

# The Effects of Genre Writing on Korean High School Learners' English Writing Abilities and Learning Motivation according to the Degree of English Writing Anxiety

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## Abstract

English writing education is crucial for ESL/EFL learners, and the significance of affective factors, such as anxiety, has been emphasized. However, there are limitations in the school field that prevent a balanced English learning environment. Moreover, longitudinal studies are lacking to track learners' progress over time. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the effects of genre writing on Korean high school learners' English writing abilities and learning motivation according to the degree of English writing anxiety. The study engaged twelve first-year (Grade 10) high school students who participated in genre writing for a three-year longitudinal study from mid-March 2020 to December 2022. The results of this study are as follows. First, it confirmed that the English writing anxiety of all learners who participated in genre writing was significantly alleviated. However, the higher the level of English writing anxiety, the more significant the alleviation. Second, it was found that the English writing abilities of all students who participated in genre writing was significantly improved in most period sections, regardless of their level of English writing anxiety. However, the lower the level of English writing anxiety, the greater the improvement in the English writing abilities. Finally, the learning motivation of all students who participated in genre writing significantly improved, regardless of their level of English writing anxiety. The findings have useful pedagogical implications for teachers to develop English writing abilities while considering learners' affective factors.

**Keywords:** genre writing, English writing abilities, learning motivation, English writing anxiety

## 1. Introduction

In contemporary society, English has become a universal means of communication that connects individuals with different languages and cultures. Undoubtedly, possessing English communication skills is essential for playing a leading role in the international community (Korean Ministry of Education, 2017; Villar, 2018). As the need for global interactions continues to rise, L2 learners must develop communication skills through writing documents such as reports and emails. Consequently, English writing education is critically essential for ESL/EFL learners, becoming as important as education for improving their speaking abilities (Hyland, 2015; Yasuda, 2011).

However, the school environment presents various limitations, such as negative perceptions of teachers and students about English writing, difficulties in securing objectivity and fairness during evaluation, and a lack of connection with the college scholastic abilities test. Therefore, the school field struggles to provide a balanced English learning environment with listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills (Hyland, 2019; Park, 2016). To improve learners' English writing abilities, various approaches and interests are continuously required.

Experts have emphasized the importance of affective factors in second language learning (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Dörnyei, 2014; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Krashen, 1982; Zimmerman, 2008). Affective factors refer to variables that develop based on human emotions and qualities, including various contents such as learning motivation, confidence, anxiety, values, and interests (Ellis, 2004). It is known that affective variables can have a positive or negative impact on the learner's overall second language learning, depending on their degree (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Dörnyei, 2014; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Krashen, 1982; Zimmerman, 2008).

Learner-centered approaches that consider individual learner differences have been introduced, and traditional foreign language learning theories, which focused on simple imitation and repetitive training, have changed direction to improve learners' communication skills (Lightbown & Spada, 2021; Taylor, 1983). In particular, the affective factor that has the greatest influence on second language writing is anxiety, which mainly affects learners who lack experience in writing in a second language, have insufficient knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, cannot clearly express themselves, or fear negative evaluation by readers (Cheng, 2002, 2004; Hyland, 2019).

However, compared to other objective measurement tools, the validity and reliability of measurement tools that gauge the affective variables of second language learners have been criticized. Moreover, opinions on how affective factors influence learners' abilities are divided (Cheng, 2004). As a representative factor, most previous studies have reported that second language writing anxiety negatively affects learners' writing ability (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Han & Hiver, 2018; Horwitz, 2010; Teimouri, Goetze, & Plonsky, 2019). However, appropriate anxiety can increase the learner's concentration and accuracy on second language writing performance and promote learning (Brown, 2014; Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). These contradictory results suggest that investigating the effectiveness of learners' affective factors on their second language learning is necessary.

In addition, second language learning is a process that involves various educational activities and stages, so longitudinal studies should be conducted to track learners' progress over time. However, longitudinal studies are conducted less frequently compared to other experimental studies in the second language learning field due to data collection difficulties (Ortega & Byrnes, 2009). Therefore, previous research is insufficient to answer key questions related to second language learners' English writing abilities, writing anxiety, and learning motivation, such as "How is it changing over time?"

