Exploring Student Perceptions of Source-based Writing Assessment in a Turkish EAP Context

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Abstract: As integrated writing tasks are becoming more common in assessment in EAP settings, there is need for more research to explore how different cultural groups perceive integrated writing assessment. With this in mind, this study aims to extrapolate students' perceptions of L2 English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in terms of their use of sources in an integrated writing assessment task and development as academic writers. It is necessary to comprehend students' perceptions towards source-based writing assessment tasks in order to set realistic goals and formulate effective instructional design for EAP programs. One hundred and thirteen undergraduate students completed the source-based assessment task, which required them to read texts and compose an argumentative essay by integrating relevant support from the texts. After the task, students were given an online questionnaire on their writing process. Student responses were analyzed quantitatively using frequency analysis and chi-square tests on SPSS across different self-reported proficiency levels. Analysis revealed highly positive perceptions and a significant relationship between reported proficiency, using sources as a repository for generating ideas, and modelling grammar and vocabulary. The study has implications for instruction and testing.

Türkiye'deki Akademik Amaçlı İngilizce Programlarında Öğrencilerin Kaynak Tabanlı Yazma Değerlendirmeleri Hakkındaki Algılarının İncelenmesi
Öz: Bütünleşik yazma görevlerinin akademik amaçlı İngilizce öğrenme ortamlarında değerlendirmede kullanımı yaygınlaştıkça, bu tür sınavları değişik kültür gruplarındaki öğrencilerin nasıl algıladığına yönelik daha fazla araştırmaya ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır. Bu çalışma, Akademik Amaçlı İngilizce programı (EAP) öğrencilerinin bütünleşik yazma değerlendirmelerinde ikinci dil olan İngilizce'de kaynak kullanım algılarını yeniden incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Daha gerçekçi hedefler belirlemek ve akademik amaçlı İngilizce öğretim programları tasarlamak için, öğrencilerin kaynak tabanlı yazma görevlerini nasıl algıladıklarını anlamak gereklidir. Yüz otuz bir öğrenci, verilen parçaları okumayı ve bunlardan gerekli uygun yerleri savlarını desteklemek için kullanıp eleştirisel deneme yazısı oluşturmalarını gerektiren kaynak tabanlı yazma görevini tamamlamıştır. Bu yazma sınavından sonra, öğrencilere yazma süreçlerine ilişkin çevrimiçi anket verilmiştir. Öğrencilerden elde edilen bilgi, öğrencilerce bildirilen farklı yeterlilik düzeylerinde SPSS kullanılarak frekans analizi ve ki-kare testleri yapılıp nicel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Yapılan analizde, öğrencilerin yüksek olumlu algılar ve bildirilen yeterlilik düzeyine göre değişen bir şekilde kaynak kullanımının fikir oluşturma, gramer ve kelime modelleme için havuz olarak kullanıldığı görülmüştür. Bu çalışma, öğretim programı ve ölçme değerlendirme alanlarında çıkarımlarda bulunmakta ve öneriler sunmaktadır.

1. Introduction

Integrating reading, listening and writing is becoming more common in assessing English for Academic Purposes (EAP) rather than testing these skills discreetly. Integrated tasks often include one or more reading and/or listening texts which would serve as source material and present ideas for a writing task. Many arguments have been put forth for the use of source-based writing assessment. One of the main justifications is grounded in authenticity since source-based writing reflects the construct of academic writing (Chapelle et al., 1997; Feak & Dobson, 1996; Gebril, 2009; Leki & Carson, 1997, 2008; Plakans, 2009; Rosenfeld et al., 2001; Weigle, 2004). As Weigle (2004) postulates, academic writing is rarely done in isolation. Students often read, discuss, and reflect critically on a topic rather than depend solely on their background knowledge before they write on a topic at college. It's argued that alignment of instruction, integrated writing assessment tasks and the real-world academic demands foster positive washback (Cumming et al., 2005, 2006) by fostering transfer of academic skills practiced during instruction to students' further academic life and boosting student motivation (Leki & Carson, 1997). Therefore, a great amount of research on academic writing advocates for the validity and use of source-based writing assessment (Gebril, 2009, 2010), which triggers academic conversation (Hyland, 2009), skill integration and positive washback (Weigle, 2004).

