

Individual Paper Session 22
Reading and Writing
Thursday, July 6
12:15-12:45pm

Rethinking writing apprehension and performance

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With the advent of process studies, one issue getting attention was the difficulty the writers experienced composing a piece. One such difficulty was attributed to writing apprehension or anxiety. Daly and Miller (1975) coining the term defined it as “the tendency of a person to avoid the process of writing - particularly when it is to be evaluated in some way” (244). Learners experiencing this feeling often find it difficult to express themselves, avoid writing as much as possible and find such classes unfavorable. Over anxiety often impairs and hinders performance.

The issue deserves investigation as this totally affects the self confidence of the learners. So it is the purpose of the present study to discover the relationship, if any, between writing apprehension and student performance. Eighty-six Iranian graduate male and female students majoring in TEFL, Regional Studies and Arabic literature in Allameh Tabatabaai University participated in this study.

The Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Inventory was administered. The learners were also asked to share with the researcher their feeling about writing. The average of their writing scores of mid term, final, in-class and out-of- class writings was used as an index of writing ability. Indeed the correlation between anxiety and proficiency was curvilinear. Students reported that group work very much minimized their apprehension. Individual teacher- student conferences also declined apprehension. Interestingly the assigned topic as well as the situation under which they wrote greatly influenced their anxiety.