

Understanding L2 Academic Writing Trajectories: Writing Self-Efficacy, Motivation, Attitudes, and Achievement Emotions

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Abstract

Despite a burgeoning body of literature on individual differences (IDs) affecting foreign language (L2) writing processes in English academic writing (EAW) contexts, longitudinal patterns and the potential interrelationship of different individual variables remain underresearched. Addressing this gap, this exploratory study pursues a two-fold aim: first, identifying the longitudinal patterns of several ID factors—L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, and achievement emotions—over the course of a semester; and second, investigating whether these constructs are interrelated. Pre-and-post surveys were administered to conveniently sampled English-major university students enrolled in a first-year EAW course that followed a process genre approach. Descriptive and inferential analyses revealed significant variations in these constructs and foregrounded their interconnected nature. Students significantly improved their L2 writing quality, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, and attitudes whereas they decreased their anxiety. They also experienced a gamut of achievement emotions: before the course, anxiety, boredom, and hopelessness predominated, whereas afterward pride and enjoyment were more prominent, accompanied by reduced negative emotions. Findings further highlighted the coexistence of positive and negative achievement emotions. Overall, this study offers valuable insights into how these variables interact to shape L2 writing trajectories, thereby informing endeavors to enhance EAW in higher education and guiding future research agendas.

Keywords: academic writing, EFL writing, L2 writing, writing anxiety, writing self-efficacy, writing motivation, achievement emotions

Writing in a second/foreign language (L2) is well attested as a critical skill for academic achievement (Hyland, 2019), largely because writing functions as a “gatekeeper” (Caplan, 2021, p. 268) in the academic landscape. This is especially true for students in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) contexts, where exposure to English is relatively limited and

possessing strong academic writing skills in English is both demanding and essential. While academic writing proficiency is foundational in both a first language (L1) and an L2 alike, the need for English academic writing (EAW) proficiency specifically has intensified due to the increasing dominance of English in global academia. By and large, EAW maintains a strong presence globally in academic settings at undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study, playing a critical role in student achievement. Mastery of academic writing in English is therefore a pivotal skill in academic literacy across disciplines and educational levels, which underpins academic achievement and future professional success.

Reflecting its central role in academic success, writing is also a multifaceted and tremendously complex skill (Hyland, 2019) since its development is affected by an array of cognitive and non-cognitive factors due to its elusive nature (Kormos, 2012). In this regard, writing is “[...]both cognitive and an emotional activity” (Sabti et al., 2019, p. 10). As a matter of fact, L2 writing is not a straightforward cognitive process; “[...] it is also influenced by factors related to the emotional or psychological level” (B. Li, 2022, p. 1). Research on L2 writing to date has predominantly focused on cognitive factors, yet investigating non-cognitive factors (e.g., motivational and affective) could also yield valuable insights, thereby helping to better understand the underlying mechanisms of L2 writing. Papi et al. (2022) note that other non-cognitive factors such as motivation and emotions must also be considered to fully understand L2 writing. Nonetheless, research on these non-cognitive factors remains meager. Most importantly, what has been largely missing and neglected in this discussion is research that investigates positive and negative psychological constructs together from a holistic perspective, which is beginning to receive much-needed pedagogic and research attention (Alqarni, 2024). With Positive Psychology (PP) ushering in a new era of studies in educational research and gaining greater attention over the years, the field of L2 learning and teaching—particularly the L2 writing sphere—has similarly witnessed an upsurge in studies focusing on PP.

However, to date, no previous studies have investigated different constructs within the scope of PP and Negative Psychology (NP) in tandem. There are limited L2 learning/teaching studies that investigated these constructs together in the same group of participants—for example, anxiety and enjoyment (e.g., Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Informed by these studies and approached from an exploratory lens, this study investigated L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, and emotions of English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) learners over the course of a semester in an academic writing setting. Furthermore, the study also sought the relationship among these constructs to promote a holistic understanding of emotional experiences in L2 writing.

Background and Literature Review

Self-efficacy

Individuals’ learning and behaviors are affected by the dynamic interplay of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors (Bandura, 1986). Among the key principles of Bandura’s (1986) Social Cognitive Theory is self-efficacy, which refers to the belief that an individual has in their capacity to carry out particular tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997). Bandura further characterizes it as “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (Bandura, 1997, p. 2). In the context of writing, writing self-efficacy is likewise described as “confidence in [...] writing capabilities” (Pajares, 2003, p. 141). According to Pajares and Johnson (1994), such beliefs refer to “[...] individuals’ judgment of their competence in writing, specifically their judgment of their ability to write different writing tasks and of their possession of varying composition, usage, and mechanical skills” (p. 9).

L2 writing self-efficacy is considered a critical determinant of L2 writing performance (Pajares, 2003; Woodrow, 2011), as self-efficacy beliefs affect L2 writers' confidence: Those who are self-efficacious tend to handle difficulties presciently and take greater risks whereas the ones who are not are more likely to be dubious about their writing performance and could therefore avoid writing. To illustrate, Woodrow (2011) reported that self-efficacy predicted writing performance of Chinese EFL students. Yoon (2022) likewise indicated that L2 academic writing self-efficacy predicted L2 academic writing performance of Korean EFL learners. Learners with high L2 writing self-efficacy levels were likely to take risks, engage with feedback more, and demonstrate greater enthusiasm—regardless of their L2 writing anxiety being low or high. At the same time, having low self-efficacy beliefs could also make things seem more challenging than they actually are, which could aggravate anxiety and stress (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). Consistently, writing anxiety has been found to be negatively correlated with writing self-efficacy ($r = -.145, p > .05$). (Sabti et al., 2019). In addition, Yavuz-Erkan and İflazoğlu-Saban (2010) indicated Turkish EFL university students with high self-efficacy in writing exhibited low-level writing apprehension. As they reported, self-efficacy and achievement were positively correlated, whereas self-efficacy and anxiety were negatively correlated.

The literature comprises several studies with university-level students from different EFL contexts, including China (e.g., B. Li, 2022; Sun & Wang, 2020; Woodrow, 2011), Iraq (e.g., Sabti et al., 2019), Korea (e.g., Yoon, 2022), and Finland (Mendoza et al., 2022), and Türkiye (e.g., Balaman, 2021; Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2020; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015), where most of which reported moderate L2 writing self-efficacy levels. For example, in Kırmızı and Kırmızı's (2015) study, university-level Turkish EFL students (English Language and Literature students) had moderate writing self-efficacy levels. Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2020) similarly examined university students at a private Turkish university taking an English writing course (A1 and B1 level students) from various majors. Their writing self-efficacy was moderate and did not vary according to their actual general language proficiency level, although a moderate correlation was observed between perceived proficiency level and writing self-efficacy. In another study with English-major students, Balaman (2021) reported that second-year undergraduates displayed high levels of self-efficacy perceptions towards L2 writing. An exception to these studies which reported moderate-to-high self-efficacy levels was Sabti et al.'s (2019) study. In the Iraqi EFL context, more than half (59%) of the English-major undergraduate students exhibited low L2 writing self-efficacy levels. In addition, their writing performance did not vary significantly across writing self-efficacy levels (low, moderate, and high). However, this finding may be attributable to the imbalance across sub-groups, namely students whose self-efficacy was high ($n = 59$), moderate ($n = 37$), and low ($n = 4$). Overall, since self-efficacy beliefs “can have beneficial or destructive influences” (Pajares, 2003, p. 153), they warrant further investigation.

Motivation

Motivation simply refers to “*why* people decide to do something; *how long* they are willing to sustain the activity; *how hard* they are going to pursue it” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 4, emphasis in original). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), which also guided this study, individuals' motivation is promoted when the social contexts they are in support their autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Similarly, L2 writing motivation refers to the motivation one has to engage in writing. The literature indicates that L2 writing is a skill requiring higher motivation levels (Solhi et al., 2024; Teng & Zhang, 2018). Individuals with higher motivation are more likely to spend additional time on tasks, maintain more positive L2 writing attitudes, and achieve higher academic success (Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021). However, past research specifically and solely focusing on L2 writing motivation in tertiary

contexts remains limited. One notable exception is Solhi et al.'s (2024) study, which investigated the mediating role of L2 writing motivation of English Language Preparatory Program (ELPP) students in the Turkish context and reported a negative relationship between L2 writing motivation and boredom.

