from Paragraph to Essay, and Longman Writing Academic Series.

Procedures

	Activities
STEP 1: Opening 5 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Greet students and do the roll call. -Provide students with some overall oral feedback about the paragraphs they wrote in lesson three, e.g. some students may have written well-organized paragraphs, praise them in class but do not mention students' names. -Then provide them with oral feedback about the most frequent error or the most lacking feature of their paragraph. Again, do not mention names. -Explain the objectives of the lesson to students.
STEP 2: Presentation 10 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide a concrete example for unity and coherence to grab students' attention. For example, provide them with the metaphor of building a house and paragraph writing that are similar in many ways. You should glue sentences together like gluing together of bricks in a building using, e.g. cement and transition signals respectively. -Then, ask students simple questions to activate prior knowledge. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is unity? 2. What is coherence? 3. What is the difference between them? 4. How to keep unity and coherence in a paragraph? Unity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Point out that academic writing should be focused. -Inform students that writing a paragraph in English requires discussing one main idea from beginning to end and all the main points and supporting details should be directly related to the topic and the main idea. -Introduce and explain the word 'irrelevant' and 'off the topic'. -Have students check the correct outline of a paragraph that should look like this and explain that main points and supporting details should be relevant to the controlling idea of the paragraph: <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">Topic</div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>Topic sentence</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Main point</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Supporting detail</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Supporting detail</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Main point</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Supporting detail</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Supporting detail</p> <p>Concluding sentence</p> </div> Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tell students that academic writing should be well-organized and movement from one sentence to the next should be smooth and logical, i.e. ideas should flow logically. The ideas should be arranged according to a specific pattern, e.g. order

	<p>of importance, according to types, reasons, advantages, etc. The connection between the sentences is clear enough because all the sentences are easy to follow and; therefore, are well-connected.</p> <p>Four ways of keeping coherence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repeating key nouns 2. Using nouns or pronouns consistently 3. Using and punctuating transition signals correctly 4. Arranging ideas in a logical order (Chronological, logical division, compare and contrast)
STEP 3: Practice 10 mins. Modelling	<p>Activity 1: Read the topic sentences below and choose the sentence(s) that support them. Work in groups of three students.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are several causes why online courses are boosting in popularity. A. Online courses are easily adaptable in terms of time. B. Online courses have been accessible since the 1990s. C. Online courses are more appropriate for students who live far away from the campus. <p>Note: The other 4 items will not be provided so that it will not use up space. They are found in “Effective Academic Writing”, p. 10-11.</p> <p>Activity 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide students with three model paragraphs discussing the same topic “Effects of Color” and have them read and ask them these questions: 1. Underline the topic sentence. 2. Underline the concluding sentence. 3. Which paragraph has unity? And which does not? 4. Why does or does not each paragraph have unity? 5. Draw a line through the sentence(s) that are off the topic. -Encourage them to work in pairs. -Note: The model paragraphs are not given here to save space; they are found in “Writing Academic English”, p. 19-20.
STEP 3: Practice 20 mins. Modelling	<p>Coherence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make sure that the students remember what coherence is and remind them the four major ways of keeping coherence. <p>Activity 1: Have students read two paragraphs about “Gold” and circle the key noun that is repeated in each paragraph. The first paragraph has coherence while the second does not. The two paragraphs are found in p. 22 of Writing Academic English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thus, students should realize that one way of keeping coherence is repeating the key noun. <p>Activity 2: Using pronouns and nouns consistently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask students to work in pairs. -Have students read the instruction for the second activity that is concerned with using nouns and pronouns consistently. -Ask students to read the paragraph and correct the pronouns to make the paragraph more coherent. (The paragraph is found in p. 25 of Writing Academic English). <p>Activity 3: Correct placement and punctuation of transition signals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have students read the instruction for the activity in which they are required to read two paragraphs and identify which one contains transition signals and more coherent. -Ask them to work in pairs and then elicit answers from students for whole-class discussions. (The two paragraphs are found in page 26 of Writing Academic English). <p>Activity 4: Arranging ideas in a logical order (Logical division of ideas, chronological order, compare and contrast).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have students read the instruction for the activity in which they are required to read three paragraphs and identify the type of order the writer has used. (The paragraphs can be found in page 34-36 of Writing Academic English). -Ask them to work in pairs and elicit answers from them.
STEP 4: Production	Unity

