

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ÇAĞ UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**AN EFL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME ON ADAPTING WRITING
RUBRICS TO EVALUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ESSAYS**

THESIS BY

Berna TORLAKLI

SUPERVISOR

Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

MASTER OF ARTS

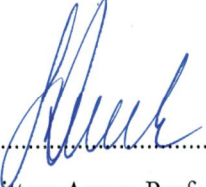
MERSİN, September 2014

REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ÇAĞ UNIVERSITY
DIRECTORSHIP OF THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

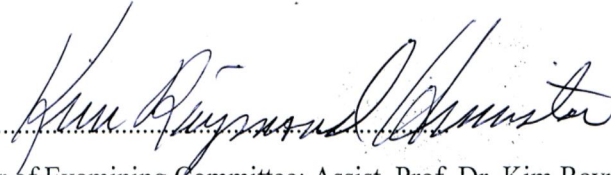
We certify that thesis under the title of “AN EFL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME ON ADAPTING WRITING RUBRICS TO EVALUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ ESSAYS” is satisfactory for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of English Language Teaching.


.....

Supervisor- Head of Examining Committee: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

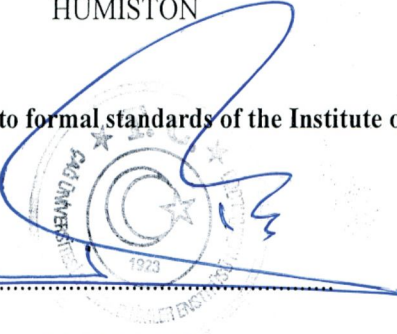

.....

Member of Examining Committee: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şehnaz ŞAHİNKARAKAŞ


.....

I. Reserved Member of Examining Committee: Assist. Prof. Dr. Kim Raymond
HUMISTON

I certify that this thesis conforms to formal standards of the Institute of Social Sciences.


.....

11 / 09 / 2014

Assist. Prof. Dr. Murat KOÇ
Director of Institute of Social Sciences

Note: The uncited usage of the reports, charts, figures and photographs in this thesis, whether original or quoted for mother sources is subject to the Law of Works of Arts and Thought. No: 5846.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank to my supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU, for all her help, support, valuable advice, encouragement and tolerance throughout the preparation of my thesis. Without her help, this study would not have been completed.

I also would like to thank my thesis committee members Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şehnaz ŞAHİNKARAKAŞ, Assist. Prof. Dr. Kim Raymond HUMISTON and Assist. Prof. Dr. Erol KAHRAMAN for all their support, guidance and suggestions throughout the process. It was a pleasure for me to work with them.

My special thanks go to the principal of Toros University Preparatory School, Oya ÖZVEREN GENÇ and the Academic Coordinator of Toros University Preparatory School, Dilek BATUR SEÇER for providing the necessary conditions for the conduction of my study. They have always been eager to help.

The data for the study were collected with the help of a writing teacher who is at the same time a testing coordinator, Sera GÜVENÇ, working at Toros University Preparatory School. I would also like to thank the teacher for her precious contribution to the study. I also owe a lot to my colleagues who showed interest for the study and shared their invaluable knowledge and experience with me.

I would like to express my gratitude to my beloved mother, Ayşe KÖSE and my mother in law, Fatma TORLAKLI for their tolerance and help.

I owe special thanks to my husband, Serdal TORLAKLI for his patience and support during the writing process of the thesis.

11.09.2014

Berna TORLAKLI

ÖZET
ÜNİVERSİTE ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN KOMPOZİSYOLARINI
DEĞERLENDİRMEK İÇİN KULLANILAN RUBRİĞİN GELİŞTİRİLMESİNE
DAYALI BİR ÖĞRETMEN GELİŞTİRME PROGRAMI

Berna TORLAKLI

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

Eylül 2014, 49 sayfa

Bu çalışma Toros Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu'nda kompozisyon yazımında ölçme aracı olarak kullanılan rubriğin geliştirilmesi çalışmasıdır. 6 haftadan oluşan bir çalıştay gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalıştay süresince karşılıklı fikir alışverişi ve tecrübe paylaşımı gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yazma derslerinde kullanılan öğrenci değerlendirme yöntemleri genel olarak gözden geçirildikten sonra Toros Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu öğrencilerinin kompozisyonlarının değerlendirilmesinde hangi yöntemlerin kullanıldığı ve TOEFL ve IELTS gibi uluslararası sınavlarda hangi yöntemlerin kullanıldığı değerlendirilmiştir. Bu bağlamda Toros Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu'nda kullanılan yazma dersi öğrenci değerlendirme ölçütü (rubrik) ayrıntılı bir şekilde değerlendirilmiş ve daha açık ve anlaşılır olmasını sağlamak amacıyla bazı yönlerinin geliştirilmesine karar verilmiştir. Hem içerik hem de formatta değişiklik yapılmıştır. Çalışmada niteliksel veriler kullanılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları aynı zamanda yazma dersi okutmanı olan 1 araştırmacı ve 1 diğer yazma dersi okutmanıdır. Her iki katılımcı da Toros Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu Sınav Koordinatörüdür.

AnahtarKelimeler:Profesyonel Gelişim, Öğretmen Gelişimi, Yazma Dersi Öğrenci Değerlendirme Yöntemleri, Yazma Dersi Öğrenci Değerlendirme Ölçütleri.

ABSTRACT

AN EFL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME ON ADAPTING WRITING RUBRICS TO EVALUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ESSAYS

Berna TORLAKLI

Master of Arts, Department of English Language Teaching

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hülya YUMRU

September 2014, 49 pages

This study aimed to adapt the writing rubric that is used to evaluate essays in Preparatory School at Toros University. A six-week workshop was conducted to achieve the aim of the study. During the workshops, ideas were exchanged and experience was shared. After the methods to evaluate writing papers were reviewed, the methods that are used at Toros University and in the international exams such as TOEFL and IELTS were examined. In this concern, the rubric that is in use in Preparatory School at Toros University was examined in detail and it was decided to make some changes in some parts to make it more clear and understandable. In this study, qualitative data was used. The participants of this study included the researcher of the study and a writing instructor who were at the same time the Testing Coordinators at Toros University Preparatory School.

Key words: Professional Development, Teacher Training, Assessment of Writing, Writing Rubrics.

ABBREVIATIONS

TEFL : Teaching English as a Foreign Language

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

ELT : English Language Teaching

TD : Teacher Development

TT : Teacher Training

TOEFL : Test of English as a Foreign Language

IELTS : International English Language Testing System

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. The Contrasting List of Training and Development.....	7
Table 2. The Contrasting List of Tests and Assessments.....	12

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER.....	I
APPROVAL PAGE.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	III
ÖZET.....	IV
ABSTRACT.....	V
ABBREVIATIONS.....	VI
LIST OF TABLES.....	VII
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VIII

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1.Introduction.....	1
1.2.Background of the Study.....	1
1.3.Statement of the Problem.....	2
1.4.Purpose of the Study.....	3
1.5.Significance of the Study.....	3

CHAPTER II

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	4
2.1.Introduction.....	4
2.2.Learning.....	4
2.3.Teacher Training and Teacher Development.....	5
2.4.Conducting a Teacher Training Programme.....	8
2.5.Professional Development and Teacher TrainingProgrammes.....	8
2.6.Testing and Assessment.....	11
2.7.Assessment of Writing.....	12

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY.....	14
3.1.Introduction.....	14
3.2.The Research Design.....	14
3.3.Participants.....	14
3.4.Data Collection Tools.....	15
3.5.Data Collection Procedure.....	15
3.6.Data Analysis.....	16

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....	17
4.1.Introduction.....	17
4.2.Findings from the Workshop Sessions.....	17

CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....	27
5.1. Introduction.....	27
5.2.Evaluation of the Findings Received from the Workshops.....	27
5.3.Limitations of the Study.....	28
5.4.Implications for English Language Teaching.....	28
5.5.Suggestions for Further Study.....	29
6. REFERENCIAS.....	30
7. APPENDICES.....	34
7.1.Appendix 1: The Current Rubric.....	34
7.2.Appendix 2: The Adapted Rubric.....	35
7.3.Appendix 3: The Checklist to Evaluate Qualitative Research.....	36

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

In Chapter I, background of the study, which is followed by the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study, is identified. The significance and the limitations of the study are also explained. They are followed by operational definitions in the last part of the Chapter.