Attitudes

Attitude is a hypothetical construct (Ajzen, 2005) referring to “a relatively enduring and general evaluation of an object, person, group, issue, or concept on a dimension ranging from negative to positive” (American Psychological Association, n.d.). According to Ajzen (2005), attitude is “a disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event” (p. 3). Attitudes are considered to “provide summary evaluations of target objects and are often assumed to be derived from specific beliefs, emotions, and past behaviors associated with those objects” (n. d.). Graham et al. (2007) define writing attitude as “an affective disposition involving how the act of writing makes the author feel, ranging from happy to unhappy” (p. 518). Accordingly, L2 writing attitude can be defined as evaluations held towards writing in L2. Given that attitudes are often linked to behaviors, investigating L2 writing attitudes could yield important insights: having positive writing attitudes could promote writing performance, whereas negative attitudes could negatively affect writing performance. Consistently, a positive relationship between attitude and writing performance has been reported in previous studies (Göncü & Mede, 2022; Paker & Erarslan, 2015; Yavuz-Erkan & İflazoğlu-Saban, 2010).

The literature comprises precious few studies specifically focusing upon L2 writing attitudes at tertiary level, though. Of these, the majority were conducted with ELPP students. For example, Göncü and Mede (2022) indicated learners in the ELPP had negative feelings and attitudes towards writing. Similarly, Paker and Erarslan (2015) investigated ELPP students' (at different proficiency level) attitudes towards the writing course and found that they experienced attitudinal decline over the semester. Among studies involving undergraduate students, Aydın and Başöz (2010) comparatively reported that freshman university students at two different universities (enrolled in an English-major program) exhibited generally positive L2 writing attitudes. Overall, research on L2 writing attitudes is both limited and mixed, with contradictory findings across different student profiles in different contexts.

Achievement Emotions

Emotions are acknowledged as “[...]multi-component, coordinated processes of psychological subsystems including affective, cognitive, motivational, expressive, and peripheral physiological processes” (Pekrun, 2006, p. 316). Regarding emotions, this study builds upon the theoretical framework of Positive Psychology (PP). On the research front, PP has garnered substantial interest and has been well-acknowledged as an effective pedagogical school of thought across various academic disciplines for more than three decades. Introduced by psychologists for the first time in the late 1990s and spanning through the new millennium, PP (Seligman, 1999) marked a critical shift from focusing on negative emotions towards fostering more positive ones (Dewaele et al., 2019; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Fundamentally, PP endeavors to nurture and flourish positive individual traits, valuing them to prevent the emergence of those that are negative in nature (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Amidst today's constantly evolving landscape of education, cultivating students' positive traits, states, emotions, and experiences has likewise kindled a considerable surge of research interest exclusively in the last decade. As yet, focusing on learners' psychological well-being (e.g., Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), enjoyment (e.g., MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), and motivation (e.g., Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021), PP has appeared to dominate the field since its introduction.

Nonetheless, within this growing trend, the concept of PP later started to be “in flux” (Wong, 2011, p. 77). As Lomas and Ivztan (2016) asserted, increasing criticisms raised against the idealization of PP (see van Zyl et al., 2024, for a comprehensive systematic review) led to the emergence of the “second wave” PP (Held, 2004) (referred to as SWPP) or “positive psychology 2.0” (Wong, 2011) (referred to as PP 2.0), which followed Seligman’s and his colleagues’ foundational “first-wave” of PP. For a long time, the all-too-common logical fallacy had been dissociating positive constructs from negative ones or vice versa. However, with a dual-system model acknowledging their complex interplay (Wong, 2011), it became essential to address both negative and positive dimensions together. The so-called “tyranny of the positive attitude” (Held, 2002, p. 965), or what Wong (2011) described as “Black-and-White Thinking” (p. 70), was argued to ignore the complex, dynamic, and interdependent nature of the two. Following the first two waves of PP, the “third wave” (Lomas et al., 2021) (referred to as PP 3.0) appeared, expanding the scope and methods of PP. Mainly, the scope has expanded from the individual to wider groups, organizations, and systems in diverse contexts affecting individuals’ well-being.

For this study, PP was considered the most pertinent theoretical framework as it concentrates upon affective states. More specifically, the study was guided by the two emotion theories historically rooted in PP: Broaden-and-Build Theory (BBT) of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004) and the Control-Value Theory (CVT) of achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2006). According to BBT (Fredrickson, 2004), positive emotions tend to *broaden* individuals’ momentary attention and thinking, thereby contributing to *building* their long-term personal resources that guide their habitual thoughts and acts moving them forward. As per CVT (Pekrun, 2006), various emotions individuals experience related to learning and success (i.e., achievement emotions) such as anxiety and enjoyment are shaped by their perceptions of control and the value placed on outcomes.

In this study, the focus was on achievement emotions. Despite being similar in nature, emotions in general terms differ from achievement emotions, where the latter refers to “emotions tied directly to achievement activities or achievement outcomes” (Pekrun, 2006, p. 317). Achievement emotions are considered essential given that they can substantially influence both students’ and teachers’ performance, along with their psychological and physical well-being (Pekrun & Perry, 2014). Achievement emotions are typically sub-divided into *activity-related* and *outcome-related* emotions, with the former referring to emotions arising during learning or teaching, and the latter to those associated with related success or failure (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014). According to Pekrun et al. (2002), emotions can impact academic achievement in multiple ways. For example, *positive activating* (e.g., enjoyment) and *negative deactivating* (e.g., boredom) emotions could lead to different outcomes. Nevertheless, the case of *positive deactivating* and *negative activating* emotions is more intricate because although they might have immediate positive or negative effects, they might trigger opposite emotions in the long run. To exemplify, anxiety, a *negative activating* emotion, could ultimately yield positive outcomes—for example, by increasing extrinsic motivation. Besides, in academic settings, students experience a wide range of emotions, underscoring their multifaceted nature (Pekrun et al., 2002). This explains why there has been a greater deal of interest in investigating emotions in recent years, with attention lately shifted to positive ones (C. Li et al., 2023b). Overall, studying emotions is considered critical because “cognitive and motivational processes are integral parts of the emotion per se” (Pekrun, 2006, p. 329). However, emotions remain complex entities whose intensity hinges largely upon learners’ subjective evaluations of success or failure (Pekrun, 2006). The following sections, therefore, explore positive and negative emotions in greater detail.

Positive Emotions

Enjoyment. Enjoyment is theoretically grounded in the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004), the Theory of Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1990), and partly the Control-Value Theory of Achievement Emotions (Pekrun, 2006), as Elahi Shirvan et al. (2021) similarly posited. Fundamentally, it encompasses positive emotions such as happiness, joy, and pleasure. According to Fredrickson (2004), joy indeed “...creates the urge to play, push the limits and be creative” (p. 1369). As a sub-domain of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Elahi Shirvan et al., 2021; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), L2 writing enjoyment can simply be described as the sense of joy and pleasure foreign/second language learners experience during writing in L2 (Papi et al., 2022).

Thus far, existing research has primarily focused on classroom enjoyment or FLE (e.g., Botes et al., 2022; Derakhshan & Fathi, 2024; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014), whereas empirical data specifically addressing L2 writing enjoyment are very limited. Only a few studies (i.e., Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021; Zhao et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2022) have empirically investigated university students’ L2 writing enjoyment. For instance, Tahmouresi and Papi (2021) explored how motivation and emotions affect L2 writing achievement of Iranian university-level EFL learners, reporting that L2 writing enjoyment positively predicted learners’ motivation. However, it did not predict L2 writing achievement, yet this could be because they used course grades for describing achievement. In another study, Zhu et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between L2 writing enjoyment and task performance among freshman English-major students at a Chinese university, where participants engaged in an integrated argumentative writing task. They reported a moderate direct effect of L2 writing enjoyment on task performance. Nevertheless, it is also worth noting that their data on L2 writing enjoyment were collected using a general FLE instrument rather than an L2-specific measure. In another study, Zhao et al. (2023) sought the potential connection among ideal L2 writing selves, enjoyment, strategy use, and writing performance of Chinese university EFL learners. Findings showed those who enjoyed L2 writing were more likely to employ writing strategies which would enhance their writing. As confirmed by a very recently published study by Zhang et al. (2024), who conducted a systematic review of enjoyment in foreign language learning among 118 empirical studies, most studies focused on adult EFL learners from Chinese and Persian EFL contexts in traditional classroom learning settings. They also reported a negative correlation between enjoyment and anxiety, and a strong negative correlation between enjoyment and boredom. In sum, literature offers limited empirical insights into L2 writing enjoyment, and therefore no clear consensus exists over its nature.

