The Relationship between Secondary School Students' Writing Attitudes and Anxiety and Writing Disposition

Berna Urun Karahan*

Kafkas University, Faculty of Education, Kars-Turkey

Corresponding author: Berna Urun Karahan, E-mail: bernacan61@hotmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Literacy is an important result of language teaching. Language skills are like the pieces of a whole. The accurate acquisition of these skills, which are needed to be used effectively by individuals both in their social and educational life, is equally valuable. Writing is a skill that is acquired and developed mostly during the learning process among these skills. Writing requires not only recognizing the letters and language rules but also understanding and internalizing oneself and the environment. Therefore, emotions, opinions and experiences regarding this skill should be emphasized. The aim of this study is to review the relationship between secondary school students' writing attitudes and anxieties, and writing dispositions. The study group of the study included secondary school students who were randomly selected in the center of Kars, Turkey in the 2019-2020 academic year. Data were collected using "the Attitude Scale towards Writing for Secondary School Students", "the Writing Disposition Scale", and "the Writing Anxiety Scale for secondary school Students". The results showed that secondary school students' writing attitudes, dispositions and anxieties did not produce a significant difference based on the variable of gender.

Key words: Writing, Attitudes, Anxiety, Writing Disposition

INTRODUCTION

Writing is the basis of literacy, which is a language skill. In the process, the correct acquisition of writing skill is necessary for the individual to become literate. As language and language skills are needed in all fields of life, they have formed the basis of many studies. Because language is a force that creates important situations for an individual like learning, understanding, communicating and transferring information to future generations. In this regard, accurate acquirement of language skills is a subject that must be paid attention to. "Language is a tool that ensures communication and agreement between people. The system that enables the language to be long-term and effectively permanent is writing" (Can, 2019, p. 115).

Writing is a tool that people used to express themselves form past to present, a measure for success throughout their education life, one of the main communication mediums and one of the fundamental language skills. In one way, writing is the transfer of the individual to the next. This skill which has an important role in the transfer of the living, history and culture of the mortal life has been drawing attention in all times.

"Writing is the expression of individuals' emotions, opinions and requests with certain symbols in accordance with certain rules" (Şahin, 2019, p. 6). Writing is a concept that

the individual will need all her life. Thus, individuals need to acquire this skill like other skills in a healthy way. However, in addition to information the individual learned from her family, environment and school, personal differences are also important like all skills. Because each experience the individual gains in learning and teaching processes is shaped in her inner world and turn into meaning and concepts. According to Erdağı Toksun (2020), personal differences play an important role in the acquirement of this skill.

The wish and need to write or writing success might be different for all individuals. Because the success of this skill might develop and change based on personal differences as well as interests and needs. So writing is a literate process not only when it is combined with learning and conveying but also with ability. This situation is called the writing disposition. This process which may change in each individual as well as each field, also directs the skill acquisition process.

All types of experiences that individuals gain in time may turn into an attitude. "The concept of attitude generally express the individual's reaction disposition to any case or object around her. In other words, attitude can be defined as the possible behavior pattern an individual is expected to display when faced a situation, event or phenomenon" (İnceoğlu, 2011, p. 16). Attitude is the perspective based on the knowledge, skills, experience, and emotions that an individual gain

throughout her life. "Attitude is defined as the combination of emotions and behaviors related to the state of education" (Stanfield, 2006, p. 4).

The most important element about writing skill is the state whether writing becomes more effective with teaching processes in addition to its common aspects with other language skills. This situation shows the efficiency and effectiveness of learning and teaching processes on the skill acquisition process. The first factor that must be considered in the learning and teaching processes is personal differences. Because knowledge and experiences an individual gain about a situation turn into attitudes in time. These attitudes gained in time may cause positive or negative results in behavior acquisition in time. Therefore, all types of factors should be considered in skill acquisition processes. Because negative experiences may turn into negative attitudes in time and then they may cause anxiety and concern. This undermines the skill acquisition. The secondary school period is one of the periods were these processes are sensitive. Anxiety is an individual's inability to be confident by feeling the emotion of fear about herself and the job while doing a job, and feeling her deficiencies about that job. Writing anxiety is "a reaction developed against writing" (Zorbaz, 2011, p. 2272). Writing anxiety might be due to many conditions like lack of knowledge about the subject of the writing, incomplete use of spelling rules or the fear of disfavor.