1.2. Background of the Study

Professional development of teachers is one of the issues that is of great importance in the field of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). Teacher educators have always tried to find out how teachers learn to teach their knowledge of the subject, and to balance students' needs according to the curriculum. Teacher development is about teacher learning, learning how to learn, and putting their knowledge into practise for the benefit of their students. Teacher development has gained much importance in recent years with the demands for quality education. Teacher development is crucial for educational development in higher education (Dede, Ketelhut, Whitehouse, Breit, & McCloskey, 2009; Looi, Lim, & Chen, 2008; Yang & Liu, 2004). Hence, many universities and publishers provide teachers with various teacher-training programmes. Among these programmes, there are online courses, computer based training sessions, and workshops and so forth. As Richards and Farrell (2005) uttered, teachers are in need of regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills, and they will be able to do this by taking part in activities like:

- engaging in self-reflection and evaluation,
- developing specialized knowledge and skills about many aspects of teaching,
- expanding their knowledge base about research, theory and issues in teaching,
- taking on new roles and responsibilities, such as supervisor or mentor teacher, teacher-researcher, or materials writer,
- developing collaborative relationships with other teachers (Richards and Farrell, 2005, *p. vii*).

Teachers need to develop themselves not only in teaching but also in testing. One of the areas teachers have difficulties is evaluating students' performance in writing, as

there are many items, which cause complexity in the process of assessment. Teachers should be provided with some training programmes to be able to evaluate writing effectively.

The second important issue in the field of TEFL is assessment of writing for classroom evaluation, institutional purposes and high stake tests like TOEFL, IELTS and so forth. Assessment of writing can be used for formative purposes or summative purposes. Teachers usually play a role as a motivator, collaborator, critic, evaluator, and so forth and give different types of feedback. In the process of assessing writing, teachers of EFL face many problems. Regarding this issue, Şahinkarakaş (1993) states the following:

Teachers can reduce the problems to a minimum by learning enough about the arts of testing. For example, writing teachers can learn enough about the types of testing writing to apply the appropriate type to their situation (p. 7).

To assess student writings different assessment tools have been developed in EFL world. The analytic and holistic rubrics are the ones that are used widely. For Blaz (2000) “A rubric is the most commonly used method for scoring, evaluating, and grading performance assessment” (p. 23).

1.3. Statement of the Problem

At Toros University Preparatory School in 2014 spring term, a holistic rubric was used to assess about 904 student essays in the examinations and to evaluate about 1808 student essays assigned as homework. The discrepancy between graders was quite a lot at the beginning of the year. This was because the English language teachers were newly graduates and they were new at school. They had some difficulties in understanding the rubric, as they found the rubrics not clear enough (see Appendix 1). They also uttered that they could not decide what mark to give to the students, as they thought there was a mismatch between the explanations in the rubrics and what the student wrote. In the light of the context as presented above, it became clear that writing instructors needed a better understanding of how to assess students' writing papers and the writing rubric has to be reviewed and most likely to be adapted. Guarino, Santibanez, and Daley, (2006) suggest that an education system that aims to offer a quality education for all citizens should be able to rely on teachers who are well

prepared and competent (cited in Ravinder,2010). Milanowski, (2004) also asserts that quality of teaching makes a difference in students' learning (cited in Ravinder, 2010). Darling-Hammond (2005) also asserts that in order to improve quality of education, teachers should be prepared accordingly (cited in Ravinder, 2010). Therefore, quality teachers' role cannot be underestimated.

1.4. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to learn how to conduct a teacher-training programme on writing rubrics in a university context. The study also attempted to help both the researcher and the writing instructors to learn how to adapt the writing rubrics according to the needs of the students, the teachers and the institution.

Research Questions:

1. How can I conduct a teacher-training programme on assessment of writing?
2. How can we adapt the writing rubric so that it will be compatible with the needs of the students, the teachers and the institution?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study provides an insight into the importance of teacher learning on assessment of writing. The present research study sought to shed light on the following questions: how to conduct a teacher-training programme and how to create a writing assessment rubric. The intention was to learn how to conduct a teacher-training programme so as to solve the problem of assessing student essays. It was hoped that this study would be helpful in the process of assessment of writing at Toros University School of Languages and it would enable the teacher researchers to gain a better understanding on how to further improve teacher training programmes.

CHAPTER II

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Chapter II presents the theoretical basis of the study. It starts with the definition of learning and types of teacher development programmes, and then moves on to testing and assessment, writing assessment and ways to assess students' writing products.

2.2. Learning

Learning can be defined in various ways. Learning is defined differently when it is argued in a psychological or educational context. Smith, (1993) asserts that according to psychology, learning products include knowledge and intellectual skills, attitudes and emotional responses, and social behaviours (as cited in Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), 2008). Educational concept of learning is that learning is the process by which people acquire skills, knowledge, understanding and attribute. According to Atkins (1994), learning occurs most readily and effectively when:

...whole brain processing is engaged, and in particular when the process of learning moves from experience to reflection on experience so that a pattern or framework allows the learning to grasp the meaning of the learning in the mind's eye and finally learning moves on to a facility to use language, rules, laws, principles for accuracy and efficiency in thinking, doing and further learning (p.33).

Learning is also defined differently by various theories. Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD) (2012) suggests that "Cognitive learning theories view learning as a process of understanding and internalizing.... aspects of the world around us (p.23).

As it is widely known the term pedagogy refers to child learning and teaching. Knowles (1978) named adult learning as 'andragogy'. American academics Holmes and Cooper (2000) argue that education is a basic human process, and that the processes of children and adults are not radically different from each other. According to Holmes and Kerka (2002), the key elements in learning are the personal attributes and experience, not the age. Knowles (1980) defines adult learners as learners that expect knowledge to be applicable, and useful with the belief that when adults feel ownership

and engagement, they will learn more effectively. Therefore, adults need to be involved in the planning and direction of their own learning. Richards and Farrel (2005) suggest that there are four theories to explain how teachers learn best. One of these theories sees teacher learning as skill learning which refers to professionalizing on a set of different skills and competencies for example, questioning, giving explanations, presenting new language is fundamental for an effective teaching. The second theory sees teacher learning as a cognitive process. It suggests that teacher beliefs and thinking influence their performance. This theory encourages teachers to explore their own beliefs and thinking process via self-monitoring, journal writing, and analysis of critical incidents. The third theory sees teacher learning as personal construction. According to this theory, knowledge is internalized through reorganization and reconstruction and it promotes self-awareness and personal interpretation via activities such as journal writing and self-monitoring. The fourth theory sees teacher learning as reflective practice. Reflection is compiling data on one's teaching.

2.3. Teacher Training and Teacher Development

In the field of teacher education, as Richards & Farrel (2005a) suggests that the two main scopes that should be defined and understood clearly are teacher development and teacher training. Richards & Farrel (2005b) also puts forward that training is activities that are directly focused on teacher's current responsibilities and it is as its nature aimed at short-term and immediate targets. Training involves understanding basic concepts and applying them to the lessons. Experts generally decide the content of training. Training is generally presented in a standard training format. Some goals of a training perspective can be exemplified as learning how to use peer assessment in a lesson, using classroom aids and technological resources, learning the techniques for giving feedback on performance.

On the other hand, development as the name suggests is a long process. Lange (1990) states that TD refers to "a process of continual intellectual, experiential and attitudinal growth of teachers" (p.250). Life-long learning programmes can be given as examples for development. In life-long learning programmes the main focus is the development of the individual, which is a long process that never ends. Teacher development, Olson (1992) utters, aims at improving the capacity to realize one's own practice. Freeman (1989) observes that the components of teacher development are "attitudes, awareness

and decision making” (p. 27-45). Richards & Farrell (2005) define development as a general growth not focused on a specific job and it provides a long-term goal and ensures the growth of teachers’ perceptions on their own teaching. Teacher development benefits from documenting teaching practises, reflections on teaching practises, examining values and principles, conversation and collaboration with peers. In teacher development programmes teachers can learn a lot through self-observation and critical reflection. Professional development is defined by (TALIS,2008a) “as activities that develop an individual’s skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher” (p. 49). As the definition suggests there are many different forms of teacher development. The types of development vary from formal to informal teacher development programmes. There are courses, online courses, workshops, education conferences or seminars, observation visits to other schools, participation in a network of teachers, individual or collaborative research, mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, formal qualification programmes, and collaboration between schools or teachers across schools or within school programmes (TALIS, 2008b). In the last kind of programme teacher development is realized by coaching/mentoring, collaborative planning and teaching, and the sharing of good practices. According to Glattenhorn (1987), because teachers start to examine their own teaching, they gain professional development in their work life. Professional workshops and other formal meetings are some of the professional development experiences (Ganzer, 2000). As for Glattenhorn (1987), professional development is a growth that occurs through the professional cycle of a teacher and is much broader in scope than career development. Kedzior and Fifield (2004) pointed out that effective professional development is an integrated, logical and on-going classroom instruction and incorporates experiences that are consistent with teachers’ goals; aligned with standards, assessments, other reform initiatives, and supported by the best research evidence. Elmore (2002) suggests that professional development requires continuous focus in time and it should be supported by best practice.

