The Effect of Four-Square Writing Method on Writing Anxiety of Learners of Turkish as a Foreign Language: A Mixed Method Study

Ozan İPEK[1] & Hüseyin KARABUĞA[2]

[1] Department of Teaching Turkish, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey

[2] Department of Turkish Language, Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Bolu, Turkey

Correspondence: Ozan İPEK, School of Education, Bursa Uludağ University, Bursa, Turkey.

Abstract

The study aims to examine the effect of the Four Square Writing Method (FSWM) on the writing anxiety of the learners of Turkish as a foreign language at the B2 level. The mixed-methods sequential explanatory design was applied, and 50 students at the B2 proficiency level who studied at the Turkish Teaching Practice and Research Center (BAİBU TÖMER) at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University in the 2020-2021 academic year were selected through the purposeful sampling. The quantitative data were obtained with a weak experimental design consisting of a pre-test and a post-test, while the qualitative data consisted of interviews with the participants. As data collection instruments, the Writing Anxiety Scale (WAS) developed by Şen and Boylu (2017) and the Semi-Structured Interview Form designed by the researchers were used. Quantitative data were analyzed by hypothesis testing, whereas qualitative data were scrutinized using content analysis. The quantitative data showed that the FSWM had a statistically significant effect on the writing anxiety of the learners of Turkish as a foreign language. On the other hand, the qualitative findings were categorized into two main themes: "writing skills" and "affectivity." The writing skills category included 13 codes and 72 views; "general, transition, and linking expressions, developing strategies, developing thinking skills, learning vocabulary, enhancing writing style, planning in writing, graphic organizer, drafting, collaborative writing, organization, writing quality, and generating ideas. The affectivity category consisted of 5 codes and 31 views, including relaxation, enjoyment, motivation, increased self-confidence, and dislike. The findings determined that the FSWM played a role in positively affecting writing anxiety, contributing to the development of writing skills, promoting participants' psychological comfort, allowing them to have a fun time, gaining self-confidence, and motivating them to write. Lastly, the study detailed the aspects where the qualitative findings supported the quantitative results contributing to the interpretation of the data.

Keywords: four square writing method, teaching Turkish as a foreign language, writing anxiety, writing skills

1. Introduction

One of the most critical skills in 21st-century societies is writing. Writing is a medium with various functions, such as communication among people, mediating one's self-expression in various contexts, facilitating the development of thoughts, and gathering, preserving, and transmitting information (Graham & Harris, 2005, p. 1). In the information and technology era, the diversification of communication media and thus the enrichment of forms of self-expression have increased the significance of writing skills. Communication by writing is vital in the modern world, becoming more critical as the information age progresses. The electronic and wireless communication explosion has brought writing skills into play as never before (Graham & Perin, 2007). Undoubtedly, this also applies to individuals learning foreign languages. Language learners, just as in their native language, need writing for various reasons, including meeting their needs in everyday life, communicating in media environments, or performing their academic tasks.

Despite the critical role that writing skills play, various studies revealed that language learners did not have the desired skillsets in writing in the context of teaching Turkish as a foreign language (Balcı & Melanlıoğlu, 2015; Dolunay & Mantı, 2018; Erol, 2016). The difficulty of writing skills (Nunan, 1989), complex processes (Hinkel, 2006; Raimes, 1983), its slow development compared to other language skills (Yalçın, 2002), individual differences among language learners and differences between languages (Grabe, 2001), misleadingly intensive form-focused teaching practices (Ülper, 2012) cause learners difficulty in developing writing skills. In addition,

individual differences can be the focus of the problems experienced by the learners. One reason learning a foreign language is a complex and problematic matter is that individual differences among learners have different effects on the language learning process (Aydın & Zengin, 2018, p. 82).

One of the individual differences that impact writing skills is the affective factor. Human behavior is not only defined by physical and cognitive aspects but also by its affective and social aspects. Therefore, the affective characteristics of an individual can affect various behaviors. Writing skills can be considered one of them. It is also reflected in the theories that discuss the nature of writing. In characterizing the nature of early cognitive theories of writing (Flower & Hayes, 1981), the affective aspect of writing was neglected, yet affective elements were constructed as an essential aspect of writing in the new theories developed in later years (Hayes, 1996; Hayes, 2012). Today, the affective aspect of writing skills as a fundamental matter is explained by such concepts as attitude, anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy.

