

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

COLLABORATIVE WRITING IN HIGH SCHOOL EFL CLASSES

Mehmet ŞANVERDİ

MASTER OF ARTS

ADANA / 2019

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MASTER OF ARTS

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ÖZET

LİSELERİN YABANCI DİL SINIFLARINDA İŞBİRLİKÇİ YAZMA

Mehmet ŞANVERDİ

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Zuhall OKAN

Eylül 2019, 72 sayfa

Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı müfredatında temel dil becerileriyle ilgili kazanımlar yer almasına rağmen çoğunlukla bunlar göz ardı edilmekte, özellikle yazma becerileri önemsenmemektedir. İngilizce derslerinin gereklerinden olan yazma etkinliklerinde öğrenciler zorlanmakta, öğretmenler de bu beceriyi kazandırma konusunda isteksiz davranmaktadır. İşbirlikçi çalışmalarda, öğrenciler dilsel ve bilişsel seviyelerini var olan seviyeden daha ileriye götürürler. Bu çalışmada işbirlikçi yazma yöntemi Vygotsky'nin sosyo-kültürel yapılandırmacı kuramına dayandırılarak öğrencilerin birbirlerine öğrenme desteği sağlaması ile yazma becerilerini geliştirmeleri amaçlanmaktadır.

Bu çalışma öncelikle, Hatay, Türkiye'de bir devlet lisesinin yabancı dil bölümünde okuyan öğrencilerin yabancı dilde yazma becerilerini İşbirlikçi yazma yöntemiyle geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bireysel yazılan çalışmalarla işbirlikçi yöntemle yazılan çalışmalar arasında nitelik ve nicelik farkının olup olmadığını tespit etmeyi de hedeflemektedir. Bu çerçevede Hatay ili Reyhanlı ilçesindeki bir Anadolu Lisesi 12.sınıf Yabancı Dil Bölümü öğrencileriyle çalışma yapılmıştır. Çalışma sürecinde önce yazma eğitimi verilmiş olup daha sonra da yazma etkinlik uygulamaları yapılmıştır. İlçede sadece iki okulda Yabancı Dil Bölümü bulunması nedeniyle öğrenci seçiminde Amaçlı Örneklem Yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Kontrol Grubu ve Deney Grubu olmak üzere iki grup oluşturulmuş ve her iki gruba ilk dönem 8 hafta, ikinci dönem 8 hafta ve her haftada 2 saat olmak üzere aynı çalışmalar yapılmıştır. Bu uygulamaları Kontrol grubu bireysel yaparken, deney grubu ise işbirlikçi yöntem doğrultusunda 3'er kişilik gruplar halinde yapmıştır. Etkinlikler Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı müfredatı çerçevesinde yapılmıştır. Yazıların analizi, ESL Kompozisyon Profilinden ödünç alınan dört noktalı bir skala olan değerlendirme ölçeği ile yapıldı (Jacobs ve ark. 1981).

Çalışma sonuçları, deney grubunun içerik, düzen, kelime bilgisi/dil kullanımı ve dil bilgisi yönünden kontrol grubundan daha başarılı olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: işbirlikçi yazma, bireysel yazma, işbirliktelik, yabancı dilde yazma, kompozisyon / paragraf yazımı



ABSTRACT**COLLABORATIVE WRITING IN HIGH SCHOOL EFL CLASSES****Mehmet ŞANVERDİ****Master Thesis, Department of English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Zuhale OKAN****September 2019, 72 pages**

Even though the curriculum of the Ministry of National Education includes learning outcomes related to basic language skills, these are often overlooked, especially writing skills are ignored. Students have difficulty in writing activities, which are the requirements of English classes, and teachers are reluctant to teach this skill. In collaborative studies, students may carry onward their linguistic and cognitive levels further than the existing level. In this study, based on Vygotsky's socio-cultural constructivist theory, it is aimed to develop students' writing skills by providing learning support to each other.

This study primarily takes aim at developing L2 writing skill of the students studying at foreign language department of a state high school in Hatay, Turkey through collaborative writing. It also targets to find out whether there is quality and quantity difference between the individual writings and collaborative writings of the students in their essays. Within this context, the study was carried out with 12th grade Foreign Language Department students in Anatolian High School in Hatay. During the study process, writing training was given first and then writing activity applications were performed. Since only two schools in the district have a Foreign Language Department, Purposive Sampling Method was used in student selection. The participants were divided into two main groups, the control group and the experimental group. Both groups worked on the same tasks during the study. Writing skills were covered in the first semester courses and practice was done in the second semester. Each period took 8 weeks with 2 lesson hours in each week. The control group performed these practices individually, while the experimental group performed in accordance with the collaborative method, in 4 groups of 3 students.

The analyses of writings were carried out in line with an evaluation rubric that is a four-point scale and borrowed from ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, et al., 1981).

The results of analysis showed that students who wrote collaboratively scored higher marks in terms of content, organization, vocabulary/language use, and grammar usage than the control group did.

Keywords: collaborative writing, individual writing, collaboration, writing in EFL, essay/paragraph writing



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ABBREVIATIONS

CEF	: Common European Framework
CW	: Collaborative Writing
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
ELT	: English Language Teaching
ESL	: English as a Second Language
FL	: Foreign Language
FLD	: Foreign Language Department
L1	: First Language (Native Language)
L2	: Second Language
SCT	: Sociocultural Theory



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

“One hand washes the other and together they wash the face,”

“Two heads are better than one.”

“Union is strength.”

“Many hands make light work”

These proverbs both point out our path and indicate our starting point for this study. We have focused on cooperative learning because we believe that “many hands make light work”, and better works can be done together and we want to have the benefit of giving our students this habit. We believe that such a habit would have important benefits both academically and socially because the students who cooperate in their lessons and activities in the school can be seen as individuals who cooperate in every aspect of social life in the future. As Vygotsky (1962, p.188) says; “What children can do together today, they can do alone tomorrow.”

Roger and Johnson (2002, p.9) support this idea by stating that learning to cooperate with others is the keystone to constructing and sustaining permanent marriages, families, careers, and friendships. It is because performing technical skills, such as reading, speaking, listening, writing, computing, and problem solving, are important, but more valuable if applied in cooperative interactions through all settings like career, family, and community environments.

Among language skills, writing is generally believed to be an individual and difficult activity. Even higher level students wrestle with many details of writing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) because mostly this skill is either disregarded or underestimated considering to other skills like reading, listening and speaking. Swain (2006, 2010) ascribes the attempt of the learners to solve language problems as “languaging”. If students collaborate, languaging means the social structure of meaning as the students talk about the language. Otherwise, if learners study by themselves,

language is unconnected. Thus, in writing context, language gives the students a chance for concentrate on language problems (Swain, 2006).

However, with the social constructivist perspective of language learning, based on the work of Vygotsky (1978), learning is purified from the individualistic perspective. Further, writing is a complex cognitive skill which requires both cognitive and social skills. Therefore, improving of writing skill is foremost encouraged by a helpful conversational atmosphere.

Goodenow (1993) asserts the connection amongst people in teaching/learning circumstances cannot be neglected. Interactions between participants in Foreign Language Departments are so crucial in terms of meanings, “essentially social events” (Block, 1996), and so may result in many academic conclusions (Brooks, 1990). A better comprehension of interaction may offer greater opportunities for language learners, as well.

Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner (2015) narrate that according to Vygotsky, human beings controlled biology with the consciousness of the use of high-level symbolic artifacts like language, literacy, numeracy, categorization, logic, etc. Tomasello (1999) says that these artifacts are significant in the relation between man and environment as they come out of the historical accumulation of cultural activity and development. Right here, language is one of the most important and powerful cultural elements in all these artifacts because the human, through the language, communicate with the world and with each other (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015).

Also, with reference to Vygotsky (1978), scaffolding makes it possible for children to spread their available level in terms of cognition and language improvement towards a further possible level of development. Therefore, this research aims to show that scaffolding may also take place in terms of writing in context of Foreign Language Department (FLD) students of high schools.

Writing tasks such as paragraphs or essays are some of the requirements of the English courses in high schools which seem to be a challenge for learners. That is why we are going to conduct a social constructivist method for improving writing: Collaborative Writing (thereafter CW). Basically from the meaning of the “collaborative” word itself, it is associated with the meaning of which students create

teams, peers, groups to go through a task. At the same time, Collaborative tasks prepare student for future assignments that require team abilities, self-confidence, and participation. In other words, this study by using this method tries to catch out whether the implementation of writing collaboratively will boost the property of writing for content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. For this, the study is going to carry out both writing instruction and writing performance tasks such as writing paragraphs or essays. CW supplies learners with the chance to engage with language and prove their assumption.

The purpose of this study is analyzing the effect of CW through project work on students' writing development. This analysis focuses on the participants' control of written English in terms of form, content, grammar, vocabulary and spelling rules.

The present study has the intention to add more empirical evidence to the understanding of the effects of collaboration on writing performance of high school FLD learners. It focuses on writing skill in high school English courses which normally require English teachers to instruct basic skills-reading, writing, listening, speaking- but writing in particular, are neglected in English courses. Even if not, these courses generally composed of teaching grammar, vocabulary, and test techniques. The teachers mostly teach through an individualistic and teacher-centered approach. Students often write their compositions outside class, and are exposed to explicit grammatical instruction through the class time.

The chapter will start with an overall background. Then, the background of the study was followed by the statement of the problem and significance of the study. The research questions will be introduced and finally, limitations will be clarified at the end of the chapter.

1.2. General Background

In today's modern world, acquisition of English skills is momentous. Hyland (2013) points out the international status of English in scientific research area and predicted that English will become the most necessary academic skill more than a language as it is assumed to be used by every other person by 2050.

We mostly speak of the four skills of English, which are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, as Brookes and Grundy (1998) state that writing is often

treated neglectedly in language teaching and for a long time it has been disregarded in consequence of aural/oral approach. Also Hess (2001) points out the negligence of writing by teachers of large classes with different levels and attributed this notion to that in this kind of classes writing is the most difficult skill to teach and also it is the very hard of the four skills to become proficient in. On the other hand, Byrne (1988) asserts that writing needs some deliberate intellectual attempt and that's why, it is usually a difficult activity both in first language (L1) and second language (L2) for most people. Hess (2001) supports this view by stating that writing, contrary to speaking, is not an innate skill. It needs to be instructed, acquired, performed and dominated.

Nunan (1999) agrees that producing a logical, flowing, well-organized and effective writing is likely the very complicated skill many speakers cannot master even in their L1. Also, he (2000) emphasizes a similar point that writing comprehensibly in line with the writer's purpose and readers is so difficult that most writers cannot manage this in their L1 even with the education dedicated for this aim.

Therefore, it is reported by many that writing is difficult to acquire, and we should remind again that advanced writing is generally the result of a particular instruction, expansive reading, and a lot of practice (Davies & Pearse, 2000). It is believed that by collaborative writing practice, we can help learners to write more comprehensive, organized, logical, cohesive, relevant, fluent essays/paragraphs.

1.3. Background for the study

Campbell & Barnard (2005) note that most theories of second language (L2) acquisition and learning are based on cognitive processes, usually in empirical context, and do not take the social context into consideration whereas Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (hereafter SCT) puts it in the center of the learning process. Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner (2015) argue that despite the fact that Vygotsky suffered an untimely death in 1934 at only 38 years of age, he had a tremendously productive career that was profoundly influenced by the fact that he came of age during the Russian Revolution. They emphasize that Vygotsky grounded SCT on the basis that the person is an inseparable part of the community, and that person comes forth from social interactions and being a social entity. (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015).

As Campbell and Barnard (2005) state, according to Vygotsky, sociocultural interactions are so critical to learning that human learning cannot be understood separately from the social and cultural contexts that effect individuals. In this sense, they assume that learning is constructed among individuals through dialogues in which the more capable partner scaffolds the other from the existing position to a higher level (Campbell & Barnard, 2005).

