An Investigation of the Relationship between EFL Young Learners' Writing Fluency and their FL Writing Anxiety

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Abstract

The current research paper aimed at investigating the relationship between EFL young learners' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety. The study sample consisted of 'sixty' fifth year primary stage students at Azza Zidan Official Language School, Fayoum Governorate, Egypt. The study sample's writing fluency was measured using a writing performance test, and their FL writing anxiety level was identified using a foreign language writing anxiety scale; both prepared by the researcher. Results of the study sample showed a statistically significant negative correlation between the scores obtained from the writing performance test regarding writing fluency and the FL writing anxiety scale.

*Key words***:** Writing Fluency, FL writing anxiety.

Introduction

One of the most important aspects of recent educational reform efforts is the increased attention to the writing skill (Hussein, & Al Ashri, 2013) as English writing plays an important role in EFL students' personal and professional lives (Corgill, 2008). Also, it plays a significant role in fostering creativity (Tabatabaei, & Assefi, 2012). Amoush (2015) confirmed that writing allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas. Thus, it encourages thinking and learning. Hence, writing is considered one of the most important skills that EFL students need to enhance (Hyland, 2003).

One of the essential components of the writing skill is fluency. Therefore, writing fluency research is important to teachers and researchers who are interested in facilitating students' written text production and in assessing writing. This called for reaching a better understanding of writing fluency and how it should be measured (Abdel Latif, 2013; Dormer, 2016).

In spite of the importance of FL writing skills, they may be impeded from being enhanced and developed because of writing anxiety. Many students may feel discouraged due to this anxiety and this will eventually cause them to stop even trying to write (Salem, & Abu Al Dyiar, 2014). Many studies in the area of English writing instruction have highlighted that writing apprehension has a negative influence on EFL/ESL learners' writing performance (Cheng, Horwitz & Shallert, 1999; Kurt & Atay, 2007).

In general, students with a high level of writing anxiety tend to feel demotivated in writing, hold negative attitudes toward writing tasks, produce papers of low quality, have negative impressions about their own writing, and are more likely to avoid situations where writing is required (Abdel Latif, 2007; Cheng, 2002; Cheng 2004; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014).

'FL writing anxiety' has attracted a great deal of attention and has been the focus of a number of studies (Armendaris, 2009; Cheng,

2002; Daud et al., 2005; Ho, 2016). However, few studies and researches have addressed the relationship between learners' writing performance and their FL writing anxiety. Thus, the lack of previous studies and researches handling the relationship between learners' writing performance and their FL writing anxiety support the need for conducting the current study. Therefore, the current study aimed at investigating the relationship between EFL young learners' writing performance and their FL writing anxiety.

Statement of the problem

Due to the negative effects that writing anxiety have on students' language development in general and their writing performance and writing fluency in particular, there is a need to investigate the relationship between students' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety in order to provide help to reduce students' writing anxiety level. In order to investigate the relationship between EFL young learners' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety, the researcher had to answer the following research main question:

'What is the correlational relationship between fifth year primary stage students' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety?'

This question was sub-divided into the following sub questions:

1. What is the level of fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance in general and writing fluency in particular?

2. How much FL writing anxiety do fifth year official language primary stage students undergo while writing?

3. What is the correlational relationship between EFL fifth year primary stage students' writing performance and their FL writing anxiety?

4. What is the correlational relationship between EFL fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance and the six components of their FL writing anxiety?

5. What is the correlational relationship between EFL fifth year official language primary stage students' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety?

Aims of the Study

The current study aimed at identifying the following:

1. The relationship between EFL fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance and their FL writing anxiety.

2. The relationship between EFL fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance and the six components of their FL writing anxiety.

3. The relationship between EFL fifth year official language primary stage students' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety.

Significance of the Study

The current study might be helpful in:

4. Providing EFL young learners, teachers, supervisors and researchers with a writing performance test that might help in identifying EFL young learners' writing performance level.

5. Providing EFL young learners, teachers, supervisors and researchers with a valid and reliable foreign language writing anxiety scale for measuring EFL young learners' FL writing anxiety.

6. Raising educators' awareness towards the relationship between EFL young learners' writing performance and their FL writing anxiety.

7. Raising educators' awareness towards the relationship between EFL young learners' writing performance and the six components of their FL writing anxiety.

8. Raising educators' awareness towards the relationship between EFL young learners' writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety.

Hypothesis of the study

The current study aimed at testing the following hypothesis:

"There is no statistically significant correlation between the study sample's writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety"

Delimitations of the study

A sample of 'sixty' EFL fifth year primary stage students in Azza Zidan Official Language School, Fayoum Governorate

Definition of terms

The following definitions of key terms are adopted in the current study:

1. Writing Fluency:

The term 'fluency' according to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary is 'the quality of being able to speak or write a language, especially a foreign language, easily and well' and 'the quality of doing something in a smooth and skillful way'.

2. Writing Anxiety:

Cheng (2004) defined writing anxiety as 'a relatively stable anxiety disposition associated with writing, which involves a variety of dysfunctional thoughts, increased physiological arousal, and maladaptive behaviors' (P. 319).