Source-based writing assessment is also gaining prominence in Turkish EAP contexts. Following large-scale assessment batteries, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) and university based assessment programs such as Georgia State Test of English Language Proficiency (GSTEP), several Turkish universities have adopted source-based assessment in their proficiency tests (e.g., English Proficiency Exam [EPE] of Middle East Technical University, and Test of Readiness for Academic English [TRACE] of Ozyegin University). However, reading-to-writing tasks often pose challenges to Turkish students like most L2 students. As indicated by Grabe and Zhang (2013): "Learning to write from textual sources (e.g., integrating complementary sources of information, interpreting conceptually difficulty information) is a challenging skill that even native-speaking students have to work hard to master" (p.10). Integrated writing assessment may pose challenges for L2 students who may not have practiced these skills in their prior educational background. This group of learners do not have much of a chance to learn and practice reading-to-writing prior to tertiary education (Eret & Gokmenoglu, 2010; Erkaya, 2009) as the education system in Turkey favours a test-oriented assessment, which is reported to have a negative effect on learning and instruction (Akpinar & Cakıldere, 2013; Karabulut, 2007; Ozmen, 2011; Sevimli, 2007). Thus, the purpose of our study is to explore L2 students' perceptions towards the use of integrated writing assessment tasks in Turkish tertiary EAP context.

Our study is grounded in an educational setting with Turkish participants coming from a shared cultural background. Prior research on integrated writing has not included this cultural group whose educational background entails test-oriented instruction. Understanding student perceptions of source-based writing would provide the researchers, who were also the teachers, with the opportunity to provide instructional support for future students enrolling in the EAP program. The results of the study conducted with this group may also offer insights for L2 learners in diverse higher education settings as most of the L2 learners go through similar processes. The results of the study will add to the growing literature on perceptions of learners towards integrated writing assessment in diverse educational settings and offer insights into instruction and assessment.

2. Review of Literature
2.1. Source-based writing assessment in development of academic writing skills

In the assessment of academic writing and integration of listening and reading is becoming commonplace because external texts provide support for content, act as a repository for language, improve validity and bring about positive washback to instruction and assessment. Research studies have highlighted that as a partial fulfilment of their courses, EAP students are required to conduct academic tasks, which play a critical role in academic success. These are commonly based on using external resources and integrating reading-writing skills (Hale et al., 1996; Rosenfeld et al., 2001). Similarly, according to Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1996) learners need to be a part of the academic literacy and academic conversation by responding to external sources and constructing their own responses based on source-based information. In fact, Leki and Carson (1997) highlighted that students should be held responsible for using relevant information from the given sources appropriately.

Another support put forth for source-based writing assessment is that text-based information provides test-takers with content and ideas, minimizing the impact of topic familiarity, creativity and life experiences (Weigle, 2004). In addition, writing an essay based on background knowledge on a topic which was unseen before is not regarded as authentic by a number of scholars (Cumming et al., 2000). By eliciting a discourse synthesis process through organizing, selecting, and connecting (Spivey, 1984), integrated tasks relate to the processes in the target language use situation and lead to more appropriate placement in academic writing (Plakans, 2009). Furthermore, source texts provide test-takers with rhetorical structures to model vocabulary and grammar (Leki & Carson, 1997). Consequently, educators and policy makers can interpret the scores generated by integrated writing assessment more effectively.

2.2. Challenges for L2 Writers in writing from sources

Lee et al. (2018) analysed the citation practices (including surface forms, writer's stance and rhetorical purposes) of L2 undergraduate students in 100 source-based research papers composed in a first-year writing course and reported that students who relied on simply retelling others' ideas and lacked critical evaluation of sources integrated information from sources at the surface level. Novice writers displayed a tendency to take a non-committal stance "…by merely acknowledging or distancing themselves from cited materials, as opposed to taking a strong positive or negative position, or directing their readers toward or away from particular propositions" (p. 10). Acknowledging the role of engaging with the sources in meaningful ways and using citations effectively in order to construct one's own argumentation in academic writing, the researchers suggest that rather than reducing citation practices to technical exercises by focusing on mechanics of citations, instruction should entail "the diversity of rhetorical roles citations play and meanings they express in composing persuasively sophisticated academic texts" (p. 11).