Ratner (2002) states that SCT, originated from the works of Vygotsky and his colleagues, asserts that cognitive function is a process arranged by culturel events like home life, interaction, education, group pastimes. According to Engeström (1987), in SCT, cognitive activity of human beings develops through interaction between social and material environments (Engeström, 1987).

Campbell & Barnard (2005) remark that even though Vygotsky did not use the term "scaffolding", today it is hard to disconnect it from sociocultural perspective. Actually, it emerged in an article by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) and since then it has been used for the necessary collaboration in a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Lantolf, et al (2015) emphasize that Vygotsky's ZPD has an important effect on applied linguistics, education and developmental psychology (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015). The most frequently mentioned definition for ZPD is that the breadth between the existing level of a person while working individually and the probable level of that person while collaborating with higher level ones (Vygotsky, 1978). With the ZPD, Vygotsky (1978) attaches belief to that human learning involves a certain kind of social interaction because he was of interest to the schooling effects on cognitive improvement.

Therefore, one of Vygotsky's most important findings is that formal instruction in school paves the way for development and shapes it (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015). In this sense, the ZPD is both a model of the developmental process and a conceptual tool that can be used by educators to understand aspects of students' emerging capacities in early stages of maturation (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015). In this way, the ZPD, if used dynamically, will provide teachers with the opportunity to create important conditions for development.

Lantolf, et al (2015) report that in L2 studies, the ZPD was also used by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) to investigate the correlation between correctional review and language learning in terms of teacher-learner interactions in an English as a Second Language (ESL) context. They found that mediation was an important requirement at the outset, and should be abolished when the student has the capacity to function independently. They cite from Vygotsky (1994) that ZPD is based on a standpoint that does not isolate the individual from the social and in deed affirms that the individual arises from social interaction and is always fundamentally a social being (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015).

They (Lantolf, et al, 2015) also point out that the ZPD has attracted educationalists and psychologists for some reasons. One of these reasons was the assisted performance. Even if it was not equal to the ZPD, it was the impulsion in back of attention to Vygotsky's work. The other captivating feature of the ZPD is representing the independent potential level of learners in the future when working collaboratively today, different from conventional tests and scales showing the existing developmental level. When considered from this point of view, the assessment of ZPD ensures a detailed identification of both the existing developmental level and the potential developmental level (Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015).

Collaboration is a part and parcel of SCT. In collaborative learning, dyad can be seen either as a combination system composed of two partially independent cognitive systems or as a unique cognitive system. These two cases form the ends of the theoretical axis in this subject.

On the one hand, the individual is analyzed and how the received messages change the cognitive system is researched. On the other hand, the group is analyzed and how a common cognitive system is formed is researched. In this context, these two different analysis points offer us three different theoretical positions: socio-constructivist, socio-cultural and shared (or distributed) cognition approaches.

Now, if to summarize these three different theoretical situations, let us first talk about socio-constructivist approach. Notwithstanding that Piaget concentrated on the individual in terms of cognitive progression, his work led some psychologists to conduct scientific studies to understand how social interaction influenced the cognitive progression of the person (see also Doise & Mugny, 1984). These researchers based on

some concepts such as "conflict, centration" from Piaget's theory. This new approach increased the role of inter-action rather than the action itself. After the Piaget-centered approach, the other important approach was the socio-cultural approach of Vygotsky (1962, 1978) and some other researchers (Wertsch, 1979, 1985, 1991; Rogoff, 1990) affected by his point of view. The difference of this approach from the former is that it focuses not on individual cognitive development in the context of social interaction but on the causal relationship between them. Namely, this approach centers on the social activities where the mental functioning of the individual occurs that is the starting point of this study. This approach describes Vygotsky's (1978) concept of ZPD as the difference between the independent problem-solving level of the individual and the level of problem-solving with an adult or a more capable peer. Thirdly, in the Shared Cognition Approach, according to the researchers (Roschelle & Teasley, in press), the environment, which includes both physical and social context, is not independent of cognitive processes and is an important part of it. This approach regards the cooperation as a process of creating and maintaining a shared conception of a problem. This approach focuses on the social plane rather than the interpersonal plane.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

As Brookes and Grundy (1998) state that writing is often treated neglectedly in language teaching and for a long time it has been disregarded in consequence of aural/oral approach. Despite a wide theoretical support, as Storch (2011) has pointed out the relatively limited use of collaboration in L2 classes for writing tasks. Also, according to Shehadeh (2011), many studies underrated the effect of collaboration on the quality of individualistic L2 writing.

Shehadeh (2011) states that many earlier studies on collaboration concentrated on oral context rather than written context. This defect of written discourse research especially on low-proficiency level students is also an important reason of conducting this study.

Furthermore, the earlier studies on Collaborative Writing have been mainly conducted on ESL context rather than EFL context. As the count of studies on EFL is so scarce, this study focused on this neglected context.

As Hess (2001) points out the negligence of writing by teachers of large classes with different levels and attributes this notion to that in this kind of classes writing is the most difficult skill to teach and also it is the very hard of the four skills to become proficient in. On the other hand, Byrne (1988) asserts that writing needs some deliberate intellectual attempt and that's why, it is usually a difficult activity both in L1 and L2 for most people.

Nunan (1999) agrees that producing a logical, flowing, well-organized and effective writing is likely the very complicated skill many speakers cannot master even in their L1. Also, he (2000) emphasizes a similar point that writing comprehensibly in line with the writer's purpose and readers is so difficult that most writers cannot manage this in their L1 even with the education dedicated for this aim. Therefore, it is harder in EFL.

Therefore, it is reported by many that writing is difficult to acquire, and we should remind again that advanced writing is generally the result of a particular instruction, expansive reading, and a lot of practice (Davies & Pearse, 2000). Thus, by studying collaborative writing and with a lot of practice, we may improve writing skill of the learners, which is important in language learning.

To sum up, this current research aims to improve writing skills of high school 12th grade FLD students of public schools and contribute to the literature in these respects.

1.5. Purpose of the Study

The present study has the intention to attach more empirical findings to the comprehension of the impacts of collaboration on writing productions of high school FLD students. It focuses on writing skill in high school English courses which normally require English teachers to instruct basic skills-reading, writing, listening, speaking- but writing in particular, are neglected. The study aims to carry out both writing instruction and writing performance tasks such as writing paragraphs or essays.

Writing tasks such as paragraphs or essays are some of the requirements of the English courses in high schools which seem to be a difficulty for learners. In other saying, this research tries to catch out if or not the implementation of CW will advance the value of writing in terms of content, organization, grammar, and vocabulary.

1.6. Research Questions

The three main research questions that we sought answers are the following:

1. Do collaborative writing tasks help high school FLD learners to improve their writing?
2. Are there any differences between the tasks produced by learners in the control group and those in the experimental group under basis of the rubric used to assess the products?
3. Which aspects of writing, if any, of the learners in the experimental group are improved through Collaborative Writing (CW)?

1.7. Significance of the Study

There are plenty of studies carried out on CW emphasizing its importance in Foreign Language (FL) learning (Batstone, 2010; Ellis, 2003; Garcia Mayo, 2007; Lantolf, 2000; Shehadeh & Coombe, 2010). According to Swain (2010), CW can improve the linguistic competence, and Bruffee (1993) asserted that CW makes it possible for learners to improve reflective thinking that leads to more extensive consciousness and grasp of the desired audience. Also, Kuiken and Vedder (2002b) stated that CW aids students to identify language structures. Thus, as some researchers (Mutwarasibo, 2013; Razmjoo & Hoomanfar, 2012) pointed out that CW may be supposed to be efficient for FL learners.

Many high school learners of English think and feel they are not very good at writing and their teachers are often unwilling to lecture them to overcome this obstacle. Among the four skills of English, writing is the most difficult to learn because it requires considerable conscious mental effort and applied tasks and assignments on learners. However, in today's interconnected world, communication among people is more and more done in both aural/oral and written English, which gives English a much more importance than it has been before. As writing can be improved mostly through writing, learners should continually be provided with a good number of writing exercise.

Also, the significance of collaborative writing is vindicated in second language learning and teaching. Shehadeh (2011) states that collaboration has become common

widespread in language learning settings for the last two decades. Consequently, the collaboration in second language learning has become even more important.

The positive results of CW are not limited just to the language learning. However, its advantages may exceed that collaboration setting. Wigglesworth and Storch (2009) exemplify how CW can contribute to the learners in terms of experiences necessary for their future education or for the business.

McDonough (2004) points out that CW supplies educational benefits to students in language learning setting. Namely, Shehadeh (2011) remarks that learners collaboratively create the information at first as a cooperative work, and after that convert that knowledge into an intellectual one thanks to the processing of approximation and internalization.

Generally, writing is believed to be an isolated activity frequently pursued by feedback. Nevertheless, according to the social constructivist perspective based on the work of Vygotsky (1978), verbal communication is the beginning of learners' early attempts at writing. For this reason, an encouraging conversational atmosphere stimulates the development of writing. Consequently, our comprehension of writing inclusive of L1, L2, and FL appears to switch away from a wholly individualistic approach to a sociocultural one. Thus, CW may give the students the chance to have a supportive environment.

SCT stimulated the researchers to survey the role of language itself in the process of L2 or FL learning. In particular, they have concentrated on verbal interaction and its usage in education. The impacts of verbal interaction in L2 writing setting attracted the attention of L2 writing researchers. Weissberg (2006) argued that interaction produces an optimal setting for learning sophisticated cognitive abilities such as writing, and they should not be disconnected. According to Atkins (2003), writing effectively needs both cognitive and social skills.

Vygotsky (1978) portrays the scaffolding as spreading the learners' cognitive and language achievement further away their existing level to a probable level of development. Thus, this study's results may contribute to whether and how scaffolding can help students in terms of writing collaboratively.

It is hypothesized that collaborative writing will help FL learners to write more effectively. This supposition is based on two assumptions:

- 1) the scaffolding through the interaction among the students will help them to make their writing more accurate and intelligible to the reader as they are provided with a more valid reason to write;
- 2) sharing their linguistic and non-linguistic resources, groups are able to produce more accurate texts. (Biria and Hosseinpour, 2014, p.3)

Wigglesworth and Storch (2012) underlined that further studies need to be conducted to enhance the comprehension of how CW activities and collaborative attendance can improve language learning. However, Hubert (2011) asserted that most studies has focused on ESL learners and disregarded FL learners. Therefore, this research may improve the quality of the writing skills of the FLD students.

1.8. Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

It is assumed that all participants in this study will write the essays with their own words and provide authentic data.

In terms of limitations in this study with high school students, the low-proficiency level of English may prove troublesome for writing tasks since writing mostly requires higher-level proficiency.

In addition, the lack of the qualitative dimension that includes students' comments and thoughts about this learning process is a limitation of this study and it will be appropriate to add this dimension in future studies.

Also, the participants of this study are going to be from one state high school located in Reyhanlı, Hatay. For this reason, the results of the study will be valid for the school that is studied and it may not be generalized nationwide.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is composed of four parts. In the first part, theoretical background for collaborative writing is presented. Here, SCT and dynamics of collaborative tasks are explained. In the second part, the significance of collaboration is highlighted. For this aim, the importance of collaboration, its relation with interaction and the nature of collaborative tasks, important points for effective collaboration are clarified in the first place. As a next step, collaborative writing is explained. Writing as a skill, writing as a learning process and collaborative writing are defined. Finally, empirical studies related to literature are examined.

2.2. Theoretical Background for Collaborative Writing

According to Donato (1994) and Ohta (2000), SCT may be taken into consideration as the foremost hypothetical frame for collaborative learning. Storch (2002), and Swain and Lapkin (1998), using SCT as a frame for their studies, points out that application of SCT in L2 learning settings had a certain benefits. As some learners are good at language learning while some are bad at, SCT gives the learners an opportunity to recompence for each other's weaknesses by their strengths.