Literature Review

The main goal of writing instruction is to encourage learners to communicate effectively through writing (Bonyadi, 2014). However, writing is not only a tool for communication, but also it serves as a means of learning, thinking and organizing knowledge (Kern, 2000). Moreover, writing adds variety and interest to classroom activities (Byrne, 1988). Furthermore, English writing plays a significant role in human life as it has been involved in numerous aspects of human life; e.g., social, educational, political, cultural, economic, financial and occupational life (Torwong, 2003). In addition, EFL writing serves as a vehicle for language practice as it reinforces the spoken language and accuracy, consolidates the grammatical structures,

vocabulary, and spelling encountered in reading and listening activities (Al-Saleem, 2008).

Fluency involves a normal speed of accessibility of the inter language. Thus, writing fluency is concerned with the capacity of the learners to communicate meanings in real time through organizing an inter language system. Research has been done with the aim of examining the effects of affective variables such as anxiety on complexity, accuracy, and fluency of writing; e.g., the study of Saeedi and Farnia (2017) in which the relationship between the psycholinguistic variable of EFL learners' perceived level of writing anxiety and the linguistic quality of their task based written discourse in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency has been explored. The results revealed a significant negative association between writing anxiety and fluency. In other words, higher ratings of writing anxiety correlated with lower levels of fluency in writing performance.

Language anxiety effects on foreign language learning have been explored since the 1970s (Ali, 2016; Horwitz, 2001; Jang and Choi, 2014; Jebreil et al., 2015; Karakaya & Ülper, 2011; Negari and Rezaabadi, 2012). It also has long been recognized as a major obstacle to be overcome in foreign/ second language learning context for both teachers and students (Ö. Kırmızı, & G.D. Kırmızı, 2015; Zhang, 2011). Though FL anxiety exists in various aspects of second/foreign language learning such as listening, reading, speaking and writing, writing anxiety has not been adequately investigated. FL writing anxiety is as complex as FL anxiety so it is necessary for both language instructors and learners to be aware of the existence of writing anxiety and take strategies accordingly to help anxious learners to write better in SL/FL contexts (Bline et al., 2001; Lui & Ni, 2015).

Cheng (2004) presented three types of writing anxiety: somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and avoidance behavior. Daud et al. (2005) attributed students' writing anxiety to their lack of vocabulary knowledge, low proficiency level and experience of language use.

Different scholars pointed out that the fear of being evaluated and judged seems to be the main source which might cause writing anxiety (Cheng, 2002; Ferris, 2002; Kurt & Atay, 2007; Öztürk & Çeçen, 2007). There are a number of factors that contribute to the students' FL writing anxiety including; classroom, teacher, exam, and personality traits (Karakaya & Ülper, 2011).

Additionally, the solitary nature of FL writing as product-oriented that depends on the students' own thinking and ideas causes more FL writing anxiety than other skills (Horwitz, 2001; G.C. Yastibas, & A.E. Yastibas, 2015). Zahran (2013) suggested some major causes of writing anxiety including students' misconceptions about writing, negative self-perception, unpleasant experiences with writing, lack of adequate writing skills and knowledge, and inadequate writing instruction. Chang (2004) & Jiang (2016) attributes FL writing anxiety partly to some external factors as teachers' unpleasant comments, too much concern of others' judgment and uncertainty about their writing capacities.

Many recent studies showed that Foreign Language writing anxiety has profound negative effects on students' writing performance in ESL/ EFL context in terms of quality and quantity (Cheng, 2002; Cheng, 2004; Erkan & Saban, 2011; Hassan, 2001; Ho, 2016; Horwitz, 2001; Jang and Choi, 2014; Jebreil, et al., 2015; Kara, 2013; Karakaya & Ülper, 2011; Liu & Ni, 2015; Negari & Rezaabadi, 2012; Ö. Kırmızı, & G.D. Kırmızı, 2015; Salem & Abu Al Dyiar, 2014; Sanders-Reio et al., 2014; G.C. Yastibas, & A.E. Yastibas, 2015). Also, writing anxiety influences students' willingness to write or to take advanced writing courses which affects individuals' career choices and academic decisions (Ali, 2016; Armendaris, 2009; Kara, 2013; Ö. Kırmızı, & G.D. Kırmızı, 2015).

This research paper can complement the previous studies by its direct focus on EFL young learners' writing performance and its relationship with their FL writing anxiety.

Material and Method: The method used in the current study can be shown throughout the following items the design of the study including the variables of the study, the participants of the study, and the instruments of the study.

1. The Study Design

The quasi-experimental design was adopted in the current study. In this study, sixty students enrolled in the fifth year primary stage represent the study sample. They belong to one of Fayoum public official language schools, namely Azza Zidan Official Language School.

1.1. The Study Variables

▪EFL Fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance

▪EFL Fifth year official language primary stage students' FL writing anxiety

2. The Participants of the Study

Sixty students enrolled in the fifth year primary stage participated in the study. They belong to one of Fayoum public official language schools, namely Azza Zidan Official Language School. Participants' age ranged from ten to eleven years old. The rationale for choosing the study sample is that students in the primary stage, especially fifth year students, need to be able to express themselves, their ideas, their understanding either in written or spoken language without being afraid. FL writing anxiety may hinder their ability to write. Thus, identifying the relationship between the study sample's writing performance and their FL writing anxiety may help in identifying their writing anxiety level, reducing it, and improving their writing performance as a result.

3. The Study Instruments

In the current study, the researcher made use of two main instruments:

3.1. The Writing Performance Test

3.2. The Writing Performance Scoring Rubric

3.3. The Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale.

3.1. The Writing Performance Test

3.1.1. Purpose of the Writing Performance Test

A writing performance test was prepared and administered by the researcher to sixty students enrolled in the fifth year primary stage. It aimed at assessing fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance.