According to the abovementioned information, it is clear that writing attitude and writing anxiety are effective on writing skills. Secondary school students' skill acquisition and their emotions and experiences about these skills should be emphasized in the secondary school period, which is one of the sensitive periods of teaching process. The aim of this study is to review the relationship between secondary school students' writing attitudes and anxieties, and writing dispositions. There are studies on writing anxiety and writing attitude (Yaman, 2014; Sevim and Erem Özdemir, 2013; Aşılıoğlu and Özkan, 2013; Özdemir and Erdem, 2011) in the relevant literature. Additionally, Baştuğ (2015) conducted a study with fourth grade primary school students and examined the effect of writing dispositions, attitudes and stiffness on writing success of the students. In this regard, no study on writing attitudes, anxiety and disposition was in the literature. Thus, we believe that this study will contribute to the literature.

Research Questions

1. What are the students' attitudes, anxiety and disposition towards writing?
2. Do the writing disposition, attitude and anxiety differ significantly in terms of gender variable?
3. Is there any relationship between writing attitude, anxiety and disposition?

Method

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between secondary school students' writing attitudes, writing anxiety and writing dispositions. The study was structured with the screening model as the existing situation will be tried to be described as it is. Screening model is a study design where "the opinions, interests, skills, abilities, attitudes of the participants about an issue or event are determined and which is generally used in relatively larger samples compared to other studies" (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014, p. 177). The individual or object that is the subject of the study is tried to be expressed under its own conditions and as it is (Karasar, 2010).

"The relational screening approach, which is a screening approach aiming to determine the existence of change between two or more variables, was used" (Karasar, 2005, p. 81). The relational analysis can be made in two ways as correlation and comparison types (Karasar, 2005). This study used the correlation screening as the relational screening model. "The correlational studies are conducted to determine the relationships between two or more variables and to obtain hints related to the cause and effect relationship" (Büyüköztürk et al., 2011, p. 14).

Study Group

The study group of the study included secondary school (state school) students who studied in various schools in the center of Kars, Turkey in the 2019-2020 academic year. The study group was randomly selected. Demographic characteristics of the students are presented in Table 1.

Data Collection Tools

The attitude scale towards writing for secondary school students

The scale was developed by Can and Topçuoğlu Ünal (2017) and has 23 items and three subscales. These subscales are named as follows: "relation" subscale of 10 items, "perception" subscale of 6 items and "contribution" subscale of 7 items. Overall, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was recorded at $\alpha= .891$. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the subscales were $\alpha=.84$ for relation, $\alpha=.70$ for perception and $\alpha=.72$ for contribution. According to the results of confirmatory factor analysis, the scale was accepted as structurally valid (RMSEA= 0.097, GFI= 0.75, SRMR= 0.091, CFI= 0.79, NNFI= 0.76, RMR= 0.071). Necessary permits are obtained for the use of scale.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of students in the study group

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female 117	52.2
	Male 107	47.8
	Total 224	100.0
Grade	1(5th grade) 46	20.5
	2(6th grade) 58	25.9
	3(7th grade) 40	17.9
	4(8th grade) 80	35.7
	Total 224	100.0

The Writing Disposition Scale

The scale was developed by Piazza and Siebert (2008) and adapted to Turkish by İşeri and Ünal (2010). It has 21 items and three subscales. These subscales are named as "Passion", "Confidence" and "Persistence". The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was determined to be $\alpha= .87$. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the subscales were $\alpha= .88$ for passion, $\alpha= .73$ for confidence, and $\alpha= .63$ for persistence. According to the results of confirmatory factor analysis ($x2/sd= 1,24$, $IFI=0.99$), the scale was accepted as structurally valid as the RMSEA, GF, CFI, AGFI values were at the good level. Necessary permits are obtained for the use of scale.

The Writing Anxiety Scale for Secondary School Students

The scale was developed by Karakuş Tayşi and Taşkın (2018) and has 16 items and three subscales. These subscales are named as "Anxiety about Motivation to Write", "Anxiety about Understanding the Writing" and "Anxiety about Meeting the Requirements of the Writing Process". The studies were made with the Cronbach's Alpha method and the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as $\alpha= .79$. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the subscales were $\alpha=.78$ for "Anxiety about Motivation to Write", $\alpha=.70$ for "Anxiety about Understanding the Writing" and $\alpha=.61$ for "Anxiety about Meeting the Requirements of the Writing Process". This three factor structure explained 41.036% of the total variance. Necessary permits are obtained for the use of scale.

RESULTS

The mean values were evaluated to determine secondary school students' level writing attitudes, writing anxieties and writing dispositions. The results are presented in Table 2.