In formal educational setting, Vygotskian concept of social interaction (1978) has been examined by an extensive amount of research on the interaction of verbal and written language. Also interactionist approach has been given a start to be studied by L2 instructors and researchers, emphasizing the social environment. Cumming (1992) concentrates on the discourse organizing of ESL composition lectures. One of the practices applied in such lectures particularly is interpreting collectively through open-ended discussions to promote interactive conversation among participants. Classroom conversations are important for L2 learners in terms of interaction and cognition. Weissberg (1994) highlights the importance of classroom conversations in terms of brainstorming for writing, transfering the ideas to writing, and recognizing the characteristics of writing process. As an example, Manglesdorf (1989) mentions some

practices such as CW projects, text editing and group discussions to insert conversation into the writing classrooms. (as cited in Hosseinpour and Biria 2014, p.2).

In spite of the traditional ESL classroom setting which locates learners as novices and teachers as experts, some researchers supporting SCT (Donato, 1994; Ohta, 2001; Storch, 2002) claims that language learners can benefit from one another as they are not good/bad at the same domains. Therefore, they can be both apprentice and master in such practices. Ohta argues that through interactionist approach, learners can contribute to each other, and this can help them achieve a higher level of competence than their existing one. Nevertheless, not all works containing interaction are collaborative. Donato (2004) emphasizes the conditions under which the interaction in these works becomes collaborative:

- Participants must have developed social relations as a result of their joint work which should include a meaningful core activity;
- Participants must acknowledge themselves as apart of core activity in such a way that each individual has a role to play in achieving a larger goal;
- Participants must possess knowledge which can be shared with other participants in order to construct new knowledge through which group coherence can develop. (Donato, 2004, p. 287)

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the impacts of collaboration on writing tasks. For instance, Storch and Wigglesworth (2007) analyze the performances of learners written either individually or in pairs, and they ascertained an important difference with regards to accuracy. In a connected study with the same data in the previous study (2007), Wigglesworth and Storch (2009) analyze the students' conversation with their couples to define the effect of interaction and collaboration while writing. Since learners talked over language usage, correction on grammar and vocabulary choice was an important review, as well.

Another example is the study of Dobao (2012) which was based on collaboration and interaction. The study was conducted with Spanish students in a university. The learners divided into three groups. Some of them worked in groups, some in pairs, and some individually. The conversations of the participants were recorded and analyzed in terms of linguistic aspects. As a result, it was seen that the groups constructed the most correct writings pursued by pairs and thereafter individuals. In these interactions, the

groups created more linguistic episodes than pairs. As an outcome, it can be claimed that accumulative knowledge enables the learners to create more correct writings.

According to Reichelt (1999), FL learners have insufficient exterior motivation while writing compositions. Even though writing tasks at university courses may ensure some particular exterior motivation, the absence of certain audience and motivation for writing out of the classroom is a handicap. In terms of fulfilling this gap, the collaboration of learners on writing assignments may be of use to improve a feeling of audience. On the other hand, Shehadeh (2011) expanded the study of CW into FL setting. In that study, participants, some individually and some in pairs, were required to fulfill some writing projects, and they were provided with written and spoken feedback. As a result, the learners made progress in content, organization and vocabulary but not in grammar. According to Shehadeh, this may be because of that the learners may have not the essential language knowledge to assist one another as a result of their low-proficiency level.

One more study attempted to expand the basis of CW to FL. Biria and Jafari (2013) conducted their study with intermediate level EFL learners to see the effects of collaboration on writing. The schema of the study was composed of two stages. In the first stage, the learners were given training on writing paragraph and essay. As a result, pairs made a significant progress in terms of T-units and clauses use. A study conducted by Marzban and Sarjami (2014) on EFL collaborative writing investigated the effect of collaboratively negotiated feedback on learners. These feedbacks were compared with feedbacks written by the teacher. Participants were required to join in revision of errors, and at last their post-test scores supported the effectiveness of collaboratively negotiated feedback.

2.3. Collaboration

Roger and Johnson (2002) state that the interaction among the students and how they comprehend one another is an unregarded detail for education. However, this should not be the case. The interaction among the learners has many effects on their learning, their feelings about education, educator and one another, and their self-confidence.

In her study, Ohta (2001) describes the interaction indications as that peers work in dyads sequence to supply more and more suitable support to each other. She notices that learners create more significant proficiency for the group when they work together than work individually.

Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner (2015, p.9) indicate that like Ohta, Swain (2000) refers to this area with her own words “collaborative dialogue”, and through the development of the process, there arises the term ‘*linguaging*’ (Swain et al., 2009). Swain expands her term and included “a socially constructed cognitive tool” which serves L2 learning by mediating its own construction, and the construction of knowledge about itself” (2000, p. 112).

After stating the significance of the interaction in learning, Roger and Johnson (2002) also emphasize three basic ways students interact with one another: competitively to see the “best”, individually without paying attention to other students and cooperatively with a vested interest in each other's learning as well as their own. Surprisingly, the first is the most common and dominant. Johnson & R. Johnson (1991) corroborate this assertion by stating that this competitive attitude exists in schools and unfortunately it gets bigger as the students promote in school.

Donato (2004) defines the collaboration as a basic action like playing a networked computer game, creating a visual product, improving curriculum and interpersonal relations established cooperatively for mutual effort. He adds that cooperation requires the identification of individuals as the members of a collaborative action and the reception of the supports of individuals in the duty of a major aim. In his previous study, Donato (1994) emphasizes that cooperation builds more extensive new information than an individual has.

Johnson and Johnson (1992) identify the core of cooperative efforts as the positive goal interdependence. It gives us the perception that we are linked with others in a way that we cannot succeed unless the other members do (and vice versa) and that groupmates’ work benefits us and our work benefits them (Johnson & Johnson, 1992).

Donato (2004) indicates that interaction does not categorically mean collaboration although the study of interaction is commonplace in the field of applied linguistics and language learning. Many features should be taken into account to entitle

an interaction as collaboration. In this aspect, Roger and Johnson (2002) draw attention to the distinction between gathering students to study in a group and designing groups of students to study collaboratively. According to them, the cooperative learning situation should be structured and managed by the instructors to be successful. They stated that if the learners just sit at the same table doing their own work, it is not going to be a structured learning situation as there is no positive goal interdependence. Thus, there should be a common goal and a group reward for this goal.

They (Roger and Johnson, 2002, p.2) even reify five certain conditions for collaborative tasks to be more successful than competitive and individualistic works:

1. Clearly perceived positive interdependence
2. Considerable promotive (face-to-face) interaction
3. Clearly perceived individual accountability and personal responsibility to achieve the group's goals
4. Frequent use of the relevant interpersonal and small-group skills
5. Frequent and regular group processing of current functioning to improve the group's future effectiveness

Donato (2004) draw attention to the difference between the conceptualizations of collaboration and stated that many language learning researches in collaborative context ignored the level of relation of the learners in cooperative working. In his previous studies (Donato, 1988; 1994), he indicates that when the tasks with predetermined aims and outwardly described objectives are performed by groups studying imprecisely, their results are expected to be different from cooperatively established activities. Indeed, in his prior study on FL learning, Donato (1988) observes that the learners working collaboratively on tasks achieved better outcomes than those who have loosely group interaction and connection. Students' collaborative effort in jointly constructed activity brought into the members' extensive use of the pronoun "we," frequent requests for mutual assistance, and an artificial discourse pattern that was often indistinguishable from that of a single speaker. Another study by Storch (2001) also supports this notion that there are different kinds of relations between pairs while working and just the ones who presented a collaborative processing could reestablish new information and learn new structures or vocabularies.

Donato (2004) highlights that the aim of collaborative learning is not solely to fill information into the brains of the learners as a learning outcome. On the contrary, collaborative learning requires the transformation of the individuals to become participant and contributor of the society they live in. As Donato (2004) states, people who are isolated from others not only lose information but also social roles. Cooperation converts the individuals from isolated members to participating and contributing members of the community. Therefore, according to Donato (2004), cooperation and its mutuality are the cause and effect of purposive, indirect social relationships.

The importance of needed time for constructing social interaction which is a necessity for collaboration has not been sufficiently cared about. As defined in the prior chapter, a small number of studies conducted on interactive settings attached importance to nonpermanent necessities for kinds of relations in learning environments. Brooks, Donato, and McGlone (1997) verify the time as an element facilitating the comprehension of collaborative and linguistic necessities. In that study, it was indicated that participants's use of target language and discussing the task strategy decreased considerably. The result of that research pointed to three significant aspects which are respectively from theoretical perspective, research perspective and pedagogical perspective. According to the first perspective, in collaboration learners need time to improve socially and cognitively encouraging learning environments for one another. On the other hand, the second perspective proposed that the outcomes of the studies conducted in brief term with participants unfamiliar to cooperation are not the same as the results of the studies carried out actively in collaborative settings. The last perspective suggested the educators not to focus on a single aspect in assessment and to evaluate the learners' performance in many ways.

2.4. Collaborative Writing

Campbell and Barnard (2005) state that although writing has been perceived as a skill that individuals personally put forward, this understanding has been changed in recent years and it has started to be accepted as a way of constructing and broadening meaning (Appleby, 2000; Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987; Chenoweth and Hayes, 2001, 2003; Flower and Hayes, 1981; Hayes and Flower, 1987).

Campbell and Barnard (2005) assert that most of the researchers in this area, especially earlier ones such as Hayes and Flower, thought the process of writing to be an essentially cognitive one, but more recently this assumption has been converted into a more sociocultural orientation. By time, sociocultural theorists have moved away from individual cognition and underlined the importance of cooperation among learners (Cole & Engestrom, 1993; Lantolf, 2000; Van Lier, 2000). For instance, Pea (1993) states “the mind rarely works alone” and writing, as a learning process, is the coconstruction of texts by students working together (Pea, 1993, p. 47).

Campbell and Barnard (2005) affirm that some researchers have suggested some relevant activities such as collaborative problem-solving, brainstorming, shared planning, multiple drafts, peer feedback, and revision for the cycle of process writing.

The focal point of learning theories has also changed over time. For example, Dillenbourg, Dillenbourg, P. Baker, M. Blaye, A. and O'malley (1996) point out that cooperative learning theories investigated the behaviors of individuals within the group previously, and in recent years this study area has shifted to the group itself. Then, the social interaction and interaction characteristics of the group took the lead role. Therefore, academic studies have begun to try to understand the role of variables in interaction, rather than developing parameters for effective collaboration (Dillenbourg, P. Baker, M. Blaye, A. & O'malley, C. 1996). Similarly, Donato (2004) highlights the definition of “the collaborative phenomenon” and appreciated the concepts of sociocultural theory as a binding explanatory frame for collaborative learning. Goal-directed activity, human relations, mediation, history and culture are included in the concepts of sociocultural theory.

More previously, Petrovsky (1985) claims that collaboration involves group conformity and refuse the individual. Unlike to contemporary concepts of collaboration, Petrovsky's theory is different in two respects. The first is that the individual is unique and derivated from the society. The other is that the analysis of collaboration conduces multiple levels from deeply rooted cooperative efforts to superficial social affinities. For Petrovsky, socially constructed activity hosts interpersonal relations, the historical and cultural backgrounds of the members, and it is at the centre of the collective. That is to say according to Petrovsky, collaboration includes a meaningful core activity like

playing a networked computer game, creating a visual product, etc. and the social relations that come along as a result of jointly constructed goals for the common aim.

Whether collaborative learning is more efficient than individual learning or not depends on some conditions and it is not always positive. As Dillenbourg, et al. (1996) state that collaboration is a social structures but not just a process with certain positive outcomes on participants. In collaboration, pairs or groups of people work together, and just in some instances, some positive kinds of interaction come out (Dillenbourg, P. Baker, M. Blaye, A. & O'malley, C. 1996). In some other studies (Salomon and Globerson, 1989; Mulryan, 1992), it is reported that there are some negative instances in such a way that the weaker participants are more and more inactive while cooperating with higher level participants.

