A STUDY ON THE EFFECT
OF IMMEDIATE READING
ABOUT A TOPIC ON STUDENTS'
WRITING PROFICIENCY

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE
OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

BY
SELAMİ OK
AUGUST 1992

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MA THESIS EXAMINATION RESULT FORM

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The examining committee appointed by the

Institute of Economics and Social Sciences for the

thesis examination of the MA TEFL student

SELAMİ OK

has read the thesis of the student.
The committee has decided that the thesis
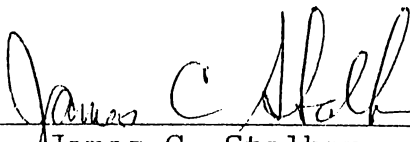of the student is satisfactory.

Thesis title   : A Study on the Effect of
                      Immediate Reading About a Topic
                      on Students´ Writing
                      Proficiency.

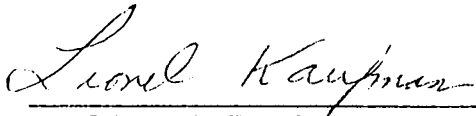Thesis Advisor   : Dr. James C. Stalker
                      Bilkent University, MA TEFL
                      Program

Committee Members : Dr. Lionel Kaufman
                      Bilkent University, MA TEFL
                      Program

                      Dr. Eileen Walter
                      Bilkent University, MA TEFL
                      Program

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in
our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope
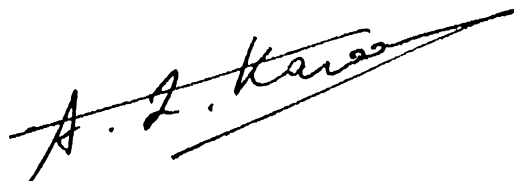and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master
of Arts.

James C. Stalker
(Advisor)

Lionel Kaufman
(Committee Member)

Eileen Walter
(Committee Member)

Approved for the
Institute of Economics and Social Sciences

Ali Karaosmanoğlu
Director
Institute of Economics and Social Sciences

To my niece and nephew

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ABSTRACT

It is a generally observed fact that reading and writing are taught as isolated skills rather than in an integrated way and this is one of the reasons why students fail to improve their writing skill as their writing experiences are not based on their reading experiences. Hence, the teachers usually fail to see progress in their students' writing. Therefore, this study focused on the immediate effect of reading about a topic on a student's writing proficiency when reading activities are done as part of writing instruction.

To test the hypothesis, the upper-intermediate level was selected, primarily because students at this level are assumed to be proficient in general language skills which should support the production of an acceptable composition. Two groups were formed, both of which consisted of 6 subjects who were all students at Dokuz Eylul University English Language School. They were placed in treatment groups based on the holistic scores of their compositions written before the actual treatment was started, so that the groups would be similar in terms of writing proficiency between the matched subjects. Each group received a reading treatment and a non-reading treatment. Different reading passages were used in each of reading treatments. In the reading treatment, the group read a topic-

related passage after doing some exercises derived from the passage itself, whereas the non-reading treatment was only the exercises. Both groups were given an equal amount of time for doing the exercises and then writing the compositions.

The compositions written on the two topics were evaluated holistically by two trained outside judges who had high inter-rater reliability. The scores assigned to the compositions in both portions of the treatment were computed using a t-test in order to see the aggregate significance level of the treatment under the reading condition. The t-test results of the overall means yielded a level of $p<.005$ for a one-tailed test. To determine the significance level of each part of the treatment for each group, two more t-tests were done. The first one yielded a significance at the level of $p<.025$, and the second one resulted in a significance level of $p<.01$, which is higher. These results support the acceptance of the directional hypothesis.

To support the objectivity and reliability of the holistic scores, a T-unit analysis was also done. For this purpose, the percentage of error-free T-units was calculated for each composition and then a t-test was run using the percentages for each treatment. Both t-tests indicated a significance level of $p<.005$ for a one-tailed test. The T-unit analysis also supports the results of the study.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Goals of the Study

In the English language programs of some Turkish universities, writing and reading are taught either as isolated skills within the limits of the course textbooks, separate from the main course in the curriculum, or they are taught as an integral part of the language program. However, even in the latter case, different textbooks are used to support the main course book. The general aim is to enable students to be able to read and write in English efficiently. In some faculties of some Turkish universities and in all faculties of some others, the medium of instruction is in English, and when those students attending the language program complete their one-year or two-year training-- depending on the school's requirements--they attend their major faculties where they have to do all their studies in English. The students have to acquire enough English in this one or two-year training to be able to attend lectures and take notes in English, to read books in their academic fields, to write in English in examinations, and to prepare assignments and projects.

Depending on the richness of the curriculum, students may develop their reading skill because they will be exposed to a lot of reading material in such language programs. However, being exposed to

a lot of reading material within the reading course
may not guarantee a great deal of improvement in the
writing skill when handled separately. On the other
hand, the writing practice given in a limited number
of writing classes per week in an isolated fashion
cannot be expected to result in success in the
improvement of the writing skill. In addition to
these two aspects, knowing the grammar rules may not
be a guarantee in itself for students to be able to
improve this skill. Besides these three facts, it
is a general observation of language teachers that
students cannot write well-planned and coherent
essays or compositions rich in terms of content when
they are asked to write and their compositions are
usually considered to be failures. Thus, it can be
said that students generally finish the language
schools in Turkey without acquiring adequate writing
skill.

Rivers (1981) states that "with so much writing
in a foreign language over so many years, one would
expect to find highly effective methods for teaching
the writing skill and marked success in learning it"
(p.291). Rivers furthers her argument saying that
examination papers in composition the world over
are, with few exceptions, disappointing. Rivers
also points out the fact that many college and
university students with four, five, or even six or
more years of study of another language behind them

are unable to express themselves in a clear, correct and comprehensible manner in writing. Rivers suggests analyzing what is involved in the process of writing in another language and tracing out the steps by which this skill can be progressively mastered.

Several factors can be detected when this problem is analyzed. On the one hand, one of the reasons could be students' lack of knowledge of the grammar rules of English. This may be true of beginning and intermediate students, but upper-intermediate level students are expected to know the grammar rules sufficiently well that they would not be an impediment to writing. At this point in the students' careers, it can be assumed that knowing or memorizing the grammar rules and being able to use them are different things. Students may have learned the rules but may not be able to use them in expressing their ideas, not only when they speak but also when they sit to write. On the other hand, in spite of the fact that students are taught within the limits of the writing course textbooks how to form well-developed and coherent paragraphs and essays whose contents are to be rich in terms of the use of vocabulary and structures, a general failure is observed in the improvement of the writing skill, which leads students and teachers to ignore this important skill. In other words, the writing skill

is given less and less importance by the students, and the teacher finds it difficult to increase the motivation and help students gain a positive attitude towards writing. As a result of this, the curricular goals are never reached.

Students are given final examinations on which teachers ask students to write a composition on a given topic and the result is that most of them fail to write comprehensible and coherent compositions. The essays or compositions that teachers evaluate are usually full of misuse of vocabulary, errors in the structures used and word-ordering; on the other hand, compositions are in general found difficult to evaluate or grade because of so many errors. It is possible that because students are taught these aspects of writing in isolation, they do not learn how to use them in context.

Another source of difficulty may be causing a problem as well. Students learn writing in isolation from the other language skills, most particularly from reading. If writing and reading were taught more integratively, students may learn to write more efficiently.

The general failure in the improvement of the writing skill can be solved by providing a basis for writing which could be a reading activity that would be studied with the guidance of the teacher. Two points need to be clarified here. One is that

studying reading passages from a writer's perspective with special attention to structures, vocabulary, organizational features of the reading sample may help students improve their writing skill. The second point is that doing so immediately before producing their own written product will enable them to write with better content as they may be expected to borrow ideas from their reading. In addition to that, students may also rely on the activation of the knowledge they already have and may reflect it in their writing and consequently improve their skill.

As Eisenberg (1986) pointed out, a "holistic approach" to reading and writing through the use of a "range of materials that may be approached by historical period, by rhetorical model, or by theme" as the basis for developing both skills rather than "presenting the material as a series of fragmented skills" may result in positive learning outcomes (p. 208). In terms of organizational features and syntax of written language, Reid (1984) states that:

> Students need to study rhetorical approaches and to imitate models for academic purposes in particular. The purpose of assignments can rely on models of rhetoric and of syntax and can familiarize nonnative speakers with rhetorical forms perceived as specifically English. (p. 151)

Such an approach to writing may also enable the learners to be more conscious of the rhetorical models in writing and they may feel more secure. In

other words, what students read may be related to what they write immediately. In this way, fluency in writing, especially for academic purposes, may be gained more easily. Moreover, the learning process could be speeded up and students' needs and interests could be taken into account. Also, students may feel at ease in putting their ideas together when they write compositions or essays.

It can be stated that a balanced integration of reading and writing activities in contrast to teaching them in an isolated fashion may guide the teacher in making use of a range or variety of materials and the teacher can observe students' development in both skills and guide them more efficiently, and the students can realize the fact that they can benefit from such materials when used in an integrated way.

It is a fact that writing in a foreign language has to be purposeful, which is also true of other skills, and unless students are aware of the purpose behind the writing activities, they do not participate in any activity willingly. As a result, the writing course turns into a tyranny both for the teacher and the student. In this sense, it can be said that incorporating a reading passage into the topic about which students will write will make the writing more purposeful and increase the students' motivation. Therefore, students should be provided

a basis to rely on immediately before they attempt to write.

1.2 Statement of the Research Question

It has been shown that integrating the study of reading and writing is possible and that when the two skills are closely integrated in a single class unit, gains in overall reading improvement, as Tierney and Leys (1986) note, contribute to gains in overall writing improvement through choice of topic, writing style, vocabulary as well as affecting the values held for writing. Besides, improving student's comprehension ability can result in better organized, more connected and high content quality written products (Spivey, 1983). Therefore, the goal of this study was to investigate the influence of reading in L2 on composition writing proficiency in Turkish EFL classes. The study did not focus on the teaching of the reading skill specifically but on the use of reading prior to a writing activity.

1.2.1 The Research Question

What is the effect of reading in L2 immediately before writing about a given topic on writing proficiency in the upper-intermediate level?

1.2.2 Definition of Terms

In this study, the "effect of reading" refers to the influence of reading on composition writing in terms of vocabulary, syntactic structures, rhetorical organization, and content as measured by

holistic evaluation, and in terms of syntactic complexity as measured by T-unit analysis.

"Reading immediately before writing" refers to students' involvement in a reading activity just before they attempt to write a composition about the same topic.

The variables of this study are defined in section 1.3.3.

1.2.3 Statement of Expectations

The expectation of this study was that reading in L2 with the teacher's guidance with special attention to syntactic structures, vocabulary, organizational features, and the content of the reading piece immediately before writing a composition would positively affect a student's writing proficiency. The results of the study can be used in the design of writing courses and the preparation of new course textbooks and teaching materials in the Turkish EFL situation.

1.2.4 Statement of Limitations

This study was limited to only Turkish EFL learners at a university prep school who were at the upper-intermediate level. The ages of the subjects and their backgrounds in learning English were not taken into consideration.

1.3 Hypothesis

1.3.1 Hypotheses

The null hypothesis in this study is: There is no relationship between reading in L2 immediately before writing about a related topic and the students' writing proficiency.

The directional hypothesis is as follows: There is a positive relationship between reading in L2 prior to writing about a related topic and writing proficiency.

1.3.2 Identification of Variables

Dependent Variable: Proficiency in writing

Independent Variable: Reading in L2 immediately before writing about a related topic.

Control Variable: General language proficiency level of students (upper-intermediate)

Control Variable: Reading for pleasure

1.3.3 Definitions of Variables

Proficiency in writing, as the dependent variable, refers to a level at which students are able to express themselves in clear, correct, and comprehensible manner (Rivers, 1981), a level at which what students write should be an example of accepted prose (Raimes, 1987) and should be perceived as specifically English (Reid, 1984).

Reading in L2 immediately before writing about a given topic, as the independent variable, refers to reading done by L2 students on a certain topic

that they will write about immediately afterward.

The upper-intermediate level was determined by the university placement examination and was chosen for this study because students at this level are assumed to be at a level of proficiency in general language skills which should support the production of an acceptable composition.

Reading for pleasure, as the second control variable in this study, refers to the reading activities that students do in their leisure using materials such as newspapers, periodicals, short readers, novels, and books in their academic fields.