10 mins.	<p>-Activity 1: Write supporting sentences for the topic sentences below and then exchange your answer sheets with a partner. (The activity is found in Effective Academic Writing, p. 14).</p> <p>Coherence</p> <p>Activity 2: Have students read 10 sentences from a narrative paragraph and ask them to reorder them chronologically. (Effective Academic Writing, p. 14).</p>
STEP 5: Assignment 5 mins. For the next class	<p>-Ask students to do the activity on page 33 of Writing Academic English at home.</p> <p>-Explain how they should do the activity. (There is a paragraph that contains lots of transition signals and students need to rewrite the paragraph and keep coherence by removing some of those transition signals and remove any sentences that lead to the loss of focus).</p> <p>-Teaching students the repetitive prayer mentioned in the methodology section when thinking that something is difficult.</p>
Note	<p>-Devote some time to students to visit you in the office or in Google Classroom for any specific queries or questions. This can be employed as a support strategy and students can verbalize and present their fears and worries to you.</p> <p>- Students were advised to read for the next week's paragraph writing about "Someone Who Made a Difference" through the following link address: <https://www.studymode.com/essays/The-Person-Who-Has-Made-a-1949691.html></p> <p>-Although students were advised to write down their negative thoughts about writing and verbalize the problems that they encountered, very few students visited the instructor and wrote them in a paragraph. Instead, the instructor advised students on a daily basis to replace any negative thoughts with positive ones or whenever observing any negative thoughts, the instructor taught them to replace it with a positive one, e.g. instead of saying I might not pass, they should say I will pass. Instead of saying they do not like my writing, they should say although students do not like my writing, I always obtain high grades and my teacher likes it.</p>

Week Five: Steps of the Writing Process

Date: 14-11-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students were assumed to have learnt to write a unified and coherent paragraph.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 56 students

General objectives: Students will be able to understand that writing is a process rather than a one-shot product.

Specific objectives: This lesson aims to teach students the process of writing that writers need to go through a number of steps when writing rather than doing all simultaneously through this field "Someone Who has Made a Difference". At the end of the lesson, students will learn to produce a unified and coherent paragraph by following the five steps of the writing process including prewriting, organizing,

drafting, revising and editing, and writing a new draft. To this intent, students should compose a paragraph by going through the steps.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

	Activities		
STEP 1: Opening 5 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Greet students and do the roll call. -Check if they have carried out the homework given in the previous lesson. -Explain the objectives of the lesson to students. Explain that writing takes time and patience. It is not a one-shot action; you have to think and know what to say and write before you write. You think, write, revise and so on. Note: For this lesson, Longman Writing Series 3 is utilized. -Tell students that they are going to write a paragraph about “A Person Who Has Made a Difference” in their lives, community, or in the world in pairs. 		
STEP 2: Prewriting 10 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students that prewriting is a step in which they select a topic and collect ideas and find supporting information by, e.g. listing. -The teacher makes a list of people who have made a difference to him. -The Topic: A Person Who Has Made a Difference -The list (Albert Einstein, Mark Zuckerberg, High School Teacher, His Grandfather). -Then, the teacher chooses one of these topics “Grandfather” and starts writing words and phrases that come to his mind related to the topic. Topic: Someone Who Has Made a Difference: Grandfather <table border="0"> <tr> <td> Farmer who worked hard assisted his community A. started community hospital respected in community went church every week got up early worked late though things overt </td><td> Ideas started a big hospital in town improved local medical care first farmer to terrace his land B. enhanced farming techniques in his area was the first person in town to buy a car read about new things terracing assists prohibit soil erosion listened to experts </td></tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Next, the teacher chooses one main idea, ‘how his grandfather assisted his community’ and two related supporting points ‘A’ and ‘B’. -The teacher should cross out any ideas that are irrelevant, see the crossed-out ideas. -Ask students a few questions about the reading they were given in the previous class about someone who made a difference (Strategy). -Students should do the same, i.e. writing a list of people, choosing one person, creating a list of how this person made a difference, and choosing one or two ways of making this difference. 	Farmer who worked hard assisted his community A. started community hospital respected in community went church every week got up early worked late though things overt	Ideas started a big hospital in town improved local medical care first farmer to terrace his land B. enhanced farming techniques in his area was the first person in town to buy a car read about new things terracing assists prohibit soil erosion listened to experts
Farmer who worked hard assisted his community A. started community hospital respected in community went church every week got up early worked late though things overt	Ideas started a big hospital in town improved local medical care first farmer to terrace his land B. enhanced farming techniques in his area was the first person in town to buy a car read about new things terracing assists prohibit soil erosion listened to experts		
STEP 3: Organizing 10 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students that this step includes organizing ideas into an outline. -The teacher then creates the outline: My Grandfather: Someone Who Has Made a Difference Main Idea: My grandfather aided his community in two ways <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He enhanced farming techniques in his area. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. The only farmer to terrace his land. B. Terracing stops terracing. 2. He started a community hospital. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Only hospital in the area. B. Boosted local medical care. -Have students do the same. 		
5 mins.	-Deep breathing and the repetitive prayer		
STEP 4: Drafting 10 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students that drafting means writing a first draft employing the outline as fast as one can without worrying about grammar, punctuation, or spelling or any other errors. -Inform students that further ideas can be added here. Students should do the same. 		