Roschelle (1992) identifies the collaboration as a practice in building of common meanings, and notes that studies on interaction has defined some features which make it possible for learners to reach that knowledge by reconstruction of shared meanings. That reconstruction or convergence happens by stages, yet it is prone to consist of four stages: 1) conceptual comprehension of the structure; 2) the interchange of the metaphors; 3) a repetitive pattern for reconstructing notions; 4) applying gradually higher standarts for convergence. A similar definition for collaboration was uttered by Roschelle and Teasley (1995) in the way that it is a synchronized action as a consequence of permanent effort to reconstruct and sustain a common notion of an issue. According to them, the scope of a common issue is combining the aims, defining the existing problem cases, being aware of the possible schemes, and connecting these to each other. According to Roschelle and Teasley (1995), the learners carry out the collaboration in the scope of a common issue by worthwhile interaction.

2.5. Related Empirical Studies in the Literature

To explain the transformation of education from the middle ages to the present, let's take a look at the hypothetical portrait Spence tells us. In his study, Spence (2001, p.3) fantasizes an imaginary case that time travel is possible and individuals from the middle ages are placed into present day. A farmer placed in a modern farm would not recognize anything except for the cows. A physician from the 13th Century would probably have shocked in a modern operating room. Galileo would be perplexed by a tour of NASA's Space Center. Columbus would shake with fear in a nuclear sub.

However, a 15th Century university professor would feel right at home in a today's classroom as little thing has been changed since then. When compared with agriculture, medicine, science, transportation, manufacturing and communication, teaching has little to no been transformed and improved. The most still assumption that teaching is telling, learning is comprehending what the instructor teaches, and knowledge is subject content. Unfortunately, the perspective of education is in such a shallow condition.

Spence (2001) also states that education reforms were made during the 20th century but that these reforms provided very little persistence. He even propounds that Dewey's sigh about education in 1890 could be heard as if it were written today. He mentioned that education historians also address these failed reform cycles based on new technology, new management, budget procedures, new reward structures, etc.

On the other hand, of course, in these unsuccessful educational reforms are not only the faults of educators but also of many components like families, politicians, children, citizens, etc. Because they have taboos such as a "real" school, a "real" education, "teaching is ...", "learning is ...", and "knowledge is ..." and expect education to continue in line with these taboos. (Spence, 2001, p.2-3)

Spence (2001) reproaches and adds that survival leads mankind to learning and even in the most difficult conditions man can learn and learning is from the womb to the tomb. Nonetheless, education practices ignore this ability of man and assume "learning" as though it were unique to a few intelligent people. In this sense, Spence recommends professors at the university to be designers of educational experiences, not teachers.

Since the best way to make real our dreams about the future is to carry out them, Spence (2001) exemplifies this notion by saying that designing the future is the best way to foresee it. Likewise, the fact remains that the correct design of learning environments will also enable lower-cost learning.

Meanwhile, collaborative/cooperative learning does not always guarantee the improvement. For instance, in Storch's (2002) study, the researcher divided the participants into dyads as collaboratively or expert/novice, the dominant/dominant and dominant/passive dyads. Storch observes that working in pairs can scaffold each participant's performance, but the desired scaffolding was more likely to happen when pairs interacted collaboratively or in an expert/novice pattern rather than that of the

dominant/dominant or dominant/passive dyads. These dyads brought to an issue three categories of instances: 1) Instances suggesting transfer of knowledge. In this case, the correction of one student elicits a confirmation from the other student. This is the expected and desired result of collaborative working in these kinds of studies. 2) Instances showing no transfer knowledge- despite the high level of correction, the other student persists using his/her own form and maintains a resistance to or disregard for the suggestions made by the other participant. 3) And there may be instances suggesting missed opportunities. In this case, one participant modeled a correct form of article usage and leaded the other participant to extend the mentioned knowledge to new contexts but there came no involvement by the other participant. When compared, the data of the dominant/dominant dyad had the greatest number of instances showing “no transfer of knowledge”, and the data of the dominant/passive dyad had the greatest number of “instances suggesting missed opportunities”.

Likewise, there are some negative instances, as well. For instance, the weaker participants are more and more inactive while cooperating with higher level participants (Salomon and Globerson, 1989; Mulryan, 1992) and working in pairs is more effecient than working in groups because pairs are prone to collaborate while the groups have the tendency to compete (Trowbridge, 1987). Also, another important point to note in Storch' study (2002) is that there were examples of transferring knowledge to undesired direction. 10 examples in that study showed that mistaken decisions lead to transference of inaccurate information to individual performance. As it is seen, collaborative/cooperative learning sometimes comes up with the expected/desired results, but sometimes with reverse/undesirable results and sometimes with resultless. This may arise from the incomprehensible collaboration phenomenon. For instance, Donato (2004) states that the collaboration phenomenon needs to be described and explained comprehensively and adequately by researchers. As he asserts that language acquisition studies conducted with interactionalist perspectives contain much data while the studies from the sociocultural perspective are rich in terms of theoretical concepts but poor in terms of data. Secondly, Donato (2004) highlightes the importance of the collaborative productivity and summons for better and larger definition of this term because mostly collaborative production is unrelated to the result which contrsucts an artifact language. Additionally, he wishes for that collaborative productivity needs to be examined in terms of social and relational consequences carried out for a social purpose

at the time of collaboration or later because having a wider understanding of collaborative productivity may provide us avoid from superficial language use and dualism. Thirdly, he suggests uniting L2 learning studies with cooperative learning literature as the latter possess abundant archives derived from the leading studies of Johnson and Johnson and Slavin. According to him, collaboration draws attention to the significance of group working, affirmative mutuality, and individual responsibility, which are crucial components for efficient collaboration in classrooms. These conceptions come out to make different grades of cooperation and to stimulate collaborative classroom settings.

Donato (2004) asserts that interaction does not exactly represent cooperation, and he cites from John-Steiner's study: "in engaging in collaboration in Western societies, partners need to shed some of their cultural heritage, such as the powerful belief in a separate, independent self and in the glory of individual achievement" (Steiner, 2000, p. 204). Then he joints this idea with his previous study (Donato, 1994) that interaction is mainly established on the psychological and social tendency of community members and it is less than persons processing in a self-directed way in front of others because according to him, several aspects need to be considered to entitle an interaction as collaboration. Culture is one of them. For example, Fullan (1999) states that collaborative civilizations stimulate heterogeneity, induce and include concern, increase implicit information to reveal the knowledge, search for relations to individuals' ideas and construct consistency. Donato (2004) supports this notion and adds that cooperation is related to the changing social roles by way of relevant and intentional shared works as in educational institutions and social life. Meanwhile, the conclusion of the cooperation is the development of new information and expansion from the group. However, he adds that to form a change, cooperation must facilitate individuals to participate in collaborative works rather than causing them to be independent individuals isolated from interactions. Similarly, Gee (2003) studies this issue, introducing the Notion of affinity groups. According to Gee, these groups share common features, and similar to Fullan's ideas, also they are bound up to each other and learn through a network of relationships.

Donato (2004) also highlights the significance of the time needed for establishment of the interactions which are essential to collaboration. In a study, Brooks, Donato, and McGlone (1997) prove that time was an important component

which facilitates pairs to comprehend the collaborative and lingual necessity to accomplish an assignment. That study had three important conclusions: the first is, from a theoretical perspective that participants need time to develop socially and cognitively for supporting collaboration. The second is, from a research perspective, that isolated tasks in studies performed in short time intervals do not reveal results alike to the ones in collaborative contexts. The last one is, from a pedagogical perspective, an advice for teachers that evaluations of the participants' productions should not be grounded on an exclusive aspect of a task.

We are of the same idea with Donato about that the aim of the collaborative learning is not and should not be just exclusively to upload information into the minds of the learners. Contrarily, collaboration should involve the transformation of the individuals to become participants and contributors of the society (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Donato (2004) states that while collaborating, individuals not only gain more information but also convert from average persons to contributors of the society.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology of the research is reported. It includes the overall approach and the type of research, the process of data collection and analysis.

Firstly, the overall process of the study will be imparted in detail. Next, the overall design of the study will be presented. Then, information about the participants in the study will be given, and the research questions of the study will be highlighted once again. Finally, data collection instruments will be presented.

3.2. Overall Process of the Study

As this study aimed to be implemented with FLD students of a state high school, firstly the necessary permission was obtained from the District Directorate of National Education. Principal of the school was informed about the study. ELT teachers of the participants were also informed about the study and their consents were taken. We also took the participants' consent. Participants were also convinced for that the study was fully confidential, their identities would not be shared and the results from the study would have no effect on their school grades. As a matter of fact, at first few of the students seemed to be reluctant to participate in such a study because they stated that they do not really focus on writing skills as they are not required to write any paragraphs or essays in English neither in classes nor in the university admission exam. Fortunately, we were able to persuade them for the research after a brief delivery about the importance of writing skills at university and as language teachers in the future.

As the first aim of the study was to improve and compare the written production of the participants, they were educated at first. Participants were provided instruction in terms of paragraph format and content, types of sentences, essay format, essay writing process, writing introductions, body paragraphs and conclusions, outlining, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. This was a period of 8 weeks/2 hours per week. Then, the second phase of the study was to practice the instruction topics which

were in line with curriculum and syllabus design of the 2018-2019 Academic Year 12th grades textbook. Participants were divided into two groups-control and experimental ones. The control group members were required to do the tasks individually while the experimental group members were supposed to do their tasks collaboratively. After the practice tasks were completed, the results of the groups' writings were compared. Finally, we analyzed and interpreted the findings.

3.3. Overall Design of the Study

In terms of technical aspects, this study was based on Quantitative Research Method to handle efficiently the research problem. It has a deductive logic which hypothesizes that collaborative writing improves the students' writing skill and tries to collect data to determine whether empirical evidence exists and supports the stated hypotheses. This method was used because it identifies structured cause-and-effect relationships between variables. Also, it ensures fast data collection and analysis, and it offers consistent results.

The study has an Experimental Design. This method is used to establish a cause and effect relationship between two variables. The experimental group (the depended variable) was exposed to collaborative writing (the independed variable). It aimed to compare the writing results of the experimental group and control group, and to see whether collaborative writing improves high school FLD students' writing skill, and if so, to show that in which aspects it makes improvement.

Since it was planned to be done with FLD students, Purposive Sampling Method was used in this study. Therefore, there were two schools in our district that met this criterion. Considering the willingness of the school administration, teachers and students, this high school was chosen for this study.

3.4. Participants

The population of the study consisted of 18 students who were at the 12th grade of a state high school. They were admitted to high school based on their scores on national secondary entrance examination which was called TEOG. Participants chose to study at foreign language departments of their high school at the end of the 10th grade. This department offers students 14 hours of English lessons per week during at grade 11th and 12th. They were preparing for the university entrance exam. Most of the

participants were wishing and planning to become teachers of English in the future. Their level of English, according to curriculum, supposed to be at least B2 level of CEF. However, as their teachers indicated, they are at the low-intermediate level of proficiency in English. All participants share the same L1 background, Turkish. They were used to teacher-centered education, memorization and individual work in their preceding schooling experiences. They were native speakers of Turkish language. Participants' age range was 17 to 18 years old. As for the gender of the participants, 78% of the participants was girls while 22% of them were boys. In order to protect their privacy, the participants were given symbols as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, G1, G2, G3, and G4. S is abbreviation of "student" and G is of "group".

3.5. Research Questions

This study aimed to find possible answers to the questions below:

1. Do collaborative writing tasks help high school FLD learners to improve their writing?
2. Are there any differences between the tasks produced by learners in the control group and those in the experimental group under basis of the rubric used to assess the products?
3. Which aspects of writing, if any, of the learners in the experimental group are improved through Collaborative Writing (CW)?