1.4 Overview of Methodology

In this research study, 35 male and female subjects from three upper-intermediate classes were used at the beginning of the data collection. All the subjects were given a short questionnaire in order to determine how often the subjects read for their own pleasure on the basis of an hour/week measure. The purpose of this step was to select high quality readers in order to form homogeneous groups since research by Elley and Mangubhai (1983) and Janapoulos (1986) indicate that there is a strong correlation between pleasure reading and writing proficiency. Based on this data, those who did the most pleasure reading, independent of the course books they used in their classes, were identified. This smaller number of subjects was

asked to write a composition on a topic which was determined in coordination with the teachers teaching those groups. The basic purpose of this preliminary composition writing was to form two homogeneous treatment groups based on the holistic scores of their compositions through matching the subjects with the same or a very close score in order to form two equal groups in terms of proficiency level. The raters who were to score the compositions holistically were trained on a 100-point scoring scale prepared by the English Language Center at Michigan State University using sample compositions like the ones they scored for this research.

When the groups were equally formed, both groups were assigned a practice activity which was followed by writing a composition on the topic of the activity. The practice activity for Group 1 was reading and discussion of the reading together with practice on vocabulary, sentence combining and transformation whereas the practice activity for Group 2 was practice on vocabulary, sentence combining and a general discussion of the topic.

After the first treatment was completed, a second treatment was carried out to reverse the procedure for each group. This time, the second group read and discussed a reading passage while the first group did a practice activity like the one

that the second group did in the first treatment. A different topic was used for the second treatment. When these steps were completed, the compositions were scored holistically by two raters who had been trained in using the scoring scale described above.

1.5 Overview of Analytical Procedures

After the holistic scoring of the compositions, by running a t-test, the means and standard deviations of the scores of the compositions were compared to find out the students' performance and variability of the scores under each reading condition.

In order to provide a qualitative analysis and to support the reliability and the objectivity in the holistic evaluation, the percentage of the error-free t-units per composition was taken into consideration and a t-test was also used to compare the percentages.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

The first chapter of this thesis presents an introduction to the study. The second chapter reviews the research literature related to the research topic. The third chapter introduces the methodological and analytical procedures. The fourth chapter includes the presentation and analysis of the data. The fifth and last chapter provides a summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 EFFECT OF READING ON WRITING

This section of the review of literature focuses on, first, writing as a tool for learning; second, integrating writing with other language skills; third, reading and writing as constructive processes; and finally, integration of reading and writing skills.

2.1.1 Writing as a Tool for Learning

The need for reaching a level that will enable a writer to produce an acceptable piece of writing recognizable as English requires emphasis on two basic points that can be demanded from the teacher teaching writing and the student learning to write under the guidance of the teacher. The first point is the teacher's continual adjustment in approaches to writing through shaping the curriculum and the teaching material in an integrated form. The second point is the need for perceiving writing as a learning tool by means of which the students can have an active self-control over the reading and writing processes instead of being passive participants.

Since the writing skill is one of the most difficult skills to be improved in the language learning process, it is natural that there will be continual adjustments in approaches to writing. Raimes (1987) states that:

> The changes in approach to writing in an
> English language classroom can be seen to
> stem from different ways of answering two
> questions, both of them important for every
> language teacher: (1) Why do language
> teachers ask their students to write, and
> (2) why do students of a second language
> need to write? (p. 36)

These two questions should guide teachers teaching

writing in being aware of the changes in approach to

this skill and in organizing their material and

shaping the curriculum. Raimes places emphasis on

the fact that "these two questions raise issues of

students' needs, teaching objectives, and curriculum

design; therefore, any changing perceptions of

purpose will bring about changes in writing

instruction" (p. 36). Raimes also says that:

> What students write as a result of an
> exercise should, if it represents connected
> discourse in English, at least be an example
> of accepted prose, something that we would
> hope our students would some day write,
> something we might even write ourselves. (p.
> 37)

Students' writing can be guided on an integrated

basis, relating it to another skill and students can

be helped to see the fact that what they write is

required to be an acceptable piece of writing.

Raimes (1991) has recently drawn attention to

perceiving writing as a tool for learning. She has

argued that:

> In a writing class, students need to be
> taught both how to use the process to their
> advantage as language learners and writers,
> and also how to produce an acceptable
> product upon demand; however, in terms of
> what university writing is and what kind of
> writing students should be doing, while

> students certainly need to learn how to pass
> exams, they also need to perceive writing as
> a tool for learning, a tool that can be
> useful to them throughout their professional
> and personal lives. (p. 415)

Briefly, Raimes draws attention to student needs, teaching objectives, creating an acceptable prose in a connected discourse, and the importance of instruction of writing for academic purposes. The relationship between writing and learning is emphasized by Emig (1977) when she says that "successful learning is connective and selective; it uses propositions and hypotheses, and it is active, engaged and personal. So is writing" (p. 124).

Students' lack of a sense of their own control over the reading and writing processes may be seen as another factor that impedes their progress (Ronald, 1986). When Ronald talks of college freshmen, she says that:

> They are trained to read for information
> rather than pleasure, and not trained to
> write in many contexts other than for the
> teacher and tend to be extremely passive
> participants in both activities. They often
> expect knowledge or information to be given
> to them rather than taking an active role in
> obtaining or shaping that knowledge. In
> general, students tend to think of reading
> and writing in terms of conventions rather
> than effectiveness. (pp. 235-6)

Ronald concludes that students seldom see these discovery processes as opportunities for their learning in which their personal stance is central. Ronald suggests that they should be encouraged to take control of their own reading processes through

expressive writing exercises which can give teachers strategies for intervening in both reading and writing.

From this standpoint, it can be stated that if one is proficient in the reading skill, he may be expected to reflect his proficiency into his writing and vice versa. In this sense, Birnbaum (1986) sees the more proficient reader/writer as more reflective in his engagements with the written language than his less proficient peers. Birnbaum states that:

> Both better readers and better writers seem to take control of their written language, formulating better questions and solutions about the text and continually monitoring their success or failure in constructing meaning in or from print. (p. 30)

It is important to note that when students are involved in intensive reading of academic pieces and are provided with the writing skills necessary for academic writing assignments, they can recognize the fact that writing can serve as a tool for their own learning and that they can engage themselves personally in active writing by connecting and selecting from their knowledge sources and can be more reflective while using these two skills.

2.1.2 Integrating Writing with Other Language Skills

Recent discussions of second language programs have begun to emphasize the value of an integrated model of language instruction. Searfoss et al. (1981), Silberstein (1987) and Rivers (1981), among others, suggest that the integration of the writing

skill with the other language skills, when taught and practised simultaneously, can enable the learners to develop faster and achieve better results in their progress as they will have the chance to extend their gains from one skill to the other. When the reader is also present in the writing process, the learner can expand his knowledge of language elements to his writing experiences, and as a result of this, more creative writing with an appropriate use of the language forms and their combinations can be achieved. On this basis, intensive reading assignments can help the learners extend their benefits from their reading to their writing with a greater control of language use.

This emerging view suggests that listening, speaking, reading and writing may be taught and practised by second language learners "simultaneously as interdependent tools of communication" (Searfoss et al., 1981, p. 383). Searfoss et al. say further that if literacy instruction is based on an integrated model, the resulting improvement in communicative ability may be greater than that where listening, speaking, reading and writing are viewed as independent language processes and separate curricular subjects.

Based on the view of an integrated model of instruction, Silberstein (1987) points out that

integration of writing with the reading skill makes certain aspects of teaching writing easier.

> With increasing emphasis on language teaching for communicative competence, on functional-notional syllabi, and on English for specific purposes, many language programs are developing integrated curricula. Most often, reading and writing instruction are integrated. The advantage of this is the ease with which one can focus on the implied presence of the reader in the writing process. (p. 33)

When these two skills are integrated in the curriculum, learners can have the advantage of focusing on reading and writing skills together and may develop faster benefiting from them both and can recycle their learning outcomes in terms of vocabulary and structures and other features of written language throughout the curriculum on an individual basis more easily than if they did separately.

Rivers (1981) also sees a connection between writing and other skills as follows:

> Writing practice moves from the more guided types of exercises, where elements of structure and vocabulary are manipulated, expanded, and restated in various ways, to more flexible production in writing, where students begin from the material provided and develop it out in an individual way. These flexible production activities may be related to what has been read or heard. (p.294)

It is a general fact that teachers should help their students to benefit from their reading, listening, and speaking activities in their attempt to write in terms of vocabulary and structural elements that are

encountered during the learning process.   Rivers also states that:

> Expressive writing or composition may be for practical purposes, or it may be more creative.   The ultimate goal in creative expression will be to express oneself in a polished form which requires a nuanced vocabulary and certain requirements of structure. (p. 294)

Once students have achieved an accurate command of English which can lead to an acceptable piece of writing specifically English, the opportunity to write creatively with a wide range of vocabulary structures could be greater.   So, in the course of time students can polish their writing style, too. On this basis, to write in a creative way students can be equipped with the ability to relate what is gained in one skill to the other successfully.   As Rivers points out "more effective results will be achieved in writing classes if there is a continual integration of practice in all skills" (p. 299). Rivers also emphasizes the fact that:

> In its most advanced form of composition, writing is dependent on the progress in other skills.   Accurate, idiomatic writing is quite different from the mere piecing together of language elements in some artificial way which would not be encountered outside the classroom.   Only by hearing and reading a great deal of the language as it is spoken and written by native speakers can language learners acquire that feeling for the appropriate use of the language forms and combinations. (p. 296)

It can be pointed out that it is the role of the teacher to give the students an awareness of the

requirement that they use the language features, such as vocabulary, idiomatic expressions and syntactic structures and their combinations, in their writing correctly at various levels while progressing in other skills as well.

In writing classes, the teacher often needs to explain difficulties of structure and to extend the student's knowledge of vocabulary. Rivers (1981) places emphasis on intensive reading as a way of accomplishing this in a writing classroom saying that:

> Intensive reading is related to further progress in language learning under the teacher's guidance. Extensive reading develops at the student's own pace according to individual ability. Intensive reading will provide a basis for explaining difficulties of structure and for extending knowledge of vocabulary and idioms. It will also provide material for developing greater control of the language in speech and writing. (p.305)

It can be stated that students can rely on their experiences of intensive reading for finding ideas to further develop in other skills. They can transfer the vocabulary, idioms, and structural features that they encounter and perceive into their speech and writing; and in this way they can control their own language development. Also, they may find answers to their difficulties in problematic syntactic structures throughout the course. Rivers furthers the argument pointing out that students do not always have a ready flow of ideas when asked to

write, even in their native language; therefore, composition exercises should be closely related to intensive reading assignments.

2.1.3 Reading and Writing as Constructive Processes

When the reading and writing skills are handled together in the classroom, in other words, when readers become writers or when they write related to what they read, it is possible that they will have more ideas to reflect to their writing. The reading-writing combination in a class unit may lead students to an interactive use of the two skills causing the writer to have more ideas which might not have been thought of even by the author of the text and the reader of it. In this way, what has been read will interact with previously acquired knowledge of the reader and result in the construction of new ideas to be exploited in writing by selecting, organizing and connecting them. As a result of such a process, it can be expected that what has been written will also reflect in the subsequent reading experiences of the learner in the form of transactions, that is, exchanges, which prepare the way for the writing experiences to interact with the reading skill for better and easier comprehension.

Composing is a process which actively engages the learner in constructing meaning, in developing ideas, in relating ideas, and in expressing ideas.

Squire (1983) notes that composing and comprehending are two sides of the same process and sees them both as "critical to thinking processes and interactive in their operations" (quoted in Peterson, 1986, p. 2). Sternglass (1986) states that:

> Studies examining the relationships between reading and writing from an interactive perspective have had two major orientations: (1) looking at the role of reading while writing is occurring, and (2) the more indirect effect that reading has on a writer" (p. 3).

It can be noted at this point that when the teacher keeps an open eye on this interactive relationship between reading and writing skills, his or her facilitative role can be greater because the teacher can observe the student's development in both skills and can guide them more efficiently by choosing better materials with attention to their development in vocabulary capacity, level of comprehension and interests.

Recent interest has focused on the similarities in the processes that reading and writing involve. Sternglass (1986) mentions that "recent interest in integrating instruction in reading and writing has focused primarily on the similarities in the processes, and both reading and writing are now being recognized as constructive processes" (p. 151). Sternglass also mentions that:

> There has always been tacit acceptance that writers construct new meanings in the process of writing, but now it is understood that readers are creating new meanings as

they interact with texts, meanings that did
not exist independently either in the mind
of the author or the reader. This approach
to reading-writing relationships is
currently referred to as the "transactional
approach" (p. 151)

From this perspective, it is possible to say that as

long as learners are considered as both readers and

writers who can create meanings to be transferred

from their reading into their writing, there is no

point in delaying an effective interaction of

reading and writing skills. Shanklin (1979) also

notes that reading and writing are both constructive

processes and the constructive process is, in part,

the "by-product of transactions" which occur between

reader and text and writer and text. Shanklin

suggests that students be involved in activities in

which the acts of writing and reading support and

enhance each other.