	<p style="text-align: center;">My Grandfather: A Person Who Made a Big Difference</p> <p>My grandfather assist his society in two ways. My grandfather was born in 1932. He was farmer. Not well educated. Perhaps he only went to high school for one or two year. In those days, children were needed to serve the farm. He was only farmer in his society to terrace his fields. People thought he was crazy. But now every farmer, do it. Terracing stops soil erosion. This ameliorated farming techniques in the area. After he is too old to work at farming, he obtain the idea that his town needs a Hospital. So, he spend his time collecting money to build one. There is no hospitals surrounding, and people have to go to long distance to view a doctor. People think he really crazy, but he succeeded. Now a small Hospital in community, and two doctor. Each of the doctors have plenty of patients. The hospital is named the james walker community hospital. It was named for my grandfather. He enhanced local medical care. My grandfather just a simple, uneducated farmner, but he aided his community a lot.</p>
STEP 5: Revising and editing 15 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students that revising means working on issues of content and organization while editing refers to working on the smaller issues of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and mechanics. -Invite students to comment on the paragraph (using the worksheet) and then to correct grammar, spelling and punctuation. -Explain peer reviewing to students which means reading and commenting on your classmate's writing. -Next, ask them to exchange their first drafts and pee review each other's writing. (Refer them to the worksheet at the end of Longman Writing Series on page 254 that is helpful in commenting). -Guide students to page 21 of the College Writing from Paragraph to Essay reference that contains more fruitful information about peer editing. -Refer students to the self-editing worksheet found on page 255 of Longman Writing Series 3.
STEP 6: Writing a final draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inform students that writing a final draft means writing a clean copy with final revisions and edits as well as proofreading it and handing it to the teacher. Note: Show the clean copy to students through the projector due to lack of time.
STEP 7: Homework 5 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask students to write a paragraph about someone who made a big difference in their life, community, or in the world and follow the same steps as for writing the one they wrote in class. -Ask them to upload it to Google Classroom. -Ask them to exchange the paragraphs and comment on each other's paragraphs through Google Classroom, particularly providing positive comments and upload the comment to Google Classroom. -Use the worksheets referred to above or your own comments and feedback. -The teacher should upload a pdf document containing punctuation rules for them to read at home as a support strategy. -Ask students to read about the logical division essay in the references given to them and that an online quiz will be active on Google Classroom the night before the next week's class.

Week Six: Logical Division Essay (Classification Essay)

Date: 21-11-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students were assumed to have learnt to write a unified and coherent paragraph and to have learnt that writing is a process.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 56 students

General objectives: This lesson aims to teach students the logical division essay genre through the field of driving, which is even essential for teaching the opinion essay later.