Pride. As an emotion discussed under the framework of CVT (Pekrun, 2006), pride refers to “a self-conscious emotion that occurs when a goal has been attained and one’s achievement has been recognized and approved by others” (American Psychological Association, n.d.). It is one of the self-reflective emotions linked to causality (Weiner, 1985) and is typically experienced when a person credits themselves for a positive outcome (Weiner, 1985). Based on this standpoint, it is an *outcome* emotion (i.e., retrospective) generally experienced after the completion of an activity (Pekrun, 2006). Relying upon one’s subjective value and attribution of success, the intensity of pride may vary. Empirical research has illustrated a positive significant relationship between pride and enjoyment (Sadoughi & Hejazi, 2021), with pride exerting a positive effect on enjoyment in EFL contexts (Yin, 2021). Furthermore, academic engagement has been found to be closely related to pride (Derakhshan & Yin, 2024), and experiencing pride as part of positive emotions could enhance motivation (Y. Wang et al., 2024).

Pride, alongside other positive emotions like enjoyment and hope, is an emerging construct in L2 emotion research. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is not any empirical evidence in the context of L2 writing specifically except for Y. Wang et al.'s (2024) study. Whilst their focus was not necessarily limited to pride alone, they investigated how future L2 selves as an L2 writer and positive emotions affect writing-specific self-regulated learning (SRL) strategy use among Chinese university-level EFL students. Their findings illustrated students' sense of pride, alongside other positive emotions such as enjoyment and hope, promoted their writing experiences by motivating them to adopt SRL strategies during writing.

Negative Emotions

Anxiety. Broadly speaking, anxiety is “a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 125). Although classified as a negative emotion, anxiety could also lead to positive outcomes. According to Pekrun (2006), anxiety could spoil interest and intrinsic motivation, yet simultaneously stimulate extrinsic motivation as learners strive to avoid failure. As a skill-specific form of language anxiety, L2 writing anxiety encompasses feelings of tension and apprehension experienced while engaging in writing in L2. While Cheng (2004) described L2 writing anxiety focusing mainly on three-dimensional conceptualization of anxiety (i.e., cognitive, somatic/physiological, and behavioral), the present study focused on *trait anxiety* (i.e., general anxiety toward writing).

Research on L2 writing anxiety, which derived historically from Daly and Miller's (1975) L1 writing apprehension studies, has established that it affects students negatively, resulting in not only psychological but also physiological responses. It detrimentally affects the overall writing performance (Dal, 2018) and potentially play a suppressive role on learners' working memory (Güvendir & Uzun, 2023). Consequently, anxious students often struggle to organize their thoughts and generate ideas when writing in L2 (Atay & Kurt, 2006). As such, a comprehensive meta-analysis study by R. Li (2022) reported a moderate correlation between L2 writing anxiety and L2 writing performance. Similarly, Yoon (2022) found that Korean EFL learners' L2 academic writing anxiety predicted their L2 academic writing performance. Research has generally shown that L2 writing process and product is influenced negatively by L2 anxiety (Cheng, 2002; Dal, 2018; Teimouri et al., 2019). L2 writing anxiety also predicts L2 writing achievement negatively (Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021). Besides, writing apprehension and writing performance are negatively correlated (Yavuz-Erkan & İflazoğlu-Saban, 2010). Consistent with these findings, Sabti et al. (2019) reported that higher anxiety levels corresponded with poorer writing performance and lower writing achievement motivation.

Several relevant studies on L2 writing at the university level can be cited from other EFL contexts including Taiwan (e.g., Cheng, 2004), Korea (e.g., Yoon, 2022), China (e.g., B. Li, 2022; Woodrow, 2011), Türkiye (e.g., Atay & Kurt, 2006), Pakistan (e.g., Rasool et al., 2023), Iraq (e.g., Sabti et al., 2019), and Iran (e.g., Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021), which generally reported moderate (e.g., B. Li, 2022; Yoon, 2022), or moderate-to-high (e.g., Rasool et al., 2023; Sabti et al., 2019) L2 writing anxiety levels. Amongst these contexts, a greater body of research on L2 writing anxiety seems available in the Turkish EFL context (e.g., Atay & Kurt, 2006; Dal, 2018; Ekmekçi, 2018; Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Göncü & Mede, 2022; Keyvanoğlu & Atmaca, 2023; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Zerey, 2013). Of these, only four studies (i.e., Genç & Yaylı, 2019; Göncü & Mede, 2022; Keyvanoğlu & Atmaca, 2023; Zerey, 2013) specifically examined university students in the ELPPs, who were from different proficiency levels learning how to write in general English. These studies generally reported moderate/average to high anxiety levels. Studies conducted with undergraduate program students (i.e., Atay & Kurt, 2006; Dal, 2018; Ekmekçi, 2018; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Öztürk

& Saydam, 2014) yielded similar findings, mostly indicating moderate anxiety levels. A pioneering study by Atay and Kurt (2006) with fourth-year undergraduates revealed that more than half had high or average writing anxiety. Öztürk and Saydam (2014) investigated students from eight different universities, reporting moderate L2 writing anxiety levels. Kırmızı and Kırmızı (2015) found that university students (English Language and Literature students) also exhibited moderate anxiety. Dal (2018) investigated freshman university students' (Electrical and Electronics Engineering Students) L2 writing anxiety, reporting moderate anxiety levels, while Ekmekçi (2018) observed that the majority of freshman and senior undergraduate university students (pre-service EFL teachers) had moderate anxiety levels.

While previous studies shed light on writing anxiety in EFL contexts, very few of them were conducted with undergraduate students enrolled in English-major programs. In particular, very little is known about L2 writing anxiety of freshman students learning how to write in an EAW context.

Anger. Anger is defined as “an emotion characterized by tension and hostility arising from frustration, real or imagined injury by another, or perceived injustice” (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Classified as a negative activating emotion, anger is likely to arise when an activity is perceived as controllable but holds negative value—for example, when the required effort is perceived as unpleasant (Pekrun, 2006). It tends to impair motivation and is strongly and negatively correlated with achievement (Camacho-Morles et al., 2021). As per existing empirical evidence regarding anger, particularly from the L2 writing context, it is pretty limited.

Boredom. Boredom is distinctively “a negative, deactivating emotion arising from ongoing learning activities or tasks” (C. Li et al., 2023a, p. 225). It is, at the same time, “an aversive state that is characterized by feelings of dissatisfaction, restlessness, and weariness.” (Elpidorou, 2014, p. 2). Generally subdivided into *state* and *trait* boredom, with the former being transient while the latter perpetual, boredom generally undermines taking an action. This study focuses upon the *state boredom*, which is “[...]an aversive, transient state that can be often easily alleviated. [...] Often, boredom is considered situational: it is brought about by the unchallenging, monotonous, or repetitive situations in which we find ourselves (O'Hanlon, 1981)” (as cited in Elpidorou, 2014, p. 1). Boredom in academic contexts typically arise when “demands are too low, as in the case of high-ability students who are taught in regular classes.” (Pekrun et al., 2002, p. 93). Interestingly, Pekrun et al. (2002) also found that boredom is linked to “[...] low self-evaluations of abilities and high evaluations of demands” (p. 93). Therefore, boredom might result in behavioral or mental withdrawal from cases that are not only satisfactorily stimulating yet also from those which are too demanding for those with low abilities (Pekrun et al., 2002).

Compared to other emotions that are at the forefront, boredom has received relatively limited scholarly attention. As C. Li and Wei (2023) note, “Unlike anxiety or enjoyment, boredom is more inconspicuous.” (p. 95). Still, the extant literature suggests boredom is generally correlated with negative emotions. A moderate negative association between boredom and academic performance has also been reported (Camacho-Morles et al., 2021). Research on foreign language learning boredom (FLLB) (C. Li et al., 2023a) suggests a positive correlation between L2 classroom anxiety and L2 boredom (C. Li & Wei, 2023; X. Wang & Li, 2022), whereas a positive correlation between L2 enjoyment and L2 classroom anxiety (Botes et al., 2022; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; X. Wang & Li, 2022) as well as between L2 enjoyment and L2 boredom (C. Li, 2022; C. Li & Wei, 2023; X. Wang & Li, 2022).

Specific to L2 writing boredom, comparatively little is known. However, C. Li et al. (2023b) reported L2 writing achievement was negatively affected by L2 writing boredom and positively

affected by L2 writing enjoyment. Yet, their study involved Chinese junior secondary EFL learners and focused on L2 writing in general rather than on EAW. More recently, Solhi et al. (2024) investigated L2 writing boredom of Turkish EFL learners who were English preparatory school students across different universities. Their SEM analysis yielded a negative relationship between L2 writing boredom and L2 writing motivation. They measured both state and trait boredom and reported that higher writing boredom is linked to lower motivation and less effective strategies for coping with boredom. Thus, despite the growing interest in classroom or L2 learning boredom, there is limited empirical data on L2 writing boredom, leaving its part highly enigmatic in L2 writing research.