Teachers are being trained to get ready for their professional career at faculties at universities. However, this training may not be enough to teach student teachers how to cope with all the challenges they will face throughout their career. As OECD’s comparative review on teachers noted:

Effective professional development is on-going, includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate time and follow-up support. Successful programmes involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students, and encourage the development of teachers' learning communities. There is growing interest in developing schools as learning organisations, and in ways for teachers to share their expertise and experience more systematically. (OECD, 2005, p.17)

Teacher development after graduation requires some necessary objectives (OECD, 1998), including exchanging information and cooperating, updating teachers' knowledge of a subject in the light of recent advances in the area, and enabling teachers to apply changes made to curricula or other aspects of teaching practice.

The articulation process ,..., helps the teacher understand how his/her students find meaning. It also gives teachers the chance to clarify their thoughts so as to reflect on the ways of change (Yumru, 2000, p.13).

The distinction between training and development is revealed as in the table below.

Table 1. The Contrasting List of Training and Development

TRAINING	DEVELOPMENT
1. Imposed from 'above'	1. Initiated by self
2. Pre-determined course structure	2. Structure determined through process
3. Not based on personal experience	3. Based on personal experience
4. Externally determined syllabus	4. Syllabus determined by participants
5. External evaluation	5. Self-evaluation
6. Input from 'experts'	6. Input from participants
7. Unthinking acceptance of information	7. Personal construction of knowledge
8. Cognitive, cerebral	8. Cognitive and affective, 'whole person'
9. Isolated	9. Collaborative
10. Stresses professional skills	10. Stresses personal development
11. Disempowers individual teacher	11. Empowers individual teacher

Based on articles by Bolitho (1986), Edge (1986), Freeman (1990), McGrath (1986), Tangalos (1991), Underhill (1987), Ur (1998, cited in Güven, 2005, p.78).

According to Ur (1998), the first six items accord with the ‘reflective’ versus ‘applied science/craft’ models. Items seven to ten are about the ‘person-centred’ approach. Item eleven refers that the teacher is an autonomous professional who is responsible for professional learning and practice (cited in Güven, 2005, p.78).

2.4. Conducting a Teacher Training Programme

Teacher training programmes starts with a need analysis. The need analysis should cover the needs of teachers and the institution together. The needs of teachers may be identified by informal discussions and/or conversations with teachers, or by formal questionnaires and similar other ways. When designing professional learning programmes, the researcher should consider teachers’ prior knowledge of curriculum and assessment. Timperley (2008a) puts forward that if teachers know a lot about curriculum but less about assessment, it will be revealed in the development programme. Teachers have different professional learning needs, which arise from different demands of their students.

Theory and practice also need to be integrated. In effective Professional development, theories of curriculum, effective teaching, and assessment are developed alongside their applications to practice. This integration allows teachers to use their theoretical understandings as the basis for making ongoing, principled decisions about practice (Timperley, 2008b, p.11).

2.5. Professional Development and Teacher Training Programmes

In this part, professional development is described via literature and the types and features of teacher training programmes of are introduced. Teacher training methods are explained within the paragraphs.

For Abdal-Haqq, (1995), a set of characteristics of effective professional development is as below:

Professional development

1. is ongoing.
2. includes training, practise, and feedback; opportunities for individual reflection and inquiry into practice; and coaching and other follow up procedures.
3. is school based and embedded in teacher work.
4. is collaborative, providing opportunities for teachers to interact with peers.
5. focuses on student learning, which should, in part, guide assessment of its effectiveness.
6. encourages and supports school-based and teacher initiatives.
7. is rooted in knowledge base for teaching.
8. incorporates constructivist approaches to teaching and learning.
9. recognizes teachers as professionals and adult learners.
10. provides adequate time and follow up support.
11. is accessible and inclusive. (p.1)

As cited in TALIS (2009) it can be important for teachers to exercise their own professional judgement by identifying and taking part in development activities which they feel are most beneficial to them. Richardson, (2003) published a list of characteristics of effective professional development, suggesting the components of such works:

state-wide, long term with follow-up; encourage collegiality; foster agreement among participants on goals and visions; have a supportive administration; have access to adequate funds for materials, outside speakers, substitute teachers, and so on; encourage and develop agreement among participants; acknowledge participants existing beliefs and practices; and make use of outside facilitator/staff developer (p. 402).

Ball, (1996) utters that the most effective professional development model is thought to involve follow up activities, usually in the form of long term support, coaching in teachers' classrooms, or ongoing interactions with colleagues.

Opportunities for active learning and content specific strategies for staff development refer to a focus on teacher application of learned materials. Overall, coherence refers to the staff development program perceived as an integrated whole and development of activities building upon each other in a consecutive fashion. Marzano (2003) warned,

however, that standardized staff development activities, which do not allow for effective application, would be ineffective in changing teacher behaviour.

Hodkinson&Hodkinson, (2004) state that teachers are the ones who most effectively organize and run successful teacher learning communities but it requires institutional support such as time for collaboration and adequate physical space.

Richards & Farrell, (2005), list the benefits of workshops as follows:

- Workshops can provide input from experts
- Workshops offer teacher practical classroom applications.
- Workshops can raise teachers' motivation.
- Workshops develop collegiality.
- Workshops can support innovations.
- Workshops are short term.
- Workshops are flexible in organization (p.27).

Self-monitoring can be defined as a systematic approach to observation, evaluation, and management of teacher's own behaviour (Armstrong & Frith, 1984; Koziol& Burns, 1985). The most commonly used tools for self-monitoring are lesson reports, audio recording a lesson, and video recording a lesson (Blaz, 2001). According to Lieberman and Grolnick (1998), "teacher support groups have an important role in helping teachers to validate teacher knowledge and inquiry" (p. 723). Birchak, Connor, Crowford, , Kahn, Kaser, Turner, & Short (1998) highlight the point that support groups should not become an activity to discuss administrative, personnel, or school problems as a support group is voluntary and does not require all teachers to attend. Teacher support groups are formed in various ways (Birchak et al., 1998; Kirk & Walter, 1981) some of which are topic-based groups, school based groups, job alike groups, and research groups. Keeping a teacher journal enables an "opportunity for teachers to use the process of writing to describe and explore their own teaching practises" (Ho& Richards, 1993, p.8). "Peer observation refers to a teacher or other observer closely watching and monitoring a language lesson in order to gain an understanding of some aspect of teaching, learning, or classroom interaction" (Richards, C.J. & Farrell, T.S., 2005, p. 85). According to Evans (1995), a teacher portfolio is a collection of teacher works including professional thoughts, goals, and experiences and provides the aim, identity, progress of the teacher. Robbins (1991), describes peer coaching as a process when two or more teachers reflect on each other's work, share ideas, solve problems,

and develop. “Team teaching (sometimes called pair teaching) is a process in which two or more teachers share the responsibility for teaching a class” (Richards, C.J. & Farrell, T.S., p. 159). As Richards, & Farrell, (2005), suggest action research occurs in teacher’s own classroom and has a lot activity to find out the problem, carry out ways to solve the problem, and observe the results.

2.6. Testing and Assessment

For the teachers of English, testing and assessment are as important as teaching the subject. Clapham, (2000a) suggests that that for some teachers of English, one of the two vitally important aspects is teaching English and the other one is testing and assessment. The terms testing and assessment have some differences. According to Clapham, (2000b),

some applied linguists use the term ‘testing’ to apply to the construction and administration of formal or standardized tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and they use the term assessment to refer to more informal methods(p. 150).

She adds that however, in ELT literature the term assessment has been used as a general umbrella term to cover all methods of testing and assessment nowadays. So now it’s a wider and more acceptable term. However, in the past the perspective was a little different. Valetta (1994) asserts “tests are large-scale proficiency tests and assessments are school-based tests” (as cited in Clapham, 2000, p.151).