Specific objectives: It further aims at teaching students the purpose and structure of the logical division essay to identify the genre and explain its purpose, structure, and language features. Students will also be able to compose a logical division essay, one that is expected to have an appropriate generic structure and language features for this genre.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

	Activities
STEP 1: Preparation 5 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students the objectives of the lesson and that they are going to write a logical division essay at the end. -The instructor should provide overall feedback to the paragraphs they wrote in Google Classroom, both positive and negative about the most frequent features. -Explain to them what an essay is and how it is different from a paragraph. The best way to teach students essay is the metaphor of the hamburger method in which a hamburger picture is shown to students and the parts of an essay is compared to the parts of the hamburger to both grab students' attention and explain essay.
5 mins.	Deep breathing and repetitive prayers.
STEP 2: Modelling 45 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Explain to students that they will study two model essays (see Appendix C) to understand the textual organization of the logical division essay and to identify the language features. -Explain how this type of essay would be beneficial for students. -Ask students to work in pairs to answer the questions below about the logical division essay. (Questions about this type of genre) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is a logical division essay? 2. What is the purpose of a logical division essay? 3. How is it organized? 4. Who is the reader of this type of essay? 5. What transition signals can usually be used with this type of essay? 6. How is the thesis statement of a logical division essay composed? And what are its characteristics? 7. What are the techniques used to write a memorable conclusion for a logical division essay? -Tell students to read the model essays and work in pairs to answer these questions. (Topical questions) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the topic of each essay? 2. What issue is being discussed in the model essays? 3. What is the purpose of each essay? 4. Who would be the reader of each essay? -Then, discuss the answers with the whole class. -Ask students to read the model essays again and answer these questions about the structure of the model essays in pairs. (Questions about the structural organization) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many paragraphs are there in the essays? 2. What is the specific topic in the thesis statement? 3. What are the subtopics? 4. Where have they been discussed? 5. What details does the writer give to support the subtopics? 6. Where can you find the summary of the essay? -Elicit whole-class discussions.

	<p>Next, after realizing that the students have understood the overall structure of the texts, ask them to answer these specific questions about the generic structure of the model essays.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which part is the introduction, body, and conclusion? 2. What is the most important statement in the introduction? 3. What does it contain? 4. How many body paragraphs does the essay have? 5. What is the first sentence of each body paragraph called? Underline and double underline its topic. 6. What kind of information do the rest of the sentences in each body paragraph provide? 7. Does the concluding paragraph summarize the main points of the body paragraphs or paraphrase the thesis statement? 8. Is there any other part in the concluding paragraph? <p>-The instructor should wrap up everything by informing students that the logical division essay has a generic structure, consisting of the introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction consists of a catchy hook, background information, and a thesis statement that contains both the more specific topic and the subtopics. The hook part usually occurs at the beginning, the thesis statement at the end while the background information part between these two. The body paragraphs (usually three) should discuss the subtopics contained in the thesis statement and provide supporting details to them. The conclusion paragraph should contain either a summary of the main points or a paraphrase of the thesis statement as well as a prediction, an opinion, a recommendation, and so on. Thus, the generic structure of a logical division essay should look like this:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic</p> <p>I. Introduction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Hook B. Background information C. Thesis statement: The more specific topic and the subtopics <p>II. Body</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Topic sentence 1 – first subtopic – first idea Supporting details B. Topic sentence 2 – second subtopic – second idea Supporting details C. Topic sentence 3 – third subtopic – third idea Supporting details <p>III. Conclusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Summary or paraphrase B. Recommendation, opinion, prediction, etc. <p>-After understanding the generic structure of the model essays, the instructor should ask students to identify the language features of the model essays, namely the transition signals used for introducing the body paragraphs, the signals used between the sentences of each paragraph, the punctuation used for punctuating the thesis statement and introducing the subtopics, paired conjunctions, subject-verb agreement, tense in each model essay, parallelism, and the transition signals used for concluding the essay.</p> <p>-In addition, inform students that a formal language should be used in essay writing such as using more formal words ‘approximately, negative, do not, because’ rather than the less formal everyday words ‘almost, bad, don’t, cause’ respectively.</p> <p>-Activity 1: Doing the activity found on page 62 of Writing Academic English in which students are required to reorder six sentences to form an introductory paragraph for a logical division essay.</p> <p>-Activity 2: Doing the exercises on page 66 and 67 of Writing Academic English in which students are given a number of thesis statements and they are required to identify the topic, the subtopics, the elements used to introduce the subtopics, and parallelism. In the next activity, they are given with a set of incomplete thesis statements in which they are required to complete them by adding subtopics.</p>
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	-Refer students to Longman Writing Series 3, College Writing from Paragraph to Essay and Writing Academic English for a complete list of transition signals used with logical division essay.
Homework 5 mins.	<p>-Ask students to read about driving or aggressive driving. To support them, provide them with a model essay about the ways of showing aggression in driving. The model is not given here not to use up space. Additionally, give them a link that leads to information regarding aggressive driving: <https://www.blairramirezlaw.com/consequences-aggressive-driving></p> <p>-Ask them to write a paragraph, as freewriting, about one of these topics: Causes of aggressive driving, consequences of aggressive driving, the ways of showing aggression in driving, coping with aggressive drivers, and so on.</p> <p>-Refer students to Longman Writing Series 3 for fragments and run-on sentences for students to read because most of their sentences were incomplete, lacking certain elements in the paragraph they wrote in the previous lesson.</p> <p>-After they complete their paragraph, students should exchange their paragraphs and pass positive comments to one another's paragraphs and upload it to Google Classroom.</p>