Anxiety is one of the most pervasive affective factors hindering the learning process and is associated with negative feelings such as uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and tension (Fang, 2011). In addition to emotional reactions such as attitude, empathy, and motivation, anxiety also plays an essential role in acquiring and developing basic language skills (Uçgun, 2016). Anxiety is a term that is considered and classified in different forms. Anxiety has been categorized in the literature as temporary and permanent anxiety (İşeri & Ünal, 2012), facilitating and debilitating anxiety (Scovel, 1978), general and communicative anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), and personal, state, and situation-specific anxiety (Aydın & Zengin, 2008). In the language learning/teaching process, the term appears to indicate language anxiety or foreign language anxiety (Horwitz & Young, 1991). Foreign language anxiety is a type of anxiety that differs from general anxiety (Genç, 2017). It has three varieties; communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension occurs in cases where learners lack mature communication skills although they have mature ideas and thoughts (Aydın & Zengin, 2008, p. 84).

Writing anxiety, which is essentially communication anxiety, is variously defined as the anxious feelings experienced in one's writing situation (McLeod, 1987, p. 427), the tendency of people to approach or avoid writing or be unwilling to write (Faigley et al., 1981, p.16), a strong feeling of uneasiness with writing (Cheng, 2002, p. 648) and "the fear of the writing process that outweighs the projected gain from the ability to write" (Thompson, 1980 as cited in Kurt & Atay, 2007, p. 13). Writing anxiety, associated with one's negative feelings concerning writing, can interrupt writing activity at any time (McLeod, 1987) and cause people to find writing an uncomfortable, punishing, and fearful experience (Teichman & Poris, 1989). Holladay (1981) stated that students with high writing anxiety in a second language were frightened by the demand for writing competency and fear negative evaluation of their writing, avoided writing, and behaved destructively when they were forced to write.

Writing anxiety can negatively affect individuals' writing performance (Daly & Miller, 1975; Demirel, 2019; Faigley et al., 1981; Lee, 2015; Pajares & Johnson, 1993; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Zhang, 2011). In addition, students with low writing anxiety can produce better quality texts than students with high writing anxiety. Some research in the literature reported that students with low apprehension of writing used more paragraphs (Book, 1976) and words (Burgoon & Hale, 1983; Reeves, 1997), wrote longer texts (Daly, 1977), made fewer spelling (Book, 1976; Reeves, 1997) and punctuation mistakes (Daly, 1977; Reeves, 1997), used significantly more intense language (Daly & Miller, 1975), conveyed more information in their texts (Book, 1976; Reeves, 1997), scored higher in syntactic maturity (Garcia, 1977; Reeves, 1997) and appeared to be more successful in terms of style (Fleming, 1985) than did less apprehensive writers. The level of writing anxiety also affected the behaviors of individuals in the writing process in various ways. Compared to students with high apprehension of writing, students with low writing anxiety focused more on inventing ideas, planning (Bannister, 1992; Bloom 1980, Selfe 1981a, b; Reeves, 1997), and drafting (Selfe, 1981a, b) and spent less time on the writing stage and more time in the editing/revising stages (Bannister, 1992; Bloom, 1980; Selfe, 1981a, b). Therefore, writing anxiety is an important affective element in developing writing skills with foreign language learners.

1.1 Writing Anxiety and Four Square Writing Method

Anxiety, a complex affective trait, has been frequently researched in educational sciences. One of the main points of these studies is to determine the effect of various teaching methods and techniques on anxiety. This aspect of anxiety has been the subject of a variety of research, including *the teaching of mathematics* (Bakaç, 2014), *science education* (Doğru & Ünlü, 2012), *music education* (Öztürk & Kalyoncu, 2018), and *computer/technology education* (Çoruk & Çakır, 2017). The topic is also relevant to the context of foreign language teaching. Various teaching methods and techniques have been employed to address the concerns of foreign language learners about their language skills. One of the ways to support students affectively is to

implement concrete, entertaining, practical, and systematic teaching methods in the classroom environment.

Research related to anxiety in the context of writing skills usually refers to process-based writing approaches (Abdullah, 2019; Arıcı & Kaldırım, 2015; Bayat, 2014; Kurniasih et al., 2020). For example, Bayat (2014) investigated the effect of teaching with a process-based writing approach on students' writing anxiety and found a positive effect. Arıcı and Kaldırım (2015) examined the effect of process-based writing on writing anxiety in a semi-experimental approach with pre-service teachers. This study also demonstrated that process-based writing practices effectively reduced writing anxiety. These results were not unexpected considering the fundamentals of teaching approaches to writing. The reason was that product-based writing approaches mainly focused on writing style and mechanical aspects, and students were provided with feedback on a completed product (Ülper, 2008). Therefore, this may cause various behaviors among learners that catalyze writing anxiety, such as fear of negative evaluation, feeling inadequacy, and task avoidance. Therefore, to minimize anxiety, students should receive intervention in the writing process, and a process-based approach should be used to teach writing to learners (Bayat, 2014).