We can define a tester as a person who concerns herself with requirements of validity and reliability, and assessors as the one who is not consciously guided by such constraints. In addition to this, we cannot see any differences between them (Clapham, 2000c). Language assessment plays a pivotal role in applied linguistics, operationalizing its theories and supplying its researchers with data for their analysis of language knowledge or use (Clapham, 2000d). Wiggins (1994) raised excellent questions about assessment that is designed to improve performance not just audit it. He asked, for example,

what kinds of challenges would be of most value to the students (and to the teachers concerning the abilities of their students)? How will the results of this test be used to help students know their strengths and weaknesses on essential tasks? What kind of evaluating will provide the best kinds of

incentives and aims, thus enabling students to raise their own standards? (as cited in Hancock, 2006, p. 8)

Hancock, (2006) illustrates the differences between testing and assessment as in the table below:

Table 2: The Contrasting List of Tests and Assessments

TESTS	ASSESSMENTS
1. Usually announced so students can prepare for them	1.usually unannounced because the purpose is to informally check on student progress
2. Are often achievement checks on a unit of instruction (e.g., a chapter test, a semester exam)	2.Are typically designed to check student progress informally(purpose is to see what students need to have re-taught or need to practice more)
3. Are mainly designed to result in a grade or test score	3. Many times – informal and de-emphasize the grade or test score
4. Occur at a single time and place	4. Are often ongoing and continuous
5. Typical test item formats include multiple choice, correct answers, and other ways of evaluating students	5. May include the use of rubrics easily scored, sometimes discrete
6. Often not contextualized	6. Usually contextualized

2.7. Assessment of Writing

Assessment of writing is not an easy and quick process as it is not easy to produce writing. There are two main components of writing which are form and content. Hillegas (1912), states, “Merit in English writing is complex. Judges are influenced both by form and by content. Such factors of form as spelling, punctuation, capitalization and the like are subject to definite rules. Form is, therefore, more easily measured than content”. One of the ways to integrate teaching writing and assessment of writing is scoring rubrics. Rubric is a kind of assessment tool that includes a set of criteria. This set of criteria provides teacher with the rules to be able to grade the paper.As Hancock (2006b) points out

...rubrics, especially those developed in cooperatively between the instructor and the students, are a means of sharing the power invested in the instructor with the students (p. 10).

Blaz (2001) suggests that there are two kinds of rubrics used in the field of assessment of writing: holistic rubric and analytical rubric. She points out that holistic rubric assess the overall performance of the writer and scores it qualitatively. She also describes analytical rubric as an assessment tool that evaluates the writing in different levels of behaviour expected, assigning each point value, and grade quantitatively.

The importance and the need of a teacher training programme on rubrics is clearly explained by Brown and Hudson (1998), “tasks are often not tried out to see whether they produce the desired linguistic information; marking criteria are not investigated to see whether they work; and raters are often not trained to give consistent marks” (as cited in Clapham, 2000, p. 150).

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology of this study is presented. First, the description of the research design, the participants of the study and data collection tools of the study are presented. Following that, the data collection procedure is described in detail.

3.2. The Research Design

The intention of this study was to learn how to conduct a teacher-training programme on preparing rubrics in a university context. Regarding this, this study was assumed to contribute to the assessment practices at Toros University and raise EFL writing teachers' awareness on the field of assessment in writing. Accordingly, this study is based on qualitative data. Discussions, workshop sessions and presentations were conducted to contribute to the qualitative data provided in the study. In addition, the researcher kept a diary throughout the process so as to record the findings based on her observations.

3.3. Participants

The participants of this study were two EFL writing instructors at Toros University, Mersin, Turkey. One of these instructors was the teacher-researcher who was also involved in the study actively. The other participant teacher was a writing instructor of the pre intermediate level students at Toros University School of Foreign Languages. Both the researcher and the teacher had 5 years of teaching experience. The ages of the participants in this study were 29. Participants have been teaching writing in the institute for about two-three years and they have also been actively involved in the assessment of student writing process. The researcher was a member of Testing Office of in the institute and selected the participant among the testing office members. The main aim of the selection of testing office coordinator as a participant was the belief that a testing office member would contribute better to the study in the process of preparing a rubric as she was directly involved in the exam preparation and assessment processes of the institute.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

This study was carried out over a span of 6 weeks and qualitative research design was adopted. To provide data for the qualitative study, 6 regular workshop sessions were made with the writing instructor and the researcher. Each week, one session was conducted. Sample writing rubrics of IELTS and TOEFL examinations, samples of holistic and analytical rubrics and the current writing rubric used in the institution at that moment were all analysed in the workshop sessions (see Appendix 1). After all the workshop sessions were completed, the current rubric was developed in the light of the reflections arrived at 6-week workshop sessions (see Appendix 2).

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

As a first step, the researcher asked for a permission from the university administration to conduct the study. Following the approval from the administration, the participant was informed about the procedure. Each week, one workshop session was conducted with the participants. In week 1, the title of the session was “The teachers’ perception toward quality essay writing.” The aim of this workshop was to have an idea of the perceptions of writing teachers toward quality essay writing. Regarding this aim, the teachers described what a quality essay was. At the end of the session, the teachers gathered the descriptions and discussed them in detail. Out of the descriptions gathered, they identified three common features of quality-writing essays. In week 2, the title of the session was “The ways to assess students’ writing performance.” The aim of the session was to articulate different ways to assess student writings. In this session, the teachers discussed assessment types. Additionally, the teachers discussed the most common assessment types that they use in their own classrooms. In week 3, the title of the session was “The practicability of holistic and analytical rubrics.” The aim of the session was to decide whether the holistic or analytical rubric was more practical to use as an assessment tool. During the session, the teachers listed the items for each type of rubric and they put forward their opinions about the practicability of each rubric. In week 4, the title of the session was “The strengths and weaknesses of the current rubric.” The aim of the session was to discuss and find out the strengths and the weaknesses of the current rubric that was in use at the institution. In week 5, the title of the session was “Creation of a new rubric/ Development of the current rubric according to teacher suggestions.” The teachers worked on the findings gained in week 4 and

decided to make some crucial changes on the current rubric to develop it in terms of content and form. During the development process of the new rubric, student needs, teacher observations in their own classes and the curriculum were all taken into account. In week 6, the title of the session was “Grading sample essays of the students both with the current rubric and the newly developed rubric”. In the session, two different graders graded the same student essay papers and they gave the final marks after the third grading concerning the discrepancy between the grades.

3.6. Data Analysis

As this study is based on qualitative research design, the process of evaluating the findings was not an easy process. Guba & Lincoln (1995) share the same opinion that findings are not facts per se, but are created via the interaction between the participant, the data, the researcher and the evaluator. As a response to the evaluation problem of qualitative data Horsburgh (2002) suggests that:

Application of quantitative conceptualizations of reliability and validity is inappropriate in evaluation of qualitative research, as the purpose and focus of the paradigms are not directly comparable....It is, however, equally inappropriate to assume that criteria which are suitable for evaluation of qualitative research are unachievable or unavailable (p. 312).

To evaluate the qualitative findings of the data the researcher benefited from the criterion developed by the Qualitative Research and Health Working Group LSTM (Helen Bromley, Grindl Dockery, Carrie Fenton, BerlhaNhlema, Helen Smith, Rachel Tolhurst, Sally Theobald) in 2002 (see Appendix 3).

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The aim of the study was to learn how to conduct a teacher-training programme on preparing a writing rubric in a university context. The findings were obtained from six-week workshop sessions. Each of the weekly sessions lasted for about 60 minutes. The whole procedure took 6 weeks in total. During the sessions, the researcher kept a diary to keep the notes in the sessions. The researcher and the teacher discussed the writing assessment problems occurred at the institute, articulated their knowledge on assessment of writing, shared ideas, tried to improve their knowledge with the help of the materials used in sessions, and produced solutions to the problems set. All the findings were recorded in the researcher diary and interpreted by the researcher while going through the checklist.

4.2. Findings from Workshop Sessions

Weekly workshop sessions were conducted in order to provide qualitative data for the study. The general aim of these workshops was to help the teachers to articulate their ideas on how to assess writing and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the current rubric, which was in use in the institution. The workshops provided the teachers with an atmosphere within which they had the chance to exchange their ideas and experiences in the field of writing assessment. Furthermore, they made further suggestions that enriched the content of the study. The workshops were conducted in six weeks. Each workshop had a title and a specific topic to discuss in an hour.

In assessment of writing, the perception of writing teachers plays a crucial role. Each teacher has a different point of view on assessment and this study aimed at harmonizing these different perceptions. In week 1, the first workshop session was conducted with one testing coordinator who was also a writing instructor at Toros University. In the workshop, the teacher and the researcher put forward their own perceptions on quality writing essay. Accordingly, each teacher gave a personal description.

Teacher:

A quality writing essay is the careful and creative combination of elements of content and form such as relevancy, coherence, paragraph organization, thesis development, lexis and grammar.

Researcher:

A quality writing essay is a craft created by the writer regarding the elements of creativity, unity and coherence.