3.1.2. Design of the Writing Performance Test

The researcher constructed the writing performance test based on:

✓ Reviewing literature related to testing EFL young learners' writing performance.

The writing performance test consisted of four questions to assess fifth year official language primary stage students' writing performance. Each question asks students to use pictures and guiding words/ questions to compose a paragraph of at least five sentences. It was graded based on the writing scoring rubric, 25 marks for each question. For the final form of the test, see **appendix (A)**, **p**. **23.**

3.1.3. Validity of the Writing Performance Test

To ensure the validity of the test, the initial version of the test items was submitted to a group of specialized jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to be read and judged regarding the following criteria:

✓ Suitability of the test items to students' linguistic level.

✓ Clarity and linguistic correctness of the test instructions and items.

✓ Suitability of the test as a whole to its intended goal; i.e., assessing EFL young learners' writing performance.

Some modifications were done on the test according to the recommendations of the jury members.

3.1.4. Reliability of the Writing Performance Test

In order to examine the reliability of the writing performance test, it was administered to a group of 'thirty' fifth year primary stage students at Azza Zidan official language school; i.e., piloting. Cronbach's Alpha analysis in the SPSS program was used in order to estimate the reliability of the test. Cronbach's Alpha result yielded (0.820), which is a high level of reliability.

3.1.5. Time of the Writing Performance Test

During piloting the writing performance test, the researcher estimated the average time needed for answering the test items. In order to do so, the researcher calculated and added the time spent by each examinee in the classroom and divided them by the number of the students. The time accredited for answering the test items was (48) minutes, (12) minutes for each question to be answered, which would provide ample time for students to respond to the test. No one needed an extension of time to complete the test.

3.1.6. Writing Performance Test Scoring

Students' writings on the writing performance test were assessed using the writing performance scoring rubric described below. Two raters (the researcher and another rater) used the writing performance scoring rubric to assess learners' writing performance on the test. Hence, according to this rubric each question was scored and, in turn, the whole test was scored too. The total score of the test became 100 marks because each question was graded according to 5 criteria (based on the parameters given in the rubric; content, accuracy, quantity, fluency & organization of ideas, and writing mechanics) with 5 marks each. Then, the mark of each question was (25), by summing the scores of all questions, the total score of the test became 100 marks. Data were collected, recorded and statistically analyzed to specify the study samples' writing performance level.

3.2. The Writing Performance Scoring Rubric

3.2.1. Design of the Writing Performance Scoring Rubric

The writing performance scoring rubric was designed after reviewing literature related to EFL young learners' writing sub-skills, EFL young learners' writing performance assessment, and samples of rubrics designed and used in several research works. It was based on the checklist of the writing sub-skills necessary for fifth year primary students. It consists of (5) criteria to be measured; i.e., content, accuracy, quantity, fluency & organization of ideas, and writing mechanics. According to the learner's skill, h/she was labeled in one of the (5) criteria mentioned in the rubric. For each criterion, (5) levels of performance were described on a five point rating scale (arranged from 5 to 1). Thus, the total points of the rubric are (25). As the writing performance test includes 4 questions of paragraph writing, the overall mark of the test is 100. For the final form of the writing performance scoring rubric, see **appendix (B)**, **p. 26.**

The Writing Performance Scoring Rubric Parameters

The rubric included five parameters for assessing and rating the answer of each question, **content**, **accuracy, quantity, fluency & organization of ideas, and mechanics of writing;** thirteen features of writing performance. Five levels of students' performance were described for each parameter using a five point rating scale (arranged from 5 to 1):

5   indicates 'excellent' performance,

4   indicates 'very good' performance,

3   means that the student's performance is 'average',

2   indicates 'acceptable' performance, and

1   indicates 'acceptable' performance.

Thus, the total score of the rubric is (25) marks.

3.2.2. Purpose of the Writing Performance Scoring Rubric

A writing performance scoring rubric was prepared by the researcher to:

✓ Rate students' writing performance in paragraph writing, and
✓   Identify students' writing abilities.

3.2.3. Validity of the Writing Performance Scoring Rubric

In order to establish the validity of the writing performance scoring rubric, it was submitted to a group of specialized jury members in the field of EFL curricula and instruction to be read and judged in the light of the following criteria:

✓ Clarity and relatedness of each level of performance to each writing sub-skill.
✓ The suitability of the rubric to its intended goal; i.e., assessing writing performance.
✓ The suitability of the rubric for discriminating between different levels of students' performance.

The writing performance scoring rubric was modified according to the jury members' comments and suggestions.

Inter-Rater Reliability

In order to ensure the reliability of the rubric, participants in the pilot study were evaluated and rated by three raters using the designed rubric. In order to estimate the inter-rater reliability of the rubric, the researcher made use of the SPSS program using Cronbach's Alpha with inter-class correlation coefficient statistics. Reliability yielded (.899), which is a very strong level of reliability and consistency at (0.01) level of significance.

3.3. The Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale

3.3.1. Purpose of the Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale

The foreign language writing anxiety scale was designed to identify FL writing anxiety levels of fifth year official language primary stage students.

3.3.2. Design of the Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale

After reviewing a number of studies on students' FL writing anxiety, the researcher prepared a FL writing anxiety scale, taking into account the following points:

- o Using items that are positively worded and some items that are negatively worded.
- o Using clear, simple and direct items.
- o Addressing all FL writing anxiety components; i.e. somatic symptoms, cognitive apprehension, communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, pressing situation inhibition, and risk taking reluctance.