Rosenblatt (1978), the originator of the

transactional theory, points out that:

Writing about reading is one of the best
ways to get students to make clear their
transactions so that we can see how they
understand, and in the process, help them to
elaborate, clarify, and illustrate their
responses by reference to the associations
and prior knowledge that inform them. (Cited
in Peterson, 1986, p. 4)

One reason for the learners' failure to improve

their writing skill could be that the teachers in

general fail to see how students' comprehension

ability develops when reading and writing skills are

handled in isolation. If the teacher cannot observe

students' problems in comprehension and see which lexical items they learn through reading and what sort of meanings they can gain from text through writing, students cannot be expected to deal with their problems in writing successfully.

According to a transactional model presented by Bleich (1978), the only way to demonstrate comprehension is through extended discourse where readers become writers who articulate their understandings of and connections to the text in their responses. Spivey (1990) also considers the processes that readers and writers are involved in as "constructive" when she says that:

> Building meaning through reading entails organizing, selecting, and connecting. Readers use previously acquired knowledge to operate on textual cues, organizing mental representations that include material they select from the text and connect with material they generate. This constructivist characterization of the reading process extends also to literate acts in which people are writers as well as readers, those acts in which they compose texts by drawing from textual sources. (p. 256)

Spivey sees these three operations as central to the complex process of constructing meaning from text. To put it in another way, the reader organizes textual meaning, selects textual content for his own use and connects the content cued by the text with the content generated from previously acquired knowledge.

2.1.4 Integration of Reading and Writing Skills

2.1.4.1 Benefits of Integration of Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are so closely related that their curricular combination could have a positive outcome in terms of achievement of instructional efficiency (Shanahan, 1988). Shanahan makes several points about the integration of reading and writing skills that have been supported by other researchers as well.

Shanahan (1988) defines an effective reader as a "critical reader" saying that "critical reading requires consideration of an author's intentions and an evaluation of the quality of a text" and then proposes that "teachers can encourage students to read multiple selections by the same author in order to make them sensitive to author's voice." He says further that "writing activities based on such reading can make students sensitive to reader-writer relations" (p. 643). Shanahan also recommends that one productive way of having students work with reading and writing simultaneously is to have them replicate the language patterns or styles of literary models, going back and forth between the original and their own writing. Shanahan calls this "sustained interaction between reading and writing" and finally says that teachers can make students aware of these interactions. Shanahan points out that "if students do not understand that reading and

writing knowledge can be transferred, then there is less possibility that it will transfer" (p. 641).

Spivey (1983), Smith (1985), Ronald (1986) and Tierney and Leys (1986) also support the views held by Shanahan. Spivey had college students read three articles on the same topic and then write essays. She found that the essays written by the more able comprehenders were better organized, more connected, and had higher content quality than those written by the less able comprehenders. The conclusions of Spivey's study suggest that improving students' comprehension ability may directly affect their proficiency in writing; in other words, good comprehension of reading material when used as a part of writing instruction can help the student end up with a quality written product. In this sense, Smith says that "the meaningfulness of written language and its manifold utility are basic to both reading and writing." Smith also points out that "everything a learner learns about reading helps in becoming a writer and everything learned about writing contributes to reading ability"; therefore, "keeping the two activities separate impoverishes any learning that might take place" (p.127).

Ronald also emphasizes the integration of the acts of reading and writing in both composition and literature courses. Ronalds explains that:

> Readers must attend not only to what is in
> front of them at any given moment but also
> must hold onto what has come before in order
> to fit new information into old. Writers,
> too, must have a sense where they have been
> in order to keep going. Besides, focusing on
> the ability to reflect or look back, also
> looking forward in order to make predictions
> about what is coming next, which lead to
> efficient reading, and expectations, which
> lead readers to arrive at meaning help
> develop the skill of prediction by making
> students conscious of its operation. (p.
> 234)

Ronald points out that both reflection and prediction, as "cognitive skills", have personal bases and suggests that teachers explore these bases with their students as one way of intervening in the composing processes of reading and writing.

Tierney and Leys state that:

> Reading may contribute to writing in a
> variety of ways. It may be speculated that
> the type and amount of reading material to
> which writers are exposed may influence
> their choice of topic, writing style and
> vocabulary, as well as affecting the values
> they hold regarding writing and heightening
> their understanding of the author's craft.
> (p. 21).

Learners relying on their acts of reading may improve their writing skill through recognition of the use of words, syntactic rules and their various combinations. Besides that, they can widen and enrich their intellectual background, improving their perspective on the conceptual level and furnishing themselves with stylistic features of written language.

In addition to that, it can also be stated that the learners will be able to transfer their benefits

and will gain a richness of concepts to be utilized
in their future attempts to write. Tierney and Leys
put the focus on the ways through which "gains in
overall reading improvement contribute to gains in
overall writing improvement and vice versa"; and
then they ask "if we can expect students who are
successful readers to be successful writers, or
students who are successful writers to be successful
readers." They then point out that "when we read
studies which show that good readers are also good
writers, we are not surprised, since we intuitively
feel that reading and writing skills develop
together or are so entangled that they appear
inseparable" (pp. 15-16). Tierney and Leys also
place an emphasis on the "benefits or learning
outcomes which arise from interrelating or
connecting reading and writing" saying that:

> -Depending upon the measures employed to
> assess overall reading and writing
> achievement and attitude, the general
> correlation between reading and writing is
> moderate and fluctuates with age, schooling,
> and other factors.

However, Tierney and Leys also state that:

> -Selected reading experiences definitely
> contribute to writing performance; likewise
> selected writing experiences contribute to
> reading performances.
>
> -Writers acquire certain values and
> behaviours from reading and readers acquire
> certain values and behaviours from writing;
> and finally,
>
> -Successful writers integrate reading into
> their writing and writing into their reading
> experience. (pp. 25-26)

It should be noted here that when students have the awareness that their reading and writing can be successfully integrated and can see their achievement in selected reading and writing experiences which contribute to each other, it is highly possible that they will have positive attitudes toward both skills; and as a result of this, they will progress in both on the basis of equal success by transfering their overall gains from each skill to the other. Tierney and Leys also point out that "the study of reading and writing connections involves appreciating how reading and writing work together as tools for information storage and retrieval, discovery and logical thought, communication, and self-indulgence" (p. 26).

In conclusion, designing a writing course requires taking into account student needs and teaching objectives. Anyone who is to teach writing needs to be acquainted with the relationship between reading and writing skills and be aware of what can reflect from student's reading into his or her writing. In this way, improving in one skill in a given period of time can result in improvement in the other skill. When comprehending and composing go together in a writing classroom, these two constructive thinking processes may interact positively and teachers can help students improve

their writing skill throughout the course. Besides, students may end up with integrated learning outcomes and may have a better idea of what is specifically English and what is not when they attempt to write.

2.1.4.2 Influence of Pleasure Reading

One source of data related to the link between L2 reading and writing proficiency is provided by Elley and Mangubhai (1983), who investigated the effect of systematic exposure to L2 pleasure reading on the general L2 language proficiency of Fiji Island elementary students. They concluded that L2 composition was positively influenced by pleasure reading in the second language.

Another research study by Michael Janopoulos (1986) indicated that a correlation exists between L2 pleasure reading and L2 writing proficiency. The results showed that the heavy L2 pleasure readers (5 hours and more a week) were much more likely to be proficient in L2 writing than subjects who were not heavy L2 readers, whereas subjects who reported being heavy pleasure readers in their native language showed no such tendency in their L2 writing. The data from this research provides evidence that proficiency levels for L2 reading and writing are closely associated. However, the design of the study did not support the conclusion that heavy pleasure reading causes high proficiency in

writing but only that a high correlation exists between the two.

In sum, when students are guided towards reading for their own pleasure using various materials from various sources, they may also make better progress in the control of their written language.

2.2 IMMEDIATE READING BEFORE WRITING

In the light of the studies on the integration of reading and writing skills, we can postulate that the writing experiences of the learners can be based on their reading experiences in order to provide them with a source from which they can immediately benefit. The main interest here would be at the levels of words and syntax, rhetorical elements, general quality and content, and students' motivation in the process. Studies by different researchers suggest that (a) students can transfer textual features into their writing; (b) highlighting the structural characteristics of reading pieces can influence students' writing; and finally (c) the quality and content of writing is related to the quality of reading.

Based on the fact that reading and writing can be integrated, it can be stated that a reading experience related to what the students are expected to write can form an immediate source of ideas and activate their stored knowledge. Spivey (1990)

states that:

> If we are to understand writing, we must
> examine common acts of composing in which
> writers draw from immediate sources as well
> as from stored knowledge to produce texts
> other than summaries; and if we are to
> understand reading, we must also investigate
> how it is manifested as readers perform
> realistic acts that involve doing something
> with the knowledge gained. (p. 259-60)

Spivey sees this as a necessary next step in reading
research--studying reading when it is being done as
part of writing instruction. Smith (1983) agrees
with Spivey saying that "reading influences writing
skills because readers unconsciously read like
writers." He goes on saying that:

> To read like a writer we engage with the
> author in what the author is writing. We
> anticipate what the author will say so that
> the author is in effect writing on our
> behalf, not showing how something is done
> but doing it with us. Bit by bit, one thing
> at a time, but enormous numbers of things
> over the passage of time, the learner learns
> through reading like a writer to write like
> a writer. (p. 553-64)

Smith (1983), Tierney and Leys (1984), and Blackburn
(1985) reveal that students, even young children,
will gradually synthesize certain textual features,
including words, content, and structure, into
writing after they are encountered in reading.

If "the structural characteristics of a reading
piece are highlighted", as Gordon and Braun (1982)
note, students' writing can improve. Using stories
as their reading material, Gordon and Braun taught
one group of fifth graders about the structural
characteristics of the stories while another group

simply read and discussed the stories. They found that the instruction on story structure helped the students' comprehension of stories as well as their writing of stories.

When the teacher uses reading to support and facilitate the writing skill, reading may influence writing in terms of the strategies that the teacher applies. In this sense, Meyer (1982) placed importance on "rhetorical planning" in a study in which students who wrote reports on readings using the same plan as the author did remembered far more content than those who did not organize their reports along the same plan used by the author. Meyer suggests that teachers teach rhetorical planning because it will help readers to remember more content and spend less time and effort while writing. In a similar fashion, Geva and Tierney (1984) had high school students read different types of compare/contrast texts and then write either summaries or recalls. They found that the format of the text read by the students influenced the format of the students' writing.

When writing activities are fostered by reading activities based on students' comprehension of the content of the reading piece through the recognition of the rhetorical structures, the students' ability in recalling the gist of the passage could be facilitated and such an approach to essay writing

could enable students to discipline their thoughts.
In this sense, Newell and Winograd (1989) found in a
study that "overall quality of the gist captured in
the recalls reflected an understanding of the
original passage fostered by the writing task" and
they pointed out that:

> When students wrote analytic essays or
> extended writing (including complex
> manipulation of passage content) about
> passages, they were more likely to construct
> a coherent representation of the general
> theme or topic of the passages in comparison
> to answering questions or taking notes on
> the passages. (p. 207)

Newell and Winograd also state that "the
students' well-structured comprehension of passage
content facilitate their ability in recalling the
gist of the passage" (p. 207). The results of their
study showed that there is a significant effect for
task and passage-specific knowledge leading to
effective recall of passage gist. They also pointed
out that "when content was familiar, the students
were able to produce coherent recalls of the passage
regardless of tasks" (p. 207). Newell and Winograd
concluded that "because essay writing requires
global planning that entails manipulating the
information directly related to more important
rhetorical structures, essay writing will lead to
recall of those structures." They explained this
effect saying that "essay writing requires writers
to focus mostly on the general theme of the original
passage" (p. 211). Besides, Newell and Winograd

place importance on the fact that such writing
fosters disciplined thought. They discuss as
follows:

> Studies of how writing assignments can be
> implemented to aid students in integrating
> and consolidating what they take from their
> reading and classroom discussions are an
> important part of research agenda. As we
> clarify what writing contributes to
> individual learners, it is also necessary to
> develop models of instruction that employ
> writing as a way to foster disciplined
> thought about the content of texts that
> students read in subject areas; furthermore,
> the value of the writing we assign in
> school, whether restrictive or extensive,
> may be based more appropriately on what
> students are expected to take from
> expository texts. (p.213)

This study by Newell and Winograd leads one to
conclude that reading in subject areas, focusing on
the content of texts, can be used as a technique or
strategy so that students can be helped to develop
their thinking processes during their writing
experiences.

Birnbaum (1982) dealt with the influence of
reading on writing in a study, the results of which
could suggest that reading may have an immediate
effect on writing. Birnbaum found with fourth and
seventh graders that more proficient readers tended
to know how to think and what to think about while
they were reading and writing. She also found that
the quality of writing produced by those students
was related to the quality of their reading.
Further, Jaggar, Carrara and Weiss (1986) observed
elementary school children experimenting with new

modes of narrative writing, such as the use of dialogue, exaggeration, humour, and third person point of view, and found that children borrow ideas from their own reading and incorporate them into their personal experiences to form the content of their stories.