As pointed out in the above quotations, writing an essay is not just writing down the words on the paper in a standard format. It is a craft that needs creativity, careful planning and organization. Therefore, the key elements in an essay structure are inevitable parts of a quality-writing essay. At the end of the session, descriptions collected from the writing teacher and the researcher were discussed in detail and they suggested three common features that should be in a quality-writing essay. These features were identified as creativity, coherence and organization. This workshop session enabled the researcher to set clear-cut features on quality writing assessment and revise the key components of the quality-essay.

Due to its nature, writing involves complicated mental processes. These mental processes impose difficulties both for the students and the teachers. Especially, the teachers have difficulty in assessing student writing since writing is not an objective test assessed easily with standard criteria. According to Grant-Davie (1987), the teachers should act like facilitators rather than examiners in the process of assessment of writing. Grant-Davie and Shapiro (1987) also suggested teachers need to be aware of the rhetorical act of the comments and students' need to read their mistakes. This second workshop intended to discuss the difficulties in assessment of writing and the ways to assess student-writing performance. First, the researcher presented the ways to assess the student writing performance with the help of the slides. Then, the researcher and the teacher articulated their own methods of assessment that they used in their own classes. Both the teacher and the researcher asserted that they used rubrics in their classes. Rubrics were also used in the whole process of writing assessment throughout an academic year at Toros University School of Foreign Languages. The teacher also put forward that she made use of self-assessment in her class and she claimed that using self-assessment improves students' confidence and observed positive student attitude.

Teacher:

I use rubrics in my class in the assessment process. I also encourage my students to assess themselves as I believe self-assessment helps the students monitor and take responsibility of their own learning process.

Researcher:

I observed that my students benefited from peer assessment during the instruction. I personally support the idea that students learn better from their peers' mistakes. They also feel more secure and confident when they are interacting with their peers because being able to correct their peers' mistakes improve their level of confidence. Of course, I use rubrics in the examination process.

The researcher and the teacher highlighted the fact that although there is one standard rubric that is used as an assessment tool in the examinations, a variety of assessment methods are needed in the process of teaching writing. This overall session helped the researcher gain an understanding of different methods used in the classrooms. Additionally, the researcher benefited from Prezi, a kind of presentation tool instead of traditional power point slides. Therefore, she improved her technological skills in her professional life. Gunelius (2011), describes Prezi as “Prezi is a free and easy to use presentation tool that enables you to create visually engaging and unique presentations with little technical knowledge”. One drawback of the session was the inadequate number of the teachers in the workshop sessions. The researchers would have been benefited more from the session if there had been more writing teachers to articulate their own experiences in their classes and their own methods of assessment.

The aim of the session in week 3 was to decide whether the holistic or analytical rubric was more practical to use as an assessment tool in our local context. The researcher and the participant teacher analysed the differences between holistic and analytical rubrics using some samples of holistic and analytical rubrics. The teacher and the researcher worked on each item of the rubrics in detail.

Teacher:

In holistic rubric, there are no clear-cut categories to make the assessment reliable. In analytical rubric, on the other hand, categories and tasks are given clearly and it is easier and more reliable to assess.

Researcher:

In holistic rubric, the assessment is summative. The focus is on the overall quality, proficiency or understanding of a specific content or skills. Therefore, in a university context, especially in preparatory schools, analytical rubrics are more practical and detailed. They are more reliable.

After a careful analysis of the rubrics, the teacher and the researcher came to the conclusion that analytical rubrics are more reliable to use as an assessment tool in the grading process. They both highlighted the clear nature of the categories in the analytical rubric, which helped the teacher understand the tasks better and score the papers correctly. They also highlighted the disadvantage of holistic rubrics by claiming that holistic rubrics lack details in terms of content and organisation. At the end of the session, the researcher set her mind not to change the existing rubric, which is also analytical as she thought advantages of the analytical rubric outweighs the advantages of the holistic rubrics.

One of the most significant features of an efficient rubric is clarity. As it is the teacher who uses the writing rubrics in the grading process, the writing teachers need to understand the tasks and the contents of the rubrics. The aim of the fourth session was to discuss and identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the current rubric. Regarding this, the researcher and the teacher reported several strengths and weaknesses:

Teacher:

One of the strengths of the current rubric is that there are adequate numbers of categories on the rubric that are separated from one another by a specific content. In addition, the current rubric includes both the content and organisation. In general perspective, the combination of content and organisation is very important in a rubric as the content helps analysing the lexical items as well as relevance and coherence

while organization helps analysing each paragraph in detail in a more concrete way.

Researcher:

Generally, the current rubric enables graders to assess student writings effectively although there are some parts to be developed. One of the strengths of the rubric is that there is no grade '0' on the rubric which is motivating for the students. In contrast, some of the explanations are confusing for the teachers to understand.

The teacher and the researcher agreed on the necessity to omit the word phrase 'totally original' from the relevancy part, as they believed the word 'original' is not related to relevancy. Moreover, they agreed with the fact that each student writing paper is unique and original by their nature.

Teacher:

I find the word 'original' confusing in the relevancy part. It is not easy to define what originality is.

Researcher:

Originality cannot be graded easily as it is very abstract and each student writing is original and unique.

The researcher felt the need to replace 'Thesis Development' part with 'Cohesion' part, which is in the organization part on the rubric.

Researcher:

As the Thesis development part is directly related to organization of the essay, and cohesion is directly related to the content part, we need to replace them with one another to avoid confusion.

The writing teacher pointed out a confusion led by the wording of the 'Thesis Development' part in the rubric.

Researcher:

There is also confusion in the wording of 'Thesis Development' as some teachers perceive it as a single thesis statement in the introduction paragraph while some others perceive it as a whole development in each paragraph. This situation leads to discrepancies among graders. A few

ambiguous tasks such as the words 'very limited' and 'very basic' in the lexis range part on the rubric can be listed as the weaknesses of the current rubric. As these two words are very close in meaning, it leads to ambiguity in meaning.

Teacher:

Also the word 'good' is not objective enough so it needs to be changed with a clearer and more objective word.

As highlighted in the above quotations, both the teacher and the researcher realised a need to develop some of the wordings used in the current rubric for a better understanding.

In 'Grammar' part, the teacher and the researcher identified two main problems. One of them was related to the wording and the other was related to the meaning that those words carried. The following extracts reflect the issues felt by the teacher and the researcher:

Teacher:

The word 'attempt' used in grammar part on the rubric causes ambiguity as it is difficult to grasp the level of attempt of the student on the paper. This wording is so abstract to grade.

Researcher:

Another thing to consider is that the explanations in two of the categories in the grammar part almost the same and very complex. Thus, there should be another unique explanation for one of these categories. Additionally, the students who memorize and write should get the lowest mark. To do this, we need to change a part.

The researcher and the teacher shared the same idea that the word 'Thesis Statement' should be omitted from the explanations in the introduction part. They found it confusing, as there were some teachers who grade thesis sentence using the criteria in 'Content' part. Unless the word phrase 'Thesis Sentence' is omitted from the 'Introduction' part, the teachers would be grading it twice. That would naturally cause confusion among the teachers.

Teacher:

Some teachers are already grading 'Thesis Sentence' in the 'Content' part. Therefore, it should be omitted from the 'Introduction' part.

Researcher:

As we may change the word phrase 'Thesis development' with 'Thesis Sentence', there is no need to have thesis statement in the introduction part. By this way only the introduction sentences will be graded in this part.

The teacher and the researcher did not find any necessity to make any changes on the body paragraphs as they both found it adequate.

Teacher:

I think we should go on with the existing explanation in this part as they are enough.

Researcher:

I believe that this part does not cause any confusion among graders. Therefore, no change is necessary.

Both the researcher and the teacher agreed that this part should not be included in the 'Organization' but in the 'Content' part.

Teacher:

Cohesion part should definitely be included in the 'Content' part. When we think of the word 'Cohesion' in general terms, we understand that it is something about the content, namely, the meaning.

Researcher:

Putting 'Cohesion' under the category of Organization is unnecessary since the term cohesion is related with the content as it includes various elements of content such as signal words, and linking words.

Another point to consider in this part was the lack of wording. Thus, the researcher and the teacher felt the need to improve the wording of this part.

Teacher:

The term 'Cohesion' is very comprehensive. Thus, we need to include more explanations and items in this part to ensure clarity.

Researcher:

The components of Cohesion are not only limited to linking and signal words. There are also some other components to be added in this part.

Finally, the researcher made slight changes in this part. After a discussion made with the teacher, they found the ‘Conclusion’ part satisfactory.

Researcher:

In one of the categories in this part, it says that ‘summarizes the main points’. However, how well the summary was done is not stated here. Thus, we need to find a wording for this part.