3.6. Data Collection Instruments

The writing tasks conducted by students evaluated in line with an evaluation rubric which was adapted from ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, et al., 1981). The rubric is a four-point scale (Excellent to Very Good, Good to Average, Fair and Needs Much Improvement) that which suggests a general explanation at each point for standart writing production at that point and basically consists of five domains of writing which are content, organization, vocabulary and language use, grammar usage and mechanics. The rubric is as follows:

Level	Criteria
Content	
30-27	<u>Excellent to Very Good:</u> Knowledgeable, substantive development of thesis, relevant to assigned topic
26-22	<u>Good to Average:</u> sure knowledge of subject, adequate range, limited development of thesis, mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail
21-17	<u>Fair:</u> limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development of topic
16-13	<u>Needs Much Improvement:</u> does not show knowledge of subject, not many details, not relevant to assigned topic OR not enough to evaluate.
Organization	
20-18	<u>Excellent to Very Good:</u> fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/supported, succinct, well-organized, logical sequencing, cohesive
17-14	<u>Good to Average:</u> somewhat choppy, loosely organized, but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing
13-10	<u>Fair:</u> non-fluent, ideas are confusing or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing and development
9-7	<u>Needs Much Improvement:</u> does not communicate, no organization OR not enough to evaluate
Vocabulary and Language Use	
20-18	<u>Excellent to Very Good:</u> sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice and usage, word form mastery
17-14	<u>Good to Average:</u> adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning understood
13-10	<u>Fair:</u> limited range, frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage, meaning somewhat confusing or not understood
9-7	<u>Needs Much Improvement:</u> essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form OR not enough to evaluate
Grammar Usage	
25-22	<u>Excellent to Very Good:</u> effective, complex sentences, few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions

21-18 **Good to Average:** effective, but simple sentence construction, minor problems in complex constructions, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions, but meaning understood

17-11 **Fair:** major problems in simple/complex sentences, many errors of agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions, meaning confused or not understood

10-5 **Needs Much Improvement:** almost no mastery of sentence construction rules, many errors, ideas not understood OR not enough to evaluate

Mechanics

5 **Excellent to Very Good:** few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing

4 **Good to Average:** some errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, but meaning understood

3 **Fair:** frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, poor typing, meaning confused or not understood

2 **Needs Much Improvement:** many errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, typing is poor, OR not enough to evaluate

Procedures

The study was carried out in a Foreign Language Department class consisting of 18 students and divided into two groups; control and experimental groups in which students were selected according to Purposive Sampling Method.

Students in the experimental group were allowed to choose their group members themselves since it was believed that the friendly interactions among students would improve collaborative work which was a quite new experience for learners. They were required to perform all the tasks collaboratively during implementation time which was the second semester while the control group members were required to perform the same tasks individually. In order to increase the motivation for collaboration, all experimental group members were given the same score since they delivered one joint paper for each task.

As a first step, the participants wrote a paper as a pre-task. Then, during the first semester (8 sessions, 2hrs/week), students received instruction on writing in line with curriculum and syllabus design of the 2018-2019 Academic Year, and then the next semester (8 sessions, 2hrs/week), they carried out writing tasks-writing paragraphs or essays- for practice.

Steps of the procedure

To minimize any confusion, we provided students with an outline of the entire process before the implementation process started. The steps of the procedure were as follows:

1. 1st semester will be the instruction term
2. 2nd semester will be the implementation term,
3. There will be two main groups (control and experimental),
4. Control group members will write individually,
5. Experimental group members will group or buddy up (sub-groups) with each other and write collaboratively,
6. Experimental group members will choose their partners/group members themselves,
7. Brainstorming ideas about the target topic and organizing the information into coherent groupings will be done in the class,
8. Outlining, planning, and crafting of the writings will be done in the class,
9. Students are free to use dictionary while writing,
10. The instructor checks and evaluates the writings pointing out content, organization, vocabulary and language use, grammar usage and mechanics, and provides comments and suggestions;
11. Students receive a single grade based on their overall effort and the quality of their essay/paragraph;
12. The grades the students receive in this study will not have an impact on the grades of your school subjects.

Topics of the Instruction Semester

The first semester was the instruction term. It included the following learning objectives:

- Understand the structure of a paragraph

- Write an effective topic sentence
- Develop adequate support for a topic sentence
- Understand and exhibit unity in writing
- Understand the basic essay format
- Understand the essay writing process
- Develop an angle appropriate for a 5-paragraph essay
- Write effective thesis statements
- Write different styles of leads for introductions
- Write a 5-paragraph essay, exhibiting a strong introduction, well-developed body, effective conclusion, with unity throughout the essay
- Apply basic rules of capitalization in English
- Demonstrate appropriate use of apostrophes in English
- Use commas in lists and after the transition words at the beginning of the sentences
- Use commas in compound sentences

The Lesson Plans for instruction were as follow:

Lesson 1: Introduction to paragraph format and content

Lesson 2: Topic sentences – Supporting sentences

Lesson 3: Paragraph unity- sentence structure (simple and compound sentences)

Lesson 4: Essay format – Essay writing process

Lesson 5: Focusing the topic – Thesis statements

Lesson 6: Developing introductions – Outlining

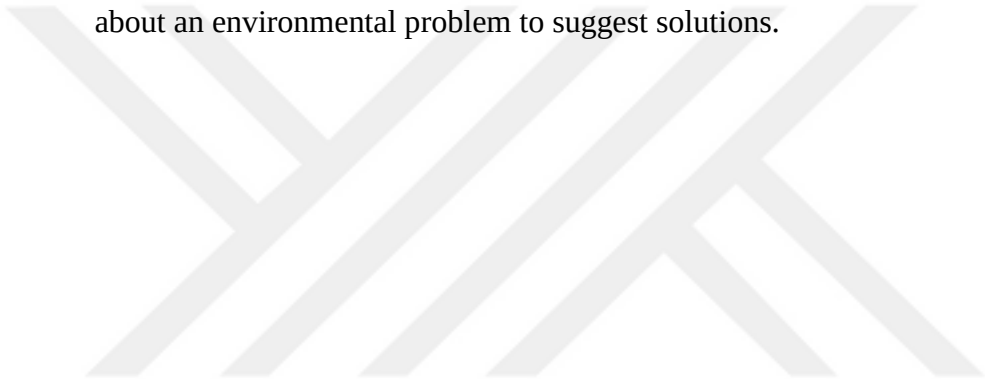
Lesson 7: Writing a conclusion – Finalizing the essay

Lesson 8: Capitalization rules – Punctuation

Writing tasks of Practice Semester

The second semester was the practice term. In this semester, the writing tasks were performed. These tasks were according to the curriculum of the Ministry of National Education in the 2018-2019 Academic Year for 12th grades. The name of the textbook was "Count Me In". The subjects were as follow:

1. Students will be able to write a survey report on their friends'/teachers' music preferences.

2. Students will be able to write an opinion essay about qualities of a good friend by stating reasons.
 3. Students will be able to write mottos/slogans about human rights.
 4. Students will be able to write detailed descriptions of an imaginary future.
 5. Students will be able to describe their current mood / mood reflected in a song/ painting/photograph through creative writing.
 6. a) Students will be able to write an announcement to invite people for a charity organization. b) Students will be able to write an application letter to an organization for scholarship.
 7. Students will be able to write a news story/a past experience/an imaginary story.
 8. Students will be able to write an email/a letter of complaint to a local authority about an environmental problem to suggest solutions.
- 

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

As mentioned above, this study intended to investigate the impact of CW on the writings of Turkish high school EFL learners in terms of content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing.

In this chapter, the findings of this study, which is conducted with experimental and control groups, will be interpreted on the basis of criteria headings in the evaluation scale. In other words, the works of the groups will be examined separately under the titles of content, organization, vocabulary and language use, grammar usage and mechanics. These results are based on an analysis of eight tasks per student/group gathered from participants. The Analyses were made in line with an evaluation rubric which is adapted from ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, et al., 1981). 18 students participated in this study. The instruction and writing tasks were completely the same for both groups. The control group consists of 6 students while the experimental group consists of 4 groups of 3 students. Students are given pseudo names as S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, G1, G2, G3, and G4. S is abbreviation of “student” and G is of “group”.

After the instruction semester, the participants started to write their tasks. The first task was writing a survey report on their friends’/teachers’ music preferences. The second one was about qualities of a good friend. The third task was about human rights. The participants wrote about describing an imaginary future in their fourth paper. Then, they were asked to describe their current mood. Writing either an announcement to invite people for a charity organization or an application letter to an organization for scholarship was the subject of the sixth task. A past experience or an imaginary story was their seventh task topic. Finally, they wrote a letter of complaint to a local authority about an environmental problem to suggest solutions.

4.2. Content of Students’ Writings

The first criterion of the evaluation rubric was the content. As in the each criterion, it needs to be graded in terms of a four-point scale (Excellent to Very Good,

Good to Average, Fair and Needs Much Improvement). Scales for content are respectively graded as; ‘Excellent to Very Good’ is from 27 to 30 points, ‘Good to Average’ is from 22 to 26 points, ‘Fair’ is from 17 to 21, and ‘Needs Much Improvement’ is from 13 to 16 points. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 1

Content Level of All Participants’s Tasks and The Mean

STUDENT	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4	Task5	Task6	Task7	Task8	Mean
S1	26	22	22	22	18	21	22	27	22,50
S2	17	18	23	17	20	17	22	22	19,50
S3	20	27	26	27	26	21	21	27	24,38
S4	25	18	17	15	25	17	21	15	19,13
S5	0	22	26	24	22	24	22	0	17,50
S6	0	21	20	21	24	20	20	21	18,38
G1	22	27	26	22	26	24	27	26	25,00
G2	26	27	27	26	26	28	21	28	26,13
G3	27	28	26	28	27	27	27	27	27,13
G4	20	20	22	26	25	22	22	25	22,75

As can be seen in the table 1 above, as a mean;

G3 is graded ‘Excellent to Very Good’,

S1, S3, G1, G2 and G4 are graded ‘Good to Average’,

S2, S4, S5 and S6 are graded ‘Fair’.

G3 was the most knowledgeable in terms of content. They had a substantive development of thesis and they wrote long enough and relevant to the assigned topic. Their writings were mostly in essay format.

S1, S3, G1, G2 and G4 seemed to be knowledgeable of the subject. They wrote mostly relevant to topic, but they had limited development of thesis and lacked detail.

Some of their writings were in essay format but for the rest they were in paragraph format.

S2, S4, S5 and S6 were limited knowledgeable compared to others. They had little essence and inadequate development of topic and showed minimal thematic development. Mostly, they wrote short and incomplete paragraphs and it was difficult to understand the topic clearly because they just wrote an introduction paragraph which was not supported with body paragraphs and not summarized with a conclusion paragraph.

Table 2

Total Mean Level of Groups In Terms of Content

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Mean of Task1	14,66	23,75
Mean of Task2	21,33	25,5
Mean of Task3	22,33	25,25
Mean of Task4	21	25,5
Mean of Task5	22,5	26
Mean of Task6	20	25,25
Mean of Task7	21,33	24,25
Mean of Task8	18,66	26,5
Total Mean	20,23	25,25

As it is presented in table 2, however different the results of means from task to task are, the total mean showed statistically significant differences between the two groups considering the content (Control Group:20,23 and Experimental Group:25,25).

That is, students who wrote individually showed limited knowledge of subject and the content of their reports mostly have little substance and indicated inadequate

development of topic (mean value for content: 20,23). The control group was graded 'Fair' as a total mean value.

On the other hand, the writings of the experiment group are graded 'Good to Average' level in terms of content as a total mean value (Mean: 25,25). Their writings were more knowledgeable, substantive, and relevant to the assigned topic when compared to control group as a whole.