Week Seven: Logical Division Essay

Date: 28-11-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students are assumed to have developed knowledge of this type of genre and the field.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.


Number of students: 56 students

General objectives: This lesson aims to help students plan for their writing in the next steps through a number of activities and learn how to construct their writing.

Specific objectives: The lesson helps students develop schematic knowledge through a number of activities and know how to construct their logical division essay through joint construction.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

	Activity
5 mins.	<p>-Greet students and do the roll call.</p> <p>-Provide overall oral positive and negative feedback about the paragraphs they wrote in the previous lesson.</p>
STEP 3: Planning 20 mins.	<p>Activity 1: Provide students with a few photos of aggressive drivers with each showing different movements of aggression.</p>  <p>-Ask them to work in groups of three students to answer the questions below:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at the photos, write a few words on them. Do not worry about grammar, punctuation, or spelling. 2. What is aggressive driving? 3. Who is an aggressive driving? 4. What are some of the ways of showing aggression in driving? 5. Are there any differences in showing aggression in driving between now and ten years ago? 6. What are the causes of aggressive driving? 7. What are the consequences of aggressive driving? <p>Activity 2:</p> <p>-Write the title of a video on the board and check the meaning of these infrequent words contained in the video in a dictionary and ask them to predict the content of the video. The words: 1. aggressive 2. lane 3. tailgate 4. bumper 5. parking lot 6. pull over 7. persist 8. ignore 9. cut off 10. Motorist and ask students to predict the content.</p> <p>-Then, ask them to watch a five-minute video below and answer the questions that follow: < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQmk6wrzAo></p> <p>-What are the five points or ways that the speaker mentions regarding dealing with aggressive drivers? Write briefly.</p>
STEP 4: Joint Constructing 35 minus.	<p>-Select a topic together with students, 'exercise'.</p> <p>-Brainstorm ideas from students.</p> <p>-Divide students into three groups and each should develop one idea.</p> <p>-Elicit ideas from students and write the most important ideas on the board.</p> <p>-Then, construct a short logical division essay and write it on the board.</p> <p>-Teach students that the first draft usually requires revision.</p> <p>-Invite students to provide feedback on the essay. However, due to lack of time further improvement of the essay is impossible.</p>

Week Eight: Midterm Exam (05-12-2020)

Week Nine: Logical Division Essay

Date: 12-12-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students are assumed to have developed knowledge of the field and to have been informed about how to construct their logical division essay.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 56 students

General objectives: This lesson aims to help students construct their own writing independently.