Adams and Dwyer (1982) suggest that "language training materials be designed so that they closely match students' cognitive and interest levels as well as their goals for language study." They say further that:

> If the teacher has high-intermediate, high school, college-bound, or university level students who have solid basic grammar skills but who need direction in the development and refinement of more sophisticated language skills, then the writing assignments should include work in reading academic prose and acquiring and polishing several other academic skills. (p. x)

From this standpoint, it can be pointed out that students should be familiarized with a realistic and appropriate use of academic language by reading academic level materials, suiting them to their particular needs through examining the organization and content of what they read in order to develop their writing skill and create coherent written products.

Consequently, in teaching the writing skill, the teacher must keep in mind the fact that students can draw something from the immediate source that they will be provided. Therefore, a writing teacher

can develop and make use of strategies in order to guide students in getting help from written sources through reading. As a result of such an approach to writing, students can be equipped with the structural characteristics of a reading piece. Also, students can be better guided in the use of vocabulary, syntactic structures, and idiomatic expressions and their combinations by creating compositions with rich content.

2.3 HOLISTIC EVALUATION

This section presents research focused on holistic evaluation of compositions, its definition and the rationale behind it, a discussion on reducing the threats to the reliability of holistic scoring, the necessity of using a scoring guide and the training of raters on it.

To begin with, it would be appropriate to provide some definitions of holistic evaluation or scoring with reference to some researchers who have been interested in the issue and done research on it. Holistic evaluation of writing, as Cooper (1977) states, is a "guided procedure for sorting or ranking a written piece." Cooper identifies three procedures in relation to holistic evaluation of writing. The rater takes a piece of writing and "either (1) matches it with another piece in a graded series of pieces or (2) scores it for the

prominence of certain features important to that kind of writing or (3) assigns a letter or number grade" (p. 3). Holistic evaluation or scoring, as Janopolous (1989) says, can be defined as "direct assessment of the overall quality of a writing sample" (p. 220). Stiggins and Bridgeford (1982) also give a similar definition, saying that "holistic scoring calls for the reader to rate overall writing proficiency on a single rating scale" (p. 26). To give a general definition, it can be said that holistic scoring is a guided procedure for sorting or ranking a written piece based on direct assessment of its overall quality on a single rating scale.

Reading a composition, forming a general impression of it and assigning a mark to it may be subjective and therefore unreliable; however, some techniques are available to reduce the threats to reliability. Jacobs et al. (1981) suggest some useful techniques for more reliable composition evaluation, and to reduce subjectivity. They are as follows:

> (1) adopt a holistic evaluation approach,
> (2) establish criteria to focus reader's attention on significant aspects of the compositions,
> (3) set a common standard for judging the quality of the writing,
> (4) select readers from the same backgrounds,
> (5) train readers until they can achieve close agreement in their assessments of the same papers,
> (6) obtain at least two independent readings

of each composition.
(7) and monitor the readers periodically
during the evaluation to check their
consistency in applying the standards and
criteria of evaluation. (cited in Perkins,
1983, p. 652)

The reasons for taking these techniques into

consideration are pointed out by Jacobs et al.

(1981) as follows: Firstly, "graders may have

different standards of severity"; in other words,

they may try to use an "absolute standard of

quality". Secondly, "graders may be inconsistent in

applying the standards of the evaluation." Next,

"graders may react to certain elements in the

evaluation or in the papers (e.g., the quality of

sentence structure)." Finally, "graders may value

different aspects of a composition" (cited in

Perkins, 1983, p.654).

When one speaks of reliability in holistic

scoring, a distinction has to be made between

"inter-rater reliability" and "intra-rater

reliability". Homburg (1984) describes them as

follows:

Different composition graders often assign
the same composition to different grading
categories, and this may affect inter-rater
reliability. On the other hand, the same
composition grader may well assign the same
composition to different grading categories
at different times, and this may affect
intra-rater reliability. (p. 87)

Homburg says further that "although these are

significant problems, holistic grading of

compositions appears to be valid by its widespread

use for the evaluation of students' writing proficiency" (p. 87).

The validity and reliability of holistic evaluation is an important issue that has to be taken into consideration. Odell (1977) points out that "holistic evaluation can offer a solution to two problems in measuring student's growth in writing: (1) making judgements that are valid; and (2) making judgements that are reliable" (p. 2). Perkins (1983) stated that "the primary assumption of holistic scoring is that a quick and general perusal of a writing sample will yield a valid and reliable assessment of the author's writing proficiency" (p. 653). Janopoulos (1989) also mentions that "the consensus of opinion is that holistic scoring is an effective method for providing a direct assessment of both first and second language writing proficiency" (p. 220).

On the issue of the validity of holistic evaluation, Perkins (1983) says that:

> Of all of the composition evaluation schemes available today, holistic scoring has the highest construct validity when overall attained writing proficiency is the construct to be assessed...Holistic scoring involves one or more readers awarding a single grade based on the total impression of a composition as a whole text or discourse because holistic scoring evaluates a whole text rather than simply parts of a text. In scoring holistically, the grader reads the composition, forms a general impression, and assigns a mark to that composition based on some standard. That standard may be either a model composition to which the reader has reference, or

general impressions the reader has based on
experience in reading student compositions.
(pp. 651-71)

There have been several studies on the
reliability of holistic scoring. Follman and
Anderson (1967) noted that:

The unreliability obtained in the evaluation
of essays occurs primarily because raters
are to a considerable degree heterogeneous
in academic background and have had
differential experiential backgrounds which
are likely to produce different attitudes
and values which operate significantly in
their evaluations of essays. (pp. 190-200)

Cooper (1977) pointed out quite early that
"unreliable rating of essays is an incontrovertible
fact but reliability can be improved to an
acceptable level when raters from similar
backgrounds are carefully trained." Cooper stated
that:

When raters are from similar backgrounds and
when they are trained with a holistic
scoring guide--either one they borrow or
devise for themselves on the spot--they can
achieve nearly perfect agreement in choosing
the better of a pair of essays; and they can
achieve scoring reliabilities in the high
eighties and low nineties on their summed
scores from multiple pieces of a student's
writing. (p. 19)

However, previous research showed that rater
reliability could be improved. To exemplify,
Follman and Anderson (1967) reported reliabilities
for five raters ranging from .81 to .95 on five
different types of holistic evaluation, and Moslemi
(1975) reported a reliability of .95 for three
raters scoring creative writing. Coffman (1971)

noted that "when made aware of discrepancies, teachers tend to move their own ratings in the direction of the average ratings of the group. Over a period of time, the ratings of the staff as a group tend to become more reliable." On the issue of training of the raters, Cooper (1977) explains that:

> The raters must be carefully trained. They should use the holistic scoring guide with sample papers exactly like those they will be scoring, and they must be able to make judgements within the context of the range of performances in the particular set of papers they are scoring. (p. 20)

Cooper also emphasizes the fact that scoring is always "relative to the set of papers at hand and must take account of the writing task, the conditions under which the writing was done, the age and ability of the students and the full range of the quality of the papers." He also states that reliability cannot be achieved when some raters are using an "absolute standard of quality". Cooper points out the fact that "raters should check the reliability of their ratings during training to insure they reach an acceptable level before they begin the actual scoring" (p. 20).

Holistic evaluation of a written piece requires the use of a scoring guide. Cooper (1977) says that "holistic evaluation is usually guided by a holistic scoring guide describing each feature and identifying high, middle, and low quality levels for

each feature"; therefore a holistic evaluation of a written piece "does not require the rater to make corrections or revisions in the paper" (p. 3). Janopoulos (1989) noted that "holistic scorers base their assessments on a standard established by means of model compositions, personal experience, a list of holistic criteria, or any combination of these" (p. 220).

2.4 OBJECTIVE MEASURES FOR DISCRIMINATING AMONG COMPOSITIONS

Compositions can be analyzed for organizational features, control of grammatical structures, vocabulary, and many other characteristics through holistic evaluation, but "in order to satisfy primarily the criteria of objectivity, and reliability", as Larsen-Freeman (1978) held, "some objective measures can also be used to discriminate among compositions at different levels of proficiency" (p. 440).

In all studies done in the field, T-unit analysis, as Gaies (1980) pointed out, was seen to provide an objective and reliable method of determining the overall syntactic complexity of language samples. The T-unit, as Perkins (1983) says, is one of the first objective measures to be employed as an instrument for assessing writing. The T-unit is an "index of syntactic complexity" and Hunt (1977) defined it as "single main clause (or independent clause) plus whatever other subordinate

clauses or nonclauses are attached to, or embedded within, that one main clause" (p. 93). More briefly, a T-unit is a single main clause plus whatever goes with it. Measures of "attained writing proficiency and language development", such as words per composition, T-units per composition, error-free T-units per composition, words in error-free T-units per composition, number of errors, and T-unit length, are said to be both "objective and reliable because independent evaluators will exhibit high correlations with each other when quantifying objective measures of samples of written work" (Perkins, 1983, p. 661). Gaies (1980) argued for the use of the T-unit in L2 research on two grounds: "(1) the T-unit is a measure of linguistic development which is external to any particular set of data; and (2) the T-unit allows for meaningful statistical comparison between L1 and L2 data" (p. 54). Homburg (1984), on the other hand, noted that:

> The T-unit, as a measure of syntactic development, has come under attack as an index of writing ability and effectiveness of communication; however, T-unit length has been shown to be a measure of syntactic complexity, although not necessarily of communicative competence. (p. 90)

The T in T-unit stands for "terminable". Grammatically, a T-unit can be terminated with a period or other terminal mark. Hunt (1977) claimed, based on his studies, that "as schoolchildren get

older, the T-units they write tend to get longer, measuring length as the mean number of words per T-unit (the T-unit length hypothesis)" (p. 93); that is, the number of words per T-unit increased with the age of the writer.

The objective measures of T-units currently available to researchers are "(1) measures of length, (2) measures of subordination and relativization, (3) measures of sentence connectors, and (4) measures of number and types of errors" (Homburg, 1984, p. 87).

Firstly, in terms of length measures, in order to see a distinction between compositions in different categories one can look, as Homburg (1984) did, at the number of words per compositions, the number of T-units per composition, the number of T-units per sentence, the number of words per sentence and the number of words per T-unit.

Secondly, as for measures of subordination and relativization, as Homburg used, "the number of dependent clauses per composition and the ratio of the number of dependent clauses per independent clause can also be used" (p. 92). Homburg found that relativization and subordination seem to increase as holistic evaluation scores increase.

The third kind of measure is connector measures. Homburg points out that the T-unit measure indicates:

> Whether or not there is some degree of
> relativization and subordination present in
> a particular composition; however, it
> ignores the use of transitional adverbs or
> other connectors, even though the use of
> them may improve the readability and
> comprehensibility of a composition. (p. 92)

For this reason, in order to determine a student's

use of these features, the number of them can be

focused on. In this sense, Jacobs (1981) says that:

> A significant problem for research in
> composition teaching has been objective
> evaluation of student prose. Measures such
> as T-units provide information about surface
> or grammatical features but there has been
> no satisfactory way to measure objectively
> the property of rhetorical connectedness
> which is an important property to measure
> since it is directly related to teacher
> intuitions concerning the quality of
> expository writing ... Holistic procedures,
> carried out by trained readers, can be used
> to show which passages have this
> characteristic and which do not. (p. 237)

Perkins (1980) noted that more research should be

directed toward the "quantification of the

rhetorical devices that make a piece of writing hang

together", and Jacobs (1981) attempted to show that

such quantification is possible and helpful. Jacobs

argued that a rhetorical relationship is actually a

special kind of predication and that the density of

such predications may be a factor directly

contributing to the results of holistic evaluation.

Jacobs postulates the concept "rhetorical density"

in which "rhetorical" refers to relationships of

general-to-specific, comparison/contrast, purpose,

condition, and so forth, while "density" refers to

the number of such relationships within a given unit

of prose.

The last kind of measure to be mentioned is error measures. Homburg (1984) says that errors could be used as a measure or "index of writing proficiency"; however, he points out that "the problem in considering errors is in determining what constitutes an error and in deciding which errors should be included in a measure of writing proficiency" (p. 93). Larsen-Freeman and Strom (1977) noted that a T-unit must be devoid of errors to be counted as error-free. In a pilot study reported by Larsen-Freeman (1978), 48 compositions were divided into five categories (poor, fair, average, good, and excellent). Because the agreement between researchers on which compositions belonged in which group was so high they felt justified in their next step to try and identify the features that made each group of compositions unique or distinct from the others so as to satisfy their criteria of objectivity, reliability, ease of application, and universality. They found that "the best discrimination measures were the average number of words written per T-unit and the total number of error-free T-units written per composition" (p. 440). Further, Perkins (1980) found in a study that objective measures which do not take the absence of errors into account are of no use in discriminating among holistic evaluations at one advanced level of

proficiency. In his research, the three objective measures (words per composition, T-units per composition, T-unit length) which did not take the absence of errors into account showed little variation between the three holistic evaluations. On the other hand, objective measures which counted error-free units were good discriminators. Perkins also stated that "any syntactic density formula which does not consider the elimination of errors is not sensitive enough to discriminate among compositions qualitatively." Perkins concluded that "objective measures which take the absence of errors into account discriminate among holistic qualitative judgements of compositions from one level of proficiency" (p. 67).