The Four-Square Writing Method (FSWM), based on process-based writing, is a teaching method developed by Judith Gould. The FSWM is a flexible method used in writing narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and explanatory texts and adapted to different grade levels (Gould & Gould, 1999a, b, c). In this method, students work on a graphic organizer consisting of four squares while creating a text (see Figure 1). The FSWM consists of brainstorming, organizing, drafting, revising, correcting, and sharing stages (Gould et al., 2010). The FSWM has several strengths that can effectively improve writing skills and reduce writing anxiety. Firstly, this method is quite systematic. From the beginning of the process, it is clear which writing tasks will be performed at each step. Thus, in writing practice, students can clearly define the writing process and achieve their goals step by step. Another advantage of the method is that the task of writing proceeds from simple to complex. Primary production of supporting ideas around a topic sentence, structuring sentences by developing those ideas with the assistance of keywords, elaborating these sentences through developing thinking skills, and moving towards paragraph writing can ensure a snowballing process. In addition, the FSWM may support the use of context-appropriate transition and linking expressions and guided learners to create coherent and consistent texts. Karatay et al. (2018) stated that this method was more enjoyable, functional, and meaningful for students than traditional writing activities. Therefore, all these advantages can positively affect students' writing anxiety.
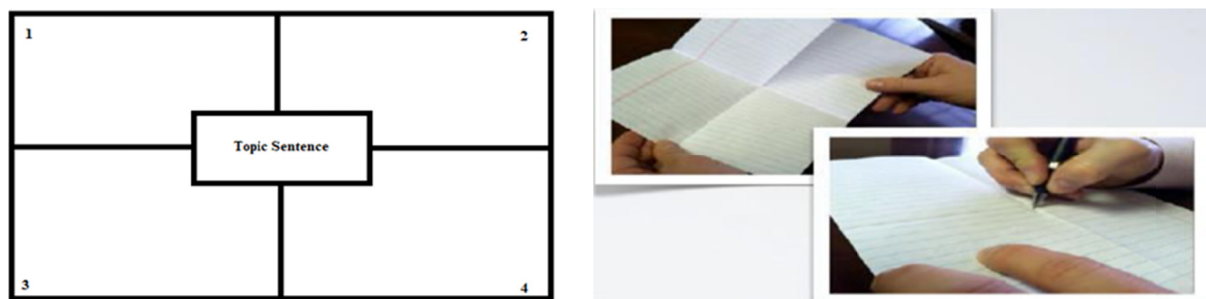

Figure 1. The FSWM worksheet

Despite the various advantages of the FSWM that can impact writing anxiety, research in the literature has largely neglected the effect of the FSWM on writing anxiety and instead focused on its effect on writing competency in more general terms (Agustiana, 2017; Handini & Saragih, 2013; Karatay et al., 2018; Lumenta et al., 2020; Nursyifa & Asrori, 2014; Nugroho et al., 2014; Tijani & Ogbaje, 2013). None of these studies examined the effect of FSWM on writing anxiety. Besides, Kurt (2019, p. 90) emphasized that the impact of the method on writing anxiety should be investigated. With these reason in mind, the research will contribute to teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Accordingly, the study aimed to determine the effect of FSWM on the writing anxiety of B2-level students learning Turkish as a foreign language. To this end, the following questions were asked.

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants' writing anxiety?

RQ2: What are the views and experiences of the participants about the effectiveness of the FSWM?

2. Methodology

This section presents the research model, participants, data collection, and analysis.