Considering this table, the highest score that can be obtained from the persistence subscale of the writing disposition scale is 20 and the lowest is 4. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this subscale. The highest score that can be obtained from the confidence subscale of the same scale is 30 and the lowest is 6. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this

Table 2. Descriptive statistics result for writing attitudes, anxiety and writing disposition means

Subscales	N	M	SD
Persistence	224	15.9	3.25
Confidence	224	22.1	3.54
Passion	224	39.7	7.21
Contribution	224	25.1	3.37
Perception	224	21.4	3.14
Relation	224	34.5	4.53
Anxiety about meeting the requirements of the writing process	224	17.6	2.66
Anxiety about understanding of the writing	224	16.9	3.36
Anxiety about motivation to write	224	21.3	2.96

subscale. The highest score that can be obtained from the passion subscale of the writing disposition scale is 55 and the lowest is 11. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this subscale.

The highest score that can be obtained from the contribution subscale of the attitude scale towards writing is 35 and the lowest is 7. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this subscale. The highest score that can be obtained from the perception subscale of the same scale is 30 and the lowest is 6. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this subscale. The highest score that can be obtained from the relation subscale of the same scale is 50 and the lowest is 10. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this subscale.

The highest score that can be obtained from the anxiety about motivation to write subscale of the writing anxiety scale is 30 and the lowest is 6. It is seen that students have a mean score at the moderate level for this subscale. The highest score that can be obtained from the anxiety about understanding of the writing subscale of the same scale is 25 and the lowest is 5. It is seen that students have a mean score at the good level for this subscale. Lastly, the highest score that can be obtained from the anxiety about meeting the requirement of the writing process subscale of the same scale is 25 and the lowest is 5. It is seen that students have a mean score at the very good level for this subscale.

The t test was used to determine whether the secondary school students' writing attitudes, writing anxieties and writing dispositions changed based on gender. The results obtained are presented in Table 3.

The results showed that secondary school students' writing attitudes, dispositions and anxieties did not produce a significant difference based on the variable of gender.

The ANOVA was used to determine whether the secondary school students' writing attitudes, writing anxieties and writing dispositions changed based grade. The results obtained are presented in Table 4.

Considering this table, it was determined that the secondary school students' writing attitudes, writing anxieties and writing dispositions changed based on grade. Considering the mean values, this difference was found in favor of 5th grade students in the persistence, confidence and passion subscales of the writing disposition scale.

Considering the mean scores on the contribution, perception and relation subscales of the attitude scale towards writing, there was a difference in favor of the 8th grade students. Lastly, considering the mean scores on the anxiety about meeting the requirements of the writing process and anxiety about understanding of the writing subscales of the writing anxiety scale, there was a difference in favor of the 6th grade students while there was a difference in favor of the 8th grade students in the anxiety about motivation to write subscale.

The Pearson Correlation coefficients of the students were calculated to determine secondary school students' level writing attitudes, writing anxieties and writing dispositions. The results are presented in Table 5.

Considering this table, it was found that there were very weak and weak positive and negative correlations between

Table 3. T-test results according to the variable of gender

	Gender	N	*M*	*S*	*Sd*	*t*	*p*
Persistence	Female	117	15.6	2.9	204.5	-1.61	.108
	Male	107	16.3	3.5			
Confidence	Female	117	22.1	3.6	221.8	.011	.991
	Male	107	22.1	3.4			
Passion	Female	117	40.3	7.2	220.8	1.36	.174
	Male	107	39.0	7.1			
Contribution	Female	117	25.1	3.5	221.9	-.111	.911
	Male	107	25.1	3.2			
Perception	Female	117	21.3	3.3	221.9	-.154	.877
	Male	107	21.4	2.9			
Relation	Female	117	34.4	4.9	218.1	-.468	.641
	Male	107	34.6	3.9			
Anxiety about meeting the requirements of the writing process	Female	117	17.7	2.5	216.7	1.09	.273
	Male	107	17.4	2.7			
Anxiety about understanding of the writing	Female	117	21.4	3.5	222.0	1.36	.175
	Male	107	21.3	3.2			
Anxiety about motivation to write	Female	117	17.2	2.7	212.4	.29	.768
	Male	107	16.6	3.1			