Specific objectives: The lesson helps students compose their essay individually in class.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

STEP 5: Independent constructing 60 minutes	<p>-Greet students and do the roll call.</p> <p>-Advise students that they should think that they can compose a well-organized essay.</p>
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	-Ask students to say the repetitive prayer so that they believe that things will become easier and expel the worries they have. -Ask students to write their essay independently.
Revising and editing	-Refer students to peer editing and self-editing worksheets found at the end of Writing Academic English and Longman Writing Series 3 and Effective Academic Writing and to revise their essays and each other's essays accordingly. -The teacher should also provide feedback to students' essays.
	-Refer students to chapter ten of Longman Writing Series 3 and chapter 4 of Effective Academic Writing that contain information about opinion essay

Week Ten: Opinion Essay

Date: 19-12-2020

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students were assumed to overall knowledge of essay structure.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 57 students

General objectives: This lesson aims to teach students the opinion essay.

Specific objectives: It teaches students the structure, purpose, generic and language features of the opinion essay. Students will also be able to compose an opinion essay, one that is expected to have an appropriate generic structure and language features for this genre.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

	Activities
STEP 1: Preparation 5 mins.	-Greet students and do the roll call. -Explain to students the objectives of the lesson and that they are going to write an opinion essay at the end. -The instructor should provide overall feedback to the essays they wrote in class the previous lesson, both positive and negative about the most frequent features.
STEP 2: Modelling 45 mins.	-Explain to students that they will study two model essays (see Appendix C) to understand the generic organization of the opinion essay and to identify the language features. -Explain how this type of essay would be beneficial for them. -Ask students to work in pairs to answer the questions below about the opinion essay. (Questions about this type of genre) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is an opinion essay? 2. What is the purpose of an opinion essay? 3. How is it organized? 4. Who is the reader of this type of essay? 5. What kinds of supporting details can be used in the body paragraphs? 6. What transition signals can usually be used with this type of essay? 7. How is the thesis statement composed? And what are its characteristics? -Before students read the models, have them think about the title of each and to predict the writer's opinion on the topic.