In their longitudinal study, Thompson et al. (2013) investigated thirteen first-year L2 students' source usages and authoring practices. Their study revealed that the use of sources was motivated by being able to comprehend the external texts and their relevance. Furthermore, student response indicated that source use was generally associated with providing support for the student writers' own opinions. Researchers concluded that despite the observed changes in students' selection and integration of source-based information in their own writing (such as establishing connections between source materials and one's own

writing, academic authorship, textual (re)construction, and differentiating between disciplinary expectations), one academic year was not enough for the students to improve their confidence in this sophisticated aspect of academic writing which requires continuous engagement. This finding concurs with previous research which reported that in order to enhance students' confidence in mastery of this challenging academic literacy skill, ongoing attention to citing practices is required in the higher education contexts (Mansourizadeh & Ahmad, 2011; Thompson et al., 2013; Wette, 2017, 2018). This study, therefore, surveys students' perceptions of source-based writing to determine challenges it posits for L2 writers and offers implications for instruction.

Some research studies have also concurred that cultural factors affect source-use (Curie, 1998; Gebril & Plakans, 2013; Pennycook, 1996). It was found that applying the concept of plagiarism uniformly worldwide posed a challenge, as the students coming from various educational backgrounds reportedly held rather dissimilar conceptions of plagiarism (Pennycook, 1996). It was stated that students in various educational settings have different views of plagiarism due to the fact that it was seen as a Western concept which could not be used in an identical way internationally. In addition, Currie's longitudinal case study (1998) of a non-native English speaker reported that owing to low scores and the challenging nature of the task, that is, difficult readings, ambiguous expectations, heavy workload, and discouraging teacher feedback, the writer adopted academic survival strategies including copying sentences and phrases from source texts which led to improved grades. Curie's point is important since second language writers may especially opt for copying which may be perceived as a safe survival strategy at college. Similarly, researchers who work with developing writers reported that plagiarism was conceptualized as an unintentional outcome in the process of developing competence in writing with sources (e.g., Flowerdew & Li, 2007; Keck, 2014; Pecorari, 2010) rather than a deliberate intention to deceive. Keck (2014) compared copying and paraphrasing strategies of 227 novice L1 and L2 writers and reported "copying and close paraphrasing play an important role in the development of academic writing skills" (p.18) in student writers who have less experience in source-based writing.

Cumming (2016) remarked that inappropriate integration of source-based information may stem from "lack of awareness of discourse, cultural or genre conventions or limited linguistic or rhetorical abilities rather than intentionally as deceit in respect to institutional policies or academic standards" (p. 48). Similarly, studies conducted with Turkish students (Eret & Gokmenoglu, 2010; Erkaya, 2009) reported that lack of knowledge about plagiarism, alongside other factors including difficulty with the target language, time limits, challenging nature of the assignment, and lack of academic skills, affect source use. These findings suggest that plagiarism should be considered as a problem of pedagogy and academic literacy rather than academic dishonesty. Therefore, exploring how different cultural groups perceive integrated writing assessment gains prominence, and there is a need for more research to extrapolate the perceptions of the students.

2.3. Students' Perceptions on Source-based Writing Assessment

Various researchers have noted the importance of surveying student perceptions and incorporating their feedback into revision of assessment tasks, items and test rubrics in order to promote positive washback (Brown, 1993; Sato & Ikeda, 2015). Several studies (e.g., Llosa & Malone, 2017; Malone & Montee, 2014; Stricker & Attali, 2010) have examined student perceptions of integrated tasks on the TOEFL internet-based test (TOEFL iBT)). Malone and Montee's study (2014) reported that generally students held positive perceptions towards

the TOEFL iBT test since an integrated writing task was considered a good measure of their writing. Also, students compared the tasks of the TOEFL iBT and their academic writing course, and they considered these tasks similar since university writing involves summarising and arguing for or against a position. Similarly, in a study comparing writing tasks on TOEFL iBT and university writing courses, Llosa and Malone (2017) concluded that half of the students perceived the quality and type of their exam writing as representative of the quality and type of their writing in their academic writing courses. In Plakans and Gebril's study (2012), most student writers indicated that using information from external sources acted as writing aids, and this provided several benefits including gaining ideas about the topic, shaping opinions on the topic, using sources for evidence and using sources as language support.