As an alternative to the current situation, numerous studies have shown that English learning activities based on genre writing have a positive effect on learners' English writing ability and affective areas. English Newspapers in Education (ENIE) can be pointed out as a specific activity (Albiladi, 2019; DeRoche, 1991; Freeman & Holden, 1986; Gilmore, 2007; Little & Singleton, 1991; Palmer, Fletcher, & Shapley, 1994). For instance, Brown and Lee (2015) argued that through ENIE, cultural/literature backgrounds were dealt with, reading and writing were connected, authentic writings were offered, and conventions of writing were provided. Moreover, Mehta (2010) stated that through ENIE, the four skills of language could be developed harmoniously, learning habits and motivation could be formed, and affection for the target language could be fostered. Thus, previous studies have shown that ENIE has a positive effect on learners' improvement of English writing abilities and positive influence on affective factors, generally consistent with the direction pursued by genre writing (Hyland, 2019; Kilickaya, 2004; Palmer, Fletcher, & Shapley, 1994).

Therefore, continuous genre writing through English newspaper making activities can be an effective alternative to current high school English classes, considering the improvement of English writing abilities and the positive impacts on affective factors. This study aims to confirm the effects of genre writing according to the degree of English writing anxiety on the English writing abilities and learning motivation of Korean high school learners based on three-year accumulated longitudinal data. Additionally, based on the analysis results, recommendations will be offered to activate genre writing activities in the school education field to improve learners' English writing abilities and have a positive impact on their affective factors. The research questions of this study are as follows.

- How does genre writing affect learners' English writing anxiety?
- How does genre writing according to English writing anxiety degree (higher and lower) affect learners' English writing abilities?
- How does genre writing according to English writing anxiety degree (higher and lower) affect learners' learning motivation?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 *The Educational Effects of Genre Writing and English-language Newspaper Making Activities*

Although educators and researchers have slightly different approaches and teaching methods to genre writing (Hyland, 2004, 2007, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012), Hyland (2004) describes the various advantages of genre writing, including explicit, systematic, learner demand-oriented, scaffolding, empowerment, critical, and conscious growth (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Advantages of Genre Writing (Hyland, 2004)

Explicit	Facilitates learning to write by clearly presenting what learners need to learn
Systematic	It provides a framework that can systematically connect linguistic expressions and the context in which they are used
Need-based	The purpose and content of writing reflects the needs of the learners
Supportive	It provides a central role as a scaffold for learners' learning and creativity
Empowering	It provides a form of text that is culturally respected in the society to which the learner belongs, and helps to become familiar with it
Critical	Through a critical perspective, learners are understanding valuable discourses and provided with resources to challenge
Consciousness raising	Develop the teacher's knowledge of the text so that they can give advice confidently on learners' writing

Considering the characteristics of ENIE highlighted by Brown and Lee (2015) and Mehta (2010), it is evident that Hyland (2019) believes that genre writing not only provides learners with a diverse and broad reading experience, but also meaningful English learning opportunities through fresh and helpful authentic materials. Berardo (2006) further supports this view by stating that newspapers contain various categories of texts and styles, which helps learners improve their reading and writing skills by exposing them to new words and expressions. Additionally, Deroche (1991) argues that ENIE has educational effects and values, such as motivation, information provision, cohesion, appreciation, and cooperative learning in the affective aspect, which are consistent with the benefits of genre writing. Therefore, it can be inferred that the educational effects of genre writing align with those of English newspaper making activities.

As studies demonstrating the effectiveness of English writing education through ENIE and English newspaper making activities have been reported, various studies have attempted to apply them. Kim and Kim (2018) suggested that English newspaper making activities applying the creative problem-solving model not only showed significant changes in learners' English speaking and writing skills but also positive development in the creative fluency and flexibility of the language. Kim and Kim (2015) also argued that English newspaper making activities had a positive effect on learners' English reading-writing abilities and learning motivation, especially improving the content and composition and increasing the number of vocabularies in the text. Furthermore, research findings show that various ENIE activities have a positive effect on the improvement of learners' writing abilities as well as other linguistic functions (Jung & Jang, 2017; Mahir, Ali, & Amin, 2016; Trang, 2018; Wu & Yang, 2013).