3.3.3. Content of the Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale:

The researcher's FL writing anxiety scale is based on Cheng (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) and Horwitz et al. (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.

The FL writing anxiety scale consists of (36) items that aimed at identifying fifth year official language primary stage students' FL writing anxiety in terms of somatic symptoms, cognitive apprehension, communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, pressing situation inhibition, and risk taking reluctance components of FL writing anxiety. Those (36) items were scored on a five-point Likert response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A higher score obtained indicated a higher level of FL writing anxiety and a lower score indicates a lower level of FL writing anxiety. Ten of the items (3, 7, 10, 14, 21, 23, 26, 27, 30, and 35) are negatively worded and accordingly require reverse scoring before being summed up to yield total scores. The (36) items of the FL writing anxiety scale can be divided into six categories of anxiety; i.e., **somatic symptoms** represented by items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), **cognitive apprehension** represented by items (8, 9, 10, and 11), **communication apprehension** represented by items (12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19), **fear of negative evaluation** represented by items

(20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27), **pressing situation inhibition** represented by items (28, 29, 30, 31, and 32), and **risk taking reluctance** represented by items (33, 34, 35, and 36).

The FL writing anxiety scale was translated into Arabic by an EFL instructor. Then, the Arabic form of the scale was back-translated into English and compared with the original version. The English version was almost the same as the original version. The FL writing anxiety scale was translated into Arabic to make it easier for students to complete it.

3.3.4. Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale Validity

The validity of the FL writing anxiety scale was established using two ways as follows:

3.3.4.1. Content Validity

The FL writing anxiety scale was submitted to a group of specialized jury members in the field of EFL curriculum and instruction. The jury members were asked to:

✓ Check the suitability of the scale as a whole for identifying EFL young learners' FL writing anxiety level.
✓ Check the clarity and relatedness of the scale dimensions to FL writing anxiety.
✓ Check the clarity and relatedness of each indicator to each category.
✓ Check the Clarity of the scale instructions.
✓ Make any modification to the scale items.

The scale was modified according to the jury members' comments and suggestions**.** For the final form of the English and Arabic FL writing anxiety scale, see **appendix (C)**, **p. 29.**

3.3.4.2. Internal Consistency

The internal consistency was tested by calculating the correlation between the score given to each of the six dimensions (**somatic symptoms**, **cognitive apprehension**, **communication apprehension**,

fear of negative evaluation, **pressing situation inhibition** and **risk taking reluctance**) and the total score of the scale.

The correlation between the score given to each of the six dimensions of the scale and its total score was calculated, and shown in **table (1)** below:

Table (1)

The Correlation between the Scale's Six Dimensions and its Total Score

No.	Dimension	Correlation Value	Significance level
1	Somatic Symptoms	0.861**	0.000
2	Cognitive Apprehension	0.743**	0.000
3	Communication Apprehension	0.841**	0.000
4	Fear of Negative Evaluation	0.404*	0.027
5	Pressing Situation Inhibition	0.837**	0.000
6	Risk Taking Reluctance	0.540**	0.002

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

* **Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

The values given in the above table show the strong correlation between the six dimensions of the scale. They were all significantly related to the total score of the scale at (0.01) level and (0.05) level. **This means that the FL writing anxiety scale has an acceptable level of validity.**

3.3.5. The FL Writing Anxiety Scale Reliability:

Cronbach's Alpha analysis in the SPSS program was used in order to examine the reliability of the FL writing anxiety scale. Cronbach's Alpha result yielded **(0.799),** which is a high level of reliability.

3.3.6. Calculation of Students' FL Writing Anxiety on the FL Writing Anxiety Scale:

The final version of the scale consisted of 36 items, for each item, participants were given a mark out of 5 according to his response as follows:

For the Positive Items:

Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Uncertain (U)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)
5	4	3	2	1

For the Negative Items:

Strongly Agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Uncertain (U)	Disagree (D)	Strongly Disagree (SD)
1	2	3	4	5

The overall anxiety was calculated through summing students' scores on all positive and negative items. The highest score a student could get was (180) and the lowest score was (36) and the neutral score was (90). In addition, the mean scores of the six components of writing anxiety among the respondents were also calculated separately. The highest score a student could get on the **somatic symptoms** component was (35) and the lowest score was (7) with (17.5) as the neutral score. The highest score a student could get on the **cognitive apprehension** component was (20) and the lowest score was (4) with (10) as the neutral score. The highest score a student could get on the **communication apprehension** component was (40) and the lowest score was (8) with (20) as the neutral score. The highest score a student could get on the **fear of negative evaluation** component was (40) and the lowest score was (8) with (20) as the neutral score. The highest score a student could get on the **pressing situation inhibition** component was (25) and the lowest score was (5) with (12.5) as the neutral score. The highest score a student could get on the **risk taking reluctance** component was (20) and the lowest score was (5) with (10) as the neutral score.

Tools Implementation

After establishing the validity, ensuring the reliability and specifying the time of the **writing performance test** and the **FL writing anxiety scale**, they were introduced to a sample of 'sixty' fifth year primary stage students in Azza Zidan official language school, in order to identify their writing performance level and FL writing anxiety level. The researcher applied the tools on (December 9th, 2019). Students' answers were analyzed and data were collected, recorded, and statistically analyzed to know the correlation between the study sample's writing performance and their FL writing anxiety.