Investigating how students perceive integrated writing assessment is necessary to understand how these tasks challenge and support test-takers while they are composing. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the following research questions:

1. What are the students' beliefs about the source-based writing assessment task?
2. Do student perceptions change based on their self-reported English writing proficiency?
3. What are the students' beliefs about their citation skills in their writing?

Although results of the study may not be generalizable to other learner groups in diverse contexts, insights garnered from this study may shed light on features of academic writing in university settings and inform the validity and development of integrated writing assessment tasks.

3. Method

This study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative research design involving frequency distribution of questionnaire data and Chi-Square statistical tests. Kumar (2011) reiterates, "This design is best suited to studies aimed at finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue, by taking a cross-section of the population" (p. 107). In a cross-sectional study design the researchers identify the research focus, determine the study population, select a sample, contact respondents to find out the required data, and quantify the extent of variation in the focus of research. This design can provide an overall picture as it stands at the time of the investigation (Kumar, 2011).

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study are undergraduate freshman Turkish students enrolled in an EAP program of a private university. They had sufficient proficiency levels in English for their further academic study in higher education. The participating freshman students got a minimum grade of 65 on the institutional proficiency test or a mean average TOEFL iBT score of 80. Participants were in a 16-week undergraduate English course with four contact hours each week. This course catered for university students' academic and linguistic skills using 'sustainability' and 'business ethics' themes as content. Thus, the course was built on an integrated approach and used an integrated assessment task which required students to use information from readings in their writing. Course objectives aimed to improve academic writing and reading skills. To this end, course content entailed instruction in academic writing conventions such as summarizing, responding, paraphrasing, citing and referencing. Students were expected to compose an argumentative essay which asks them to develop an argument

and expand on main ideas and premises using source information from the articles read in the class.

In this study, 113 freshman students from various departments, such as hotel management, civil engineering and architecture, taking this undergraduate English course participated in the study on voluntary basis. They were recruited based on convenience sampling, and their consent was taken at the onset of the research study.

3.2. Data Collection

This study took place in an EAP program in a Turkish private university in spring semester of 2019-2020 academic year.

3.2.1. The Questionnaire

Researchers with extensive teaching experience in academic writing and questionnaires in second language acquisition research used a student questionnaire, adapted from Gebril and Plakans (2009), to investigate students' perceptions as well as their writing processes. We observed that when students complete a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, there is a clear proclivity towards the median option, that is, the neutral option and abstain from expressing their opinion. Thus, to determine general tendency and lead students to critical reflection and decision making, we changed the 5-point Likert scale into four points ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The grouping of the items into subsections was agreed on by both researchers. Then, the questionnaire was piloted with 64 students. Piloting provided insights for necessary modifications (i.e., deletions of some items, changes in wording, adjustment of time allocation), and the questionnaire was revised accordingly. Once this was complete, 26 statements about the writers' process were used. There were also 6 open-ended questions for qualitative analysis. The questionnaire entailed several sections surveying participants' backgrounds, demographic information, perceptions towards the reading-writing task and the composing process. More information about questionnaire item categories is given in Table 1. The questionnaire was given online on Google Forms after completing their source-based writing exam for an academic writing course, which required them to read texts and compose an argumentative essay by integrating relevant support from the reading texts.

Table 1.

Thematic categories of the questionnaire

Categories	Items
Source texts used for idea generation	3,10, 12, 13,17
Source texts used for modelling language	19, 20
Source text used for organisation	18
Integration Process	22, 24
Knowledge of academic citation in reading-to-writing task	21, 25, 26
General Reading-writing Process	1, 6, 7, 8,11
Writing Process: (outlining, composing, and editing)	4, 5, 9
Reading Process: (evaluation of lexical difficulty, evaluation of ideas)	16, 15

3.3. Data Analysis

In order to answer the research questions, the questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively. Initially, questionnaires were analyzed, and compared across the three proficiency levels. Questionnaire items were grouped to consider aspects of source use and the perceived impact of the integrated writing task upon each writer's performance. Questionnaire items that are related to perceived general reading-to-writing process and source-use are reported in the study. Questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively through descriptive statistics. Statistical associations between questionnaire items and the three different proficiency levels were examined by Chi-square tests.