## 2.2 English Writing Anxiety

The higher the level of anxiety about writing in a second language, the more likely learners are to avoid writing activities or the class, and this negative attitude can hinder the improvement of second language learning. Therefore, basic research has been actively carried out to identify the causes of second language writing anxiety and to create a learning environment in which anxiety is alleviated (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989).

Several studies related to the causes of English writing anxiety have been conducted. Olanezhad (2015) found that a lack of previous educational experience related to English writing, lack of confidence in English writing, and fear of negative evaluation from teachers can cause English writing anxiety. Kara (2013) also found that learners who are familiar with an assessment method specialized in reading may not be accustomed to writing and expressing themselves in English, resulting in failing to develop the habit of writing in English. Moreover, a lack of writing strategies to organize work and the belief that learners' English proficiency is not sufficient to express their opinions clearly can also increase English writing anxiety. Instructors' teaching methods focused on writing theory, negligence in practical writing practice, students' insufficient knowledge of the target language and negative attitude towards English writing, and negative evaluation and reaction from teachers can also negatively affect learners' English writing skills and increase their English writing anxiety (Kirmizi & Kirmizi, 2015; Rabadi & Rabadi, 2020).

As research related to the causes of second language writing anxiety has progressed, many studies have been conducted to create a learning environment and suggest appropriate methods to decrease learners' second language writing anxiety. Daud et al. (2016) argued that teachers can alleviate learners' English writing anxiety by using various teaching methods and flexibly modifying the syllabus according to students' progress level. Cho (2018) explained that cooperative learning can help examine the learning strategies of advanced learners and provide

opportunities for learners to reflect on their own learning. Thus, this could decrease students' English writing anxiety level and lead to a catalyst for learners to use various learning strategies, enabling more effective English learning. Additionally, an English writing environment suitable for students' level, such as selecting a writing topic that is familiar to the learner, providing sufficient preparation time for students, or providing students with an interesting prior activity related to the topics so that learners can approach English writing with high learning motivation and confidence, should be provided (Kim & Song, 2019).

Despite the importance of anxiety in English writing, numerous previous studies have primarily focused on identifying or reducing anxiety as a variable itself (Cheng, 2002; Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Dörnyei, 2014; Teimouri, Goetze, & Plonsky, 2019; Woodrow, 2011), developing measurement tools (Cheng, 2004; Botes, Dewaele, & Greiff, 2020), and investigating overall learning strategies or teaching methods (Daud, Daud, & Kassim, 2016; Cho, 2018; Kara, 2013; Shao, Pekrun, & Nicholson, 2019). However, research specifically examining the relationship between English writing anxiety levels and practical and specific activities, such as English newspaper making activities based on genre writing, has been rarely conducted. Similarly, most previous studies on educational effects through genre writing have focused on the effect of different genres on learners (Bae, & Min, 2017; Kim, 2015; Yoon & Polio, 2017), genre analysis (Hyon, 2016; Nagao, 2019; Qin, & Uccelli, 2016), and teaching perspectives (Ahn, 2012; Huang & Zhang, 2020; Yang, 2016). Only a limited number of studies have explored the educational effects of genre writing according to affective factors, such as English writing anxiety levels.

Furthermore, most previous research subjects were elementary or university learners, making it difficult to generalize to secondary education, particularly high school learners. Moreover, most research periods lasted only three to six months or at most one year, representing a microscopic approach to short-term analysis of the impacts and effects of English writing abilities, English writing anxiety, and learning motivation in second language learners. As a result, existing studies have limitations in answering the question of "how is it changing over time," which is a key question for this study. Therefore, this three-year longitudinal study examining the effect of genre writing on students' English writing abilities and learning motivation according to their English writing anxiety levels can be meaningful.