Hopelessness. Hopelessness is defined as “the feeling that one will not experience positive emotions or an improvement in one’s condition” (American Psychological Association, n.d.). It is a prospective outcome emotion (Pekrun, 2006) that can arise once individuals hold low expectations of success or high expectations of failure, particularly when the outcome is personally significant. As such, it is a *deactivating* emotion (Pekrun & Perry, 2014), emerging from both low expectations for success and high expectations for failure. From a domain-specific perspective, however, hopelessness has not been studied in the context of L2 writing.

Interrelationship between Variables

Given the multifaceted and complex nature of L2 writing, the interplay of cognitive and affective variables is similarly complex. Research in L2 learning has yielded several relevant findings: For instance, a very recent study by Derakhshan and Fathi (2024) longitudinally investigated the interconnectedness of different constructs through a cross-lagged panel design: Enjoyment and anxiety in L2 learning. However, these constructs were not specific to L2 writing but rather concerned with foreign language learning more broadly (e.g., foreign language enjoyment, etc.). Generally, foreign language enjoyment (FLE) has been reported to be negatively correlated with foreign language anxiety (FLA) (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Nevertheless, some scholars have raised criticisms regarding their relationship arguing that they are not in the relationship of “binary opposition” and “one falling and another rising,” but coexisting in FLL’s learning process (Boudreau et al., 2018; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016). Although there was a significant negative correlation between FLE and FLCA (overall, not specific to English), the amount of shared variance is relatively small (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014), supporting the view that “these two dimensions are related but that enjoyment and anxiety appear to be independent emotions, and not opposite ends of the same dimension” (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 261).

Taken together, earlier studies with university students in EFL contexts have generally reported the following regarding the relationships among these constructs investigated in this study:

- L2 writing anxiety is negatively associated with L2 writing self-efficacy (Göncü & Mede, 2022; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Öksüz-Zerey & Müjdecı, 2023; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Sabti et al., 2019; Yoon, 2022), L2 writing motivation (Cheng, 2002), and L2 writing performance and/or achievement (Cheng, 2002; C. Li et al., 2023b; Öksüz-Zerey & Müjdecı, 2023; Sabti et al., 2019; Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021; Teimouri et al., 2019). Additionally, L2 academic writing anxiety and self-efficacy predict L2 academic writing performance (Yoon, 2022).
- L2 writing self-efficacy and L2 writing achievement motivation are strongly and positively correlated (Sabti et al., 2019).
- L2 writing enjoyment is positively related to writing achievement (C. Li et al., 2023b), although it does not predict L2 writing achievement (Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021).

- L2 writing boredom is negatively associated with L2 writing motivation (Solhi et al., 2024) and L2 writing achievement (C. Li et al., 2023b).

Overall, these empirical investigations highlight the intricate relationship of these variables, while also yielding varied findings. That said, there was an evident need, and the study was worth undertaking because of the following three reasons, which could cast a light on what readers should be interested in reading this research: First, the interplay of different variables in PP and NP have not received much empirical research attention. In other words, there has been relatively little research looking at these constructs in connection with each other. Although some relationships are well-established (e.g., negative relationship between L2 writing anxiety and L2 writing self-efficacy), the interplay of different variables, especially those from PP and NP, have not been investigated under the same study much. Second, most previous studies in the tertiary context were conducted with ELPP students learning General English, meaning that research has largely focused on general writing practices rather than English academic writing (EAW) specifically. Empirical data on L2 writing focusing specifically on EAW remain scarce. Third, regrettably though, research on L2 emotions has been overwhelmingly monopolized by L2 anxiety studies (Cheng, 2002, 2004; C. Li et al., 2023b; Y. Wang & Xu, 2024), whereas empirical data regarding L2 enjoyment, boredom, or other emotions are rather limited. Positive emotions (e.g., enjoyment, pride, etc.) are generally reported to contribute positively to learning processes, whereas negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, boredom, anger, hopelessness, etc.) tend to undermine them; however, positive and negative activating and deactivating emotions could yield different results in academic contexts. In the domain of L2 writing specifically, emotions have not been empirically investigated much, either. Nevertheless, given that “L2 writing success also depends on learner’s emotional experiences in the writing process” (Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021, p. 1), investigating these variables is fairly crucial.

The Study

In the L2 writing field, the attention—as discussed above—has long been on cognitive and linguistic factors, whilst comparatively little attention has been attached to motivational and/or affective factors (C. Li et al., 2023b; Papi, 2021). Earlier studies were often conducted with students from varying backgrounds, and principally with K-12 students in EFL settings (e.g., C. Li & Wei, 2023), and research sampling university-level students majoring in English in EAW contexts remains notably scarce. Importantly, despite the growing body of research on PP in L2 learning and teaching, writing is comparatively uncredited as most studies have focused on PP constructs (e.g., enjoyment, anxiety, etc.) in the general contexts of L2 learning/teaching (e.g., Derakhshan & Fathi, 2024) rather than in a domain-specific context like L2 writing. Besides, among the studies focusing on PP constructs in L2 writing, despite the proliferation of research focusing on each of these constructs, one area that still merits further inquiry is their potential interrelationship. Although there are separate studies on these variables, no research has investigated their interrelationships within a single study. Hence, this study sought to address these gaps and achieve a more comprehensive understanding of L2 writing by adopting the following research questions:

RQ1. To what extent do university-level EFL students experience L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, and emotions in EAW?

RQ2. Do L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, emotions, quality, and improvement of EFL students change over time, namely before (Time 1) and after (Time 2) completing an EAW course? If so, how?

RQ2.1. Are L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitude and quality related to changes in L2 writing development?

RQ3. Is there a relationship between L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, emotions, quality, and improvement?

Method

Participants and Setting

The participants (N= 63, 26 male and 37 female) were university students aged between 19 and 28 (M= 21.01 years; *SD*= 1.717 years). They were recruited from a single, homogenous educational context, with all being Turkish native speakers who shared similar linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds and learned English as their foreign language. They had begun learning English at around age 8 (from Grade 2 in primary school), having a total of at least ten years of learning experience without any prior overseas training. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2020), their English proficiency ranged from upper-intermediate (B2) to advanced (C1), as determined by the in-house English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) administered by the program. The ELPT is designed to assess students' four language skills in English (both receptive and productive) and is composed of publicly available tasks and items from standardized tests such as IELTS and TOEFL, both of which have already-established validity. All test items are reviewed by language experts to ensure construct relevance for test-takers in the institutional context. Content and construct validity are further supported through expert review and alignment with institutional learning outcomes. Participants of this study were enrolled in an English-medium program where a score of 80 out of 100 on the ELPT is required for gate-keeping purposes. Those who cannot pass the test complete the ELPP, which is an intensive language teaching program, for one year before starting the department. The participants consisted of undergraduate program students who had either completed ELPP an entire academic year or previously passed the ELPT.

The study was conducted in the Turkish higher educational context where English academic writing (EAW) is taught to undergraduate university students. Employing the convenience sampling method for practicality and accessibility purposes, undergraduate students pursuing a bachelor's degree in English Language Teaching (i.e., English-major students) at a state university were recruited on the principle of voluntary participation. Informed consent was obtained through a form on which participants checked a box indicating their agreement to take part. The form provided detailed information about the study and participants were explicitly informed that their responses would be used solely for research purposes by anonymizing their data. They were also explicitly informed that their participation would not affect their course grades by no means. According to the program curriculum, where the medium of instruction is English, students are offered compulsory courses to improve their academic English language skills (i.e., academic reading, writing, listening and pronunciation, and oral communication) offered in two semesters in their first academic year besides introductory field courses such as Introduction to education, Information technologies, and so forth. Each semester, students must successfully complete courses equivalent to 30 ECTS credits, accumulating 240 credits over eight semesters required for their graduation.

Data were collected in the course *Writing Skills II* from the participants enrolled in the 2023-2024 academic year Spring semester. This compulsory freshman academic writing course in English was offered over a 15-week semester, with a weekly duration of 120 minutes (i.e., 2-hour) per week. Participants had initially completed *Writing Skills I* in the previous (i.e., Fall) semester as a foundation, where they practiced sentence, paragraph, and essay types and

structure in EAW. Altogether, participants received 30 hours of EAW instruction during each (i.e., Fall and Spring) semester, amounting to 60 hours during their freshman year.