2.1 Research Model

This study was designed as a mixed methods research using *explanatory sequential design*. There were two different interactive stages in the exploratory sequential design. As shown in Figure 2, the design began with collecting and analyzing quantitative data. It proceeded with collecting and analyzing qualitative data to explain or expand the quantitative results. The qualitative component of the study was developed based on the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The reason for using the exploratory sequential design in this research was to understand the rationale behind the quantitative results obtained on the effect of the FSWM on writing anxiety and explain these results.
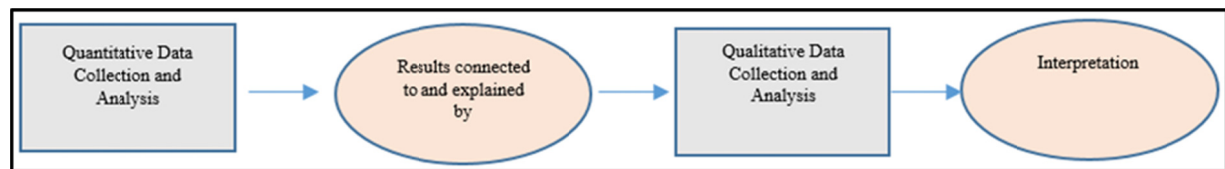

Figure 2. The explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018)

As stated earlier, this study used an exploratory sequential design, so the quantitative data were collected first. To this end, this study employed a single group pre-test-post-test model, also defined as a *weak experimental design*. In the single group pre-test-post-test model, a single group was assessed or observed before and after, without an experimental intervention (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Details about the weak experimental design used in the study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Symbolic image of the weak experimental design

Group (G)	Pre-Test (O)	Treatment (X)	Post-Test (O)
B2	Writing Anxiety Scale	Writing Practices Based on the Four-Square Writing Method	Writing Anxiety Scale
		Time (6 Weeks)	

The qualitative component consisted of the interviews conducted with students about the effect of the FSWM on writing anxiety. The interviews were conducted with the participants proceeding with the analysis of the quantitative data. Thus, the research was reconstructed so that the qualitative analysis explained the quantitative results more thoroughly.

2.2 Participant

Fifty students at the B2 proficiency level who studied at the Turkish Teaching Practice and Research Center (BAİBU TÖMER) at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University in the 2020-2021 academic year were selected through the purposeful sampling, a non-selective sampling method. Purposeful sampling is preferred to study one or more particular cases that meet specific criteria and have certain characteristics (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014, p. 90). The reason for selecting the B2 level students was that academic language skills appeared to become essential at the B2 level. At the B2 level, students are expected to write texts with surface and deep structure. This process thus prepares the student to become a competent writer.

The participants included 14 Iraqi, 13 Syrian, five Palestinian, four Nigerian, four Afghan, three Malian, two Sudanese and Somali, one Mongolian, one Iranian, and one Madagascan. Twenty-three of the participants were female, and 27 were male. Their age group ranged between 18 and 25. The quantitative data were obtained from 50 participants, while the qualitative data included 20 participants.

2.3 Instruments

The research employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Table 2 presents the data collection tools in detail.

Table 2. Data collection tools

Data Collection Tools	Intended Purpose	Audience	Approach
1-Writing Anxiety Scale (Şen & Boylu, 2017)	Determining the level of writing anxiety	Students	Quantitative
2-Semi-Structured Interview Form	Obtaining student opinions to determine the effect of the implementations on writing anxiety	Students	Qualitative

Writing Anxiety Scale (WAS): The quantitative data were collected using the Writing Anxiety Scale. This scale, developed by Şen and Boylu (2017) to determine the writing anxiety of students learning Turkish as a foreign language, consisted of two sub-dimensions; action-oriented writing anxiety and environment-oriented writing anxiety, and had a total of 13 items. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were performed for the construct and measurement validity of the scale. As the tests suggested, the value indicated a good fit, and the two-factor structure explained 46.82% of the total variance. The Cronbach Alpha reliability value of the scale was 0.84. Based on the consideration that the anxiety level increases as the score obtained from the scale increases, the items of the first-factor dimension of the scale were scored inversely.

Semi-Structured Interview Form: The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with students to obtain qualitative data. A semi-structured interview form was designed to determine student views about the effects of the FSWM on writing anxiety. In semi-structured interviews, questions are formulated before the interview and can be adjusted flexibly during the interview. In such interviews, the order of the questions can be altered, and the questions can be explained in more detail if necessary (Çepni, 2014, pp. 172-173). Three experts working in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language were consulted to finalize the interview question.