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1 Research Design

**Table 2.** Genre Writing (English newspaper making activities) Procedures and Detailed Activities

Stages		Procedures and detailed activities
Preliminary stage		<class1> Information on club activities
Phase 1	<Step 1> Agree on a project theme	<class2> Establishing an overall plan
	<Step 2> Determine the final tangible outcome	<class3> Articles (fields) partitioning and topics setting
	<Step 3> Structure the project	<class4> Determining the final tangible outcome
	<Step 4> Information gathering	<class5-6> Learning how to write newspaper articles and write an outline
Phase 2	<Step 5> Information compilation and analysis	<class7-8> Collecting data according to the topic
	<Step 6> Information reporting	<class9-11> English article drafting and main body writing
	<Step 7> Evaluating the project	<class12-14> Revising and editing English articles (peer editing, group editing)
Phase 3		<class15-16> Editing and correction English articles (club instructors and native-speaking teachers)
		<class17-18> Presentation club activities
		<class19-20> Evaluating club activities, publication and distribution of English newspapers

This study was conducted as a longitudinal study for about three years, from mid-March 2020 to December 2022, and the genre writing activity consisted of more than 20 classes for an average of 15 weeks every semester during the school's regular curriculum club activities time. The genre writing performed every semester was based on the project-based learning procedures by English and Kitsantas (2013) and Stoller (2012). The detailed activities for each step of the procedure are outlined in Table 2.

### 3.2 Subjects

This study conducted a panel survey for a three-year longitudinal study with 12 identical students who voluntarily participated in genre writing among first-year students (Grade 10) who entered K Girls' High School in Korea in March 2020. Before participating in the study, the students were given a detailed explanation about the purpose and procedure of the study, and they voluntarily agreed to participate. To ensure ethical considerations were addressed in the study, the research received clearance from the high school ethics unit. In addition, written consent was obtained from both the participating students and their parents. The consent forms outlined the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits, as well as provided contact information for the researchers in case of any questions or concerns. The consent forms also emphasized that participation was voluntary and that participants could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. To ensure participant protection, the study adhered to ethical standards and laws, such as maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and ensuring that the data was securely stored. Overall, the study took appropriate measures to address ethical considerations and protect the rights and well-being of the participants. For the study, the students were classified into six higher and six lower groups based on the degree of English writing anxiety using Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI).

### 3.3 Instruments

#### 3.3.1 The Degree of English Writing Anxiety

Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI), which has been used as a measurement tool in numerous previous studies (Bayat, 2014; Gass, Behney, & Plonsky, 2020; Shao, Pekrun, & Nicholson, 2019; Teimouri, Goetze, & Plonsky, 2019; Woodrow, 2011), was utilized to measure the degree of English writing anxiety among the participating students in this study. The SLWAI consists of 22 items, including 7 items related to somatic anxiety, 7 items related to avoidance behavior, and 8 items related to cognitive anxiety. Each student responded to each question on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from '5=strongly agree' to '1=strongly disagree'. The total score for all items is 110, with higher scores indicating higher levels of English writing anxiety.

The Cronbach's Alpha correlation coefficient of the SLWAI based on students' responses was .913. Moreover, the Cronbach's Alpha correlation coefficient of the SLWAI's three sub-categories was .8 or higher, respectively, which indicates a very suitable level (physical anxiety=.862, avoidance behavior=.801, cognitive anxiety=.894). The students' degree of English writing anxiety was measured using Cheng's SLWAI during the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020 and the second semester (December) of Grade 12 in 2022.

#### 3.3.2 English Writing Abilities

The students' English writing abilities were measured based on the analytical scoring criteria provided by the ESL Composition Profile for Native Speaker Writers and Non-Native Speaker Writers (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2013). A total of 60 English articles written by the 12 identical students who participated in genre writing were collected and organized once per semester, from the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020 to the first semester (August) of Grade 12 in 2022 (5 articles per student). Following the arrangement, an analytical evaluation was carried out.