4.3. Organization of Students' Writings

The second criterion of the evaluation rubric was the organization. As in the each criterion, it was graded in terms of a four-point scale (Excellent to Very Good, Good to Average, Fair and Needs Much Improvement). Scales for organization are respectively graded as; 'Excellent to Very Good' is from 18 to 20 points, 'Good to Average' is from 14 to 17 points, 'Fair' is from 10 to 13, and 'Needs Much Improvement' is from 7 to 9 points. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 3

Organization Level of All Participants's Tasks and The Mean

STUDENT	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4	Task5	Task6	Task7	Task8	Mean
S1	17	15	14	15	13	13	15	17	14,88
S2	17	15	18	15	14	12	17	16	15,50
S3	13	18	17	17	17	14	13	18	15,88
S4	14	13	10	10	17	13	16	9	12,75
S5	0	15	17	17	18	17	17	0	12,63
S6	0	13	12	13	15	13	12	13	11,38
G1	15	18	18	18	17	17	18	17	17,25
G2	17	18	20	20	17	18	14	18	17,75
G3	17	20	18	20	18	20	19	18	18,75
G4	14	14	17	17	15	17	13	18	15,63

As it is seen in the table 3 above, as a mean;
 G1, G2 and G3 are graded 'Excellent to Very Good',
 S1, S2, S3, and G4 are graded 'Good to Average',
 S4, S5 and S6 are graded 'Fair'.

G1, G2 and G3 succeeded the most fluent expression. They stated their ideas clearly and supported them with details. Some of their writings were succinct and some were longer, but the writings were well-organized, written in a logical order, and cohesive. Their writings were mostly essay formatted, with an introduction, body and conclusion.

S1, S2, S3, and G4 wrote a little floating. Their main ideas were mostly stood out, but they had limited support, and they were loosely organized. The writings were logical, but somewhat lack of complete sequencing. Some of their writings were paragraph formatted but mostly they were essay formatted.

S4, S5 and S6 had insufficient organization. The writings were non-fluent and lacked of logical sequencing. The ideas were disconnected and sometimes confusing. Mostly, they wrote short, and, sometimes without title, incomplete paragraphes, and the writings needed much improvement. Mostly they just wrote a short paragraph which did not embody the body and a conclusion.

Table 4

Total Mean Level of Groups In Terms of Organization

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Mean of Task1	10,16	15,75
Mean of Task2	14,83	17,5
Mean of Task3	14,66	18,25
Mean of Task4	14,5	18,75
Mean of Task5	15,66	16,75
Mean of Task6	13,66	18
Mean of Task7	15	16
Mean of Task8	12,16	17,75
Total Mean	13,83	17,34

As it is presented in table 4, the total mean showed statistically that experimental group (Mean: 17,34) outweighed the control group (Mean: 13,83) in terms of organization, as well. The control group was graded 'Good to Average' as a total mean value. The writings of the experiment group are graded 'Excellent to Very Good' level in terms of organization as a total mean value.

Writings of the control group were mostly non-fluent or choppy, loosely organized and incomplete sequenced while the writings of experimental group are mostly stated clearly, fluent, well-organized, essay formatted with logical sequencing and cohesive.

4.4. Vocabulary and Language Use of Students' Writings

The third criterion of the evaluation rubric was the vocabulary and language use. As in the each criterion, it needs to be graded in terms of a four-point scale (Excellent to Very Good, Good to Average, Fair and Needs Much Improvement). Scales for Vocabulary and Language Use are respectively graded as; 'Excellent to Very Good' is from 18 to 20 points, 'Good to Average' is from 14 to 17 points, 'Fair' is from 10 to 13, and 'Needs Much Improvement' is from 7 to 9 points. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 5

Vocabulary and Language Use Level of All Participants's Tasks and The Mean

STUDENT	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4	Task5	Task6	Task7	Task8	Mean
S1	14	14	14	17	14	13	13	17	14,50
S2	18	14	17	15	12	15	13	13	14,63
S3	17	18	17	18	18	17	15	18	17,25
S4	15	18	13	14	18	17	16	14	15,63
S5	0	15	17	16	17	14	14	0	11,63
S6	0	13	12	13	13	13	13	13	11,25
G1	15	18	17	14	18	18	18	17	16,88
G2	17	17	17	17	18	18	15	18	17,13
G3	17	18	18	18	18	18	20	18	18,13
G4	15	17	18	17	18	15	17	17	16,75

As it can be seen in the table 5 above, as a mean;

G3 are graded 'Excellent to Very Good',

S1, S2, S3, S4, G1, G2 and G4 are graded 'Good to Average',

S5 and S6 are graded 'Fair'.

Students in G3 are the most successful ones in terms of vocabulary and language use. Their texts effectively transmitted meaning and were in a sophisticated range, they used an effective language. Word or idiom choice and usage were effective and correct.

S1, S2, S3, S4, G1, G2 and G4 wrote with an adequate range. There were occasional errors of Word/idiom form, choice, usage, but the texts transmitted the meaning. Here are some examples of their errors and what they actually intended to say:

S1: Pop music is moving => for meaning of that Pop music is upbeat.

No limited board => for meaning of unlimited food and beverages

S2: say lie => lie/tell a lie

such a every people... => like everybody else/ just like everybody else

S4: from 7 to 70 => young and old alike

G1: by living lessons => by experiencing

G2: Friends constantly coming out of your back => Friends should count on/back up each other

G4: there is nothing come in my hand. => There is nothing I can do.

S5 and S6 had insufficient and limited range. Their writings were somehow confusing and not easy to understand. Their texts contained frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, and usage. There were several inappropriate word choices, frequent translation-based vocabulary problems. For instance;

S5: Our mood changing something. => Our mood changes somehow.

S6: trees cut => cutting trees

experience wins => gaing experience

It's about people should be awareness and must be something about it. => People should be aware of these problems and must/should do something.

I didn't experience an important yet. => I'm not experienced enough yet.

Table 6

Total Mean Level of Groups In Terms of Vocabulary and Language Use

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Mean of Task1	10,66	16
Mean of Task2	15,33	17,5
Mean of Task3	15	17,5
Mean of Task4	15,5	16,5
Mean of Task5	15,33	18
Mean of Task6	14,83	17,25
Mean of Task7	14	17,5
Mean of Task8	12,5	17,5
Total Mean	14,14	17,22

Comparing the results with level specifications of the rating scale, it is revealed in Table 6 that the control group (individuals) fell behind the experimental group in terms of vocabulary and language use. The control group was graded ‘Good to Average’ as a total mean value (Total Mean: 14,14). The writings of the experiment group are graded ‘Excellent to Very Good’ level as a total mean value (Total Mean: 17,22).

Writings of the control group were mostly either limited ranged or somewhat confusing, and contained several errors of Word/idiom form, choice, usage. On the other hand, the writings of the experimental group are mostly more sophisticated ranged, easily understood, and effective in terms of Word/idiom choice and usage than the writings of the control group.

4.5. Grammar of Students' Writings

The fourth criterion of the evaluation rubric was Grammar Usage. As in the each criterion, it needs to be graded in terms of a four-point scale (Excellent to Very Good, Good to Average, Fair and Needs Much Improvement). Scales for Grammar Usage are respectively graded as; 'Excellent to Very Good' is from 22 to 25 points, 'Good to Average' is from 18 to 21 points, 'Fair' is from 11 to 17, and 'Needs Much Improvement' is from 5 to 10 points. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 7

Grammar Usage Level of All Participants's Tasks and The Mean

STUDENT	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4	Task5	Task6	Task7	Task8	Mean
S1	18	12	12	20	17	17	17	18	16,38
S2	21	15	15	17	14	17	15	15	16,13
S3	20	21	18	22	21	21	15	21	19,88
S4	18	22	17	12	18	21	21	15	18,00
S5	0	17	17	18	21	17	15	0	13,13
S6	0	11	11	11	17	11	11	11	10,38
G1	18	21	22	18	21	20	18	21	19,88
G2	21	17	21	21	18	18	20	22	19,75
G3	22	23	22	22	23	24	22	22	22,50
G4	18	18	21	21	21	18	17	18	19,00

As it is seen in the table 7 above, as a mean;

G3 is graded 'Excellent to Very Good',

S3, S4, G1, G2 and G4 are graded 'Good to Average',

S1, S2, S5 and S6 are graded 'Fair'.

Students in G3 are the most successful ones in terms of grammar usage. Their texts are effective, contain complex sentences and convey the correct meaning. There

were few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions.

S3, S4, G1, G2 and G4 wrote effective, but mostly with simple sentence construction. There were several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions, but the texts transferred the meaning somehow. Some examples are stated below:

S3: some of them like or some of them don't like. => We like some of them and do not like some.

She whenever you behind. => She should always stand behind you.

It can use at education. => It can be used in education.

Technology part of our life. => Technology is a part of our life.

S4: What good friend should we assess according to? => How should we assess a good friend?

G1: When they are sad, sad songs listening to song. => When people are sad, they prefer listening to slow music/songs.

For many people, a good friend is the only good things to tell them. => ...the one who tells them good things.

Good friends they don't want you to be perfect. => Good friends do not expect you to be perfect.

These rights apply worldwide. => These rights are universal.

People cut off communication with people face to face, with tools like phone, computer, etc. => People cut off communication with each other and they prefer communicating with phone, computer, etc.

G2: Four of my friends I was listening to music in the classical style. => Four of my friends are listening to classical music.

As long as a person dreaming, s/he=> As long as a person dreams, S/he...

My dream is a good teacher, a good wife/mother...=> My dream is being a good teacher, a good wife/mother...

G4: I have a many friends and they have bad things cigarette, alcohol, etc. => I have many friends who have bad habits /addictions like cigarette, alcohol, etc.

Poor countries so weak for defend their rights. => poor countries are too weak to defend their rights.

You don't even understand much how can I tell you. => You can not understand no matter how much I tell you.

Today increased disease. => Nowadays, diseases are on the rise.

I was think a long time. => I thought for a while/a long time.

Green peace successful group. => Green Peace is a successful group.

On the other hand, S1, S2, S5 and S6 had major problems in their sentences either simple or complex. Their writings were confusing and the meaning was not easy to understand. Their texts contain frequent errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions. There were several inappropriate contructions and meaningless sentences. Also, translation-based problems exist. For instance;

S1: Slow music is relaxing than...=> Slow music is more relaxing than...

We can understand from persons listens music styles. => We can understand which music style they are listening to.

This reason for we should agree ourselves. => For this reason, we should agree with each other.

This is for we continue relationship. => For this reason, we should maintain the relationship.

If one this qualities are not, ...=> if one of these qualities does not exist, ...

It (right to live) not taken in person. => People can not be deprived of the right to live.

It is important to society's peace. => It is important for peace of society.

We do many things without know. => We do many things unawares/without knowing.

It event will increase developing time. => This situation will increase in time.

I think the worst feelings are boredom. => I think the worst feeling is boredom.

Because in other feelings are clear to what you will do. => Because in other feelings, it is clear what to do.

You with the attend of party, it will have been better. => Your attendance/participation to the party will honor/please us.

S2: Listen to music one of the necessity of human, relax spirit. => Listening to music is one of the necessities of human, relaxing the soul.

She doesn't love jazz. Her listening music influence me. => She does not love jazz. Her music style influences me.

I embark on love species music arabic because of her. => I embark on loving Arabic music style because of her.

No single a definition of friendship. => There is no single definition of friendship.

Every people equal each other. => All people are equal to each other.

All people since birth they are born with human right. => All people are born with human rights.

In order to a good world, ...=> in order to have a good world,...

Now this imagine want make real very studying. => Now I want to make real this dream by studying hard.

Due to take an examination, excited and nervous. => Due to preparing for an exam, I'm excited and nervous.

It make easy life of people. => It makes people's life easier.

S5: these are the rights each has individual. => These are the rights each individual has.

Something I don't like, I'm nervous and aggressive. => When something I do not like happens, I get nervous and aggressive.