	<p>-Tell students to read the model essays and work in pairs to answer these questions. (Topical questions).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the topic of each essay? 2. What issue is being discussed in the model essays? 3. What is the purpose of each essay? 4. Who would be the reader of each essay? <p>-Then, discuss the answers with the whole class.</p> <p>-Ask students to read the model essays again and answer these questions about the structure of the model essays in pairs. (Questions about the structural organization)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many paragraphs are there in the essays? 2. Which part is the introduction, body, and conclusion? 3. What is the most important statement in the introduction? 4. How many body paragraphs do the essays have? 5. What is the first sentence of each body paragraph called? Underline and double underline its topic. <p>-Elicit whole-class discussions.</p> <p>Next, after realizing that the students have understood the overall structure of the texts, ask them to answer more specific questions about the generic structure of the model essays.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In which paragraph is the issue being presented? 2. Which is the writer's opinion and which is the opposing opinion in the thesis statement? 3. What are the reasons the writer provides to support his opinion in the body paragraphs? What details does the writer give to support his opinion? 4. Which body paragraph has a concluding sentence and which does not? 5. What kinds of supporting details have been used in each body paragraph? 6. Where can you find the summary of the essay? 7. Does the concluding paragraph summarize the main points of the body paragraphs or paraphrase the thesis statement? 8. Is there any other part in the concluding paragraph? What is it? <p>-The instructor should wrap up everything by informing students that the topic of an opinion essay should be controversial, i.e. topics that people disagree about and that the opinion essay has a specific generic structure, consisting of the introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction consists of a catchy hook, introducing an issue and explaining it as well as details about the people involved in the issue, and a thesis statement that contains both the writer's opinion (obligatory) and the opposing opinion (optional). The hook part usually occurs at the beginning, the thesis statement at the end while the issue is presented between these two parts. Sometimes the explanation of the issue can begin with the hook. Upload a PowerPoint document to Google Classroom which contains five types of hooks along with their definitions and examples for students to study and check (it should be uploaded before this lesson). The body paragraphs (usually three) should support the writer's opinion in the thesis statement by providing reasons. The conclusion paragraph should summarize the writer's opinion on the topic and the writer should call for action by giving an advice, a suggestion, a prediction, and so on. In short, the writer should express his opinion about a certain topic in the introduction, provide reasons for his opinion and support the reasons with specific details in the body, and summarize his opinion in the conclusion. Thus, the generic structure of an opinion essay should look like this:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Topic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Introduction <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. A catchy hook B. Presentation of an issue C. Thesis statement: The opposing opinion + the writer's opinion II. Body <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Topic sentence 1 – first reason for writer's opinion on the topic Supporting details
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	<p>B. Topic sentence 2 – second reason for writer’s opinion on the topic Supporting details</p> <p>C. Topic sentence 3 – third reason for the writer’s opinion on the topic Supporting details</p> <p>III. Conclusion</p> <p>A. Summary of the writer’s opinion</p> <p>B. Recommendation, advice, prediction, suggestion, etc.</p> <p>-Inform students that certain transition signals are important with this type of genre including ‘one reason, many people believe that, since, due to, from my point of view, I am convinced that, I am in favour of, etc.’.</p> <p>-Inform them that exclamation marks, contractions, phrasal verbs, collocations, and parentheses are not or are rarely used in this type of essay.</p> <p>-After understanding the generic structure of the model essays, the instructor should ask students to identify the language features of the model essays, namely the transition signals used for expressing the writer’s opinion, the transition signals of contrast used to connect the opposing opinions, the signals used between the sentences of each paragraph, tense in each model essay (usually present tense), and the transition signals used for concluding the essay.</p> <p>-Most importantly, inform students on how to support the topic sentence of a body paragraph with quotes, e.g. using reporting verbs such as ‘says, said, stated, added, reported, continued, according to, and so on’.</p> <p>-The instructor should also teach students how to punctuate quotes. To this intent, he should refer students to information about this on page 231 of Longman Writing Series 3 and ask students to do the activity on that page. In the same way, he should teach them the way to include statistics, e.g. using expressions such as ‘statistics show that, statistical data prove that, a survey of second year students shows reveals that, ...’.</p> <p>-Inform students that the thesis statement should demonstrate which side the writer is for, the writer’s opinion should be expressed in the main clause but the opposing opinion in the subordinate clause. In addition, expressions such as ‘many people think that, some people feel that, many think that, it may be true that’ can be used before the opposing point of view. Transition signals of contrast include ‘however, although, even though, in spite of the fact that, while, whereas,’.</p> <p>-Activity 1: Provide students with an exercise in which they are required in pairs to complete incomplete thesis statements by adding the opposing opinion. The details of the exercise are found in page 148-149 of Writing Academic English and p. 277 of Longman Writing Series.</p> <p>-Activity 2: Have students work with a partner. Ask them to select a topic from the ones given by the instructor or any topic of their own, discuss the topic with your partner, talk about both sides of the issue, make a list of important points for each side, then decide whether you are for or against the issue, write a thesis statement for it, then write reasons for your opinion.</p> <p>The topics: School uniforms for high school students Social Networking Sites Prohibition of Cell phones in college classes</p> <p>-Refer students to Longman Writing Series 3, College Writing from Paragraph to Essay and Writing Academic English for a complete list of transition signals used with the opinion essay.</p>
Homework 5 mins.	<p>-Ask students to read about the topic “The Impact of Social Networking Sites” or “The Prohibition of Mobile Phones in College Classes” they will write about in the independent step. To support them, provide them with a model essay about the topic to read. The model is not given here not to use up space.</p> <p>-Ask them to write a paragraph, as freewriting, about one of the above topics.</p> <p>-Refer students to Longman Writing Series 3, Effective Academic English, and Writing Academic English for more information about this type of essay.</p> <p>-After they complete their paragraph, students should exchange their paragraphs and pass positive comments to one another’s paragraphs and upload it to Google Classroom.</p>

Week Ten: Opinion Essay

Date: 02-01-2021

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students are assumed to have developed overall knowledge of this genre of essay, particularly its structure.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 57 students

General objectives: This lesson aims to help students develop further knowledge of the opinion essay.