To ensure the reliability of the scoring in measuring the students' English writing abilities, the researcher (first author) and two native-speaking external raters scored and compared each other. Before scoring the English articles written by the students, calibration was performed to attain the inter-rater reliability index. The scoring criteria were adjusted and agreed upon by the researcher and the raters. After comparing and discussing the differences in the scores between the raters, a re-evaluation process was performed, consequently minimizing the gap between the raters. The raters independently scored 60 English articles according to the agreed-upon criteria on calibration. The final English writing score of each English article was the sum of the average scores for each sub-area given by the three raters.

Intra-class Correlation Coefficient (ICC) was calculated to measure the reliability between the raters (Cicchetti, 1994), and inter-rater agreement and inter-rater consistency were examined for each sub-area of analytical evaluation. After scoring each student's English article according to the criteria, the raters' reliability test (inter-rater agreement and inter-rater consistency) was conducted again. As a result, the ICC showed very excellent reliability

between .891 and .943 with a 95% significance probability in all five sub-areas.

### 3.3.3 Learning Motivation

To measure the students' learning motivation, the EBS-standardized psychological test (EBS-SPT) (Korean Educational Broadcasting System, 2015), jointly developed by the Korean Educational Broadcasting System and the Korea Institute of Behavioral Science, was used. The analysis and interpretation of the test were conducted based on the final report provided by a psychological analysis expert at the EBS-SPT Institute. Among the various values provided in the report, the T score ( $M = 50$ ,  $SD = 10$ ), which is easy to compare, was used. The measurement period was the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020 and the second semester (December) of Grade 12 in 2022. The learning motivation score was the average of the two sub-category T scores provided in the result report. The Cronbach's Alpha correlation coefficient of EBS-SPT was .9, which was at a very suitable level.

### 3.3.4 Data Analysis

For data analysis, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program version 25.0 was used, and the specific statistical methods applied in this study are as follows. First, Cheng's SLWAI was used to classify students who participated in genre writing into higher and lower groups based on the degree of English writing anxiety. To determine not only whether the two groups were classified as statistically significant but also whether they were equally distributed, the Mann-Whitney U test, a non-parametric statistical method that does not assume a normal distribution, was performed. In addition, after students had performed genre writing for three years, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was conducted to compare whether there was a change in the students' English writing anxiety according to the degree of English writing anxiety (higher and lower).

Second, to analyze the improvement of students' English writing abilities according to the degree of English writing anxiety (higher and lower), the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted after designating the English writing anxiety level as the independent variable and the students' English writing ability evaluation score by semester (1st semester of Grade 10, 1st semester of Grade 12) as the dependent variable. Also, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was conducted after designating students' English writing ability evaluation scores for each semester as a corresponding variable.

Third, to examine the change in students' learning motivation according to the degree of English writing anxiety (higher and lower), the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted after designating the English writing anxiety level as the independent variable and the learning motivation score of the EBS-SPT as the dependent variable. Also, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test was carried out after designating the learning motivation score of the EBS-SPT as a corresponding variable for the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020 and the second semester (December) of Grade 12 in 2022.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Measurements and Changes in English Writing Anxiety

Cheng's SLWAI was used to classify students who participated in genre writing into higher and lower groups based on their degree of English writing anxiety. The Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted to assess the statistical significance of the two groups (see Table 3). The study was conducted among first-year students (Grade 10) who entered K Girls' High School in Korea in March 2020.

**Table 3.** Mann-Whitney U Test for Cheng's SLWAI According to the Degree of English Writing Anxiety (higher, lower)

		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
The 1st semester of Grade 10 in 2020	Higher group	6	95.33	3.01	9.50	57.00	.000	-2.887	.004*
	Lower group	6	87.00	2.19	3.50	21.00			
The 2nd semester of Grade 12 in 2022	Higher group	6	76.00	8.22	8.42	50.50	6.500	-1.845	.065
	Lower group	6	65.50	7.31	4.58	27.50			

\* $p < .05$

The students were classified into two groups (six higher and six lower groups) based on Cheng's Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) to measure their English writing anxiety at the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020. The mean of English writing anxiety in the higher group was 95.33 with a standard deviation of 3.01, while the mean of English writing anxiety in the lower group was 87.00 with a standard deviation of 2.19. It was determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups based on their degree of English writing anxiety ( $U=.000$ ,  $Z=-2.877$ ,  $p=.004$ ). This suggests that the students were effectively classified into higher and lower groups according to their level of English writing anxiety.