4. Results
4.1. Student Perceptions towards Integrated Writing Assessment

To answer the research questions, frequency counts are used to explore student perceptions towards the integrated writing assessment across different levels of reported proficiency. Students were provided with four descriptors for proficiency ranging from low to advanced, and they indicated that that their level was medium (n = 44), high (n = 51) or advanced (n = 18); none of the participants stated they had a low level of proficiency. Additionally, Chi Square tests are used to explore how student reported proficiency levels associate to test-takers' use and comprehension of source-texts as well as reading-to-writing process. Cronbach's alpha yielded high reliability of questionnaire (α = .89).

Writers' perceptions of the impact of the integrated writing assessment task upon their English writing performance was surveyed by item 6 and 11. Response to item 8 indicated that the majority conceived this writing assessment task as authentic and a valid component of their academic study. Students' perceptions towards reading-to-write process was highly positive as seen in Table 2.

Table 2.

Student perception of general reading-to-writing process

Items	SD 1	D 2	A 3	SA 4	Mode	M	SD
6. Readings helped me to write better.	9	22	47	35	3	2.96	0.91
8. This seemed like a writing assignment that I would have in a university class.	13	19	60	21	3	2.79	0.88
11. I looked back at the readings often while I was writing	23	51	33	6	3	2.19	0.82

All levels agreed that reading sources helped them to write better, with medium (M = 2.98, SD = 0.86) and high (M = 3.03, SD = 0.92) levels having a higher mean in comparison to the advanced level (M = 2.67, SD = 97).

Items 3, 12, 13, and 17 addressed writers' use of sources to generate ideas. As Table 3 shows, writers indicated mostly positive perceptions towards the higher end of the scale.

Table 3.

Student perception of source texts used for idea generation

Items	SD 1	D 2	A 3	SA 4	Mode	M	SD
3. I have formed my own opinions on sustainability.	11	25	48	29	3	2.8	0.92
12. I looked back at the readings often while I was writing.	8	27	53	25	3	2.8	0.85
13. The readings helped me choose an opinion on the issue.	9	20	52	32	3	2.9	0.88
17. I used examples and ideas from the readings to support my argument in my essay.	5	16	57	35	3	3.1	0.79

Two items surveyed writers' perceived uses of source-based information to generate their ideas (item 3) and form opinions based on ideas they were exposed to in the readings (item 13). Advanced level writers expressed more agreement to using sources to generate their own ideas (item 3) (M = 3.3, SD = 0.92) than high (M = 2.8, SD = 0.89) and medium (M = 2.6, SD = 0.89) level writers. Furthermore, advanced level writers had a slightly lower mean (M = 2.6, SD = 1.08) when compared to high (M = 3.3, SD = 0.79) and medium (M = 3, SD = 0.88) levels with regard to forming their opinions based on the ideas presented in the sources. As illustrated in Table 3, most writers (mode = 3) across all levels agreed that readings helped them as a repository for ideas since they looked back at the texts as they compose their writing (item 12) and used source-based information to support their argument in their essay (item 17).

Findings of Chi-square tests marked significant relations between proficiency level and test-takers' responses about using source texts to generate ideas only for item 13 (χ^2 = 14.63, df = 6, p = 0.02). Potentially, the high scoring writers may have utilized source based ideas to form their own ideas and integrated textual borrowing more into their essays in a more personalised way. Other items for using sources in generating ideas were not differentiated in comparisons of different reported proficiency levels.

Table 4.