The *Writing Skills II* course followed a process genre approach (Badger & White, 2000). Throughout the semester, they worked collaboratively on three writing tasks, namely 1) *Extended Definition*, 2) *Literature Review*, and 3) *Problem/Solution*. During the first weeks, the course focused on the fundamentals of academic writing, academic integrity, summarizing and paraphrasing skills, library use and literature search through databases, and APA referencing rules. Having covered these critical components required for the following writing tasks, students collaboratively (either in pairs or groups of three—depending on their preferences) composed descriptive and expository texts on field-relevant topics such as collaboration, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), inclusion, autonomy, critical pedagogy, native speakerism, gamification, and so forth. They produced all three writing tasks on the assigned topic. A sample instructional procedure, which was in line with Badger and White's (2000) assertions on the process-genre approach, was as follows: The instructor initially presented model texts in the classroom and asked detailed follow-up discussion questions to draw students' attention to the characteristics of the target genre (e.g., purpose, organization, language use, etc.). For example, concerning Task 2 (Literature Review), they analyzed literature review sections by highlighting the structure, vocabulary use, tense use, reporting verbs, and so forth. They also compared and contrasted similarities and differences across at least two different models. Afterwards, students were guided to plan their own writing both in and out of the classroom by searching the literature in depth and reading several articles on the assigned topics (i.e., *pre-writing*). Having drafted the texts (i.e., *drafting*), they received feedback from their peers and participated in one-on-one student-teacher conferences. After receiving feedback for the first drafts, they revised and edited the texts and produced the second drafts collaboratively (i.e., *revising* and *editing*). Altogether, they wrote both in and outside the classroom and submitted two drafts (Draft 1- *Initial* and Draft 2- *Revised*) for each writing task aligning with the target genre. Considering that the process-genre approach highlights model texts, scaffolding, and recursive writing practices, such instruction is likely to affect students' affective and motivational states relevant to L2 writing—possibly decreasing anxiety and promoting self-efficacy.

Instruments

Data were collected via a survey framed by the aims and RQs (see Appendix A). Since there were several variables to portray a comprehensive picture, employing individual full-length scales for each would not have been practical and the responses would have been skeptical given that it would be rather tiring for participants to respond to a battery of instruments. Considering also the need for ensuring practicality and efficiency during data collection, the survey thus relied upon self-reported data. Also, in accordance with Corneille and Gawronski's (2024) indication that “self-reports are most often the better measurement option” (p. 835), this study likewise referred to a self-reported instrument in the survey form for eliciting data directly in lieu of implicit measures.

The survey items were crafted with relevant questions by the researcher as follows: First, the affective variables frequently studied in L2 writing literature were sought. Having reviewed the literature, L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, and attitudes were determined as variables. Perceived writing quality and improvement were also incorporated. Afterwards, options were written in the form of a rating scale by reviewing the quantifiers to measure the extent of these variables in the literature. In other words, these variables were measured by close-ended items enabling respondents to mark their answers among several options already presented (Fraenkel et al., 2022). Participants were invited to respond to a

direct, global question for each variable of interest. This decision was based upon Allen et al. (2022), who posited that single-item measures, notwithstanding their bad reputation, can be “often as valid and reliable as their multi-item counterparts” (Allen et al., 2022, p. 4). Aligned with the encouraging empirical support for single-items (e.g., Allen et al., 2022; Bieleke et al., 2021; Fisher et al., 2016; Gogol et al., 2014; Wanous et al., 1997), the survey prompts (e.g., Please rate your level of when you engage in academic writing in English) consisted of single-item measures on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. Items focused on their L2 writing anxiety (1= *Not at all anxious*; 5= *Extremely anxious*), self-efficacy (1= *Very low self-efficacy*; 5= *Very high self-efficacy*), motivation (1= *Very low motivation*; 5= *Very high motivation*), enjoyment (1= *Not at all enjoyable*; 5= *Extremely enjoyable*), attitudes (1= *Very negative attitude*; 5= *Very positive attitude*), and quality (1= *Very low quality*; 5= *Very high quality*), as perceived by them. There were two items for each variable: one for pre-course and the other for post-course phase. They were also asked to indicate the self-perceived L2 writing improvement in academic English through another item (Do you think your ability to write academic texts in English has improved this semester? If so, indicate the level of improvement), where the responses ranged from 1= *Very little improvement* to 5= *Very substantial improvement*.

Additionally, to investigate emotions the participants experienced, there was a closed-ended item specifically focusing on achievement emotions (i.e., anxiety, boredom, anger, hopelessness, pride, and enjoyment) relevant to L2 writing, which were presented as a list of options and participants were asked to check those all that apply. These emotions were determined according to CVT (Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun & Perry, 2014) and incorporating the ones frequently researched in recent studies in the relevant literature (e.g., Bieleke et al., 2021; C. Li et al., 2023b; Pekrun, 2024; Pekrun et al., 2011; Shao et al., 2023; Y. Wang & Xu, 2024). The researcher also counterbalanced *positive* and *negative*, *activating* and *deactivating*, as well as *activity-oriented* and *outcome-oriented* emotions (Pekrun, 2006). Amid these emotions, two emotions (namely, *shame* and *relief*) were excluded on a deliberate decision: *Shame* (a negative activating emotion) was not included due to its culture-bound nature and the potential risk of misinterpretation or discomfort among participants. On the other hand, *relief* (a positive deactivating emotion) was left out since it is likely to be a momentary post-task emotion rather than a sustained affective state. Accordingly, the present study concentrated upon other frequently studied emotions. The taxonomy of achievement emotions investigated in this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Taxonomy of Achievement Emotions Investigated in this Study

Object Focus	Valence			
	Positive		Negative	
	Activating	Deactivating	Activating	Deactivating
Activity	Enjoyment	x	Anger	Boredom
Outcome	Pride	x	Anxiety	Hopelessness

The prompt for the item was as follow: “What are the emotion(s) you experienced/experience in academic writing in English (You do not have to choose only one emotion; you can choose all that apply to you) (Please describe your emotions—how you felt/feel—when you engage in academic writing in English)”. In accordance with Fraenkel et al.’s (2022) suggestion, an “other” option was supplied in order not to limit the range of responses in case participants’ true response might not be among the options already provided.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected upon finalization of the 2023-2024 academic year Spring semester, where the participants were a cohort of university students who completed an EAW course. Following course completion and prior to study involvement, participants received an invitation e-mail and those who granted their consent were shared the survey link. Since the author was also the course instructor, s/he made it perfectly obvious that the survey would not affect academic grades and was research-purposes only. This is also why data were collected at the end of the semester specifically, after they submitted all their course work. There were no positive or negative consequences, so there were no conflicts of interest. They were also explicitly informed in the consent form about the freedom they had to withdraw from the study any time they required. Among 66 students enrolled in the course, 63 of them provided their consent and responded to the survey. The study adhered to ethical considerations, ascertaining informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality.

Data were statistically analyzed by IBM SPSS Statistics Version 31.0. Data were first screened for missing values and outliers. Preliminary to analyses, normality checks were administered. For normality assumptions, Skewness (+.240) and Kurtosis (+2.77) coefficients were checked, which confirmed the normality of the data distribution—adhering to thresholds for Skewness within ± 1 (Mertler et al., 2021; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Kurtosis values within ± 7 are considered acceptable (Byrne, 2010). Therefore, the researcher opted for the more powerful parametric statistics. To answer RQ1, data were first analyzed by calculating descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) with their 95% confidence intervals (CI). As per RQ2, to investigate whether the changes in variables over the semester were significant before (Time 1) and after (Time 2) completing an EAW course, six dependent (or paired) samples t-tests were run. Although a Bonferroni correction ($0.05/6$) was considered, which would result in a probability (or significance) level set at $p < .008$, unadjusted p -values are reported. This was done to avoid excessive Type II error (Perneger, 1998). The results should thus be viewed with some caution concerning potential inflation of familywise error rate (FWER), namely the increased risk of a Type I error (Mertler et al., 2021; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). For the potential correlation among variables, as RQ3 sought, 21 pairwise correlations were performed with a Pearson correlation coefficient. Similarly, instead of the Bonferroni-adjusted alpha levels, effect sizes (r) were highlighted. This decision was based upon the exploratory nature of the study and high number of comparisons. Since the aim was to investigate relational patterns instead of strict significance, unadjusted p -values were reported.

Results

In this section, the results of the analyses in relation to each of the research questions are presented. The reliability of the survey was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The internal consistency of the survey was moderate, with an alpha of .61. Descriptive and inferential statistics results sought by RQ1 and RQ2 are presented in Table 2, including the means, standard deviations, standard errors of mean, as well as t and p values.

According to Cohen's (2013) seminal guidelines, effect sizes represent small ($d = .2$), medium ($d = .5$), and large ($d \geq .8$) effect sizes respectively. However, instead of using Cohen's (2013) guidelines, Plonsky and Oswald's (2014) benchmark of effect sizes were preferred. This decision was based upon the fact that their benchmarks were field-specific, meaning that they were recalculated for L2 research. Accordingly, benchmarks for d values for pre-post or within-group contrasts were as follows: small ($d = .60$), medium ($d = 1.00$), and large ($d = 1.40$). Accordingly, the overall effect sizes were small to medium ($d = |-1.27| - |.36|$) (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014).