To sum up, holistic evaluation of a student's written product, as Janapoulos (1989) stated, is a direct assessment of the overall quality of his/her writing. However, forming a general impression of a composition and assigning a mark to it may be subjective and a threat to its reliability though these negative aspects can be reduced to a minimum level by means of training. On the other hand, keeping the inter-rater reliability at the same level might be difficult due to the fact that the readers or raters need to be monitored periodically during the evaluation to check their consistency. Besides, the raters may be to an extent heterogenous

in their academic and experiential backgrounds and this factor may cause different attitudes and values during evaluations. In this perspective, in order to avoid such drawbacks of holistic evaluation, there seems to be a need to support the reliability, validity, and objectivity of holistic evaluations by using some objective measures such as average number of words written per error-free T-unit, the percentage of error-free T-units, density of rhetorical devices such as transitional words since previous research has indicated that these are good discriminators among holistic qualitative evaluations of compositions. Finally, it can be said that the holistic evaluation of compositions by graders trained in a "mutually accepted and understood scoring system", as Cooper (1977) held, and focusing on specific objective measures may present reliable, valid, and objective results for the researchers who are interested in the syntactic maturity of learners' written production.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of reading in L2 immediately before writing about a given topic on writing proficiency in the upper-intermediate level. In this study, writing proficiency was defined as the level at which students are able to express themselves in a clear, correct, and comprehensible manner, a level at which what students write should be an example of accepted prose and be perceived as specifically English.

The theoretical foundation of the study was that reading and writing are two closely related skills that should be taught in an integrated fashion rather than in a fragmented way as separate skills. The research studies done by Birnbaum (1981), Meyer (1982), Gordon and Braun (1982), Smith (1983), Elley and Mangubhai (1983), Tierney and Leys (1984), Geva and Tierney (1984), Blackburn (1985), Jaggar et al. (1986), Janapoulos (1986), and Newell and Winograd (1989), among others, reveal that reading influences a learner's writing positively, and that reading and writing are closely associated skills.

Based on the assumption that reading a great deal using a wide range of materials can help language learners acquire "the feeling for the

appropriate use of the language forms and combinations" (Rivers, 1981), one can expect that reading experiences of the learners may influence their writing style, use and choice of vocabulary and syntactic structures (Tierney and Leys, 1984), contribute to their writing performance, enable them to gain certain positive values about their own writing and also serve as tools for information storage and retrieval and for discovering new ideas and putting logical thoughts on paper. Furthermore, the structural characteristics of a reading piece can help students improve the organization of their own writing (Gordon and Braun, 1982). Also, the teaching of reading and writing skills integratively can guide learners in composing better written products reflecting their ideas through comprehensible and correct use of language which they have encountered in their reading. Additionally, improving the learner's reading comprehension ability can affect the quality of their written products, too. The studies by Elley and Mangubhai (1983) and Janapoulos (1986) show as well that pleasure reading in L2 is an effective factor in the development of writing skill.

3.2 Subjects

The subjects who participated in this study were all from Dokuz Eylul University English Language School in Izmir, Turkey. A total of 35

students, 14 females and 21 males, formed the pool from which the subjects were selected. They were all in the upper-intermediate level, which was determined by the university placement examination. Sixteen subjects were undergraduates who had to acquire adequate English in one year to be able to attend their freshman courses. Nineteen of them were university graduates who registered for the Master's Programs in their own fields but had to attend the English Language Program for a year. The upper-intermediate level was chosen for this study particularly because students at this level are assumed to be at a level of proficiency in general language skills which should support the production of an acceptable composition. The actual participants of the study were 12 in number, 7 males and 5 females. The reason that the study was conducted with this number of students is that some of the subjects were eliminated based on the results of the questionnaire and some reported that they would not be able to participate because of their personal engagements. Each treatment group consisted of 6 subjects who were matched according to the scores of the compositions they wrote in advance. Also, the study was controlled for the subjects' amount of pleasure reading and for their writing proficiency.

3.3 Materials

In this study, a questionnaire (See Appendix-A) prepared by the researcher was used in order to select the heavy pleasure readers from the whole population of 35 subjects on the basis of an hour/week measure since past research by Elley and Mangubhai (1983) and Janapoulos (1986) indicated that there is a strong correlation between pleasure reading and writing proficiency. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section asked the subjects what sort of English materials they read in their leisure and the second section asked them how many hours they spend a day and a week on their own. Pleasure reading in this study referred to reading such things as newspapers, periodicals, short readers, and novels independently from the course books studied in the language program.

For the holistic evaluation of compositions that formed the data for this study, the 100-point holistic scoring guide prepared at the English Language Center at Michigan State University was used (See Appendix-B).

Since the treatment groups were reversed in this study, two different topics and reading passages were selected so that there should be no influence from one reading into any group's writing performance in terms of the content of the reading passages. The first reading passage was about the

"shortage of fresh water", a modified passage taken from _Time Magazine_ (Appendix C). The second reading passage was about the earthquake that happened in Erzincan on March 13, 1992. The reading passage was prepared from articles that appeared in the _Turkish Daily News_ between March 14 and March 20, 1992 (Appendix D).

All the exercises that both reading and non-reading groups used originated from the reading passages that the reading groups read before the discussion questions (See Appendices C and D) and they were prepared in order to facilitate students' comprehension of the reading passages and to prepare them for writing on the topics. In each exercise part, there was, first, a vocabulary study section; next, a fill-in-the-blanks type of exercise to practise those vocabulary items in context; and then, a structural exercise that involved practice on sentence combining and transformation; and finally some discussion questions for brainstorming on the topic. The teachers were also provided with the guidelines for preparing and teaching the materials.

3.4 Procedures

The collection of the data for this study required forming two homogeneous treatment groups based on the amount of pleasure reading done by the subjects and the writing proficiency level of the

selected subjects. First, the pool of students were administered a questionnaire on pleasure reading and the subjects were selected for the study. Second, the selected students were asked to write a composition to determine their proficiency levels. Third, a training session was conducted for three outside judges on the use of the holistic scoring guide for the compositions. Fourth, the treatment groups were formed by matching the scores of the subjects and assigned two composition activities.

3.4.1 The Questionnaire on Pleasure Reading

As the first screening device in the procedure, 35 students were administered a questionnaire on pleasure reading. The purpose of this was to select high quality readers to form two homogeneous treatment groups. After the questionnaires were filled out, of the 35 students in the pool, 27 students who reported that they spent 3 hours or more each week for pleasure reading were selected as subjects for the next step. Thus, eight of the students were eliminated. Though in the study by Janapoulos (1986) a 5 hour/week measure was used as the lowest criterion, in this study a 3 hour/week measure was used as the lowest limit.

3.4.2 Preliminary Composition Writing to Determine the General Proficiency Level of the Subjects

After the selection of the heavy pleasure readers, the subjects were asked to write as much as

they could in 30 minutes on the topic "The Best Holiday I Have Ever Had". The purpose of this composition writing was to determine the general proficiency level of the subjects in writing and to form two homogeneous groups based on their scores. These compositions were evaluated holistically by two trained raters. The average of the two scores was the final score for each piece of writing.

3.4.3 Training Session on the Use of the Scoring Guide

The purpose of the training session in this study was to reach a high rater reliability. Before the compositions were evaluated, a training session was held on the use of the holistic scoring guide with the participation of three teachers from the same school. Three raters were trained during the training session because when composition scores of two raters differed a great deal, they were submitted to a third rater for evaluation as done in the study by Carson et al. (1990).

As part of their training, the scorers were given sample compositions which were provided in the set of holistic scoring guide prepared at the English Center at Michigan State University so that they would have a better idea of what to expect from compositions at different score levels between the scores of 35 and 100. The compositions having close scores were read and compared with each other and a discussion was done on the expected criteria.

Secondly, some sample compositions written on the topic "Describe the Person Who Made the Greatest Impression on You" by 13 subjects who did not actually participate in the study were used to let the three raters practise on the use of the scoring guide. Nine samples were read by each rater and assigned a score. After that, the evaluations were discussed by the raters. Four of those samples were used to test the inter-rater reliability between the two scorers.

3.4.4 Formation of the Treatment Groups

When the training session was completed, the compositions written by 27 subjects on the topic "The Best Holiday I Have Ever Had" were scored and the subjects were matched according to their scores. Then, each of the matched subjects was assigned to one of the treatment groups randomly, Group-X and Group-Y. As a result of the matching of the subjects with the same or very close scores, 12 matched pairs were formed. Three subjects were eliminated at this level. However, some subjects reported that they were unable to attend the teaching session because of their personal engagements; therefore, 12 more subjects were completely eliminated from the study as well. As a result, the teaching portion of the study was conducted with only 6 pairs of subjects who were all university graduates.

3.4.5 Teaching Sessions

The treatment was conducted by two teachers. Soon after the formation of the groups the treatment was started with the teaching of the material which was about the "Shortage of Fresh Water". The treatment took three class periods. Both groups did the introduction, the vocabulary study, and structural and transformational type exercises together, so time was kept constant for both. They were separated for the next sections after these exercises.

In the first class period, the introduction part of the activity was done in the form of a discussion on the subject using some researcher prepared questions. Next, the students focused on a list of vocabulary items with their definitions. The students used them in sentences and the teacher helped them understand their meanings. Then, the students did pair-work and filled in the blanks in sentences, using the vocabulary items that they had already studied. The teacher also helped with the meanings of some new words that the students had difficulty with. This portion of the activity took one 45 minute class period.

In the second class period, the teacher continued with the next exercise in which the students were expected to combine and transform some sentences with correct usage. The students first

worked in pairs before the teacher focused on their answers. The teacher again explained the new words when the students asked.

After these exercises, in the third class period, the groups were separated. The non-reading group continued with the discussion questions and naturally spent more time on them whereas the reading group first read a two and a half-page passage about the topic and identified some ideas to be exploited in their compositions and took note of them. These subjects did silent-reading and they were given about 15 to 20 minutes to read. After completing their reading of the passage, they discussed some researcher prepared questions provided in a handout with the second teacher. The reading passage was used to provide a linguistic model and consolidate what they did in the exercises, and the comprehension questions were used for checking their comprehension of it. The answers given to the discussion questions in both groups were not controlled; in other words, the teacher did not supply any particular answer for any of the questions. Both groups spent a class hour for this step.

Before starting to write their compositions, the subjects in both groups were asked to write down the ideas they might use in their compositions. After that was done, all the subjects started

writing on the topic. They were given sheets with the topic and the necessary instructions. They were given 45 minutes to write as much as they could without using any dictionaries or the handouts they were given.

The same steps were followed for the second set of teaching materials which was about the earthquake that hit Erzincan, a city in eastern Turkey, on March 13, 1992. For this material, the treatment groups were reversed so that the non-reading group of the first teaching session could be used as a reading group, in other words, write under the reading condition and in this way a comparison of the results could be made. The teaching of this material was done by another teacher. At the end of the steps, as done with the first, the subjects were asked to write on the topic given.

3.4.6 Holistic Evaluation of the Data

The compositions written by the reading and non-reading groups on the two topics were scored holistically by two trained raters who had the highest inter-rater reliability between them and when a difference of more than 3 points occurred between their scores, such compositions were submitted to the third rater, so the final score was the average of the scores given by the third rater and the closest score of the other two.

3.5 Variables

This study investigated the effect of reading in L2 on student´s writing proficiency immediately before writing on a given topic in the upper-intermediate level.

Proficiency in writing, as the dependent variable, was determined by the holistic evaluation of the compositions written by the subjects on two different topics.

Reading in L2 immediately before writing about a given topic, as the independent variable, required the subjects in the reading groups in both teaching sessions to read a passage related to the topic and then write compositions.

The upper-intermediate level, as the first control variable, was chosen for this study particularly as students at this level are assumed to be proficient in general language skills which should support the production of an acceptable written piece.

Finally, the amount of pleasure reading for each subject, the second control variable, was identified through administering a questionnaire at the beginning of the data collection procedures.

For the definitions of the variables, see Section 1.3.3.

3.6 Analytic Procedures

In this study, the evaluation of the

compositions was done holistically and the inter-rater reliability between each of two raters was tested twice. The first one was administered soon after the training session and the second just before the evaluation of the data of the study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical program was run to find out the correlation coefficient (r) between each of two raters, and then, the Spearman Brown Formula of Reliability (Split-half Reliability) statistical program was run to calculate the degree of inter-rater reliability.