Results

The current research paper aimed at investigating the relationship between EFL young learners' writing fluency and their writing anxiety level. To do so, some statistical procedures were followed. The results came as follow:

Testing the hypothesis of the research paper:

The hypothesis stated that:

"There is no statistically significant correlation between the study sample's scores in the administration of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test regarding writing fluency"

In order to test the above hypothesis, the researcher calculated the Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the relationship between the study sample's scores obtained from the administration of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test regarding writing fluency.

Table (1) below shows the correlation coefficient between the study sample's scores of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test

	FL writing anxiety questionnaire	Writing performance test
FL Writing anxiety scale	1	-0.519[**] 0.000

	FL writing anxiety questionnaire	Writing performance test
Writing performance test	-0.519[**] 0.000	1

**** means that the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level**

Table (1) above shows that there was a statistically significant negative correlation between the scores obtained from the administration of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test. The correlation coefficient was (-0.519), which is significant at 0.01 level. So, the first hypothesis of the research was rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant negative correlation between students' FL writing anxiety and their writing performance. This means that, when learners' writing performance increased, their FL writing anxiety decreased.

Table (2) below shows the correlation coefficient between the study sample's scores of the six components of FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test

Dimension		Correlation Value	Significance level
Somatic Symptoms	Writing performance test	-0.491[**]	0.000
Cognitive Apprehension		-0.113	0.392
Communication Apprehension		-0.367[**]	0.004
Fear of Negative Evaluation		-0.371[**]	0.004
Pressing Situation Inhibition		-0.414[**]	0.001
Risk Taking Reluctance		-0.328[*]	0.010

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

***Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

Table (2) above shows that there was a statistically significant negative correlation at 0.01 or 0.05 levels between the scores obtained

from the administration of the writing performance test and the FL writing anxiety scale in the **somatic symptoms**, **pressing situation inhibition**, **fear of negative evaluation**, **communication apprehension** and **risk taking reluctance** components. There was no a statistically significant correlation at 0.01 or 0.05 levels between the scores obtained from the administration of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test in the **cognitive apprehension** component of FL writing anxiety.

Table (3) below shows the correlation coefficient between the study sample's scores obtained from the administration of the writing performance test in the five specified writing sub-skills and the FL writing anxiety scale

Dimension	FL Writing Anxiety Scale	Correlation Value	Significance level
Content		-0.477**	0.000
Accuracy		-0.518**	0.000
Quantity		-0.464**	0.000
Fluency & Organization of Ideas		-0.485**	0.000
Mechanics of Writing		-0.495**	0.000

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

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table (3) above shows that there was a statistically significant negative correlation at 0.01 level between the scores obtained from the administration of the writing performance test in the five specified writing sub-skills and the FL writing anxiety scale.

Discussion

The previously mentioned results revealed that:

- There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the study sample's writing performance and their FL writing anxiety level at 0.01 level

- There is a statistically significant negative correlation at 0.01 or 0.05 levels between the scores obtained from the administration of the writing performance test and the FL writing anxiety scale in the **somatic symptoms**, **pressing situation inhibition**, **fear of negative evaluation**, **communication apprehension** and **risk taking reluctance** components.

- There is no a statistically significant correlation at 0.01 or 0.05 levels between the scores obtained from the administration of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test in the **cognitive apprehension** component of FL writing anxiety.

- There is a statistically significant negative correlation at 0.01 level between the scores obtained from the administration of the writing performance test in the five specified writing sub-skills and the FL writing anxiety scale.

- There is a statistically significant correlation at 0.01 level between the scores obtained from the administration of the FL writing anxiety scale and the writing performance test in the **writing fluency sub-skill**.

The current study showed that there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the study sample's writing performance and their FL writing anxiety level. **Similar results to the current study are indicated in studies and researches in the same field.**

1. Hassan (2001) conducted a study to determine if (132) EFL third-year English department college students' FL writing apprehension is related to the quality and quantity of their writing. The researcher proved that writing apprehension

negatively influenced the quality of the students' composition writing.

1. **DeDeyn (2011)** tried to investigate the relationship between (33) international undergraduate students' writing anxiety and their writing performance. The study participants enrolled in an introductory university writing course with an advanced English proficiency level. Inverse relationships were found.

2. **Fergusson (2011)** investigated the relationship between 11–12 year-old students' writing performance and their writing anxiety. Correlation analysis indicated inverse relationships between the study participants' writing performance and their writing anxiety.

3. **Faigley et al. (2014)** investigated the role of apprehension in the writing competency and writing performance of 110 undergraduates. The researchers proved that high apprehensive students would perform differently than low apprehensive students on standardized tests of writing-related skills (competency) and on two essays of different types (performance).

Balta (2018) tried to investigate the relationship between students' argumentative text writing skills and writing anxiety. The participants were composed of 375 8th graders in six middle schools in Sivas. The researcher proved that students with low writing anxiety were more successful in writing argumentative texts when compared with their counterparts with middle and high anxiety levels.

Thus, the negative correlation between writing performance and FL writing anxiety is also in harmony with the findings of previous studies conducted by Hassan (2001), DeDeyn (2011), Fergusson (2011), Faigley et al. (2014), & Balta (2018).

Conclusion

The current research aimed at investigating the relationship between writing fluency and FL writing anxiety of EFL fifth year primary stage students. Findings showed that there is a statistically significant

negative correlation between the study sample's writing fluency and their FL writing anxiety level.

From the above, there are responsibilities for the teachers to carry in order to enhance students' abilities in their writing performance in general and writing fluency in particular and to provide friendly and relaxed environment for students to learn. Also, teachers need to find ways to help students overcome their fear of participating in writing tasks.