After three years of practicing genre writing, the mean English writing anxiety score in the higher group at the second semester (December) of Grade 12 in 2022 was 76.00 with a standard deviation of 2.19. In contrast, the mean English writing anxiety score in the lower group was 65.50 with a standard deviation of 7.31. Statistical analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups in terms of English writing anxiety ( $U=6.500$ ,  $Z=-1.845$ ,  $p=.065$ ). However, it was observed that the level of English writing anxiety decreased more in the higher group compared to the lower group. Consequently, the level of English writing anxiety became more similar between the two groups.

To analyze whether there was a change in the students' level of English writing anxiety after three years of practicing genre writing, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was conducted (see Table 4). This was done to compare the students' level of English writing anxiety according to their degree of English writing anxiety (higher and lower).

**Table 4.** Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to Compare Whether There Is a Change in the Students' English Writing Anxiety Level

			<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
Higher group	The 1 <sup>st</sup> semester of Grade 10	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.207	.027*
	– the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester of Grade 12	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
		Ties	0				
Lower group	The 1 <sup>st</sup> semester of Grade 10	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	– the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester of Grade 12	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
		Ties	0				

\* $p < .05$

Overall, the study found that there was a statistically significant decrease in English writing anxiety among students who participated in genre writing. Specifically, for students in the higher and lower groups of English writing anxiety, there was a significant difference in anxiety levels between the first semester of Grade 10 and the second semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.207$ ,  $p=.027$  and  $Z=-2.201$ ,  $p=.028$ , respectively). In other words, the degree of English writing anxiety decreased for all students who participated in genre writing.

#### 4.2 Measurements and Changes in English Writing Abilities

**Table 5.** Mann-Whitney U Test for Students' English Writing Ability Evaluation Score According to the Degree of English Writing Anxiety (higher, lower)

		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
The 1st semester of Grade 10 in 2020	Higher group	6	74.11	2.04	8.67	52.00	5.000	-2.085	.037*
	Lower group	6	65.21	10.11	4.33	26.00			
The 2nd semester of Grade 12 in 2022	Higher group	6	85.21	3.40	5.67	34.00	13.000	-.802	.423
	Lower group	6	86.50	3.35	7.33	44.00			

\* $p < .05$

To further analyze the impact of English writing anxiety on students' writing abilities, the study conducted the Mann-Whitney U Test. English writing anxiety was designated as the independent variable and the students' English writing ability evaluation scores in the first semester of Grade 10 and the first semester of Grade 12 were the

dependent variables (see Table 5).

Results showed that, in March 2020, the mean English writing anxiety score for the higher group was 74.11 with a standard deviation of 2.04, while the mean score for the lower group was 65.21 with a standard deviation of 10.11. The analysis also revealed a statistically significant difference in English writing abilities between the two groups based on their level of English writing anxiety ( $U=5.000, Z=-2.085, p=.037$ ).

After three years of genre writing activities, an English writing abilities evaluation was conducted at the first semester of Grade 12 in 2022. The mean English writing anxiety score for the higher group was 85.21 with a standard deviation of 3.40, and the mean score for the lower group was 85.50 with a standard deviation of 3.35. Interestingly, there was no statistically significant difference in English writing ability scores between the two groups based on their level of English writing anxiety ( $U=13.500, Z=-.802, p=.423$ ). This suggests that the lower group of English writing anxiety students experienced a greater increase in their English writing abilities evaluation results compared to their higher group counterparts, ultimately resulting in similar final results between the two groups.

To analyze the improvement of students' English writing abilities based on the degree of English writing anxiety (higher and lower), we conducted the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test after designating the students' English writing ability evaluation scores for each semester as a corresponding variable (see Table 6, 7).