Specific objectives: It teaches students how to plan their writing and develop knowledge of the schemata. Students will also be able to compose an opinion essay, one that is expected to have an appropriate generic structure and language features for this genre.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

	Activity
5 mins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Greet students and do the roll call. -Provide overall oral positive and negative feedback about the paragraphs they wrote in the previous lesson.
STEP 3: Planning 20 mins.	<p>Activity 1: Provide students with a few photos concerning the use of technology, social networking sites and the use of cell phones in college classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask them to work in groups of three students to answer the questions below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look at the photos, write a few words on them. Do not worry about grammar, punctuation, or spelling. 2. What are the positive and negative impacts of technology, the Internet, social media, and cell phones on people? 3. Do you think cell phones should be allowed in college classes? Why or why not? 4. In what ways do the use of the Internet, technology, social networking sites, and cell phones help you improve your English? 5. What can instructors do to stop students using social media during classes? <p>Activity 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Write the title of a video “Pros and Cons of Mobile Phones” on the board and ask students to predict the content of the video. -Check the meaning of these infrequent words contained in the video in a dictionary to ensure understanding. The words: 1. multitask 2. ignore 3. constantly 4. distract 5. survive 6. weird. -Then, ask them to watch a five-minute video below and answer the questions that follow: < https://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/skills/speaking/upper-intermediate-b2-speaking/pros-cons-mobile-phones> -Next, ask them this question: What are the pros and cons of mobile phones? And have them brainstorm ideas on a sheet of paper in groups of four students. -Finally, invite students to share their ideas with the whole class.
STEP 4: Joint Constructing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Select a topic together with students, in the case of this lesson: ‘Some people think that technology and the Internet has made humans more connected while

35 minus.	<p>others think the Internet has made them isolated. To what extent do you agree or disagree?'. -Explain the topic to students first. -Then, ask them to brainstorm ideas and choose one side. -Next, divide them into three groups and each should develop one reason for the side they have chosen as well as supporting details for each reason. -Elicit ideas from students and write the most important ideas on the board. -Then, construct a short opinion essay appropriate to the time available and write it on the board. -Teach students that the first draft usually requires revision. -Invite students to provide feedback on the essay. However, due to lack of time further improvement of the essay is impossible.</p>
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Week Eleven: Opinion Essay

Date: 09-01-2021

Class: Sophomore students, group A and B, Intermediate

Characteristics: Native speakers of Kurdish, both male and female, young adults

Assumed knowledge: Students are assumed to have developed knowledge of the field and to have been informed about how to construct their logical division essay.

Time Allowed: 60 mins.

Number of students: 55 students

General objectives: This lesson aims to allows students to construct their own writing independently.

Specific objectives: The lesson helps students compose their essay individually in class.

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, projector, hand-outs

Procedures

STEP 5: Independent constructing 60 minutes	<p>-Greet students and do the roll call. -Advise students that they should think that they can compose a well-organized essay. Guide them how to answer the answer. -Ask students to say the repetitive prayer so that they believe that things will become easy for them. -Ask students to write their essay independently.</p>
Revising and editing	<p>-Refer students to peer editing and self-editing worksheets found at the end of Writing Academic English and Longman Writing Series 3 and Effective Academic Writing and to revise their essays and each other's essays accordingly. -The teacher should also provide feedback to students' essays.</p>

Appendix R

Turnitin Similarity Report

THESIS			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
18%	15%	5%	4%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	core.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %	
2	trace.tennessee.edu Internet Source	<1 %	
3	bspace.buid.ac.ae Internet Source	<1 %	
4	studylib.net Internet Source	<1 %	
5	eca.state.gov Internet Source	<1 %	
6	mjltn.org Internet Source	<1 %	
7	acikerisim.pau.edu.tr:8080 Internet Source	<1 %	
8	www.diva-portal.org Internet Source	<1 %	
9	www.researchgate.net Internet Source	<1 %	