Research Recommendations & Pedagogical Implications

According to the previously mentioned and discussed results, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Students should be offered enough opportunities to practice writing on a daily basis using authentic tasks in EFL classes, paying attention to the fact that writing is a developmental skill that improves gradually.

2. Students should be offered enough comprehensible input through pre-writing activities and especially through reading in order to provide them with the language necessary for writing.

3. Students should be provided with effective activities from their real life situations regarding the writing skill that enhance their ability to write.

4. The written tasks given to EFL students have to be purposeful in order to motivate them to participate.

5. EFL teachers should use pairing up and grouping methods for teaching EFL writing in a way that attract students' interests and challenge their minds to think and participate.

6. EFL teachers should continuously assess students' writing performance and provide them with constant feedback as this would help them to spot their points of strengths and weaknesses which would reduce their FL writing anxiety and enhance their writing performance.

7. EFL them to write using the foreign language.

8. Students teachers should encourage their students to practice writing inside and outside the classroom.

9. Teaching writing should focus on developing students' cognitive aspects; e.g., vocabulary, grammar, etc., and their affective aspects of writing; e.g., self-efficacy, motivation etc.

10. Attention should be paid to reduce students' FL writing anxiety and motivate should be encouraged to trust in their abilities in writing performance without the fear of failure.

Suggested Topics for Further Research

In light of the revealed results, the researcher suggests the following:

Investigating the relationship between:

1. EFL young learners' proficiency level and their writing performance.
2. EFL young learners' proficiency level and their FL writing anxiety.
3. FL writing anxiety and EFL young learners' accuracy.
4. FL writing anxiety and EFL young learners' content.
5. FL anxiety and EFL young learners' oral performance.

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Appendices
Appendix (A)
The final version of the English writing performance test
The English Writing Performance Test for Fifth-Year Primary Students
Test Instructions

Name: …………………………………………….

Gender: Male / Female

Class: …………………………………………..

School: ……………………………………………

Dear Students, please read the following instructions before you start answering the test:

1. Write your name, gender, class and school in the space above.

2. Read each question carefully before you answer.

3. Answer the questions in the provided space.

4. Write at least five sentences for each question.

5. Duration of the test is (48) minutes, (12) minutes for each question.

6. Total mark of the test is 100 Marks.

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1. Write about your hobbies. You can use the following picture to help you write. (25 Marks).

2. Write about your best friend. You can use the following guiding questions to help you write. (25 Marks)

* What's his/her name?　　　* How do you call him/her?
* When did you first meet?　* How do you spend your time with together?　　　　　　　* How is he/she like?

3.Write about the following: How can you be healthy? You can use the following pictures to help you write. (25 Marks)

4. Write about the following: How can you make your school a better place? You can use the following pictures to help you write. (25 Marks)

Playground

Science Lab

Music Room

School

Art Room

Computer

Appendix (B)

The final version of the writing performance scoring rubric

The Writing Scoring Rubric for correcting the EFL pre-post writing test

Student's Name: ……………………………………………

Group: Experimental/ Control.

Date: …………………………………………………………...

Title of Work: …………………………………………………

Writing Criteria	N.	Indicators for the Writing Sub-Skills	Scoring Criteria				
			Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Average (3)	Acceptable (2)	Weak (1)
I. Content	1	Writing with only one main idea.	a- The main idea is clear. b- The main idea is supported, and enriched by sufficient relevant supportive details. c- The student provides enough examples to make the ideas understandable.	a- The Main idea is well-marked. b- Support for the main idea is somewhat clear and relevant c- The student supports the main idea with many examples that make the ideas understandable.	a- The topic or the theme is identified as the main idea b- Some details begin to define the main idea or the topic, yet they are limited in number or clarity c- The student supports the main idea with some examples, yet they are limited in making the ideas understandable.	a- The Main idea is still missing; though possible topic/theme is emerging. b- Support for the topic is limited, unclear. Only few details are presented. c- The student supports the main idea with few examples.	a- No main idea, or central theme exists. b- Support for the topic is not evident, or there are no supporting details. c- There are no examples.
	2	Supporting the main idea with sufficient relevant supportive details and avoid irrelevant ideas.					
	3	Providing enough examples to make the ideas understandable.					

Writing Criteria	N.	Indicators for the Writing Sub-Skills	Scoring Criteria				
			Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Average (3)	Acceptable (2)	Weak (1)
II. Accuracy	1	**Grammatical Skills:** **a- Writing grammatically correct sentences; i.e., appropriate tenses, subject/verb agreement, word order within a sentence, appropriate types of sentences, prepositions, pronouns, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.** **b- Using a reasonable range of structure.**	**a-** The student demonstrates a reasonable range of structure, and writes grammatically correct sentences. **b-** The student uses meaningful language as there are attempts to use a reasonable range of vocabulary, idioms and expressions. Words the student uses are correct and appropriate to the topic and convey	**a-** The student demonstrates a good use of grammatical structures. Few sentences still have some grammatical mistakes, but this doesn't interfere with communication. **b-** The student demonstrates a good use of vocabulary, idioms and expressions appropriate to the topic. Few words are still incorrect, but the overall meaning is clear.	**a-** There is adequate range of grammatical structures, but the student could use more structures. Some sentences are still confusing. **b-** Student uses adequate range of vocabulary, idioms and expressions but could use more new words. Some words are incorrect or inappropriate. but the overall meaning is somewhat clear.	**a-** There is a limited range of grammatical structures. Writing is still distracting. **b-** There is a limited range of vocabulary, idioms and expressions and/or several words the student uses are incorrect, and inappropriate to the topic. The meaning is still confusing. Most sentences don't make sense	**a-** There are many grammatical errors that negatively affect communication. Writing is distracting. **b-** There is a lack of vocabulary, idioms and expressions and/ or most words the student uses are incorrect, and inappropriate to the topic. Errors often interfere with the message and the meaning is confusing. The student does not use language accurately. This does not make the writing clear.
	2	**Word Choice Skills:** **a- Using meaningful language by using a variety of appropriate vocabulary that conveys the meaning correctly and clearly; i.e., precise and clear words that highlight the meaning.**					