**Table 6.** Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to Analyze the Improvement of Students' English Writing Abilities (English writing anxiety higher group)

		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 2nd semester of Grade 10	Negative ranks	5	3.70	18.50	-1.682	.093
	Positive Ranks	1	2.50	2.50		
	Ties	0				
The 2nd semester of Grade 10 - the 1st semester of Grade 11	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.226	.026*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 11 - the 2nd semester of Grade 11	Negative ranks	4	4.38	17.50	-1.472	.141
	Positive Ranks	2	1.75	3.50		
	Ties	0				
The 2nd semester of Grade 11 - the 1st semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 1st semester of Grade 11	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 11 - the 1st semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.207	.027*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 1st semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				

\* $p < 0.05$

As a result, in the case of the English writing anxiety higher group, it was confirmed that there was a significant difference in English writing ability evaluation scores between the first semester of Grade 10 and the second semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ). The English writing skills of this group improved in all sections during the genre writing period, with significant increases observed in the period from the second semester of Grade 10 to the first semester of Grade 11 ( $Z=-2.226, p=.026$ ), from the second semester of Grade 11 to the first semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ), from the first semester of Grade 10 to the first semester of Grade 11 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ), from



the first semester of Grade 11 to the first semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.207, p=.027$ ), and from the first semester of Grade 10 to the first semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ).

**Table 7.** Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to Analyze the Improvement of Students' English Writing Abilities (English writing anxiety lower group)

		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 2nd semester of Grade 10	Negative ranks	5	3.70	18.50	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	1	2.50	2.50		
	Ties	0				
The 2nd semester of Grade 10 - the 1st semester of Grade 11	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-1.572	.116
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 11 - the 2nd semester of Grade 11	Negative ranks	4	4.38	17.50	-1.826	.068
	Positive Ranks	2	1.75	3.50		
	Ties	0				
The 2nd semester of Grade 11 - the 1st semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 1st semester of Grade 11	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 11 - the 1st semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.207	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				
The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 1st semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
	Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
	Ties	0				

\* $p < 0.05$

Moreover, in the case of the English writing anxiety lower group, it was confirmed that there is a statistically significant difference between the first semester of Grade 10 and the second semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ). The English writing skills of this group also improved in all sections during the genre writing period, with significant increases observed in the period from the first semester of Grade 10 to the second semester of Grade 10 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ), from the second semester of Grade 11 to the first semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ), from the first semester of Grade 10 to the first semester of Grade 11 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ), from the first semester of Grade 11 to the first semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ), and from the first semester of Grade 10 to the first semester of Grade 12 ( $Z=-2.201, p=.028$ ). Based on these results, it was found that the English writing abilities of all students who participated in genre writing increased significantly regardless of the degree of English writing anxiety.

4.3 Measurements and Changes in Learning Motivation

**Table 8.** Mann-Whitney U Test for EBS-SPT According to the Degree of English Writing Anxiety (higher, lower)

		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
The 1st semester of Grade 10 in 2020	Higher group	6	44.55	2.19	3.67	22.00	1.000	-2.727	.006*
	Lower group	6	48.25	1.23	9.33	56.00			
The 2nd semester of Grade 12 in 2022	Higher group	6	56.27	2.91	4.17	25.00	4.000	-2.250	.024*
	Lower group	6	61.40	3.25	8.83	53.00			

\* $p < .05$

To examine the change in students' learning motivation based on their degree of English writing anxiety (higher or lower), the Mann-Whitney U Test was conducted with the degree of English writing anxiety as the independent variable and the learning motivation score of the EBS-SPT as the dependent variable (see Table 8).

The results of the learning motivation score, measured at the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020, showed that the mean of the English writing anxiety higher group was 44.55 with a standard deviation of 2.19, while the mean of the English writing anxiety lower group was 48.25 with a standard deviation of 1.23. The analysis indicated a statistically significant difference in the learning motivation score results between the two groups according to the degree of English writing anxiety ( $U=1.000$ ,  $Z=-2.727$ ,  $p=.006$ ).