2.4 Treatment

The research was carried out in 3-hour writing classes held weekly at the Turkish Teaching Practice and Research Center (BAİBU TÖMER) at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University. One of the authors of the study was also the administrator of this research. The WAS developed by Şen and Boylu (2017) was administered to determine the students' writing concerns before the experiment. After the pre-test stage, the main features and steps of the FSWM, which will be used for this research, students were introduced to the method using a presentation. Then, the students were informed about the training to be held. After this process was completed, the application phase was initiated. The details of the FSWM application are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Experimental applications

Week	Application	Description
Week 1	Writing on the topic of "environmental pollution" with the assistance of a teacher	Collaborative writing was administered with the assistance of a teacher to facilitate students' understanding of the method, and the students produced a text with the help focusing on the planning and drafting processes.
Week 2	Writing on the topic of "sports" with the assistance of a teacher	The responsibility of authorship was shifted from teachers to students; students worked in pairs and were involved in collaborative writing.
Week 3	Independent writing on the topic of "education"	
Week 4	Independent writing on the topic of "technology"	The responsibility was transferred entirely to the student, and the students performed independent writing tasks. The teacher was only a guide at this stage.
Week 5	Independent writing on the topic of "health"	
Week 6	Independent writing on the topic of "fashion"	

As shown in the table, a gradual shift of responsibility was achieved with the FSWM practice in which writing responsibility has been gradually transferred from teacher to student. At the beginning of Week 3, the method was applied as an independent writing practice. In addition, the teacher provided feedback on the students' writings throughout the process, assisted them in correcting their mistakes and remedying their deficiencies, and contributed to improving their writing. After the 6-week applications were completed, the WAS was applied again as a post-test to determine students' writing anxiety.

2.5 Data Analysis

2.5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Upon collecting the quantitative data with the scale, the scores were calculated. This data set was analyzed and tabulated using the SPSS v.23 statistical software program. The confidence interval was 95%, and the significance level was .05. In the data analysis process, statistical difference tests, often used in experimental studies, were used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the group mean scores. Testing the distribution's normality determined the test type used.

2.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Content analysis is used to detect certain words or concepts in a text or a set of texts. By determining and analyzing the existence, meanings, and relationships of these words and concepts, researchers make inferences about the message in the texts (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014, p. 246). First, the data from the interviews were transcribed. Next, the texts were read repeatedly to reach codes, categories, and themes. NVivo qualitative analysis software was used to process the texts. Besides, the researcher utilized Miles and Huberman's formula for calculating inter-rater reliability by employing two experts, and the calculation showed that the inter-rater reliability between the coders was 92%. Initially, the coders discussed the codes to resolve the discrepancies and thus reached an agreement on all the codes.

3. Findings

3.1 Findings for the First Research Question

The researchers initially examined normal distribution to answer the question, "Is there a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants' writing anxiety?" Next, the skewness and kurtosis coefficients, and normality were calculated. The skewness coefficient of the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was .020, while the kurtosis coefficient was .244. Moreover, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test result (p>.05; p=.200) showed normal distribution. Therefore, dependent samples t-test was performed. Table 4 contains information about the test.

Table 4. Comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants' writing anxiety

Groups		n	$\overline{X}$	s	sd	t	p	d
Total Anxiety	Pre-Test	50	37.16	5.43	49	2.655	.022*	.37
	Post-Test	50	34.94	4.39				
Action-oriented Anxiety	Pre-Test	50	18.58	4.47	49	2.924	.005*	.41
	Post-Test	50	16.76	4.26				
Environment-Oriented Anxiety	Pre-Test	50	18.66	3.14	49	0.813	.420*	.011
	Post-Test	50	18.18	2.97				

The mean score of anxiety before and after the scale applications of the FSWM determined whether there was a significant difference between the mean anxiety scores of dependent samples t-test before ($\overline{X}$=37.16) and after the application ($\overline{X}$= 34.94), which revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups (p <.05; p=.022). The estimated effect size (d= .37) showed an intermediate level difference.

Action-oriented writing anxiety:

The skewness coefficient of the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for the action-oriented writing anxiety dimension was .145, while the kurtosis coefficient was .718. Moreover, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test result (p>.05; p=.200) showed normal distribution. Therefore, dependent samples t-test was performed.

The results of the dependent samples t-test performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the action-oriented writing anxiety scale (the first sub-dimension of the FSWM) revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores before ($\overline{X}$=18.58) and after ($\overline{X}$=16.76) the application (p <.05; p=.005). The estimated effect size (d= .41) showed an intermediate level difference.

Environment-Oriented Anxiety:

The skewness coefficient of the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores for the environment-oriented writing anxiety dimension was .016, while the kurtosis coefficient was .040. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov

normality test result (p> .05; p=.200) showed normal distribution. Therefore, dependent samples t-test was performed.

The results of the dependent samples t-test performed to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the environment-oriented writing anxiety scale (the second subdimension of the FSWM) revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores before ($\overline{X}$=18.58) and after ($\overline{X}$=16.76) the application (p <.05; p=.005). The estimated effect size (d= .11) showed a low level difference.