In order to compare the attained scores of the subjects in the two treatments, the t-test statistical program was used. By running a t-test, the means and the standard deviations of the scores were compared to find out the students' performance and variability of the scores under each reading condition.

After this statistical procedure, in order to provide a qualitative analysis and to satisfy the researcher's need to determine the reliability and objectivity of the holistic evaluations and to identify the syntactic complexity of the compositions, a T-unit analysis was done and this analysis focused on the percentage of the error-free T-units per composition (for a definition of T-unit, see section 2.4).

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

4.1 Introduction

This study investigated the effect of reading on the writing proficiency of the learners when it is done immediately before the act of writing.

The basis of the study was that reading and writing skills are generally taught separately and that the learners may succeed in the reading skill but may fail to improve their writing skill. However, an integration of the two skills in the curriculum using a variety of sources or materials may result in the improvement of the writing skill.

4.2 Results and Discussion

The compositions written by 12 subjects in both treatment groups, reading and non-reading groups, were evaluated holistically by three raters. The inter-rater reliability level between each two raters was tested twice in this study. The first test was done soon after the training session using four sample compositions and the second test was done just before the raters started scoring the compositions that were the data for this study, using five compositions written on the topics of the study. The following tables present the results of inter-rater reliability tests.

Table 4.1 below gives the individual scores given by the three raters in the first test of inter-rater reliability.

TABLE 4.1
Test-1: Post-Training Scores Assigned
to Compositions by Three Raters

	Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
Comp.1	73	68	80
Comp.2	75	71	65
Comp.3	65	63	63
Comp.4	78	75	80

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation program was run to calculate the correlation coefficient for each two raters, and then, the Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula of Reliability (Split-half Reliability) was used to find the inter-rater reliability levels. The following table presents the results:

TABLE 4.2
Post-Training Inter-Rater Reliability
Test Results Between Raters

	Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
Rater-1	1.00	.98	.77
Rater-2	.98	1.00	.71
Rater-3	.77	.71	1.00

Average= .82

As the table shows, Rater-1 and Rater-2 had the highest inter-rater reliability (r=.98). Rater-1 and Rater-3 scored a level of r=.77, and finally, Rater-2 and Rater-3 scored the lowest level r=.71. The average among the three raters in the post-training test was r=.82.

The next table presents the scores assigned to five compositions during the second inter-rater

reliability test, which was done to check the agreement between the raters.

TABLE 4.3
Test-2: Pre-Data Evaluation Scores
Assigned to Compositions

	Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
Comp.1	80	75	80
Comp.2	75	70	72
Comp.3	70	70	65
Comp.4	80	75	70
Comp.5	70	60	67

The same procedure was followed to find out the inter-rater reliability levels between each two raters as done for TEST-1, using the scores on the table above. Table 4.4 presents the results of pre-data evaluation inter-rater reliability levels:

TABLE 4.4
Pre-Data Scoring Inter-rater
Reliability Test Results

	Rater-1	Rater-2	Rater-3
Rater-1	1.00	.90	.88
Rater-2	.90	1.00	.72
Rater-3	.88	.72	1.00

Average r= .83

As shown in the table, the inter-rater reliability level between Rater-1 and Rater-2 was r=.90, which is a bit lower than the one scored in the post-training test. The level of reliability between Rater-1 and Rater-3 was r=.88, which was higher than the one scored in the post-training test. Meanwhile, the level of agreement between Rater-2 and Rater-3 did not change much, from r=.71 to r=

.72. The average level for the three raters before they started scoring the data of this study was $r=.83$, which was similar to the one reached in the post-training test ($r= .82$).

As Rater-1 and Rater-2 had the highest inter-rater reliability score in both tests, they were selected to read and score the compositions written by the 12 subjects. The third rater participated in the evaluation process only when the scores by Rater-1 and Rater-2 differed more than 3 points. As for the final agreement between Rater-1 and Rater-2 after the completion of the holistic evaluation of the compositions, the inter-rater reliability was $r=.88$, which was nearly as high as the one ($r=.90$) reached in pre-data scoring test, and even higher than the averages in both tests.

In sum, though it was not the main focus of this study, the results of the tests indicate once more that the inter-rater reliability level between raters who will evaluate compositions holistically could be increased through training.

As explained before, the subjects in this study got involved in two composition writing activities on two different topics both of which required the reading groups to focus on a reading passage before writing their compositions (see chapter 3). The first topic was about "Shortage of Fresh Water" and the second one was about the earthquake in Erzincan,

Turkey (See appendices C and D).

Table 4.5 presents the average scores assigned to the compositions in both parts of the treatment, the overall means and the standard deviations for the treatment groups and the t-test results of the means to see the overall significance of the treatment under the reading condition:

TABLE 4.5
Scores Assigned to the Compositions in
Both Parts of the Treatment and T-test Results
of the Overall Means for the Whole Treatment

Topic-1 Matched Pair	Reading Group (Group X)	Non-reading Group (Group Y)
x1;y1	86	73.5
x2;y2	75.5	73.5
x3;y3	90	75.5
x4;y4	91.5	83
x5;y5	75.5	74
x6;y6	85	73
Topic-2 Matched Pair	Reading Group (Group Y)	Non-reading Group (Group X)
y1;x1	80.5	72
y2;x2	80	65
y3;x3	88.5	80
y4;x4	83.5	72.5
y5;x5	86	73.5
y6;x6	77	71.5
df=5	M=83.25 SD=5.53 T-val.=4.57	M=73.92 SD=4.42

*p<.005

The scores assigned to the compositions show that the subjects who read a reading passage before writing on the topic performed better than the ones who did not read the passage. The t-test results of the overall means for the whole treatment indicated

a quite high significance at the level of p<.005 for a one-tailed test.

To find out the significance level of the first treatment, a t-test was run again. Table 4.6 gives the mean scores and standard deviations for the reading and non-reading groups:

TABLE 4.6
T-test Results of the Scores of the
Compositions Written on the First Topic

	Mean	St. Dev.	T-value	T-crit.
Read. Gr.	83.92	6.95	2.635	2.571*
Non-read. Gr.	75.42	3.81		

*p<.025

T-test results of the first treatment on the first topic reveal that the subjects' involvement in a reading activity before writing on that topic influenced their performance in writing at the significance level of p<.025.

For the second treatment, the groups were reversed to treat them equally, to put another way, to have the non-reading group of the first treatment write under the reading condition as well. As a result of this, the non-reading group of the first treatment was used as the reading group. Table 4.7 gives the t-test results for the second treatment:

TABLE 4.7
T-test Results of the Scores of the
Compositions Written on the Second Topic

	Mean	St. Dev.	T-value	T-crit.
Read.Gr.	82.58	4.24	3.890	3.365*
Non-read. Gr.	72.42	4.79		

*p<.01

As the t-test results indicate, the level of significance was higher (p<.01) than the first treatment, which could be related to the fact that the topic on which the subjects wrote their compositions after their reading was more familiar to them as it was an event that had recently happened in their own country. It can also be said that reading on such a topic influenced their writing better when compared to the ones who did not read before writing on the topic.

On the other hand, the reason for the lower level of significance for the first writing activity could be seen in the fact that it was more a global matter, so the students cannot be expected to activate their previous knowledge on it as well as the others did with the second topic. However, it can be postulated in the presence of the results that reading immediately before writing affects students' performance positively.

At this level, the null hypothesis that there would be no relationship between students' reading immediately before writing and their writing

proficiency was rejected and the directional hypothesis was accepted.

In order to support the reliability of the holistic evaluations and the significance of the treatment, a T-unit analysis was also done. The number of error-free T-units per composition as a discriminator among compositions was taken into consideration. The number of error-free T-units and the total number of T-units were identified for each composition written on each topic in order to find the percentage of error-free T-units to total T-units. Then, these percentages were totaled to find out the mean scores and the standard deviations and a t-test was used to compare these means. Table 4.8 gives the percentages of the error-free T-units per composition written on the first topic:

TABLE 4.8
Frequency and Percentage of Error-free T-units per Composition Written on the First Topic

Matched Pair	Reading Gr. (X) Err.-free t-units	Total t-units	%	Non-reading Gr. (Y) Err.-free t-units	Total t-units	%
x1;y1	27	30	90	21	27	78
x2;y2	20	23	86	14	20	70
x3;y3	50	54	92	25	32	78
x4;y4	48	52	92	26	31	84
x5;y5	18	21	86	29	41	71
x6;y6	35	39	89	17	23	74

An examination of Table 4.8 indicates that the percentages of error-free T-units for the reading group are higher than those of the non-reading group and therefore serves as a discriminator between the

compositions of the matched pairs. Table 4.9 provides the means and standard deviations for the groups and the results of a t-test of the means of the two groups:

TABLE 4.9
T-Test Results for the Mean Percentage
of Error-free T-units per Composition
Written on the First Topic

	Mean	St.Dev.	T-value	T-crit.
Read. Gr.	89.17	2.71	5.55	4.03*
Non-Read. Gr.	75.83	5.23		

*p<.005

The results of the t-test show a level of significance p<.005; therefore, the T-unit analysis also supports the results of the t-test done for the holistic scores of the compositions written on the first topic with a higher level of significance.

Table 4.10 presents the percentages of the error-free t-units for the compositions written on the second topic:

TABLE 4.10
Frequency and Percentage of Error-free T-units
per Composition Written on the Second Topic

Matched Pair	Reading Gr. (Y)			Non-reading Gr. (X)		
	Err.-free t-units	Total t-units	%	Err.-free t-units	Total t-units	%
y1;x1	24	28	86	17	24	71
y2;x2	27	32	84	14	19	74
y3;x3	36	39	92	30	37	81
y4;x4	35	41	85	18	23	78
y5;x5	34	38	89	19	26	73
y6;x6	29	34	85	16	22	73

Similar to the percentages of error-free t-units for the reading group in the first portion of the

treatment, this table also shows that the percentages of the reading group are significantly higher than those of the non-reading group.

TABLE 4.11
T-test Results for the Mean Percentage
of Error-free T-units per Composition
Written on the Second Topic

	Mean	St.Dev.	T-value	T-crit.
Read. Gr.	86.83	3.06	6.00	4.03*
Non-Read. Gr	75.00	3.74		

*p<.005

The results of a t-test indicate a level of significance (p<.005) which is as high as the one achieved in the previous t-test (p<.005). The T-unit analysis, taking the error-free T-units into consideration, confirmed the results of the t-test done for the holistic scores of the compositions written on the second topic as well. These results may lead us to postulate that reading a topic-related passage before the act of writing is performed influences the learners' performance in writing in terms of accurate use of the syntactic rules and the lexical items, serving as a linguistic model.

As a conclusion, it can be said that reading on a topic preceded by some exercises (see chapter 3) provides students with a linguistic model to help them in the choice and accurate use of syntactic structures and specific vocabulary which altogether may lead them to richer content and to a reflection

on their own ideas, incorporating them into the ones they borrow from what they read.

The results of this study support the views and studies by Silberstein (1987), Eisenberg (1986), Tierney and Leys (1986), Spivey (1983), and Shanahan (1988) among many others. As Silberstein pointed out, the presence of the reader in the writing process can result in an effective reader who will be sensitive to the author's voice, a view also shared by Shanahan. This study supports the study by Eisenberg who suggests that a holistic approach should be used in the teaching of reading and writing skills by making use of a range of materials for developing both skills rather than as fragmented skills, so that, as Tierney and Leys hold, gains in overall reading improvement contribute to the gains in overall writing improvement. Similarly, this study supports the view of Spivey that improving student's comprehension ability can result in better organized, more connected and high content quality written products.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study investigated the effect of immediate reading on writing proficiency when it is done as part of writing instruction. As defined in Chapter 1, "immediate reading" referred to topic-related reading immediately before the act of writing is performed.

To test the hypothesis, two groups were formed. Firstly, the subjects doing the most pleasure reading were selected through a questionnaire, which was the first screening device. As the next step, the ones selected were asked to write on a topic to determine their general proficiency in writing, and then, the subjects were matched based on the holistic scores of the compositions evaluated by the two raters who turned out to have the highest inter-rater reliability (r=.98) in the post-training test. The matched subjects were assigned to the treatment groups randomly. After the formation of the groups, each group received two writing activities, in both of which the reading groups read a passage.

Before the raters scored the compositions which were written by the subjects, a second test of inter-rater reliability was conducted and it showed a level of Pearson r=.90 between Rater-1 and Rater-2 and an average of r=.83 for the three raters. The final agreement between Rater-1 and Rater-2 after

the evaluation of the compositions was r=.88, indicating that the agreement between raters could be increased through training.

5.2 Summary of the Results

In this study it was hypothesized that reading on a topic immediately before writing on that topic would increase the writing proficiency of the learner.