Writing Criteria	N.	Indicators for the Writing Sub-Skills	Scoring Criteria				
			Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Average (3)	Acceptable (2)	Weak (1)
		b- Using appropriate idioms and expressions.	the meaning clearly.				
III. Quantity (Length)	1	**Writing not less than five sentences for a written text.**	Writing more than five sentences for the topic.	Writing only five sentences for the topic.	Writing three to four sentences for the topic.	Writing only two sentences for the topic.	Writing less than two sentences for the topic.
IV. Fluency & Organization of Ideas	1	**Setting a beginning, middle and an end to the written text.**	**a-** Writing has a definite beginning, middle and an end. **b-** All transitions are used effectively. The ideas are related and well-connected.	**a-** Writing follows a clear sequence with a beginning, middle, and an end. **b-** Most transitions are adequate, logical, but may be repetitive. Few ideas may not be related to each other.	**a-** Writing has a definite beginning, but the end is inappropriate or it has a definite end but the beginning is inappropriate **b-** There is a limited use of transitions or they are not used appropriately. Writing shows minimal evidence of logical sequence.	**a-** Writing shows little evidence of logical sequence. **b-** Writing lacks clear transitions. Writing has several ideas that are not related to each other.	**a-** Writing is haphazard. **b-** Transitional words are missing. Writing is confusing and hard to follow.
	2	**Using appropriate transitions and ensuring the logical sequence of sentences and the smooth flow of ideas related to the main idea so that the piece of writing seems coherent, organized and clear.**					
V. Mechani	1	**Applying punctuation and capitalization rules correctly.**	**a- b- c- a-** The student uses correct punctuation and capitalization	**a- b- c- a-** The student makes few minor errors in punctuation, and capitalization. It	**a- a-** The student makes some errors in punctuation and capitalization. **b-** The student makes some errors in spelling. Errors need	**a-** The student makes several errors in punctuation, and capitalization.	**a- b- c- a-** The student makes serious and consistent errors in punctuation, and capitalization. **d- b-** The student makes serious and consistent
	2	**Using correct word spelling.**					

Writing Criteria	N.	Indicators for the Writing Sub-Skills	Scoring Criteria				
			Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Average (3)	Acceptable (2)	Weak (1)
cs of Writing	3	**Writing readable handwriting.**	rules. **d- b-** There are no spelling errors. **e- c-** The student writes readable handwriting.	needs little editing. **d- b-** The student makes few minor errors in spelling. **c-** The student's handwriting is readable.	editing but don't impede readability. **c- c-** The student's handwriting needs editing but doesn't impede readability.	**b-** The student makes several errors in spelling. Errors impede readability. **c-** The student's handwriting impede readability.	errors in spelling. **e- c-** The text is difficult to read. **f-**

Appendix (C)
The final version of the Foreign Language writing anxiety scale
The Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale

Name: …………………………………………

Gender: Male / Female

School: ……………………………………………..

Class: …………………………………………

Academic Year: /

Instructions

1- Read the following statements and express your degree of agreement/ disagreement by ticking (√) the appropriate column.

2- Please give your reaction to EVERY statement.

3- **Note that**: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, U = Uncertain, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.

Categories	N.	Indicators for the Categories	SD	D	U	A	SA
I. **Somatic Symptoms** **الأعراض الجسدية**	1	I feel my heart beating so hard when I write in English. أشعر أن قلبي يخفق بقوة عندما أكتب باللغه الإنجليزيه.					
	2	I shiver once I write in English. أرتجف عندما أكتب باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	3	When I write in English, I feel relaxed and certain. أشعر بالراحة والتأكيد عند الكتابه باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	4	I freeze up when asked to write in English. أتجمد عندما يُطلب مني الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	5	I usually get so nervous once I write in English. عادة ما أشعر بالتوتر الشديد عندما أكتب باللغة الإنجليزية.					

Categories	N.	Indicators for the Categories	SD	D	U	A	SA
	6	I sweat when I write in English. أتعرق عندما أكتب باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	7	I am not nervous at all while writing in English. لا أشعر بالخوف على الإطلاق عند الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
II. Cognitive Apprehension الخوف المعرفي	**8**	My mind often goes blank when I start to write in English. غالبًا ما يُصبح ذهني فارغًا عندما أبدأ في الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	9	I feel shocked by the number of rules I have to master to write in English. أشعر بالصدمة من عدد القواعد التي يجب أن أتقنها للكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	10	I often choose to write down my thoughts in English. كثيرا ما أختار أن أكتب أفكاري باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	11	My thoughts become jumbled while writing in English. تصبح أفكاري مختلطة أثناء الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
III. Communication Apprehension الخوف من الإتصال	**12**	I feel afraid when asked to write in English. أشعربالخوف عندما يُطلب مني الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	13	I always feel that my classmates are better at writing in English than me. أشعر دائمًا أن زملائي في الفصل يتقنون الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية أكثر مني.					
	14	I don't understand why some students get so upset while writing in English. لا أفهم سبب إنزعاج بعض الطلاب أثناء الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	15	I feel anxious about the writing class even if I am well prepared for it. أشعر بالقلق حيال فصل الكتابة حتى لو كنت على					