S6: All the people of the world from the moment they are born as human right come into the world. => All people are born with human rights.

Table 8

Total Mean Level of Groups In Terms of Grammar Usage

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Mean of Task1	12,83	19,75
Mean of Task2	16,33	19,75
Mean of Task3	15	21,5
Mean of Task4	16,66	20,5
Mean of Task5	18	20,75
Mean of Task6	17,33	20
Mean of Task7	15,67	19,25
Mean of Task8	13,33	20,75
Total Mean	15,64	20,28

Table 8 shows that the experimental group outperformed the control group in grammar aspects of writing, as well. The writings of the experiment group are graded ‘Good to Average’ level as a total mean value (Total Mean: 20,28) in terms of grammar while the control group was graded ‘Fair’ as a total mean value (Total Mean: 15,64).

The experimental group used simple constructions effectively, but their production of complex structures was somehow problematic and contained minor problems. There were some grammatical errors, but the meaning could be understood. On the other hand, the writings of the control group contained major problems. The meaning was either confusing or hard to understand because of many grammatical errors.

4.6. Mechanics of Students' Writings

The fifth and the last criterion of the evaluation rubric was Mechanics. Scales for Mechanics are respectively graded as; 'Excellent to Very Good' is 5 points, 'Good to Average' is 4 points, 'Fair' is 3, and 'Needs Much Improvement' is 2 points. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 9

Mechanics Level of All Participants's Tasks and The Mean

STUDENT	Task1	Task2	Task3	Task4	Task5	Task6	Task7	Task8	Mean
S1	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3,75
S2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3,13
S3	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3,63
S4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3,25
S5	0	3	4	4	3	4	3	0	2,63
S6	0	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2,75
G1	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	3,38
G2	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3,25
G3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4,00
G4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3,75

As it is revealed in the Table 9 above, as a mean;

G3 is graded 'Good to Average', and S1, S3 AND G4 can also be graded 'Good to Average' as their points are about 4,

S2, S4, G1, and G2 are graded 'Fair'. S5 and S6 can also be graded 'Fair' as their points are about 3,

G3 had the most comprehensive knowledge and usage of mechanics among all the participants. S1, S3 AND G4 can also be considered in the same level in terms of

mechanics. Even though their texts contained some errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, they are comprehensible and meaningful. For example;

S1: persons mood => persons'/people's mood

G4: cuz => because

Wanna => want to

S2, S4, G1, and G2 in addition to S5 and S6 performed poorly. There were frequent errors/lacks of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, poor typing. As well, the meaning was either confusing or not understandable.

Table 10

Total Mean Level of Groups In Terms of Mechanics

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Mean of Task1	2,33	3,5
Mean of Task2	3,33	3,25
Mean of Task3	3,33	3,5
Mean of Task4	3,5	4
Mean of Task5	3,5	3,75
Mean of Task6	3,16	3,5
Mean of Task7	3,66	3,75
Mean of Task8	2,66	3,5
Total Mean	3,18	3,59

It seems in Table 10 that the experimental group outperformed the control group just a notch above in mechanics aspects of writing. The total mean levels of both groups are close to each other, between 'Fair' and 'Good to Average'. The writings of the experiment group had 3,59 points as a total mean while the control group had 3,18 points. There was no significant difference for mechanics of writing when the statistical results were compared as groups. Both groups had some errors of spelling, punctuation,

capitalization, paragraphing in general. Mostly, mechanic errors of writing were infrequently detected, yet the meaning did not change due to these errors.

4.7. Comparison of the First Task and the Last Task

Table 11

Comparison of the First Task and the Last Task of the Groups

Total Mean of	First Task	Last Task
Experimental Group	78,75	86
Control Group	50,67	59,33

As can be seen from Table 11, the experimental group achieved a better result at the end of the process. The total mean of the experimental group increased from 78.75 to 86. Therefore, it is clear that collaborative writing method helped high school FLD learners to improve their writing. When the first task and the last task of the participants were compared, it can be concluded that they improved their writing skills in general, and they seemed to be more organized, more relevant, more fluent, more inclusive, more logical, understandable, more effective, and more accurate in terms of writing performances.

On the other hand, this study seems to benefit not only the experimental group but also the control group because, as shown in the Table 11, the control group also increased its mean. The total mean of control group increased from 50 to 59. This situation shows that the subjects studied during the instruction semester are beneficial for both groups in general. However, it is important to note that 2 students from the control group do not have the first task and the last task grades and one of these two students does not have a the last task grade. Therefore, the first task and the last task means of the control group may be lower than they should be.

The experimental group outweighed the control group nearly in all aspects of criteria except for mechanics. The difference in mechanics level was nonsignificant, just a notch above. Below are given the tables from other perspective. Also, the general difference level per task can be seen below.

4.8. General Evaluation of Tasks

Table 12

1st Task Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	Criteria					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	26	17	14	18	4	79
S2	17	17	18	21	3	76
S3	20	13	17	20	3	73
S4	25	14	15	18	4	76
S5	0	0	0	0	0	0
S6	0	0	0	0	0	0
G1	22	15	15	18	3	73
G2	26	17	17	21	3	84
G3	27	17	17	22	4	87
G4	20	14	15	18	4	71
Total Mean of Control Group	14,67	10,17	10,67	12,83	2,33	50,67
Experimental Group	23,75	15,75	16	19,75	3,5	78,75

We can conclude from the Table 12 that the experimental group scored higher than the control group in terms of all criteria even in the 1st task. In this task, the students were asked to write a survey report on their friends'/teachers' music preferences. They did research on this subject and reported the results. As it can be seen above from the Table 12, both the total mean and the total grade of experimental group were higher than those of control group in all aspects.

Table 13

2nd Task Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	<u>Criteria</u>					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	22	15	14	12	4	67
S2	18	15	14	15	3	65
S3	27	18	18	21	4	88
S4	18	13	18	22	3	74
S5	22	15	15	17	3	72
S6	21	13	13	11	3	61
G1	27	18	18	21	3	87
G2	27	18	17	17	3	82
G3	28	20	18	23	4	93
G4	20	14	17	18	3	72
Total Mean of						
Control Group	21,33	14,83	15,33	16,33	3,33	71,17
Experimental Group	25,50	17,50	17,50	19,75	3,25	83,50

The participants were required to write about qualities of a good friend by stating reasons in the second task. As it is seen from Table 13, the experimental group outperformed the control group in terms of content, organization, vocabulary and language use, and grammar usage criteria in this task. They wrote more reasonable, sensible and rational than the control group. On the other hand the control group was one step ahead of the experimental group in terms of mechanics.

Table 14

3rd Task Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	<u>Criteria</u>					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	22	14	14	12	4	66
S2	23	18	17	15	3	76
S3	26	17	17	18	3	81
S4	17	10	13	17	3	60
S5	26	17	17	17	4	81
S6	20	12	12	11	3	58
G1	26	18	17	22	3	86
G2	27	20	17	21	4	89
G3	26	18	18	22	4	88
G4	22	17	18	21	3	81
Total Mean of						
Control Group	22,33	14,67	15,00	15,00	3,33	70,33
Experimental Group	25,25	18,25	17,50	21,50	3,50	86,00

Writing about human rights was the subject of the 3rd task. As it is shown in Table 14, the control group fell behind the experimental group in the this task. The writings of the experimental group were more clear, succinct, cohesive while the writings of the control group were less substantive and detailed. Therefore, experimental group scored higher both in general total grade and in total mean through all the criteria.

Table 15

4th Draft Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	<u>Criteria</u>					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	22	15	17	20	4	78
S2	17	15	15	17	3	67
S3	27	17	18	22	4	88
S4	15	10	14	12	3	54
S5	24	17	16	18	4	79
S6	21	13	13	11	3	61
G1	22	18	14	18	4	76
G2	26	20	17	21	4	88
G3	28	20	18	22	4	92
G4	26	17	17	21	4	85
Total Mean of						
Control Group	21,00	14,50	15,50	16,67	3,50	71,17
Experimental Group	25,5	18,75	16,5	20,5	4	85,25

We can see from the Table 15 that the experimental group preceded the control group in the 4th task whose subject was to write detailed descriptions of an imaginary future. The writings of the experimental group were more relevant to assigned topic, supported better and more knowledgeable. On the other hand, the writings of the control group had limited knowledge of subject, inadequate development, lack of or incomplete logical sequencing.

Table 16

5th Task Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	<u>Criteria</u>					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	18	13	14	17	4	66
S2	20	14	12	14	3	63
S3	26	17	18	21	4	86
S4	25	17	18	18	3	81
S5	22	18	17	21	3	81
S6	24	15	13	17	4	73
G1	26	17	18	21	4	86
G2	26	17	18	18	3	82
G3	27	18	18	23	4	90
G4	25	15	18	21	4	83
Total Mean of						
Control Group	22,50	15,67	15,33	18,00	3,50	75
Experimental Group	26	16,75	18	20,75	3,75	85,25

The participants were asked to describe their current mood. Table 16 shows that the control group lagged behind the experimental group in the 5th task. The experimental group was sure knowledge of subject. Their writings were somewhat choppy but the main ideas could stand out. There were occasional errors of word/idiom forms/choices/usages but the meaning could be understood. On the other side, the writings of the control group had inadequate development and were loosely organized.

There were several errors of word/idiom forms/choices/usages and major problems in sentence constructions.

Table 17

6th Task Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	<u>Criteria</u>					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	21	13	13	17	3	67
S2	17	12	15	17	3	64
S3	21	14	17	21	3	76
S4	17	13	17	21	3	71
S5	24	17	14	17	4	76
S6	20	13	13	11	3	60
G1	24	17	18	20	3	82
G2	28	18	18	18	3	85
G3	27	20	18	24	4	93
G4	22	17	15	18	4	76
Total Mean of Control Group	20,00	13,67	14,83	17,33	3,17	69
Experimental Group	25,25	18	17,25	20	3,5	84

The participants were required to write either an announcement to invite people for a charity organization or an application letter to an organization for scholarship. It is clear from the Table 17 that experimental group surpassed the control group in this task. The experimental group wrote in an adequate extend with certain knowledge of subject. Also, their writings were fluent, clear, logical and relevant to the topic but lack of

details. Mostly, they were effective in word choice and usage. On the other hand, the control group wrote less extended with limited knowledge of subject. Also, their writings were somehow choppy, not well organized and limited supported. Sometimes, they were confusing or disconnected due to lack of logical sequencing and development. There were occasional word choice or usage errors but the meaning was understandable.

Table 18

7th Task Evaluation Paper

STUDENT	<u>Criteria</u>					TOTAL
	Content	Organization	Vocabulary and Language Use	Grammar Usage	Mechanics	
S1	22	15	13	17	4	71
S2	22	17	13	15	4	71
S3	21	13	15	15	4	68
S4	21	16	16	21	4	78
S5	22	17	14	15	3	71
S6	20	12	13	11	3	59
G1	27	18	18	18	4	85
G2	21	14	15	20	3	73
G3	27	19	20	22	4	92
G4	22	13	17	17	4	73
Total Mean of Control Group	21,33	15,00	14,00	15,67	3,67	69,67
Experimental Group	24,25	16	17,5	19,25	3,75	80,75

Students were asked to write a news story/a past experience/an imaginary story in the 7th task. We can infer from Table 18 that the experimental group again

maintained the lead in this task but there were minor differences in grades. Both groups wrote in an adequate range and mostly relevant to the topic but there could have added more details. They had a loosely organization in this task but the main ideas could be understood easily. Again, both groups had occasional errors in terms of word choice/usage. However, the writings of the experimental group were more effective than those of the control group. Even though there were several errors of subject-verb agreement, tense, number, word order, the experimental group had minor problems in complex constructions. On the other side, the control group had major problems in simple/complex sentence constructions with many errors of agreement, tense, number, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions. Therefore the meaning was also confusing and sometimes not well understandable.