After students participated in genre writing for three years, the results of the learning motivation score conducted at the second semester (December) of Grade 12 in 2022 were as follows. The mean of the English writing anxiety higher group was 56.27 with a standard deviation of 2.91, and the mean of the English writing anxiety lower group was 61.40 with a standard deviation of 3.25. It was confirmed that there was still a statistically significant difference in the result of the learning motivation score between the two groups according to the degree of English writing anxiety ( $U=4.000$ ,  $Z=-2.250$ ,  $p=.024$ ).

To compare whether there was a change in students' learning motivation according to the degree of English writing anxiety (higher and lower), the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was conducted by designating the learning motivation score of the EBS-SPT as the response variable at the first semester (March) of Grade 10 in 2020 and the second semester (December) of Grade 12 in 2022 (see Table 9).

**Table 9.** Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test to Compare Whether There Was a Change in Students' Learning Motivation According to the Degree of English Writing Anxiety(higher and lower)

			<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Ranks</i>	<i>Sum of Ranks</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
Higher group	The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 2nd semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
		Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
		Ties	0				
Lower group	The 1st semester of Grade 10 - the 2nd semester of Grade 12	Negative ranks	6	3.50	21.00	-2.201	.028*
		Positive Ranks	0	.00	.00		
		Ties	0				

\* $p < .05$

Consequently, in the case of the English writing anxiety higher group, it was confirmed that there was a statistically significant difference in the learning motivation score between the two time points from the first semester of Grade 10 to the second semester of Grade 12. Similarly, in the case of the English writing anxiety lower group, it was confirmed that there was a statistically significant difference in the learning motivation score between the two time points ( $Z=-2.201$ ,  $p=.028$ ). In other words, the learning motivation of all students who participated in genre writing has improved, regardless of their degree of English writing anxiety.

## 5. Discussion

The present three-year longitudinal study adds to the current literature by examining the influence of genre writing on the English writing abilities and learning motivation of Korean high school students, with a particular focus on their varying degrees of English writing anxiety. The study utilized various instruments, such as Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) and the ESL Composition Profile for Native Speaker Writers and Non-Native Speaker Writers (2013).

Significantly, the findings of this research corroborate earlier work by Daud et al. (2016) and Cho (2018) that suggests an alleviation of English writing anxiety through customized teaching methods. More importantly, this study revealed that students with higher initial anxiety levels witnessed a greater degree of alleviation, emphasizing the central role of affective factors in language acquisition. In terms of writing abilities, this study's findings align with those of Kirmizi & Kirmizi (2015) and Rabadi & Rabadi (2020), as it showed that students displayed marked improvement in English writing skills. Interestingly, students with lower anxiety levels made greater linguistic gains, underscoring the multifaceted relationship between affective factors and learning outcomes. Furthermore, the study

aligned with Kim and Kim (2015), revealing that genre writing not only influences linguistic capabilities but also enhances motivation across all levels of writing anxiety.

From a pedagogical standpoint, these findings advocate for a more individualized approach to teaching English writing. Educators should consider the unique anxiety levels of each student when designing learning activities, especially those involving genre writing. Moreover, the positive correlation between continuous genre-based writing exercises such as English newspaper making activities and linguistic outcomes suggests a fruitful avenue for teaching practice. These findings also indicate that such exercises could serve as motivational tools, thereby possibly altering the classroom dynamics in favor of more effective language learning.

However, the study is not without its limitations. Its focus on a specific geographic area and demographic could potentially limit the generalizability of the results. In addition, the narrow focus on genre writing implies that future research could benefit from exploring a more diversified range of writing activities.

In conclusion, this study contributes insights into how genre writing affects students with different levels of English writing anxiety, thereby filling a gap in the current literature. Future research in this area could explore the impact of genre writing activities on other aspects of language learning, such as speaking and listening skills, as well as the long-term impact of such activities on learners' overall language proficiency. Additionally, more research is needed to understand the specific mechanisms through which genre writing activities reduce anxiety and improve writing abilities. This understanding could inform the development of more effective writing interventions. Furthermore, future research could be expanded and performed for a wide range of learners to gain more effective and efficient insights into the factors related to learners' English writing abilities in a relaxed environment.

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