Categories	N.	Indicators for the Categories	SD	D	U	A	SA
		استعداد جيد له.					
	16	I am afraid of my English writing being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class. أخشى أن يتم اختيار كتابتي باللغة الإنجليزية كعينة يتم مناقشتها في الفصل.					
	17	I feel nervous reading aloud what I like to my colleagues. أشعر بالتوتر عند قراءة ما أحب بصوت عال إلى زملائي.					
	18	I feel like going around the bush while communicating my ideas in writing. أشعر بالحيره عند التعبير عن أفكاري كتابةً.					
	19	I get stuck while communicating my written ideas. أتعثر أثناء التعبير عن أفكاري المكتوبة.					
IV. Fear of Negative Evaluation الخوف من التقييم السلبي	20	I feel worried if I know that my English writings will be evaluated. أشعر بالقلق إذا عَلمت أنه سيتم تقييم كتاباتي الإنجليزية.					
	21	I don't worry about making mistakes while writing in English. لا أقلق بشأن الوقوع في أخطاء أثناء الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.					
	22	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh while reading my English writings. أخشى أن يضحك زملائي عند قراءة كتاباتي الإنجليزية.					
	23	I do not worry that my English writings are a lot worse than others'. لا أخشى أن تكون كتاباتي الإنجليزية أسوأ بكثير من كتابات الآخرين.					
	24	I feel worried about getting a very poor grade if I know that my English writings will be evaluated.					

Categories	N.	Indicators for the Categories	SD	D	U	A	SA
		أشعر بالقلق من الحصول على درجة سيئة للغاية إذا كنت أعرف أن كتاباتي باللغة الإنجليزية سيتم تقييمها.					
	25	I am afraid that my colleagues will criticize my English writing if they read it. أخشى أن يقوم زُملائي بإنتقاد كتاباتي الإنجليزية إذ قاموا بقراءتها.					
	26	I don't worry at all about what other people would think of my English writing. لا أقلق مُطلقاً حول ما سيُفكر به الآخرون بشأن كتاباتي الإنجليزية.					
	27	I am not afraid at all that my English writings would be rated as very poor. لا أقلق على الإطلاق من أن تُصنف كتاباتي الإنجليزية على أنها سيئة للغاية.					
V. **Pressing Situation Inhibition** **الخوف من المواقف الضاغطة**	28	I often feel Panic when I write in English under time constraint. غالباً ما أشعر بالذعر عند الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية مُقيداً بالوقت.					
	29	I feel nervous when asked to write in English suddenly. أشعر بالتوترعندما يُطلب مني الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية بشكل مفاجئ.					
	30	I am usually at ease during the writing tasks in my English language class. عادة ما أشعر بالراحة أثناء مهام الكتابة في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية.					
	31	I get nervous when the language teacher asks me to write in a topic which I haven't prepared in advance. أشعر بالتوتر عندما يَطلب مني مُعلم اللغة الإنجليزية الكتابة في موضوع لم أقم بإعداده مُسبقاً.					
	32	I feel worried when someone stares at what I am writing. أشعر بالقلق عندما يُحدق شخص ما في ما أكتب.					

Categories	N.	Indicators for the Categories	SD	D	U	A	SA
VI. **Risk Taking** **Reluctance** **عدم الرغبه في أخذ المخاطر**	33	I start to panic when I have to write in English without previous exposure to the topic. يبدأ الشعور بالذعر عندما يكون علي أن أكتب باللغة الإنجليزية دون التعرض السابق للموضوع.					
	34	I feel uncomfortable writing about unfamiliar topics that I had no interest in. أشعر بعدم الراحه عند الكتابة عن موضوعات غير مألوفة و ليس لدي اهتمام بها.					
	35	It wouldn't bother me at all to write in English without preparation. لا يُزعجني على الإطلاق الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية دون تحضير.					
	36	I feel nervous writing words for remarkable events. أشعر بالتوتر عند التحضير كتابةً للأحداث المُميزه.					

<u>مُستخلص البحث:</u>

تهدف الورقة البحثية الحالية إلى دراسة العلاقة بين الطلاقة الكتابية للمُتعلمين الصغار الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية والقلق الكتابي لديهم. تكونت عينة الدراسة من "٦٠" طالب في الصف الخامس من المرحلة الإبتدائية بمدرسة عزة زيدان الرسمية للغات بمحافظة الفيوم، مصر. تم قياس الطلاقة الكتابية لعينة الدراسة بإستخدام إختبار الأداء الكتابي، وتم تحديد مستوى القلق الكتابي لدى العينه بإستخدام مقياس القلق الكتابي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة الأجنبية؛ كلاهما تم إعداده من قبل الباحثة. أظهرت نتائج عينة الدراسة وجود علاقة سلبية ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الدرجات التي تم الحصول عليها من اختبار الأداء الكتابي فيما يتعلق بالطلاقة الكتابية ومقياس القلق الكتابي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة الأجنبية.

الكلمات المُفتاحية: الطلاقة الكتابية، القلق الكتابي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة الأجنبية.