Table 2. Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

Variable	N	Pre				Post				Paired Samples T-test		<i>d</i>	effect-size <i>r</i>
		M	SD	SEM	95% CI	M	SD	SEM	95% CI	t	p		
L2 writing anxiety	63	3	1.000	.125	.253	2.61	1.141	.143	.287	2.184	.033*	.36	.18
L2 writing self-efficacy	63	2.71	.869	.109	.218	3.36	.848	.106	.213	-4.429	<.001**	-.76	-.35
L2 writing motivation	63	2.39	.925	.116	.233	2.92	.988	.124	.255	-3.418	.001**	-.55	-.27
L2 writing enjoyment	63	2.30	.835	.105	.210	2.65	1.018	.128	.256	-2.435	.018*	-.38	-.18
L2 writing attitudes	63	2.65	.765	.096	.192	3.09	.928	.116	.233	-3.380	.001**	-.52	-.25
L2 writing quality	63	2.41	.873	.110	.224	3.42	.711	.089	.179	-8.722	<.001**	-1.27	-.54

Notes. **p< .01; *p< .05; Responses were enumerated on a scale from "1" to "5"

Descriptive statistics results concerning RQ1 yielded that participants experienced L2 writing anxiety at a moderate level and their L2 writing self-efficacy, L2 writing attitudes, L2 writing motivation, and L2 writing enjoyment were below average before taking the EAW course. Also, they considered their L2 writing quality somewhat low. Having completed the course, participants' anxiety and enjoyment were below average whereas self-efficacy and attitudes were above average. As presented in Table 1, their L2 writing quality had the greatest improvement over the semester. After the course, they started to feel more self-efficacious and motivated as well as exhibiting greater enjoyment in L2 writing. Besides, their attitudes positively improved, and anxiety decreased. Overall, the greatest gain was in L2 writing quality, whereas the least in L2 writing enjoyment. Still, the dependent samples t-test results sought by RQ2 also yielded statistically significant changes in all variables. Participants were also asked for their perceived L2 writing improvement at semester's conclusion. The majority thought they made either very substantial ($n= 2, 3\%$) or substantial ($n= 27, 43\%$) improvement, whereas the rest perceived it as moderate ($n= 25, 40\%$), little ($n= 8, 13\%$), or very little ($n= 1, 2\%$). Overall, results yielded average improvement ($M= 3.33, SD= .803$).

The constructs were further investigated according to L2 writing improvement, which RQ2.1 strived to answer. Figure 1 presents how these constructs (i.e., anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitude and quality) are related to changes in L2 writing development.

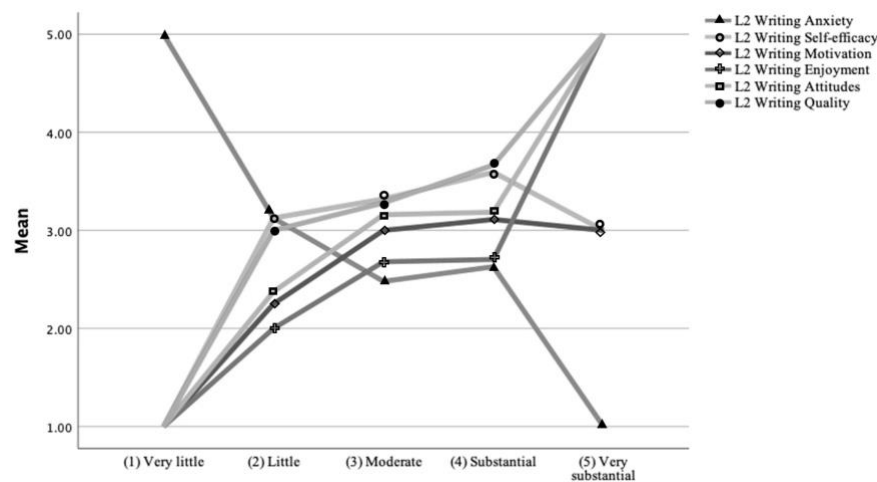


Figure 1. Constructs according to L2 writing improvement

As depicted in Figure 1, participants who thought they made very little improvement reported high L2 anxiety levels and low L2 writing self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, and quality. However, as their perceived L2 writing enhanced, their L2 writing anxiety correspondingly decreased while their L2 writing self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, and quality got better. Those who thought they made very substantial improvement had the lowest anxiety levels and the highest enjoyment, attitudes, and quality. Nonetheless, L2 writing self-efficacy and motivation were not entirely parallel with writing improvement. As Figure 1 illustrates, those who made very substantial writing improvement had slightly lower self-efficacy and motivation levels than those who thought they made substantial improvement. Yet, since there were only two participants who thought they made very substantial ($n=2, 3\%$) improvement, these slight differences may not be considered significant. In sum, L2 writing quality, attitudes, enjoyment, self-efficacy, and motivation showed a positive trend with writing development whereas L2 writing anxiety yielded a negative trend with it.

Regarding the correlational analyses as addressed in RQ3, bivariate correlations among variables of the post-test through Pearson correlation coefficient matrix of all variables are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlations among Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. L2 writing anxiety	—						
2. L2 writing self-efficacy	-.170	—					
3. L2 writing motivation	-.384**	.516**	—				
4. L2 writing enjoyment	-.491**	.131	.645**	—			
5. L2 writing attitudes	-.422**	.139	.571**	.803**	—		
6. L2 writing quality	-.312*	.324**	.278*	.299*	.279*	—	
7. L2 writing improvement	-.264*	.268*	.298*	.381**	.433**	.592**	—

Note. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

As results illustrated, L2 writing anxiety had a significant negative correlation with L2 writing enjoyment, attitude, motivation, quality, and improvement from the strongest to the weakest. However, it did not have a significant correlation with L2 writing self-efficacy. L2 writing self-efficacy had a positive correlation with L2 writing motivation, quality, and improvement. L2 writing motivation had a positive correlation with L2 writing enjoyment, attitudes, self-efficacy, improvement, and quality. L2 writing enjoyment and L2 writing attitudes were positively correlated. Also, it was positively correlated with L2 writing improvement and L2 writing quality. L2 writing attitudes were positively correlated with L2 writing improvement and quality. L2 writing quality was positively correlated with L2 writing improvement. Overall, the effect sizes were small to large (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014), where they suggest that r s close to .25 be considered small, .40 medium, and .60 large respectively. L2 writing quality was the factor with the highest effect size.

Emotions were further investigated with a specific focus (as sought by RQ1 and RQ2), and the participants experienced the following emotions before and after taking the course, as tabulated in Table 4.

Table 4. Emotions before and after EAW Course

Variables	N	Pre		Post	
		Yes <i>n</i> (%)	No <i>n</i> (%)	Yes <i>n</i> (%)	No <i>n</i> (%)
Anxiety	63	40 (63.5%)	23 (36.5%)	22 (34.9%)	41 (65.1%)
Boredom	63	32 (50.8%)	31 (49.2%)	20 (31.7%)	43 (68.3%)
Anger	63	7 (11.1%)	56 (88.9%)	8 (12.7%)	55 (87.3%)
Hopelessness	63	16 (25.4%)	47 (74.6%)	10 (15.9%)	53 (84.1%)
Pride	63	6 (9.5%)	57 (90.5%)	25 (39.7%)	38 (60.3%)
Enjoyment	63	9 (14.3%)	54 (85.7%)	20 (31.7%)	43 (68.3%)

Participants felt various positive and negative achievement emotions simultaneously. Before the course, the most common emotions were anxiety and boredom, whereas the least common was pride. After the course, nonetheless, these emotions underwent some changes, as Table 5 displays.

Table 5. Emotions before and after EAW Course

Variables	N	Pre			Post			Paired samples t-test		<i>d</i>	effect-size <i>r</i>
		Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>		
Anxiety	63	.63	.485	.061	.34	.480	.060	4.112	<.001**	.60	.29
Boredom	63	.50	.503	.063	.31	.469	.059	2.681	.009*	.39	.19
Anger	63	.11	.316	.039	.12	.335	.042	-3.75	.709	.03	-.02
Hopelessness	63	.25	.438	.055	.15	.368	.046	1.350	.182	.25	.12
Pride	63	.09	.295	.037	.39	.493	.062	-4.294	<.001**	-.74	-.35
Enjoyment	63	.14	.352	.044	.31	.469	.059	-2.810	.007*	-.41	-.20

Note. ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Having completed the EAW course, participants experienced lower anxiety and less boredom with a statistically significant decrease whereas they experienced significantly higher levels of pride and enjoyment while writing in L2. Contrarily, although there was a decrease in hopelessness, it was not statistically significant. Also, there was almost no change in anger.