3.2 Findings for the Second Research Question

The content analysis performed to answer the research question, "What are the views and experiences of the participants about the effectiveness of the FSWM?" revealed two themes, "Writing skills" and "Affectivity". In Table 5, the effect of the FSWM on writing skills is presented, while Table 6 illustrates the codes and sample opinions concerning affectivity.

Table 5. Writing skills (Theme 1)

Code Frequency	Sub-Theme	Codes/ Sample Opinion
20	Developing writing skills	*General (6)* In my opinion, I really liked the four-square writing method. It was beneficial for me because I had some problems with my writing, but I learned a lot from this method (P3). *Transition and Linking Expressions (6)* My favorite (structure) is the linking words. This method includes linking expressions. I like these the most. I think the four-square writing method was useful, especially for me. Because I do not know how to connect sentences. But now there are squares, and thus the connecting words are available to me. It is easier this way (P11). *Developing strategies (4)* I think the four-square writing method was very useful, and it taught me new things. (such as) how to write thoroughly because I did not know these writing techniques (P20). *Developing thinking skills* I have to provide an example of the four-square writing method. I attach examples to the text; hence, it becomes better and more detailed. Now, it is easier for me to write (P1). *Learning vocabulary (1)* I think the four-square writing method was very useful because I learned more words (P1). *Enhancing writing style (1)* I like the four-square writing method... My writing is better organized now (P13).
14	Planning in writing	*Plan (14)* I like the four-square writing method. Now I can easily make a plan before writing a text. I think planning is crucial (P12).
13	Facilitating writing	*Graphic organizer (7)* I think the four-square writing method was very useful because it makes it easier to write about topics with visuals and simplifies the challenging topics (P5). *Drafting (4)* Writing drafts using the frames made writing very easy (P17). *Collaborative writing (2)* Writing with the assistance of my teacher and friends made everything easy. It reduced my writing anxiety. I understood the method easily (P8).
9	Organization in writing	*Organization (9)* I think this method brings organization. Because the place of the paragraphs are apparent. For example, we write the result in the fourth frame. We summarize the other squares. This, I think, brings organization. I could not write so organized. Now I write the parts (i.e., introduction, body, and conclusion) very easily. This method, the four-square writing method, helps me this way (P19).
8	Improving the Quality of Writing	*Writing Quality (8)* I think that the four-square writing method improved me a lot. My writing is better now, and I think it has become more professional (P6).

		Generating Ideas (8)
8	Generating Ideas	This four-square (method) helps us. It gives us new ideas when we write. I mean, time management used to be a problem in writing. When writing this way, I have time to generate ideas. I think it is very nice (P2).
72 (6 Sub-Theme)		(13 Codes)

As seen in Table 5, the theme "writing skills" consisted of the sub-themes; development of writing skills (N=20), planning (N=14), facilitating writing (N=13), organization (N=9), enhancement of writing quality (N=8), and generating ideas (N=8). Under this theme, students expressed 72 opinions, through which the researcher reached 13 codes.

Table 6. Affectivity (Theme 2)

Code Frequency	Codes	Sub-Theme / Sample Opinion
29	Positive	*Relaxation (12)* I like the four-square writing method. Because I feel better when I write (P4). *Enjoyment (7)* The four-square writing is entertaining for me (P8). *Motivation (6)* This method allowed me to be more motivated to write. The writing in the coursebook is boring for me. I like writing with the four-square writing more; I want to write (P16). *Increased self-confidence (4)* I think this method is very good and useful. With the four-square writing, I learned a lot. I feared writing in the past, but after I learned the four-square writing, writing became easier for me. Now I feel confident in writing (P17).
2	Negative	*Dislike (2)* I didn't like the four-square writing method. It is more challenging for me because I do not have sentences in my mind, or I get confused (P9).
31 (2 Sub-Themes)		(5 Codes)

Table 6 demonstrates two sub-themes established under "affectivity" including positive (N=29) and negative (N=2). Positive sub-theme included relaxation (N=12), enjoyment (N=7), motivation (N=6) and increased self-esteem (N=4) codes, whereas the negative sub-theme consisted of dislike (N=2) code. Under this theme, students expressed 31 opinions, through which the researcher reached five codes. Among these codes, only the "dislike" code had content indicating a negative perception of the use of the method.