The t-test done to determine the overall significance of the treatment using the mean scores of the groups under the two reading conditions revealed a high significance level of $p<.005$ for a one-tailed test. Two more t-tests were computed to determine the significance levels of each reading condition separately. The first reading condition yielded positive significance at the level of $p<.025$ and the second reading condition revealed a significance level of $p<.01$, indicating the acceptance of the directional hypothesis, which means that students who read on a topic immediately before writing about that topic write better than students who do not.

Because of questions about the reliability and subjectivity of the holistic procedure and therefore of the scores assigned to the compositions, a T-unit analysis was done to provide an objective measure. The percentage of error-free T-units per composition was calculated and a t-test was run to find out the

significance level for each treatment. The mean scores of the two groups indicated a positive significance at the level of p<.005 for both reading conditions of the treatment. The T-unit analysis, as a result, confirmed the statistical findings of the study. The T-unit analysis also leads the researcher to state that basing the act of writing on the act of reading will result in students' better control of the syntactic structures in their writing throughout the language learning process.

5.3 Assessment of the Study

The collection of the data for this study was carried out in a very short time due to the time constraints. Therefore, the training of the outside judges on the holistic scoring guide was conducted during a very short period of time. A future research study that spends more time on this issue can result in more reliable results.

Further, this study was limited to the use of only two different reading materials. Future research should focus on the use of various reading materials over a longer period of time and their overall effect on writing proficiency.

In addition, this study was conducted with the participation of a limited number of students. Further research on this topic should be done with a larger population of subjects.

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

This study revealed that reading and writing skills can be integrated to achieve better teaching and learning outcomes in the classroom. Based on the results of the study, a good integration of these two skills requires the teacher to be selective in the choice of teaching material and also creative in shaping it for that purpose. This study showed that writing is better when it is coupled with reading and exercises built on that reading which can be used to facilitate and improve the student's comprehension of it. As done in the preparation of the material for this study, reading materials may very well serve as sources for preparing exercises to foster the acts of reading and writing integratively. In this way, the students can end up with integrated learning outcomes and they can have a better awareness of what is specifically English and what is not. Also, in the course of time the teachers can help their students become effective readers and writers in a better way by explaining their difficulties with the structures, expanding their knowledge of vocabulary and improving their ability to comprehend and put their ideas on paper.

5.5 Implications for Future Research

As the proficiency level was controlled in this study, this study can be repeated using beginning

level students to see if the same improvement in writing occurs for them. The study could also be done using students in the advanced level of their learning process. Additionally, the T-unit analysis proved to be good measure of syntactic complexity of the compositions in the confines of this study; therefore, it can be used in a similar study over a longer period of time to compare students´ compositions in the design mentioned above.

This study did not look at specifically how students benefited from their reading before writing their compositions in terms of vocabulary. A future research design can explore this issue in detail.

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APPENDIX-A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PLEASURE READING IN ENGLISH

Please take a few minutes to fill out this
questionnaire.

Name:
Age:
Department:

I) IF DURING YOUR LEISURE TIME YOU READ THE ENGLISH
MATERIALS THAT ARE NOT ASSIGNED AS PART OF YOUR
COURSE WORK, PLEASE CHECK THE KINDS OF MATERIALS YOU
READ.

A) _____ English Newspaper

(Turkish Daily News, Herald Tribune etc.)

B) _____ Periodicals

(Time, Newsweek etc.)

C) _____ Original novel

D) _____ Simplified Short Readers

E) _____ Magazines

F) _____ Books Related to Your Field of Study

II) HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU DO PLEASURE READING
(APPROXIMATELY)?

A) _____ A DAY (Total)

1   2   3   4   5

If you spend more hours, please indicate: _____

B) _____ A WEEK (Total)

1   2   3   4   5

If you spend more hours, please indicate : _____

APPENDIX-B

HOLISTIC SCORING GUIDE

100 Very clear. Native grammatical and vocabulary usage. Few if any misspelled words or punctuation problems. About 2 pages or more.

95 Between 90 and 100.

90 Very clear. Few grammatical errors of any kind. Generally smooth. Good command of vocabulary with not more than several inaccurate or unnatural usages. May have a few misspellings or punctuation problems. Well organized. Clearly developed paragraphs.

85 Between 80 and 90. Apparent that writer is not a native speaker. Good organization and paragraph development. Typical of a very advanced ELC student.

80 Very clear and understandable with minor obscure parts. Generally accurate use of grammatical structures at all levels with some problems with advanced structures. Mostly smooth sentences with a few choppy or run-on constructions. Largely accurate use of vocabulary with some problems with advanced words and some unnatural usage. A few misspelled or distorted words, and a few punctuation problems. Adequate attention to organization and development.

75 Clear with possibly one or two parts that require some mental editing. Generally accurate on elementary and intermediate grammatical structures, with occasional serious errors on advanced structures. Generally smooth, with a few choppy or poorly connected or run-on clauses or sentences. Some use of advanced vocabulary with several incorrectly or unnaturally used words. Several misspelled or distorted words and several punctuation problems. Some attention to overall organization and development. About 1 1/2 pages long.

70 Clear with minor editing but may have some parts requiring major editing or guessing. Frequent minor grammatical errors, but also accurate or nearly accurate use of a wide range of structures and tenses. Often smooth but with several poorly connected or choppy or run-on sentences. Vocabulary largely elementary, but often advanced words are used, although not always accurately. Possibly many misspelled words and up to several distortions. Sentences usually clearly marked but with several

punctuation problems.

65   Probably some unclear parts.   Use of a wide
range   of grammatical   structures but   numerious
errors, minor and serious, especially on the more
advanced structures.   Several choppy, run-on, or
poorly connected clauses or sentences.   Vocabulary
range in the elementary and intermediate ranges but
with frequent errors at all levels, especially with
advanced words.   Quite a few unnatural usages.
Probably many   misspelled words or   distortions.
Punctuation may show frequent problems.   Usually 1
to 1 1/2 pages.

60   Probably becomes unclear or confusing when
expressing some   complex ideas.   Sometimes accurate
at   the   elementary   level   but   with   serious
inaccuracies at all levels. Many choppy, run-on or
poorly connected clauses or sentences. Many serious
errors at all   levels in vocabulary, though fair use
of elementary vocabulary.   Frequent unnatural or
apparently translated or invented words.   Probably
many misspellings, distortions, or mispunctuations.
About a page or more.

55   Probably unclear in several   parts or may
possibly attempt to express only very elementary
ideas.   Few accurate sentences or   natural and
adequate use of vocabulary.   Rarely smooth.   Many
apparent   translations or invented words.   Many
misspellings,   distortions,   and   mispunctuations.
About one page.

45 May be largely unclear or overly simple.   Few
accurate or complex sentences.   Inaccurate use of
vocabulary, even at elementary level.   Usually less
than one page.

35   Name plus attempts at one or two sentences.
Barely recognizable as English.

APPENDIX-C

THE WORLD'S WATER
THE LAST PRECIOUS DROPS
Population growth and development have depleted and
polluted the world's water supply, raising the
risk of starvation, epidemic, and even war

The dismal state of the water supply in many countries all over the world could develop into a worldwide crisis. Almost imperceptibly, the problem has crept up on a planet distracted by apprehension about global warming, ozone depletion, and other emerging environmental threats. There is simply not enough water and the story is repeated in country after country. Humankind is not only outstripping limited freshwater stocks, but it is also frequently poisoning the fluid that sustains all life.

Even in the areas where rainfall is plentiful, such as Europe and the Eastern U.S., supplies are often tight, and quality is deteriorating. In drier regions, there is not enough water fit to drink, nor enough to grow adequate amounts of food. For millions, the shortage of clean water means epidemic, hunger, despair, and death. According to the U.N., 40,000 children die everyday, many of whom are the victims of diarrhea and other side effects of the water crisis.

Besides, the shortage of water could impose limits on population growth and economic expansion by curtailing food production, because roughly 73% of the fresh water used by humankind goes to agriculture. Over the decades, more and more once arid land has been put into cultivation through large scale irrigation, but no longer is an unlimited amount of water available to make deserts bloom. It is reported that the amount of irrigated land being farmed has actually declined by 7% over the past decade.

Furthermore, the world is already consuming more food than it produces. Poorer countries are facing widespread starvation, and stocks of grain are being depleted. To give an example, global reserves of grain fell sharply from 1987 to 1989. If farmers in North America have favourable weather, stockpiles can be rebuilt; however, more drought could put the global food supply in critical condition within a year or two.

Another thing is that, instead of going to war over oil, the reason for future armed conflict could be water. Already, Egypt and Ethiopia, as well as India and Bangladesh, have serious disputes over water supplies; therefore, water may emerge as a weapon in the future.

Whatever the consequences for people, the shortage of water has an even greater effect on

other living things, such as fish, birds, and
countless other creatures that are marooned or
poisoned as industry and agriculture change the
direction of rivers, dry up wetlands, dump waste,
and disrupt ecosystems.

The notion of a global water shortage seems
improbable when 70% of the earth´s surface is
covered by H_2O; however, 98% of that water is salty
and unfit for drinking and using in agriculture.
Meanwhile, desalinization is technically feasible
but far too expensive to be extensively used
anywhere except in a sparsely populated country such
as Saudi Arabia.

The precious supply is distributed most
unevenly. Canada, for example, has 26 times as much
fresh water per capita as Mexico, while Burma has 35
times as much as Bostwana. Water distribution has
also determined the map of civilization. Cities
which were located on rivers and oceans grew large
and powerful. Human populations eventually became
so concentrated in certain areas that engineering
was required to funnel water from its sources to
where it was needed, which sometimes caused dire
consequences.

Man, now, is learning that there are limits to
mankind´s ability to move water from one place to
another without seriouly disrupting the natural
balance. Ecological catastrophes by dams and other
hydroprojects have given environmentalists fresh
impetus in their campaign against uncontrolled
development. There is no doubt that the worldwide
irrigation boom that doubled the amount of land
being watered in the past three decades is over.
Without proper drainage, continuous irrigation
gradually destroys a piece of land and streams or
rivers near it through salinization. As the heat of
sun evaporates irrigation water, salts are left
behind, so it seems that such an environmental
threat can have far reaching consequences.

Similarly, deforestation plays equal havoc. In
order to obtain wood and clear land for homes and
farms, humankind is chopping down forests at an
unprecedented rate. Tree cutting has brought about
floods, mud slides, and soil erosion during rainy
seasons, as well as acute water shortages during dry
periods. Deforestation can even lead to the salting
of agricultural lands; and also, it can affect the
amount of rainfall in a given area. The further
deforestation in the vast Amazon region could have
dramatic effects on this giant rain-producing
machine. In Africa, there is a speculation that
deforestation may in part account for shorter rainy
seasons in the western part of the continent.
Additionally, in the driest areas of the world,
chopping trees for firewood and overgrazing by
animals cause the expansion of deserts. This is

especially true in Africa, where population pressures force people to work land unsuitable for agriculture.

Water is essential for life. It is the one substance common to every creature on earth. Our world has a fixed, abundant quantity of water - most of it in the oceans. As a resource, less than two percent is accessible to humans for consumption. While even this is enough for our growing populations, clean water that is safe for humans and other creatures is vanishing. Nevertheless, we continue polluting our fresh water resources with industrial and domestic wastes, as well as run-off of agricultural pesticides and fertilisers. Water is an important part of the Earth. In fact, it is the reason human beings can live on this planet. In a real sense, water keeps Earth alive. Although nature has a perfect system for recycling water, there is a problem with this recycling system. It is a balance that can be easily upset by people. Nature's recycling system can work well only if people work with the system--not against it. Some ways that people interfere with nature are easy to understand. Dirty savage water from homes and factories must not mix with drinking water. People would get sick from drinking dirty water.

Consequently, in order to ensure that we have enough clean fresh water to meet our future needs, work must be started now to reverse the damage already done; and all individuals, countries, and industries have to be very sensitive to the problem. Life on Earth would not be possible without water because water is the basic life-giving substance.

I) **VOCABULARY STUDY:** Study the meanings of the following words.

sustain: keep in existence over a long period
precious: of great value
impose: put/force (e.g. limits) on sb/sth
deplete: use up
decline: fall, go down
deteriorate: make or become of less value or worse in quality
emerge: come into view
curtail: make shorter or less

disrupt: bring or throw into disorder
unevenly: not equally
drought: continuous dry weather without rain
feasible: that can be done
chop down: cut down
conflict: fight, struggle, quarrel
obtain: get
account for: explain; give an explanation or reason for

dire: dreadful; terrible
bring about: cause
ensure: make sth. certain to happen; make sure; guarantee
vanish: disappear suddenly
accessible: able to be reached or used
raise a risk: bring about a risk
havoc: widespread damage

II) Now, fill in the blanks in the following sentences, using the appropriate vocabulary (with the correct form, if necessary).