In the light of the findings in Week IV, the researcher and the teacher decided to develop the current rubric, which was in use in the institution. They did not suggest a complete change on the rubric since there were only a few areas to develop on the rubric. In week 5, first of all the researcher and the teacher went through the common problems that were identified in the previous session and they made necessary changes to settle those problems related to the current rubric. The current rubric had two main parts: Content and Organisation. Items on the current rubric ranged from Column 1 to Column 5. Column 1 had the highest score while column 5 had the lowest score. In the content part, column 1 had the score of 10, column 5 had the score of 2. In the organisation part, column 1 had the score of 5 and column 5 had the score of 1 (see Appendix 1 and 2).

Changes made on the contents part of the rubric in the institution: In the light of the findings obtained from the workshop sessions, some necessary changes were made on the contents part of the rubric.

1. In relevancy part, the word ‘original’ was omitted (see Appendix 2).
2. The word phrase ‘thesis development’ was changed with ‘thesis sentence’ and replaced with cohesion part (see Appendix 2).
3. Since the wordings of ‘very limited and ‘very basic’ were close in meaning, the wording of ‘very basic’ was changed into ‘only a few isolated words’. (see Appendix 2).
4. The word ‘attempt’ was omitted from the grammar part and the confusion was prevented. (see columns 3, 4 and 5 in Appendix 2) Two categories in this part were almost the same in content so the wording of one of these

categories were changed into ‘ frequent grammatical inaccuracies’ and the category with the lowest score was changed into ‘ no sentence forms except for memorised phrases’ (see column 5 in Appendix 2).

Changes on the Organisation part of the rubric in the institution: The findings obtained from the workshop sessions also led some necessary changes on the organisation part of the rubric.

‘The thesis statement’ was removed from the categories in the introduction part and the explanations in the categories were redesigned according to how general to specific the introduction was written (see Appendix B)

1. In the ‘Conclusion’ part, the word ‘sufficiently’ was added to one of the categories (column 2 in Appendix B).
2. From the ‘Organisation’ part, cohesion was taken out and thesis statement was included instead (see appendix B).

In workshop 6, two different graders graded student essay papers. Having identified discrepancies between these two graders, a final grading was arrived at by a final grader. There were mainly three questions that were the focus of this session:

Question 1: Have the problems identified in previous session in week 4 disappeared as a result of the changes made on the current rubric?

Question 2: What is the discrepancy level between the graders when the newly developed rubric is used?

Question 3: Are there any changes between the scores of student writings when graded by two rubrics (current and adapted ones)? If yes, at which level?

So as to find an answer to question 1, the grader feedbacks were analysed. As a result of this analysis, the graders reported that the newly developed rubric was better than the current one. According to the graders, the adapted rubric was rich in content.

To respond to question 2, two different teachers graded five student writing papers twice with the adapted rubric. The grades given by two different teachers were analysed. When the student writings were graded with the adapted rubric by two different teachers, the discrepancy level was as follows: Student A got 52 from grader 1, and got 50 from grader 2. Student B got 34 from grader 1, and got 28 from grader 2. Student C got 51 from grader 1, and got 50 from grader 2. Student D got 32 from grader

1, and got 34 from grader 2. Student E got 49 from grader 1, and got 45 from grader 2. This analysis shows that the discrepancy level between grader 1 and grader 2 is equal or less than three except for only one student (Student B) whose discrepancy is six. As three is the accepted number for discrepancy level at Toros University Preparatory School, the result indicates that teachers have the same understanding of the rubric. Teachers grade the essays fairly.

In order to find an answer to question 3, the final score of student writing papers were analysed. The final score was obtained by calculating the average of the grades given by grader 1 and 2 unless the discrepancy was equal or below 6. If the discrepancy was more than 6, that meant the paper needed to be read again. The findings revealed that there was a slight difference between the scores of the students. Student A got 53.5 with the current rubric and got 51 with the adapted rubric. Student B got 31 with both rubrics. Student C got 51 with the current rubric and got 50.5 with the adapted rubric. Student D got 34 with the current rubric and got 33 with the adapted rubric. Student E got 48 with the current rubric and got 47 with the adapted rubric. The scores were given out of 60.

CHAPTER V

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the discussion of the findings, implications for ELT, limitations of the study and suggestions for further studies are presented.

5.2. Evaluation of the Findings Received from Workshops

In the light of the data received from the workshop sessions realized through 6 weeks with the researcher and a writing teacher at Toros University School of Foreign Languages, significant evaluations have been made.

The findings of this study enlighten some problematic areas regarding the writing rubric used in the institute. One of these enlightenments is on defining the quality-writing essay. With the help of the workshop sessions carried out for 6 weeks, teachers had the chance to articulate the meanings that they attached to the term for quality-writing essay and identified three main elements of quality-writing essay. These quality elements were creativity, coherence, and organization. This process, namely, two testing coordinators' being able to decide on the key elements of quality-writing essay should be considered as an improvement both for the teachers and for the institution. According to the teacher involved in this study, this articulation process enabled her to recognize that she had not forgotten her professional knowledge, and this in turn contributed to her professional improvement. The workshop process provided the teacher and the researcher with the chance to articulate ways of assessing student written products. In the sessions the teacher and the researcher articulated the methods that were used to assess their students' writings in their classrooms for in-class assessment. The teacher and the researcher uttered that they used peer-assessment and self-assessment as in-class assessment methods and they used rubrics in school examinations. Exchanging ideas with colleagues enabled the teacher and the researcher to learn the assessment tools that are being used in other classes. Additionally, the teacher's report on the use of different assessment tools apart from the rubrics fortified the researcher's idea that the use of variety of methods enhances the quality of writing assessment. The teacher and the researcher, by the help of the sessions, also had the chance to refresh their professional skills on analytical and holistic rubrics. A detailed study on features of each type of rubrics was conducted. The teacher and the researcher

studied the advantages and the disadvantages of the rubrics regarding the needs of the institution and the curriculum. We may conclude from the findings of the sessions that the current rubric used in the institution corresponds to the teacher's and the researcher's description of the analytical rubric. The researcher and the teacher put forward that analytical rubrics were more detailed and practical to use for the graders. Thus, the researcher and the teacher only developed the current rubric.

Throughout the study the teacher and the researcher went through a teacher development process. In this process the researcher and the teacher refreshed their existing knowledge by obtained information and experience. Therefore, they become capable of identifying and defining their personal knowledge. Moreover, the teacher and the researcher reached to the point that when they were actively involved in identifying, analysing and solving problems in assessment throughout the workshop sessions, they started to feel more confident in the field of assessment. Another outcome of the study for the researcher was that she improved her research skills on teacher development and also gained a new perspective on how teachers learn, how the setting should be, and how she can involve the participants more actively in teacher development programs.

5.3. Limitations of the Study

The present study has a limited number of participants because it only included the researcher and a writing teacher in Toros University Preparatory School. The limitations throughout the conduction of the study need to be taken into consideration. One of the limitations of the study was the limited number of the teachers involved in the workshop sessions. This situation caused the researcher not to be able to figure out other writing teacher perceptions on the quality-writing essay, and the assessment methods that the other writing teachers use in their classes. Another constraint is that the researcher and the teacher felt the lack of information and experience on item analysis to check the reliability of the newly developed rubric.

5.4. Implications for English Language Teaching

The findings of this study mainly aimed to conduct a teacher development programme on assessment of writing. Within this respect, this study might contribute to further studies and research and it may raise EFL teachers' awareness regarding the significance of the assessment in the field of writing in university context. Although

further research is necessary to enhance the findings of this study, the findings include significant implications for EFL. Additionally, the data gathered for this study may be useful for in-service or teacher training programs within the context of ELT.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Study

In the light of the results of this study, it might be appropriate to suggest that the first step to take is to study on the newly developed rubric to check the validity, fairness and reliability. When the whole process is considered, it could have been much effective if all the writing teachers in the institution had been present at the workshop sessions. A further study can include all the writing teachers. Furthermore, a more professional training programme on assessment of writing can be developed or professional trainers can be invited. Secondly, a further study may focus on creating a new rubric or creating the current rubric to assess the paragraphs of students. Thirdly, new rubrics can be created for each level of the modular system in the institute regarding the level of English proficiency of students and the curriculum for each level.