4. Discussions and Conclusions

The present research investigating the effect of the FSWM on the writing anxiety of B2-level students learning Turkish as a foreign language was a mixed method study in which the researcher initially collected quantitative data and proceeded to obtain qualitative data to explain the first set of data. First, the quantitative results revealed that the FSWM had a statistically significant effect on the participants' writing anxiety in terms of overall writing anxiety score (p=.022), action-oriented writing anxiety score (p=.005), and environment-oriented writing anxiety score (p=.005). The estimated effect size (d=.37) showed an intermediate level difference. This result indicated that the FSWM, with its process-based nature, was an effective teaching method to reduce language learners' writing anxiety. The qualitative results, on the other hand, revealed two themes; "writing skills" and "affectivity". The writing skills category included 13 codes and 72 views; "general, transition, and linking expressions, developing strategies, developing thinking skills, learning vocabulary, enhancing writing style, planning in writing, graphic organizer, drafting, collaborative writing, organization, writing quality, and generating ideas. The affectivity category consisted of 5 codes and 31 views, including relaxation, enjoyment, motivation, increased self-confidence, and dislike. These results indicated that participants considered the FSWM positively affecting their writing anxiety, and the method contributed to the development of writing skills in various aspects such as developing processed-based writing skills, elements of written expression, and writing quality, as well as affective factors such as relaxation, enjoyment, increased self-confidence, and motivation. Therefore, the findings overall illustrated that the qualitative results of the research explained and expanded the quantitative results that the applied method positively affected writing anxiety in the abovementioned aspects.

Writing anxiety is an affective trait that is challenging to explain, covering all aspects due to the complexity and variability of human psychology. Therefore, it is challenging to suggest definitive conclusions about the factors that cause, increase or decrease learners' writing anxiety. Bearing this challenge in mind, we can reach a range of conclusions about the positive effect of the FSWM on writing anxiety. Firstly, one of the reasons that the FSWM positively affected writing anxiety may be the process-based nature of this method. Previous research supported the finding that process-based writing reduced writing anxiety (Abdullah, 2019; Arıcı & Kaldırım, 2015; Bayat, 2014). For example, Bayat (2014) investigated the effect of teaching with a process-based writing approach on students' writing anxiety and found a positive effect. Based on his findings, he recommended that a process-based writing approach could make writing practice more efficient. Arıcı and Kaldırım (2015) examined the effect of process-based writing on writing anxiety in a semi-experimental approach with pre-service teachers. Their study demonstrated that process-based writing practices effectively reduced the level of writing anxiety. Abdullah (2019), similarly, found that the process-based approach significantly reduced middle school students' writing anxiety. Compared to product-based writing, teachers devote time to pre-writing activities in process-based writing. Planning and organization stages, such as narrowing down a topic and generating ideas, are essential in process-based writing. The exact process applies to the FSWM. Based on this method, the learner first selects a topic, narrows it down, and then generates ideas using keywords with a step-by-step approach. Thus, this process can be considered a system to reduce writing anxiety. One of the main reasons for writing anxiety is that students fail to generate ideas about what to write (Zhang, 2011). The fact that many participants also highlighted generating ideas and planning in writing in the interviews underpinned the argument.

In addition, the fact that the FSWM was effective in improving writing skills may also be one of the factors affecting participants' writing anxiety. Learners' weaknesses in their writing skills appeared to be one of the main reasons for their writing anxiety (Yılmaz, 2019). The results of this study indicated, concurring with previous studies, that the FSWM improved writing skills and was a method that directly reduced the students' writing anxiety (Agustiana, 2017; Handini & Saragih, 2013; Karatay et al., 2018; Lumenta et al., 2020; Nursyifa & Asrori, 2014; Nugroho et al., 2014; Tijani & Ogbaje, 2013). The qualitative data in the current study also pointed out the same argument. In the interviews, participants' views showed that the FSWM developed writing skills, assisted planning and organization, facilitated the writing process, improved the quality of the written product, contributed to the ability to generate and organize ideas, and enriched the use of grammatical and vocabulary elements. Therefore, the method seemed to assist in reducing writing anxiety as learners' writing skills concurrently developed. That is, special attention can be devoted to training on transition and linking expressions as part of the FSWM. The reason is that the FSWM organizes the transition and linking expressions used in each frame as a list. After creating sections of their texts, students can use this list to place a relevant transition and linking expressions. Thus, they can both enrich their vocabulary and gain the ability to use accurate linking expressions. This, in turn, can prevent learners from feeling anxiety. Learners can feel concerned since they experience difficulty linking new information in the flow of the text after a sentence or paragraph ends (Al-Shboul & Huvari, 2015).