Summary of Chi Square Results

Items	χ^2	df	p
1	14.84	6	.02
2	10.10	6	.12
3	11.88	6	.07
4	13.48	6	.04
5	13.48	6	.04
6	4.16	6	.66
7	3.86	6	.70
8	3.62	6	.73
9	14.94	6	.02
10	3.13	6	.79
11	12.25	6	.06
12	2.69	6	.85
13	14.59	6	.02
14	21.93	6	.00

15	14.90	6	.02
16	20.36	6	.00
17	6.16	6	.40
18	5.34	6	.50
19	10.37	6	.11
20	12.44	6	.04
22	1.70	6	.94
23	13.38	6	.04
24	6.90	6	.33
25	9.27	6	.16

Two items, outlined in Table 5 below, queried writers' perceptions towards modelling grammar (20) and vocabulary (19) from sources.

Table 5.

Student Perception of source texts used for modelling language

Items	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	Mode	M	SD
19. I used vocabulary from the readings	15	37	47	14	3	2.5	0.87
20. The readings helped me use accurate and complex grammar structures.	19	50	34	10	2	2.3	0.85

Table 5 shows that 46% of the writers disagreed that they used vocabulary, and 61% disagreed (mode=2) that they used grammar structures from sources. When we analyzed writers' response across levels, we observed that advanced level writers held slightly higher positive perceptions towards using sources as vocabulary (M = 2.8, SD = 0.98) and grammar (M = 2.5, SD = 1.09) repositories than other levels (for item 19, medium level mean = 2.4, SD = 0.76; high level mean = 2.5, SD = 0.92 and for item 20 Medium Level mean = 2.13, SD = 0.79 and High level mean = 2.4, SD = 0.80) although not to the point of agreeing that texts helped them with their language skills.

While descriptive statistics indicate a general trend of negative perceptions towards use of source texts as a repository for grammar structures, the chi-square result marked a significant relation between proficiency and test-takers' agreement to item 20 regarding using source texts as language support (χ^2 = 12.44, df = 6, p = 0.04). Potentially, the more proficient writers may perceive that they had an advantage of modelling grammatical structures more into their essays.

Regarding use of vocabulary as language support, item 19, yielded a significant result between different proficiency levels (χ^2 = 12.08, df = 6, p = 0.05). This finding confirms Plakans and Gebril (2012) who compared different score levels and concluded that the use of source texts for language support differed between levels.

Table 6.
Student perception of using sources to model organisation

Item	SD 1	D 2	A 3	SA 4	Mode	M	SD
18. I used the readings to help organize my essay.	6	33	48	26	3	2.8	0.84

65.5% of the writers agreed with item 18 and expressed positive perceptions (mode=2.8) across all levels (Medium M=2,6, High M=3.0 and Advanced=2.8).

4.2. Source Use

Writers' response to questionnaire items 21 and 25 queried writers' perceived use of source-based information. Table 7 below displays students' perceptions towards their knowledge of academic citation in the integrated writing assessment task.

Table 7.
Student perception of knowledge of academic citation in the integrated writing assessment task

Items	SD 1	D 2	A 3	SA 4	Mode	M	SD
21. I used correct APA citation in my writing	6	28	43	36	3	2.96	0.89
22. I paraphrased ideas from the readings correctly.	4	9	19	29	3	3.2	0.93
23. I used only my own ideas in my writing, nothing from the reading.	28	18	10	5	1	1.86	0.97
24. I copied phrases and sentences directly from the reading into my essay without citing the source.	43	11	5	2	1	1.44	0.79
25. I have learned how to use reading sources in my writing in this class.	3	27	52	31	3	2.98	0.79

As illustrated in the table above, majority of the writers (mode=3) indicated that they have learned how to use reading sources and were able to use correct APA citation in their written performances. Student response overwhelmingly demonstrates their positive belief that they were able to paraphrase ideas effectively (item 22). Majority of students expressed that they made use of source-based information alongside their own ideas (item 23) and they have learnt how to use sources in their essays (item 25). Although student writers' reported source use indicated a highly positive trend in terms of using correct form of textual borrowing, this finding should be regarded cautiously since students may have the tendency to overrate their performance in relation to their citation practices included in their actual written performance.

5. Discussion

Confirming prior studies of source-based writing, writers at all levels considered external reading texts as resources for ideas (Plakans, 2008). Concurring with previous research (Weigle, 2004), student response revealed that they utilised readings in generating ideas while writing and made use of source-based information to develop their argument. In terms of using source texts to generate ideas, data analysis revealed significant relations between the proficiency level and test-takers' responses when source texts were perceived 'interesting'.