Further correlational analyses were also conducted to see whether these achievement emotions are correlated or not. Results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Pearson Correlations among Emotions

Variables		1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Anxiety	Correlation Coefficient	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.					
2. Boredom	Correlation Coefficient	.144	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.260	.				
3. Anger	Correlation Coefficient	.321*	.354**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.004	.			
4. Hopelessness	Correlation Coefficient	.229	.077	.226	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.072	.549	.075	.		
5. Pride	Correlation Coefficient	-.254*	-.274*	-.212	-.264*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.045	.030	.095	.037	.	
6. Enjoyment	Correlation Coefficient	.001	-.245	-.055	-.296*	.004	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.993	.053	.667	.018	.973	.

Note. **p< .01; *p< .05

As illustrated in Table 6, both anxiety and boredom were positively correlated with anger at a moderate level, whereas they were negatively correlated with pride. Additionally, hopelessness was negatively correlated with pride and enjoyment. Nevertheless, all these significant relationships were weak (Cohen, 2013) and effect sizes small (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014).

Discussion

Herein, the findings of the present study with respect to the research questions are discussed by providing interpretations and possible explanations grounded in the relevant literature. In answer to RQ1, findings illustrated participants experience L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitudes, and various emotions while writing academically in English (see Table 2). Before the EAW course, their L2 writing anxiety was at a moderate level, which concur the earlier findings from Korean and Chinese contexts (i.e., B. Li, 2022; Yoon, 2022) as well as from the Turkish context (i.e., Atay & Kurt, 2006; Dal, 2018; Ekmekçi, 2018; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014). Yet, participants' perceived L2 writing quality was somewhat low, which may be owing in part to the fact that they had moderate anxiety levels then. It is known that anxiety tends to affect overall writing performance (Dal, 2018) and is negatively correlated with writing performance (R. Li, 2022; Sabti et al., 2019). Furthermore, echoing earlier studies on self-efficacy (e.g., Bektaş-Çetinkaya, 2020; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; B. Li, 2022; Yoon, 2022), participants' L2 writing self-efficacy were below average, same as their attitudes, motivation, and enjoyment.

Nevertheless, over completing the EAW course, notable patterns of change were identified in these constructs, as a response to RQ2. Participants significantly enhanced their writing quality, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, and attitudes whilst decreasing their anxiety (see Table 2). These findings could be interpreted through the lens of the Broaden-and-Build Theory (BBT) of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004), according to which positive emotions tend to *broaden* individuals' momentary attention and thinking, thereby contributing to *building* their long-term personal resources that guide their habitual thoughts and acts moving them forward. Increased writing practice opportunities were likely to contribute to writing quality, thereby also enhancing their self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, and attitudes. Participants practiced EAW through various writing tasks collaboratively throughout the semester (please see the section *Participants and Setting* for details). Overall, they produced three different tasks with multiple drafting, for which they received feedback from their peers and instructor throughout the writing process. Therefore, it is probable this experience was

positive for most and broadened their attention and thinking while writing in L2. It is also possible their anxiety levels decreased perhaps owing to these factors.

On the other hand, the construct in which they improved the least was in their enjoyment, as compared to others. Since L2 writing is generally considered challenging and overwhelming due to its comparatively slower nature for place for development as compared to other language skills, it may not be that enjoyable for learners to engage in writing. As also posited by Control-Value Theory (CVT) of achievement emotions (Pekrun, 2006), enjoyment is likely to occur when an achievement-related task is positively valued and considered controllable, generally resulting in flow and engagement (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Considering the participant profile in this study, who were freshman students learning how to write in EAW with limited experience, it is likely that they did not have much control over their writing. Although most appeared to positively value the writing task, that they did not have much control over it might have resulted in them not enjoying writing very much. This could explain why there was not much improvement.

Regarding achievement emotions, participants felt the whole gamut of emotions—both *positive* and *negative*—simultaneously. Changes were evident in the pre- and post-course data, albeit to varying degrees (see Table 4). Before the course, most participants felt anxious, bored, and hopeless about writing in L2 along with very little sense of pride, whilst pride was the emotion felt predominantly after the course. Upon completion of the EAW course, they started to experience significantly lower anxiety and boredom levels and significantly higher levels of pride and enjoyment while writing in L2 (see Table 5). Although they did not entirely stop experiencing negative emotions, their positive emotions positively improved whereas their negative emotions negatively reduced. The CVT (Pekrun, 2006) could again serve as a relevant framework for interpreting these outcomes by highlighting that individuals' perceptions of *control* and the *value* they place on outcomes are considered antecedent of their achievement emotions they experience regarding learning and success. In this respect, it is likely that participants felt more control of their EAW skills and put more value in it, contributing to the flourishing of positive achievement emotions while dwindling negative ones. As per RQ2.1., whether L2 writing anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, enjoyment, attitude and quality are related to changes in L2 writing development were sought. Findings illustrated L2 writing quality, attitudes, enjoyment, self-efficacy, and motivation tended to show a positive trend with perceived writing development whereas L2 writing anxiety yielded a negative trend with it (see Figure 1). This finding highlights that engaging in extended practice might facilitate the development of writing skill.

In answer to RQ3, which sought a potential interrelationship among constructs, findings indicated significant relationships (see Table 3). L2 writing anxiety yielded a negative correlation with L2 writing enjoyment, attitude, motivation, quality, and improvement. In this regard, these findings are congruent with those on L2 writing motivation (e.g., Cheng, 2002) and L2 writing performance and/or achievement (e.g., Cheng, 2002; C. Li et al., 2023b; Öksüz-Zerey & Müjdecı, 2023; Sabti et al., 2019; Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021; Teimouri et al., 2019). Despite that, unlike earlier research reporting a negative significant relationship between L2 writing anxiety and self-efficacy (e.g., Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Öksüz-Zerey & Müjdecı, 2023; Öztürk & Saydam, 2014; Sabti et al., 2019; Yoon, 2022), the correlation between the two was not significant in this study although they were negatively correlated. This could be attributable to moderation by other variables in the study. It is also worth noting that participants' L2 writing self-efficacy were below average, meaning they did not think they were self-efficacious in EAW. Considering that they were freshman students just learning how to write in EAW, it is likely that they did not feel self-efficacious.

As to L2 writing self-efficacy, it had a positive correlation with L2 writing motivation, quality, and improvement. Sabti et al. (2019) similarly reported that L2 writing self-efficacy and L2 writing achievement motivation were strongly and positively correlated. Drawing on Bandura's (1997) conception of self-efficacy, the general premise is that individuals' beliefs in their potential to perform certain tasks are likely to determine their future actions and success. This is also why self-efficacy is considered a key driver of motivation given it generally affects one's effort and persistence in doing something. If individuals have high L2 writing self-efficacy levels, their judgement of themselves regarding how well they can achieve writing tasks is positive with high confidence levels in their writing capabilities (Pajares, 2003), and they organize and execute their actions accordingly. Therefore, it positively affects their motivation, which correspondingly affects their writing quality and improvement because rather than being doubtful and performing low, self-efficacious individuals are inclined to take more risks and tackle encountered challenges while writing. Hence, such a mindset helps them improve their writing capabilities and written products. After all, self-efficacy has been known to be highly decisive in writing performance (Pajares, 2003; Woodrow, 2011; Yoon, 2022).

Another relationship was that L2 writing motivation had a positive correlation with L2 writing enjoyment, attitudes, self-efficacy, improvement, and quality. This finding can be explained by the Theory of Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1990). Accordingly, once individuals are deeply engaged and immersed in an activity, they are in a flow state, resulting in having joy and positive attitudes towards doing that activity. Also, given that joy "...creates the urge to play, push the limits and be creative" (Fredrickson, 2004, p. 1369), individuals enjoying L2 writing could improve their writing more and produce better outputs than those that do not enjoy it much. Those with higher L2 writing motivation are motivated to continue writing, which they find joy in. Besides, L2 writing enjoyment was positively correlated with L2 writing attitudes, besides with L2 writing improvement and L2 writing quality. Earlier studies have reported that L2 writing enjoyment does not predict L2 writing achievement (Tahmouresi & Papi, 2021) yet is positively related to writing achievement (C. Li et al., 2023b). Accordingly, findings appear to confirm those of past studies. When learners enjoy an activity, they tend to develop positive attitudes towards it congruently, thereby helping with improvement and quality.