Table 4. ANOVA results according to the variable of grade

Subscales	Groups	N	*M*	*S*	*F*	*p*
Persistence	1(5)	46	16.8	3.23	5.328	.001
	2(6)	58	16.6	2.76		
	3(7)	40	14.5	1.30		
	4(8)	80	15.7	3.95		
Confidence	1(5)	46	24.1	4.37	25.467	.000
	2(6)	58	23.9	3.56		
	3(7)	40	19.9	1.57		
	4(8)	80	20.7	2.23		
Passion	1(5)	46	43.9	9.13		
	2(6)	58	41.8	8.99		
	3(7)	40	37.0	2.57	14.895	.000
	4(8)	80	37.0	3.62		
Contribution	1(5)	46	25.0	2.08		
	2(6)	58	25.4	2.16		
	3(7)	40	23.9	4.53	2.648	.050
	4(8)	80	25.6	3.88		
Perception	1(5)	46	20.0	1.70		
	2(6)	58	20.4	2.16		
	3(7)	40	20.9	3.51	16.596	.000
	4(8)	80	23.1	3.40		
Relation	1(5)	46	33.5	2.59		
	2(6)	58	33.1	3.37		
	3(7)	40	33.7	5.45	8.631	.000
	4(8)	80	36.5	5.02		
Anxiety about meeting the requirements of the writing process	1(5)	46	18.4	3.35		
	2(6)	58	18.8	2.99	12.360	.000
	3(7)	40	16.5	1.67		
	4(8)	80	16.7	1.71		
Anxiety about understanding of the writing	1(5)	46	19.0	3.46		
	2(6)	58	19.8	3.39		
	3(7)	40	15.4	2.04	34.878	.000
	4(8)	80	15.1	2.11		
Anxiety about motivation to write	1(5)	46	19.9	3.80		
	2(6)	58	21.5	3.47	4.921	.002
	3(7)	40	21.0	1.68		
	4(8)	80	21.8	2.21		

the subscales of the writing disposition scale, the attitudes scale toward writing and the writing anxiety scale. According to this result, there were no correlations between the writing disposition, attitude and anxiety of the study group.

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to review the relationship between secondary school students' writing attitudes and anxieties writing dispositions. Firstly, the students' mean scores on the scales related to writing attitudes, anxiety and attitudes were evaluated. According to the results obtained, it can be stated that secondary school students had a good level of writing attitude and disposition. However, it was found that the students got scores higher than the mean score from the subscales of the writing anxiety scale. This result shows that the level of anxiety related to pre-writing preparation, writing process and post-writing period and this causes negative outcomes in skill acquisition process and writing works. Therefore, writing is a skill that must be emphasized both in the skill acquisition process and habit formation process. Çeçen and Deniz (2015) conducted a study with secondary school students and found that the writing dispositions of them were at moderate level.

On the other hand, the results showed that secondary school students' writing attitudes, dispositions and anxieties did not produce a significant difference based on the variable of gender. There are other studies with different results in the literature. Deniz and Demir (2020) found that male students had a higher level of writing anxiety than female students.

Another result obtained in this study is that the students' writing attitudes, anxieties and dispositions had a significant difference based on the variable of grade. According to the Post-hoc Scheffe test results, this difference is between the 5th and 6th grade students in the persistence, confidence and passion subscales of the Writing Disposition Scale, between the 7th and 8th grade students in the relation and perception subscales of the Attitude Scale Toward Writing, between the 5th and 6th grade students in the anxiety about meeting the requirements of the writing process and anxiety about the understanding of the writing subscales of the Writing Anxiety Scale, and between the 6th and 8th

Table 5. Correlations result for writing attitudes, anxiety and writing disposition means

Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Persistence	.580**	.406**	.003	-.045	-.004	.069	.131*	-.098
2. Confidence	1.000	.609**	-.040	-.137*	-.094	.119	.292**	-.155*
3. Passion		1.000	.057	-.201**	-.070	.091	.201**	-.239**
4. Contribution			1.000	.436**	.675**	-.021	-.019	-.010
5. Perception				1.000	.613**	-.132*	-.170*	.067
6. Relation					1.000	-.115	-.163*	.027
7. Requirements						1.000	.665**	.276**
8. Understanding							1.000	.218**
9. Motivation								1.000

**p<.01, *p<.05

grade students in the anxiety about motivation to write of the same scale. Deniz and Demir (2020) found that the 5th and 6th grade students had a higher level of writing anxiety than the 7th and 8th grade students. Karakoç Öztürk (2012) found that the 6th grade students had a higher level of writing anxiety than the 8th grade students. Çeçen and Deniz (2015) determined that writing disposition did not change based on grade.

Lastly, there were no correlations between the writing disposition, attitude and anxiety of the study group. According to this result, writing disposition is not affected by writing attitude and anxiety in this study group. Deniz and Demir (2020) conducted a study with secondary school students and found a negative correlation between the writing anxiety and writing disposition of the students. Baştuğ (2015) found that there were moderate significant correlations between the students' writing attitude, writing disposition and writing stiffness.

CONCLUSION

In this study, no relationship was found between writing anxiety, disposition and attitude. However, there are various studies in the literature showing that there are relationships between these variables. This issue can be solved by addressing it from various aspects. Additionally, considering the personal differences and forming the program accordingly are also important. If problems are still experienced even after these, then expert's opinions should be obtained for personal differences. Lastly, more studies should be carried out on students' interests and needs, which are important factors for skill acquisition. The task of basic language skills is to ensure that the individual is literate. Therefore, it is important to acquire all language skills in a healthy way. It is thought that the study will contribute to the field in this sense.

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