6. REFERENCES

- Abdal-Haqq, I. (1995). *Making time for teacher professional development* (Digest 95-4). Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education.
- Armstrong, S., & Frith, G. (1984). *Practical self-monitoring for classroom use*. Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas.
- Atkin, J, *Learning By Design*, Harden, p. 33 2001.
- Atkin, J, 'Thinking: critical for learning' in Edwards, J (ed), *Thinking: international interdisciplinary perspectives*, Hawker Brownlow Education, Melbourne, 1994, p. 201-215.
- Ball, D.L. (1996). Teacher learning and the mathematics reforms: What do we think we know and what do we need to learn? *Phi Delta Kappan*, p. 77.
- Birchak, B., Connor, C. Crowford, K.M., Kahn, L.H., Kaser, S., Turner, S., & Short, K. (1998). *Teacher study groups*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Blaz, D. (2001). *A collection of performance tasks and rubrics: Foreign languages*. (1sted.). New York: Eye on Education.
- Britten, Donard (1987). Three stages in teacher training. Retrieved September 05, 2014, from <http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org/content/42/1/3.short#>
- Bruner, J, *The culture of education*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass., 1996.
- Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development, London. *How do People Learn?* 2002.
- Clapham,C. 2000, Assessment and testing. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 20, 147-161
- Darling-Hammond, L., and M. W. McLaughlin.(1995). "Policies That Support Professional Development in an Era of Reform." *Phi Delta Kappan* 76, 8: 597-604.
- Dede, C., Ketelhut, D.J., Whitehouse, P., Breit, L., & McCloskey, E.M. (2009).A research agenda for online teacher development.*Journal of Teacher Education*, 60,8-19.

- Elmore, R. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement: The imperative for professional development education* [Brochure]. Washington, DC: Albert Shanker Institute.
- Evans, S.M. (1995). Professional portfolios: Documenting and presenting performance excellence. Virginia Beach, VA: Teacher's Little Secrets
- Freeman, D. 1989. Teacher training, Development, and Decision Making: A Model for Teaching and Related Strategies for Language Teacher Education. In *TESOL Quarterly*, 23, (1).
- Glattenhorn, A. (1987). Cooperative professional development: Peer centered options for teacher growth. *Educational Leadership*, (3)45, 31-35.
- Grant-Davie, Keith and Nancy Shapiro. Curing the Nervous Tick: Reader Based Response to Student Writing. Paper presented at the annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 1987. ED 282 196.
- Guba E.G. & Lincoln Y.S. (1995) *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Sage, Newbury Park, CA, USA.
- Gunelius, S. (2011). Stand out from competitors with prezi presentations. Retrieved September 09, 2014, from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/work-in-progress/2011/03/23/stand-out-from-competitors-with-prezi-presentations/>
- Güven, S. (2005). The Profile and The perception of Professional Competencies of the first stage primary school EFL teachers. Unpublished M.A. thesis. Mersin University
- Hancock, Charles R. (2006). Language teaching and language testing: a way and ways to make appropriate connections. *AccionPedagogica*, No 15, p. 6-13.
- Ho, B., Richrads, J.C.(1993). Reflective thinking through teacher journal writing: Myths and realities. *Prospect: A Journal of Australian TESOL* 8, p. 7-24.
- Hodkinson, H. &Hodkinson, P. (2004). Rethinking the concept of community of practice in relation to schoolteachers' workplace learning. *International Journal of Training and Development*. 8 (1), 21-31.
- Holmes G, and M Abington-Cooper, 'Pedagogy vs. andragogy: a false dichotomy', *Journal of Technology Studies* 26:2, Summer/Fall, 2000, <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JOTS/Summer-Fall-2000/holmes.html>.

- Horsburgh, D. (2003). Blackwell Publishing Ltd, *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 12, p.307–312.
- Kedzior, M., & Fifield, S. (2004). Teacher professional development. *Education Policy Brief*, 15(21), 76–97.
- Kerka S, 'Teaching adults: is it different?', *Myths and Realities* 21, ERIC/ACVE, 2002, <http://www.cete.org/acve/textonly/docgen.asp?tbl=mr&ID=111>.
- Kirk, W. & Walter, G. (1981). Teacher support groups serve to minimize teacher burnout: Principles for organizing. *Education* 102, p. 147-150.
- Knowles, M, *The adult learner: a neglected species*, Gulf Publishing, Houston, 1978.
- Lange, D. L. (1990). A Blueprint for a Teacher Development Program. In Richards, Jack C. and Nunan, David (Eds.). *Second Language Teacher Education*, 245-268. Cambridge: *Cambridge University Press*.
- Lieberman, A., & Grolnick, M. (1998). Educational reform networks: Changes in the forms of reform. In A. Hargreaves, A. Lieberman, M. Fullan, & D. Hopkins (Eds.), *International handbook of educational change* (p. 710-729). Boston: Kluwer Academic.
- Looi, C.-K., Lim, W.-Y., & Chen, W. (2008). Communities of practise for continuing professional development in the twenty-first century. In J. Voogt & G. Knezek (Eds.), *International handbook of information technology in primary and secondary education* (p. 489-505). New York, NY Springer.
- Olson, J. 1992. *Understanding Teaching*. Milton Keynes, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Rena, Ravinder (2010). Perceptions of pre-service teachers towards teaching: A case study on the Eritrea Institute of Technology. Retrieved September 05, 2014, from <https://journal.lib.uoguelph.ca/index.php/rhea/article/view/1631/2219>
- Richards, J.C. & Farrel, T.S.C. (2005), *Professional Development for Language Teachers*. Cambridge University Press, New York. USA
- Richardson, V. (2003). The dilemmas of professional development. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 84(5), 401–406.
- Robbins, P. (1991). *How to an and implement a peer coaching programme*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision Curriculum Development.

- Şahinkarakaş, Ş. (1993). *The reliability of holistic and analytic evaluations of EFL essays by Turkish university preparatory students*. Ph. D. Thesis. Bilkent University: Turkey.
- TALIS - The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey, Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from TALIS – ISBN 978-92-64-05605-3
- The National Council of Teachers of English.(2010). *Teacher learning communities* (1-877-369-6283). Urbana
- Timperley, H. (2008). *Teacher professional learning and development*. Brussels: International Academy of English.
- Yumru, H. (2000). *An ownership approach to teacher development: a constructivist view*. Doctorate' thesis, Çukurova University.

7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix 1: The Current Rubric

	CONTENT	10	8	6	4	2
A	RELEVANCY	Full answer, keeps to the topic, totally relevant and original.	Almost full original answers, but rarely strays off topic	Satisfactory original answer, but occasionally strays off topic	Limited answer, frequently strays off topic, and almost no originality	Incomplete answer, strays off topic, not original at all
B	THESIS DEVELOPMENT	Thesis is supported with sufficiently detailed and logical ideas	Good attempt to support the thesis, but lacking in a few areas and some faulty logic	Adequate attempt to support the thesis, but lacking in some areas and some of the ideas are not logical	Inadequate attempt to provide details for the thesis and most of the ideas are not logical	Almost no attempt to support the thesis, lacking details, and almost no logical ideas with lots of repetitions
C	LEXIS RANGE	Wide range of vocabulary for his level with almost no inaccuracies	Good range of vocabulary for this level with some inaccuracies	Limited range of vocabulary for this level with frequent inaccuracies	Very limited range of vocabulary with frequent inaccuracies	Very basic vocabulary with frequent inaccuracies
D	GRAMMAR	Almost no grammatical inaccuracies, and accurate use of complex sentences for this level	Occasional grammatical inaccuracies which do not interfere with the meaning, and uses complex sentences for this level	Some grammatical inaccuracies which do not interfere with the meaning, and attempts to use complex sentences for this level	Some grammatical inaccuracies which do not interfere very much with the meaning, but almost no attempt to use complex sentences for this level	Frequent grammatical inaccuracies which interfere with the meaning, and no attempt to use complex sentences
	ORGANIZATION	5	4	3	2	1
E	INTRODUCTION	General to specific statements with a very strong thesis statement	General to specific statements, but not a good thesis statement	Not general to specific statements, but a good thesis statement	General to specific statements, and only an attempted thesis statement	Very general statements with no thesis statement
F	BODY PARAGRAPHS	The thesis is supported with unified paragraphs. All the paragraphs have appropriate topic sentences and adequate supporting ideas	One body paragraph lacks unity, and doesn't support the thesis. Attempted topic sentences and supporting ideas	Two body paragraphs are not adequately organized and lack unity. Attempted topic sentences and supporting ideas	More than two body paragraphs are not adequately organized. Very weak topic sentences supporting ideas	No unity in any of the body paragraphs with no topic sentence or not enough supporting details
G	COHESION	Easy to read, good use of linking and signal words	Easy to read, but some linking and signal words are not used as expected	Difficult to read, but some linking and signal words are used.	Difficult to read because of the limited/wrong use of signal words	Impossible to read because there are no transitions at all. No cohesion, just random organization
H	CONCLUSION	Effectively summarizes the main points or restates the thesis and provides final thoughts	Summarizes the main points or restates the thesis and provides final thoughts	Weak summary of the main points or weak restatement of the thesis but provides final thoughts	No summary of the main points or restatement of the thesis. Only final thoughts are provided or vice versa	No summary of the main points, restatement of the thesis, or final thoughts