Correlational analyses also yielded that L2 writing attitudes were positively correlated with L2 writing improvement and quality. Bearing in mind that attitudes are often associated with behaviors (Ajzen, 2005), this correlation might imply that individuals with more positive L2 writing attitudes are more likely to engage in writing than those with more negative ones, favorably contributing to their writing improvement and quality. The BBT of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001, 2004) could also provide an explanation to this finding, according to which it is stated that certain positive emotions are likely to broaden individuals' momentary thought-action repertoires, resources, and skills, while negative emotions are likely to shrink them. Finally, L2 writing quality was positively correlated with perceived L2 writing improvement. In other words, those who thought they improved their EAW similarly thought their L2 writing quality was good.

Within the scope of RQ3, correlation among some emotions was also significant, though not strong (see Table 6). Both anxiety and boredom were positively correlated with anger, whereas they were negatively correlated with pride. Besides, hopelessness was negatively correlated with pride and enjoyment. These correlations were either weak or moderate, yet they still contribute to our understanding of the intricate relationship of emotions. Since anxiety, boredom, anger, and hopelessness are negative emotions, it is probable that they have a positive relationship with other negative emotions and a negative relationship with positive emotions such as pride and enjoyment. As also highlighted in previous research, L2 writing boredom is

negatively associated with L2 writing motivation (Solhi et al., 2024), where one of which is a positive and the other is a negative emotion. Therefore, it is possible to claim that positive and negative emotions could coexist, corroborating Xie et al. (2025) who likewise suggested they “do not simply mirror each other” (p. 9). These findings seem to confirm the dual system model acknowledging the complex, dynamic, and interdependent nature of the two (Wong, 2011). Like Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) similarly posited, positive and negative emotions do not have to be considered as “the opposite ends of the same dimension” (p. 261).

Conclusion, Limitations, Future Directions, and Implications

This exploratory study sought the patterns of L2 writing self-efficacy, motivation, attitudes, and achievement emotions (both positive and negative) of university-level EFL writers moderated in an EAW course over a semester as well as explored their interrelationships. In so doing, it aimed to establish a baseline of studies exploring the potential relationships among these constructs, also expecting to present a more holistic view of the arousal of positive and negative emotions in L2 writing. Taken together, this study expands upon earlier studies by illuminating the intricate psychological mechanism of L2 writing, specifically relationships among affective and motivational factors in EAW contexts. These findings, nonetheless, should be interpreted with caution alongside its limitations to be acknowledged herein, which could inform and chart future research endeavors and directions:

First, the potential relationship among the variables were investigated through inferential statistics and correlational analyses due to participant number. However, a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach with larger samples for a more fine-grained analysis could be adopted in further studies to suggest and verify models. In addition, since the study adopted a cross-sectional design and data are based on correlational analyses, it would not be suitable to make causal interpretations. To do so, experimental studies could be designed. Indeed, given these constructs are fluctuational and not fixed, future researchers need to exercise great caution while employing longitudinal designs to elicit data through extended time periods to see how they vary over time or different writing tasks. Another limitation concerns the instrumentation. Besides asking participants their self-perceptions of affective-emotional constructs through a survey, validated scales might complementarily be used for investigating constructs in future studies. For instance, for measuring L2 writing anxiety, Cheng’s scale on writing anxiety (2004) can be used. No scales were used for measurement, mainly due to the comprehensive nature of this study, economical constraints, and feasibility purposes. Another reason was that the study was exploratory in nature and was rather concerned with the extent to which students rate ID variables on a scale. These are the two main reasons participants were invited to rate their competencies on 5-point Likert scale items instead. In this sense, rather than relying solely on self-reported data, which may be somewhat limited, future studies could elicit enriched data through additional instrumentations to ensure triangulation. Besides, the constructs were investigated from a general perspective independent of the specific writing tasks. Future studies could elaborate on whether participants experience different positive or negative emotions over different writing tasks. Furthermore, the study was quantitative and lacked an elaborate and thorough understanding of the responses participants provided. In future studies, it is recommended that a mixed-method design is adopted, where a subset of participants is interviewed or a pure qualitative study design where participants provide elaboration through other instrumentations such as interviews or stimulated recalls. Another limitation concerns the way the participants engaged in writing tasks. Throughout the semester, the participants did not work individually but worked collaboratively on three writing assignments; i.e., either in pairs or groups they formed on their own will. Hence, their collaborative writing experience might have affected their responses regarding how they perceived their own L2 writing anxiety or self-efficacy. Additionally, the constructs

investigated in this study were irrespective of the writing tasks; therefore, future research could delve into whether specific writing tasks promote them while and/or after participating in tasks. Another potential constraint was that the participants in this study were freshman university students enrolled in an English-major program. It would be worthwhile to investigate the potential relationship among these constructs by recruiting students enrolled in English-medium (EMI) programs, non-English-major students, or students from diverse language backgrounds with different L1s in tertiary contexts. Since data for this study were drawn from a conveniently sampled homogeneous group of participants, this could also somewhat limit the study's generalizability to larger samples in broader contexts. Accordingly, future studies might employ larger sample sizes to strengthen statistical power and ensure greater generalizability. Last but not least, contextual and cultural factors or L1 writing abilities were not explored as they were beyond the scope of the study. Nevertheless, the potential variances across L1-L2 writing also merits investigation. It could be interesting to compare these constructs by investigating the potential relationship between L1 and L2 writing abilities.

While these limitations should be acknowledged, the study yields some implications for practice, which can also inform teaching L2 writing beyond this context. Instructors offering EAW courses should make sure to foster a positive classroom environment to nurture the positive emotions among students by reducing the negative ones. Cultivating them might be valuable to enhance their overall EAW competencies and promote a more engaging academic writing experience. As Sadoughi and Hejazi (2021) similarly contended, positive emotions are likely to foster students' engagement, motivation, and persistence. One thing instructors can do is to divide writing into manageable steps, preferably by adopting a process approach (Badger & White, 2000). It can be daunting for students to produce a text instantly. Instructors may also consider these issues while providing feedback, counterbalancing comments that would result in the arousal of positive and negative achievement emotions. Another thing they can do is to promote collaboration and cooperation among students through collaborative writing activities so that they can learn together while also feeling supported by each other. Collaborative writing activities could also be critical in promoting motivation and reducing anxiety. Instructors can also integrate writing-to-learn activities (rather than learning-to-write) to empower students by engaging them in various writing genres. For example, informal and low-stakes extracurricular writing activities could foster students' interest, lower their anxiety, and increase their self-efficacy and motivation. That students feel inadequate due to their limited language proficiency could also be one of the reasons behind their negative emotions. Therefore, instructors are recommended to diagnose their students' proficiency levels and conduct needs analyses to support them linguistically. Students might also be taught to regulate their emotions, especially the negative ones, while writing in L2 so that they can become more autonomous. Overall, mastering EAW could be extremely challenging due to the influence of several cognitive, affective, and psychological variables, yet with adequate support, appropriate guidance, and sustained engagement, students are likely to develop effective and successful academic writing skills in English.

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Appendix A- Survey

1. Writing anxiety (Please rate your level of *anxiety* when you engage in academic writing in English)

- (1) Not at all anxious
- (2) Slightly anxious
- (3) Moderately anxious
- (4) Very anxious
- (5) Extremely anxious

2. Writing self-efficacy (Please rate your level of *self-efficacy* when you engage in academic writing in English)

- (1) Very low self-Efficacy
- (2) Low self-efficacy
- (3) Moderate self-efficacy
- (4) High self-efficacy
- (5) Very high self-efficacy

3. Writing motivation (Please rate your level of *motivation* when you engage in academic writing in English)

- (1) Very low motivation
- (2) Low motivation
- (3) Moderate motivation
- (4) High motivation
- (5) Very high motivation

4. Writing enjoyment (Please rate your level of *enjoyment* when you engage in academic writing in English)

- (1) Not at all enjoyable
- (2) Slightly enjoyable
- (3) Moderately enjoyable
- (4) Very enjoyable
- (5) Extremely enjoyable

5. Attitudes toward academic writing (Please rate your *attitudes* when you engage in academic writing in English)

- (1) Very negative attitude
- (2) Negative attitude
- (3) Neutral attitude
- (4) Positive attitude
- (5) Very positive attitude

6. What are the emotion(s) you experienced/experience in academic writing in English (You do not have to choose only one emotion; you can choose all that apply to you) (Please describe your *emotions*—how you felt/feel—when you engage in academic writing in English)

Enjoyment

Pride

Anger

Anxiety

Hopelessness

Boredom

7. Your writing quality (Please indicate the level of your writing *quality* when you engage in academic writing in English)

(1) Very low quality

(2) Low quality

(3) Moderate quality

(4) High quality

(5) Very high quality

8. Your writing improvement in academic English (Do you think your ability to write academic texts in English has improved this semester? If so, indicate the level of improvement)

(1) Very little improvement

(2) Little improvement

(3) Moderate improvement

(4) Substantial improvement

(5) Very substantial improvement

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