The use of a graphic organizer in the FSWM can also have positive effects on writing anxiety. As is known, the FSWM is a method constructed using a graphic organizer consisting of four outside squares. Learners use the organizer when selecting topics, generating ideas, and creating their texts step-by-step. Graphic organizers, based explicitly on the meaningful verbal learning theory by Ausubel (1963), are designed to provide a more systematic and clear presentation of information and thus facilitate learning (Darch & Eaves, 1986). The same applies to writing skills. Graphic organizers facilitate writing processes, including creating a writing plan, selecting topics, and drafting (Tavşanlı, 2019), and help to successfully structure the chapters of a written expression (Houston, 2003). Graphic organizers direct students' attention to the writing tasks, guide them in organizing the details, and allow them to have the focus that many need to start writing (Miller, 2011). Studies in the literature concur that graphic organizers are effective in developing writing skills (Lee, 2013; Tağa, 2013; Uysal, 2018). Therefore, it can be predicted that these advantages can also affect anxiety. The findings in Zarei and Feizollahi's (2019) study supported this perspective and the current research in which graphic organizers were found to reduce writing anxiety effectively. In addition, the interview data showed that the "graphic organizer" code under the sub-theme of "facilitating writing" emphasized such a benefit of the FSWM.

Another reason that the FSWM had a positive effect on writing anxiety may be that learners diverted from the negative learning experiences with writing in the past to a new experience. Teachers' expectations, the way they taught lessons, and their behavior were some of the sources of anxiety. Daly (1977) stated that students' writing apprehension resulted from past disruptive reactions by their teachers. Smith (1984) expressed that teacher behaviors such as addressing every student error and accusing students of being incompetent writers could

increase writing anxiety. Besides, the range of topics given, time limitations, and following strict rules in creating a text could cause anxiety among learners (Cheng, 2004). We claimed that the FSWM also impacted students' anxieties in such respects. As the results suggested, the participants found the practice enjoyable, had fun time writing with the method and had more motivation to write compared to prior experiences, which supported our claim. However, two participants expressed their dislike, even though they found the method useful in certain aspects. This comment was expected considering individual differences.

Another benefit of the FSWM was that it boosted learners' self-confidence. Lack of self-confidence of foreign language learners was one of the anxiety factors. According to Daly and Wilson (1983), there was a negative correlation between anxiety and self-confidence. Cheng (2004) stated that this type of anxiety was fueled by one's perception of the self. Lacking the desired proficiency in the target language, the competency in how to write a text, and the self-efficacy based on inadequate writing experience led them to question their writing skills and reduce their self-confidence. Learners' beliefs about their self-efficacy in a foreign language can cause an increase or decrease in their anxiety level in the target language (MacIntyre et al., 1997). The FSWM practice may have effectively reduced writing anxiety by fostering students' perceptions. The interviews uncovered that some participants found the method effective in improving self-confidence.

Lastly, another reason that the FSWM positively affected writing anxiety was collaborative writing with the teacher's and peers' assistance. Some studies addressed that collaborative writing effectively reduced writing anxiety (Aldana, 2005; Jiang, 2016; Wu, 2015). Collaborative writing helps learners be less anxious about writing (McDonough, 2004) and is essential in encouraging them to write (Karsbaek, 2011). Moreover, some studies pointed out that learners who experienced collaborative writing found the experience enjoyable (Cecil, 2015; Shehadeh, 2011). Some learners' views about the FSWM in the interviews in which they referred to the method as enjoyable, relaxing, and interesting and that collaborative writing helped them reduce anxiety supported such a finding. These reasons suggested that the collaborative nature of the FSWM may positively impact writing anxiety.

5. Suggestions

1) This research is limited to the possible effects of the FSWM on anxiety and student perceptions about these effects. Therefore, this study particularly underpins anxiety as one of the affective elements that affect writing. Future studies can investigate the effect of the FSWM on other affective variables such as self-efficacy, motivation, and attitude using quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. In addition, the students' anxiety level was not considered with their writing performance in this study. Future research may focus on how this method affects the writing performance of students with high or low anxiety. On the other hand, the experiences of teachers using the FSWM may also be researched using qualitative approaches.

2) Several pedagogical recommendations concerning the FSWM can also be made. Turkish teachers can be provided with in-service training on the theoretical and practical aspects of the FSWM. Thus, the method can be disseminated in foreign language teaching classes. Thus, learners can be supported both cognitively and affectively. In addition, the FSWM activities can be included to enrich the sections on writing skills in the books developed for teaching Turkish.

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