Based on findings it could be inferred that student writers with higher level of proficiency are more engaged with the reading texts while writing if they perceive the content appealing. This finding may have implications for instructional design since language competency influences knowledge transformation (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987) in forming their own ideas and integrating source-based information effectively into their essays.

Regarding the use of vocabulary as language support, findings indicated significance between different proficiency levels. This outcome confirms Plakans and Gebril (2012) who compared different score levels and concluded that the use of source texts for language support differed between levels. While, in contrast to findings reported by Leki and Carson (1997) student writers expressed negative perceptions regarding using sources for modelling grammar structures.

Despite documented challenges for L2 writers in writing from sources (e.g. Lee, et al., 2018; Thompson, Morton, & Storch, 2018) student response to items related to citing practices revealed that they believe they were able to paraphrase ideas and they learnt how to use sources in their writing. In addition, participants claimed that they are aware of what plagiarism is and they avoided it through effective citation practices. In this respect, self-reported knowledge of plagiarism disagrees with the previously reported research conducted in Turkish context (Eret & Gokmenoglu, 2010; Erkaya, 2009). Student perceptions related to their use of citation practises and knowledge about plagiarism should be regarded cautiously since their positive perceptions may not have been operationalized accurately in their writing.

Conclusion

The results of the study suggest that students hold highly positive perceptions towards integrated writing assessment. Alongside providing writers with experience in reading for writing, which is a prerequisite in most academic contexts, integrated writing tasks are considered to provide various uses of source texts such as generating ideas, modelling language, and modelling organisation. Student response indicated that writers across different levels did not perceive source texts as a repository for language (grammar) and organisational support. In line with previous research (Plakans & Gebril, 2012), we concluded that scores across different proficiency levels may not differentiate writers' ability to use external texts for organization as well as language support. On the other hand, the integrated writing task was able to elicit the process of learning more about the topic, gaining ideas, and choosing an opinion to support writer's own argument(s) in their essays. Data analysis of questionnaires indicated that writers with different proficiency levels were able to use source texts as language support.

This study contributes to the existing literature in integrated writing assessment by exploring the writers' perceptions towards source-based writing, and examining the interface between student perceptions and self-reported proficiency. The findings of the study reveal how students perceive the use of external reading texts in an EAP testing situation and bring about several implications for writing instruction and assessment. To begin with, this study provides valuable insights on Turkish students' opinions regarding their integration of sources into writing. This population has not been represented sufficiently in prior research studies. The study improves our understanding on how students perceive integrated writing assessment tasks. Gaining insights into students' perceptions will assist teachers and test designers regarding instruction in L2 reading/writing integration, designing and fine-tuning

curriculum and instruction in academic writing and coping with difficulties that integrated writing assessment may pose for L2 students who study EAP. Thus, it will provide insights into teaching for the local testing context because findings remark necessity of more textual analysis and language support as well as remedial teaching on how to cite, using citation conventions. Consequently, during course design and instruction more guidance in reading comprehension and textual analysis as well as language support can be provided. Secondly, findings reveal useful information in terms of the interplay between proficiency and use of sources.

However, it is necessary to acknowledge our limitations here. The trustworthiness of students' self-reports of their proficiency level in the questionnaire is a point of concern for us. To resolve this uncertainty, an independent measure of language proficiency could be used to differentiate between the proficiency levels. In addition, participants were freshman students who had received instruction at the university on academic writing through using sources and they took part in the study voluntarily. Although generalizability may posit concerns, findings may resonate with other student writers at comparable tertiary education contexts.

It is important to note that in this study test-takers were required to use information from long academic texts and the writers were familiar with the sources. Further research may investigate how comprehension impacts source use when test-takers are exposed to the sources for the first time. Also, the integrated task had a firm direction and instructions for the writers indicating clear expectations of their essays (i.e. When referring to the texts, use proper APA style of in-text citation (direct quotation [maximum 3] and paraphrasing [minimum 1]). However, impact of task instructions on source use was not within the scope of the present study and this may be addressed in further research.

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