Table 19

8th Task Evaluation Paper

S T U D E N T	Criteria					O T A
	on te	rg an iz at	y an d	La r m m ar Us	ec ha ni	
S1	27	17	17	18	3	82
S2	22	16	13	15	3	69
S3	27	18	18	21	4	88
S4	15	9	14	15	3	56
S5	0	0	0	0	0	0
S6	21	13	13	11	3	61
G1	26	17	17	21	3	84
G2	28	18	18	22	3	89
G3	27	18	18	22	4	89
G4	25	18	17	18	4	82
Total Mean of						
Control Group	18,67	12,17	12,50	13,33	2,67	59,33
Experimental Group	26,5	17,75	17,5	20,75	3,5	86

Finally, students were asked to write an email/a letter of complaint to a local authority about an environmental problem to suggest solutions. Table 19 shows that the control group lagged behind the experimental group in all criteria in the last task. The control group mostly could not develop the topic enough and had major sentence construction problems. Their writings were non-fluent, contained limited knowledge of subject and frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage while the experimental group could develop the topic adequately and relevant to the the topic. The writings of the experimental group were mostly expressed fluently, clearly, logically with sophisticated range and effective word choice. They had minor problems in complex constructions. Even though their writings contained several errors of subject-verb agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions, the meaning was understandable.

Lastly, “Which aspects of writing, if any, of the learners in the experimental group are improved through Collaborative Writing?” is the third research question. Here we can see the development level of experimental group by comparing their first task and last task.

Table 20

The Comparison of the First Task and the Last Task of the Experimental Group.

<u>Criteria</u>						
Total Mean of						
First Task	23,75	15,75	16,00	19,75	3,50	78,75
Last Task	26,5	17,75	17,5	20,75	3,5	86

The practice semester consisted of 8 weeks, one task per week. At the end of the process, we compared the first task and the last of the experimental group to see better the impact of collaborative writing. As it can be seen from the Table 20, the experimental group students who studied collaboratively increased their grades in content, organization, vocabulary and language use, and in grammar domains. Any important rise in mechanics aspect of writing has not been observed.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, an overall summary of the study will be presented at first. Then, a brief review of the findings in accordance with the research questions will be highlighted. Implications of the study for English language learning and teaching will be emphasized, as well. Finally, suggestions for possible further research will be stated.

5.2. Summary of the Study

First of all, this study sets out to analyse writing skills of the L2 students studying in Foreign Language Departments of high schools and to see whether there are any differences between individual writings and collaborative writings. The purpose and importance of the study together with its limitations and assumptions are stated in the introduction part. Research questions that we search for answers are:

1. Do collaborative writing tasks help high school FLD learners to improve their writing?
2. Are there any differences between the tasks produced by learners in the control group and those in the experimental group under basis of the rubric used to assess the products?
3. Which aspects of writing, if any, of the learners in the experimental group are improved through Collaborative Writing (CW)?

The significance of collaborative learning/writing is highlighted in the literature review. To put it briefly, writing has generally been accepted as an individual and cognitive activity, but this understanding has changed. Especially with the emergence of socio-cultural theories and methods, collaborative learning has become more of an issue. Also, it has been seen that writing is a process of forming and developing meaning and writing activities can be done better as collaboratively. Besides, similar theoretical and empirical studies conducted in the literature are also summarized in the literature review part.

This study is based upon quantitative data collection procedure. The analyses are carried out after evaluating the writing tasks in line with an evaluation rubric adapted from ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs, et al., 1981). The rubric is a four-point scale (Excellent to Very Good, Good to Average, Fair and Needs Much Improvement) and basically consists of five domains of writing which are content, organization, vocabulary and language use, grammar usage and mechanics. Findings of the study will be underlined in the following section.

a. Review of the Findings

Review of the findings of the study is summarized in this section. First, the answers for the research questions will briefly be highlighted.

The answer to the first research question, “Do collaborative writing tasks help high school FLD learners to improve their writing?” was found by comparing the results of first task and last task.

As it can be easily seen from Table 20, both the experimental group achieved better results at the end of the process. It is clear that collaborative writing method helped high school FLD learners to write more organized, more relevant, more fluent, more inclusive, more logical, understandable, more effective, and more accurate in terms of writing performances. On the other hand, the last task grades of the experimental group were superior to the first task grades nearly in all aspects of criteria except for mechanics. The difference in mechanics level was noteless, just a notch above.

Also, through the process some other benefits were observed. As Tsui (1996) states that even though teaching and learning is essentially a social activity, writing is often regarded as a solitary chore involving high stress and low gain (Tsui, AB. M. 1996, p, 101). This stereotype judgment negatively affects students' perspective on new methods. Therefore, students needed an important motivation in this process because they were unaccustomed to a collaborative style of working. Some of them may easily adapt while others may be more defensive and reluctant. In this term, the participants admitted that they had difficulty and got bored while writing before then. This made them reluctant and biased to writing. However, in the process, they found out that the “boring” and “single-handed” activity became more fun, and productive via collaborative method. Of course, this situation had a positive effect on their writings.

Henceforth, they could write more regular, more connected and more accurate essays or paragraphs.

As a matter of course, this was not as easy as it was thought. Because it was a kind of scaffolding, and according to Van Lier (1996, pp. 190-194), both teachers and students can influence the scaffolding. For example, in this sense, the teachers play a crucial role as an expert. They must encourage cooperative learning, either directly or indirectly, in order to provide a psychologically safe but a somewhat challenging environment of learning, so that students can climb on one click of their existing skills. Therefore, as a teacher, I had to create a supportive but at the same time a challenging atmosphere, set the target and clarify obviously to the students why they should conduct such activities. During the lectures at the instruction semester, these steps have been taken to foster their interest, encourage and conduct collaboration.

For instance, from the very first day, we shared with them the outline, timetable and schedule for the posting of assignments. By this way, the uncertainty and anxiety in their minds for what and when to do would be minimized. We guaranteed them that we would provide assistance and scaffolding according to their needs. Also, we told them "It is free to comment, question, seek for further clarification. This process is not less important than the product. Do not forget! This is not a race, so try to do better but not the best". This process, which concerns both the teacher and the student, requires the desire of both to learn from and with each other.

Likewise, before the students started to compose their tasks, we talked and commented on the topic to make them envisage about it. Also, during the instruction semester, we worked on examples related to that day's topic and criticised them to see better the good and bad examples, the possible errors or mistakes. We intended by these activities to allow them to recognize possible errors or mistakes and understand how to correct and avoid them. Through these activities, also we aimed to form a draft in their minds for the paragraphes or essays they would write. This process was so crucial and also an example of ZPD, that is, students were motivated to upgrade to a higher potential level from their existing level of writing ability within a structured framework. We believe that this critical activities and dialogues during that structural semester scaffolded learning among the students.

Another benefit is the process of preparation to writing. As Campbell & Barnard (2005) indicate, students are mostly put into groups or peers to collaboratively complete various written assignments in collaborative studies. They are expected to co-construct texts of varying length in a dialogic atmosphere. In this atmosphere, groups or peers can do some kind of activities like brainstorming, providing feedback, assisting each other, and co-construct a text. The experimental group participants have benefited from this advantage. They have the opportunity to make use of this atmosphere as a learning process.

Yet another benefit is the persistence of writing. For instance, the experimental group motivated each other and cooperated. They made up for each other's shortcomings. They distributed the duties and each one took a responsibility. Each of them came to the forefront in the domain which S/he was good. Therefore, they could complete all their tasks. On the other hand, in the control group, as each participant was working individually and not responsible for reminding another one their responsibilities, two of them were reduced by wastage in some tasks as they were absent in those times. S5 did not submitted the first and the last task, and S6 did not submitted the first task. Therefore, this led to more difference in mean levels between the two groups.

The other research question was “Are there any differences between the tasks produced by learners in the control group and those in the experimental group under basis of the rubric used to assess the products?”. In the findings and result chapter, we revealed the evaluation results in terms of criteria headings of the evaluation scale. There, it was clear that the experimental group scored better and higher in respect to content, organization, vocabulary and language usage, and grammar usage.

Findings of the third research question showed statistically that the experimental group was able to increase the mean of criterion in terms of content, organization, vocabulary and language use, and grammar usage. There was no difference just in mechanics domain level.

According to the results, the improvement in the content and organization was relatively more than the development in vocabulary and language use and grammar usage domains. This result shows that the instruction semester subjects were useful because those subjects mostly cover content and organization like paragraph/essay

format and content, unity, and outlining. Therefore, to write more regularly, more fluently, more understandably, more comprehensively was the main intended purpose, and thus this table reveals that the intended purpose has been achieved.

b. Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The students were mostly reluctant to and had difficulty in writing. It is hard and boring for most of them. This may be ensued from some reasons. Firstly, I think it is due to the negligence of the teachers and their unwillingness to teach this skill because teachers mostly focus on teaching grammar and test techniques towards the university admission exam. They also think that it is time consuming, especially when it is done collaboratively.

Secondly, it is because students do not have enough knowledge about writing. Therefore, the subjects taught in the instruction semester were very useful for them. They learned how to outline an essay/a paragraph, how to express a comprehensive content, how to state it fluently, clearly, logically, and in a well-organized way. As Davies & Pearse (2000) stated that it is mostly admitted that it is difficult to learn writing, and we have to remind again that “good writing skills usually develop from extensive reading, some specific training, and a good deal of practice” (Davies & Pearse 2000, p.96). Consequently, teaching collaborative writing techniques and with a considerable practice, we can ensure the students to improve their writing skill that is significant in language learning. Also, students can upgrade their writing level by practicing. Improvement may be stepped, but if they continue writing, they will be at higher levels. This study gives them a chance to practice more.

Thirdly, students mostly consider learning this skill unnecessary because it is not tested and evaluated in the university admission exam. The fact that students, teachers and educational institutions have adopted the study system in line with the university entrance examination cannot be denied, and unfortunately, this makes them more selective in skills and subjects. Thus, while some skills or subjects such as grammar, reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, test techniques, etc are so important, some other skills such as speaking, listening and writing are ignored.

The findings of this study show that if teachers and students are convinced of the necessity and importance of this skill, and the knowledge and techniques required for

that skill are taught, they will use it more effectively. In addition, as Donato stated that if individuals continuously involve in collaboration rather than being isolated from interactive environments, then transformation would happen (Donato, Richard. 2004). In this sense, continuity is very important. Nevertheless, they must realize that writing is indispensable for them because they will have to use this skill in university and of course in their future lives, even if it is not now in high school. Also, it is seen from the results that if students are taught to work collaboratively, they will get in the habit of working collaboratively in all terms of life, especially in human relations. This is what I care about so much. Donato underlined the significance of this notion and stated that collaboration is far from and greater than the input-output types of interaction and it approves the significance of the aims, the interdependence in learning, cooperative relations (Donato, Richard. 2004). In fact, we should integrate the solidarity/collaborative processing which exists in our social codes into our educational methods.

c. Suggestions for Further Research

Students were mostly reluctant to study together as a pair. This case is important from a pedagogic perspective. May this case be derived from the education system which canalizes the students into a process to compete with rather than cooperate with each other? This can be a subject of further studies.

In addition, another study with a qualitative dimension that includes students' comments and thoughts about this learning process is a need and a suggestion for further studies.

Also, as Storch (2002) stated that all participants do not cooperate when they are required to do on language assignments in pairs or groups. He specified four different pair interaction types: collaborative, dominant/dominant, dominant/passive, and expert/novice. In this study, the experimental groups consist of 3 students. I wonder whether these different interaction types exist in these groups of this study, or not, and if so, which one/ones exist/exists? This can be a subjects of another different study.

Lastly, this study was conducted with a scant availability sampling and in a short time. Thus, the results could be generalized much more if a longitudinal study with more crowded participants is conducted. From this perspective, in addition, a further

study with a qualitative dimension would be much more descriptive and valid for the generalization of results.



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