7.2. Appendix 2: The Adapted Rubric

	CONTENT	10	8	6	4	2
A	RELEVANCY	Full answer, keeps to the topic	Almost full answer, but rarely strays off topic	Satisfactory answer, but occasionally strays off topic	Limited answer, frequently strays off topic	Incomplete answer, strays off topic
B	LEXIS RANGE	Wide range of vocabulary for this level with almost no inaccuracies	Sufficient range of vocabulary for this level with some inaccuracies	Limited range of vocabulary for this level with frequent inaccuracies	Very limited range of vocabulary with frequent inaccuracies	Only a few isolated words are used
C	GRAMMAR	Almost no grammatical inaccuracies, and wide range of structures	Grammatical inaccuracies which do not interfere with the meaning, and a variety of complex sentences	Some grammatical inaccuracies which do not interfere much with the meaning, and some complex sentences	Frequent grammatical inaccuracies which interfere with the meaning and limited use of complex sentences	No sentence forms except for memorised phrases and sentences
D	COHESION	Easy to read, logically organized ideas by the help of a wide range of linking and signal words, there is clear progression throughout	Easy to read with sufficient linking and signal words and there is a clear overall progression	Difficult to read, but information is presented with some organization, but there may be a lack of overall progression	Difficult to read due to the lack of / wrong use of linking and signal words, ideas may be developed inaccurately or repetitively	Impossible to read due to no transitions use at all. There is no clear progression
	ORGANIZATION	5	4	3	2	1
E	INTRODUCTION	General to specific organization is achieved effectively	General to specific organization is achieved sufficiently	General to specific organization is achieved to some extent	Almost no organization is achieved	No general to specific organization
F	THESIS STATEMENT	Thesis statement is presented well with almost no inaccuracies	Thesis statement is presented well with but with some lexical and syntactical inaccuracies	Thesis statement is presented well with but with some inaccuracies	Thesis statement with frequent inaccuracies	No thesis
G	BODY PARAGRAPHS	The thesis is supported with unified paragraphs. All the paragraphs have appropriate topic sentences and adequate supporting ideas	One body paragraph lacks unity, and doesn't support the thesis. Attempted topic sentences and supporting ideas	Two body paragraphs are not adequately organized and lack unity. Attempted topic sentences and supporting ideas	More than two body paragraphs are not adequately organized. Very weak topic sentences supporting ideas	No unity in any of the body paragraphs with no topic sentence or not enough supporting details
H	CONCLUSION	Effectively summarizes the main points or restates the thesis and provides final thoughts	Sufficiently summarizes the main points or restates the thesis and provides final thoughts	Weak summary of the main points or weak restatement of the thesis but provides final thoughts	No summary of the main points or restatement of the thesis. Only final thoughts are provided or vice versa	No summary of the main points, restatement of the thesis, or final thoughts

7.3. Appendix 3: The Checklist to Evaluate Qualitative Research

1. Theoretical/ epistemological issues	Assessment (circle most relevant)	Comments
(a) Is a qualitative approach appropriate to answer the research question?	Appropriate Unclear Inappropriate	
(b) Is a qualitative approach justified by the author? >>HINTS: Does the research methodology seek to understand or illuminate the subjective experiences or views of those being researched? Does the research methodology seek to understand WHAT is happening and the reasons WHY observed situations, outcomes or discourses occur?	Justified Unclear Not justified	
(c) Is the purpose of conducting the research adequately described and justified	Justified Unclear	
>>HINTS Was a review of the secondary data conducted and is it presented? Is the research linked to policy or practice development processes?	Not justified	

2. Study design	Assessment (circle most relevant)	Comments
(a) Is the context of the research adequately described?	Adequate Unclear Inadequate	
(b) Is the research question relevant to the context described?	Relevant Unclear Not relevant	
(c) Are the research aims/objectives/questions clearly defined and focused?	Adequately defined Unclear Poorly defined	
<p>(d) Are the methods used appropriate to the research question?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Is a range of methods used for triangulation, or is use of a single method justified?</p> <p>Do the methods investigate what they claim to?</p> <p>Have the best methods been chosen to address the research question?</p>	Appropriate Unclear Inappropriate	
3. Sampling and data collection	Assessment (circle most relevant)	Comments
(a) Is the sampling strategy appropriate to the research question?	Appropriate Unclear	

<p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Usually purposive or theoretical NOT random or representative.</p> <p>Is the sample sufficient to understand the study context and population?</p> <p>Was the sampling pre-determined or did it evolve as the fieldwork progressed?</p>	<p>Inappropriate</p>	
<p>(b) Is the choice of sampling strategy justified?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Are the reasons for this choice discussed/compared to other strategies?</p> <p>Who was selected and why? (consider gender, age, ethnicity, marital status)</p> <p>How were participants selected and why?</p> <p>Is it clear why some participants were not selected?</p>	<p>Adequately justified</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Not justified</p>	
<p>(c) Are data collection procedures clearly described?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>How was data collected? (topic guides, checklists)</p> <p>Were data collection tools pilot tested?</p> <p>Where was data collected and why was this location chosen? (privacy, confidentiality, familiarity)</p> <p>How was the data recorded and why? (tape recorded, notes)</p>	<p>Clear</p> <p>Unclear</p>	
<p>(d) Are the roles of researchers clearly described?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Who conducted the research, how were they selected?</p> <p>Are the researchers skills, motives, background, position in terms of power-relations (gender, age, ethnicity, employment relations etc.) and perspective described and discussed?</p>	<p>Clear</p> <p>Unclear</p>	
<p>(e) Are ethical issues addressed in data collection and adequately discussed?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>How was the research explained to the participants?</p>	<p>Adequate</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Inadequate</p>	

What consent procedures were used?		
How were confidentiality and privacy assured?		

4. Analysis	Assessment (circle most relevant)	Comments
<p>(a) Is the data analysis procedure explicit?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Is it clear how the researcher processed the raw data to arrive at the stated results?</p> <p>Were the categories and themes identified in advance, or derived from the data?</p> <p>Are all data taken into account in the analysis?</p> <p>Are responses/experiences compared and contrasted across different groups/individuals/study sites?</p>	<p>Explicit</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Vague</p>	
<p>(b) Is the data analysis procedure reliable/dependable?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Who was involved in the analysis and at what stage?</p> <p>Did more than one person (including researchers and other stakeholders) identify themes and code transcripts?</p>	<p>Reliable</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Potential bias</p>	

5. Findings/interpretation/trustworthiness	Assessment (circle most relevant)	Comments
<p>(a) Are the findings valid/internally coherent/trustworthy</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Are findings drawn from analysis of collected data rather than the researcher's preconceptions?</p> <p>Is there adequate critical discussion for and against the researcher's arguments? E.g. Are negative and divergent views adequately discussed? Are quotes used to substantiate the researchers conclusions from the analysis?</p> <p>Is triangulation or data cross-checking used?</p> <p>Have findings been validated by respondents?</p>	<p>Valid</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Invalid/ potential bias</p>	

<p>Has the researcher critically reflected on his/her own bias, role and influence?</p> <p>Has the research critically reflected on the quality of the data collected and skills of the research team?</p>		
<p>(b) Are the findings relevant?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Are the findings relevant to the study aim/objectives/questions?</p> <p>Do they contribute new knowledge or understanding?</p> <p>How important are the findings in local context? (geographical, cultural, political, socio-economic)</p>	<p>Relevant</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Limited relevance</p>	

6. Implications/limitations	Assessment (circle most relevant)	Comments
<p>(a) Are the implications of the study clearly defined?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Are the findings placed in local context? (geographical, cultural, political, socio-economic)</p> <p>Have findings been disseminated to key stakeholders including participants?</p> <p>Are the findings discussed in wider context? (in relation to other studies on the same topic)</p> <p>Are recommendations made for policy and practice?</p>	<p>Clear</p> <p>Unclear</p>	
<p>(b) Is there adequate discussion of the study limitations?</p> <p>>>HINTS:</p> <p>Are study limitations described and accounted for? (cost, time, resources)</p> <p>Are the weaknesses of the study design discussed?</p>	<p>Adequate</p> <p>Unclear</p> <p>Inadequate</p>	