1. Water is one of the most _____ substances for humankind.

2. Population growth and development _____ and polluted the world's water supply.

3. Shortage of water is _____ of starvation, epidemic, and even war.

4. Water is the main substance that _____ all life.

5. Water supplies in the nature are limited and quality is _____.

6. The shortage of water could _____ limits on population growth and economic expansion.

7. Water shortage limits population growth and economic expansion by _____ food production.

8. The amount of irrigated land _____ by 7% over the past decade.

9. Frequent _____ could put the global food supply in critical situation.

10. Some countries are already having _____ between them over water.

11. In future, water might _____ as a weapon for some countries which have adequate water sources.

12. Industries and agriculture both _____ the ecosystems through changing the direction of rivers and dumping waste.

13. Desalinization of sea water is _____ but costs a lot.

14. The precious supply of water is distributed most

_____ among countries. One country has more sources than a neighbour country.

15. Taking water from its sources to the places where it is needed causes _____ consequences in the nature.

16. In order to _____ wood and land for homes and farms, humankind is _____ forests.

17. Tree cutting has _____ floods, mud slides, and soil erosion during rainy seasons.

18. Deforestation in Amazon may in part _____ shorter rainy seasons in the western part of the continent.

19. Clean water that is safe for humans and other creatures is _____ .

20. Less than two percent of water sources in the world is _____ to humans for consumption.

21. Everything must be done to _____ that we have enough clean fresh water to meet our future needs.

III) SENTENCE-COMBINING /TRANSFORMATIONAL EXERCISE

1. Humankind is destroying the limited fresh water stocks. Also, it is frequently poisoning the fluid that sustains all life. (not only ...... but also)

2. Humankind is poisoning the fresh water sources. They support all life in the world. (that)

3. Rainfall is plentiful in Europe and the Eastern U.S.. Even in these areas, supplies of fresh water are limited. (such as/where)

4. 40,000 children die everyday. Many of them are the victims of diarrhiea and other side effects of the water crisis. (whom)

5. The shortage of water could bring about limits on population growth and economic expansion. It curtails food production. Roughly 73% of the fresh water goes to agriculture. (by/because)

6. There isn't an unlimited amount of water available to make deserts bloom. (No longer ...)

7. Shortage of water has great effects on living things. Some of them are fish and birds. They are poisoned. Industry and agriculture change the direction of rivers, dry up wetlands, and dump

waste. (such as/that/as)

8. The heat of the sun evaporates irrigation water. Salts are left behind. (as)

9. Tree cutting has caused floods, mud slides and soil erosion. It may also cause acute water shortages. (as well as)

10. Many countries have disputes over water. Water may emerge as a weapon in future. (therefore)

11. Man has put more and more arid land into cultivation through irrigation. (passive)

12. We know that ...   (passive)

13. The amount of <u>land that is irrigated and being farmed</u> has declined by 7% over the past decade. (make shorter/ use <u>passive</u>)

14. Humankind is depleting the stocks of fresh water. (passive)

15. The humankind depleted the lakes and rivers of their fish. (passive)

16. We can rebuild the stockpiles of grain if farmers have good weather and adequate amount of water. (passive)

17. H20 covers 70% of the earth's surface. (passive)

18. Desalinization is technically feasible.
It's too expensive. We can't use it extensively. (however/therefore/passive)

19. That precious supply (distribute) most unevenly. Canada has ....(25 times) fresh water ...... Mexico. Burma has ....(35 times) ...... Bostwana. [while (whereas)]

20. Human populations became ...... concentrated in certain areas .... engineering (require) to take water from its sources to the places. It (need) in those in those places. (so/where)

III) <u>Discuss the following questions:</u>

1. How much water do you drink a day, a week, a year? How much water does a city need a day, a year?

2. Do you think that the bad state of the water supply could develop into a worldwide crisis?

3. Why are freshwater sources so important for humankind?

4. Why did humankind ignore this problem in the past and still ignores?

5. Is fresh water a problem in the areas where rainfall is plentiful?

6. Are you pleased with the quality of water running out of your home tap? Is the quality getting better or worse? Or, do you buy your drinking water or do you filter the tap water?

7. What is the situation like in drier regions? Can people find enough clean water to drink and grow their food? How do they manage to survive if they can't? What about the dry regions in your own country?

8. What do you think the main problems are that stem from lack of water in African countries?

9. What other problems can shortage of water cause? For instance, does it affect population growth and economic expansion? How?

10. Do you think that the world is consuming more food than it produces or vice versa? What is the main reason for starvation in some African countries?

11. Do you think that water could be the reason for future conflicts?

12. How do you think the shortage of fresh water can affect other creatures such as fish and birds?

13. Is it possible to use sea water for drinking? What is the problem in using sea water through desalinization?

14. What has determined the map of civilizations? Where were the biggest cities of our present time located in the past?

15. What happened to the fresh water sources as the human populations grew in those cities? What was required?

16. Do you think man is learning that there are limits to mankind's ability to move water from one place to another without touching the natural balance? How is man destroying the natural balance?

17. Why and how is man destroying the forest in the

Amazon?   What will   the future   generations   see
instead   of   forests?   Why   is   the Amazon   so
important?

18. What   will the   state of fresh   water sources be
like in   ten   years   from   now   if the   pollution
continues at its present rate or increase?

19.   What   are   your   personal   suggestions   for
preserving   the fresh water   sources in   your country
and in the world? What are the things   to be done in
your opinion?

APPENDIX-D

QUAKE FLATTENS ERZINCAN

<u>Turkish Daily News</u>
<u>Saturday, March 14, 1992</u>
<u>Death Toll May Exceed 1,000. Thousands injured.</u>
<u>Power failure hampers rescue efforts</u>

A killer earthquake struck the eastern provincial centre of Erzincan Friday night killing at least 1,000 people and injuring thousands of others (according to the first news from the region). The authorities feared the death toll may climb. It was reported that the quake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale hit several other eastern provinces causing casualties and heavy damage. Two hotels, eight office blocks, a hospital building, a medical school, and many apartment buildings were seriously damaged in the centre of the city. It was also reported that there was heavy damage in the poor residential areas at the city outskirts. The Erzincan-Erzurum railway was also closed by an avalanche caused by the tremors. Besides, power failed in the city after the earthquake. The official sources reported that the quake felt very strong and lasted almost one minute. Erzincan had been struck by Turkey's worst earthquake in 1939, killing 30,000 people. A major earthquake in Erzurum claimed 1,330 lives in 1983. It had measured 7.1 on the Richter scale. Soon after getting the news, Premier Demirel cancelled his plans and flew to Erzincan to supervise the rescue efforts.

According to the first reports, the authorities estimated a death toll of between 300 and 1000. It is said that many tall buildings collapsed in the centre of Erzincan city, which has a population of about 145,000. Local officials said that 62 students were trapped in the rubble of a collapsed medical school. They also reported that electricity had been knocked out and telephone lines damaged in the city. Because of the power failures, the rescue efforts were seriously hampered. The first news from Erzincan came by military radio in distress calls asking for doctors and bulldozers to be sent in from outside the quake zone. Officials tried to keep the airports near the quake area open through the night for the coming aid.

<u>Tuesday, March 17, 1992</u>
<u>Quake Toll Mounts</u>
<u>Demirel: Housing guidelines will be strictly applied in cities in the quake belt.</u>
<u>Governor is accused of being incapable of organizing the distribution of relief material.</u>

Rescue teams pulled 40 more bodies from the ruins of the earthquake-shattered city, raising the death toll to 360. Turkish and international relief teams are using specially trained dogs and working to free people trapped in the rubble of flattened buildings.

Meanwhile, State Minister Orhan Kilercioğlu announced an inquiry into building practices in Erzincan. Government officials said that poor construction and illegal additions on buildings led to the high death toll. Prime Minister Demirel said that The Public Works Ministry would make sure that housing guidelines were seriously applied in the towns and cities which are situated on the quake belt. According to the official sources, it is illegal to construct buildings over three storey because of the earthquake danger. However, nearly all the 200 collapsed buildings, mostly belonging to state institutions, were multi-storey structures, many of which were four or five floors.

City officials said that 8,000 tents had been distributed in the quake area and more would arrive shortly. Some people complained that the government's response was slow and disorganized for a country accustomed to quakes. Besides, many of the rescue workers were local volunteers and military troops without training and equipment. It is reported that there are problems in the distribution of relief material to the people because of the incapability of Governor Yazicioglu. There are also claims that while some people collected four or five tents and tens of blankets, many families were unable to find one. Providing enough tents and blankets seemed to be crucial during the rescue efforts for children and elder people battling to stay alive against the harsh winter. Many countries have already sent rescue teams and relief aid for the quake victims.

Village survivors are furious over aid distribution. All are bewildered following Friday's quake that brought their brick homes tumbling down. They say that they are the forgotten people of the earthquake. They also say that the government is concentrating aid on Erzincan. Because they were not provided with tents soon after the quake broke out, they had no choice but to sleep in half demolished rooms.

Thursday, March 19, 1992
Hundreds march in protest, demand resignation of governor

Hundreds of demonstrators marched through the ruined streets of Erzincan, carrying banners and protesting against the governor, Yazicioğlu, and demanding his resignation. They accuse him and the

officials of malpractice in the distribution of aid to the quake victims. They also called for supplies of tents, blankets, and other goods. Several demonstrators said that although six days had passed since the quake, they had received no assistance. However, the governor was told before the demonstration that some locals were stockpiling blankets and tents but he refuted the allegations. The American CNN television, on the other hand, reported that no aid had reached even the villages nearest to Erzincan and that there was no effective distribution network.

The Turkish Red Crescent announced that it had already sent 11,574 tents to the region along with 69,125 blankets. It also sent 850 tents and 8,000 blankets to Pulmur, a town of the city. The U.N. has announced that it is ready to provide the greatest possible support for relief operations. The U.N. emergency relief coordinator has also been asked to continue efforts to mobilize both financial and material assistance, so that the basic needs of quake survivors could be swiftly met.

Friday, March 20, 1992
Quake Victims Refuse to Return to Houses

Despite the whole relief aid pouring into the region, many of the local people who managed to save some of their belongings from under the debris of their collapsed houses have started to move out of the city. In addition to that, although it is reported that one-storey buildings survived the quake intact and experts have declared them to be safe for accommodation, people worried by another quake refuse to return to their homes.

Is it God's will, or Nature's Trick, or Human's Neglect

Turkey lost around 1000 people this month, most of the missing buried under the earth in one way or another, with hundreds under avalanches, hundreds more down the mines of Zonguldak and nearly 500 under the debris of the earthquake in Erzincan. After this succession of tragedies, despite the promises to treat all the wounds, the following questions naturally come to mind: Were all these calamities simply God's will? Or, did human beings contribute to the losses with their ignorance, stupidity, carelessness, neglect, and greed?

We have seen that it was the new buildings, the wonders of Turkey's greedy contractors, that collapsed, including the shameful collapse of the nursing school, not the small houses of Erzincan.

I) **VOCABULARY STUDY: Study the meanings of the following words.**

strike/struck/struck: hit
casualty: injury
outskirts: borders, or outlaying parts (esp. of a town)
tremor: shaking, or trembling
last: continue
supervise: watch and direct
rescue(v): make safe, set free
rescue(n): rescuing or being rescued
estimate: guess, form a judgement about, calculate the cost, value, or size etc. of something
collapse: fall down or in, come or break to pieces suddenly
trapped: caught in
hamper: hinder, prevent
accuse: put the blame on sb., say that sb. is to be blamed because sth. was done wrong.
relief: lessening, or ending or removal of pain, distress(great sorrow) etc.
flatten: make or become flat
inquiry: investigation
illegal: not in accordance with the law X legal
strictly: demanding obedience and observance; in a stern way
crucial: critically important, essential
battle: fight, struggle
harsh: severe
bewildered: puzzled, confused
demolish: pull or tear down, destroy, ruin
demand: want, ask for
stockpile: keep things/goods in stock when they are not easily available from local sources.
succession: the coming of one thing after another

II) **Now, fill in the blanks in the following sentences, using the appropriate vocabulary (with the correct form, if necessary).**

1. An earthquake _____ Erzincan on Friday 13th.

2. The quake caused so many _____ and heavy damage.

3. There was also heavy damage in the poor residential areas at the city _____.

4. The _____ of the quake also caused avalanches in the mountains and some roads were closed.

5. It was reported that the quake _____ nearly one minute.

6. The day after the quake hit the city Prime Minister Demirel went to the region to _____ the _____ efforts.

7. At first, the authorities _____ a death toll of between 300 and 1,000.

8. It is reported that many tall buildings _____ in the centre of Erzincan.

9. 62 students were _____ in the rubble of a collapsed medical school.

10. The rescue efforts were seriously _____ due to the power failures.

11. The Governor of Erzincan is _____ of being incapable of organizing the distribution of _____ material to the people.

12. Most of the high buildings in the centre of the city were completely _____ by the earthquake.

13. The State Minister Kilercioglu announced an _____ into building practices in Erzincan.

14. Some officials said that poor construction and _____ additions on buildings led to the high death toll.

15. The State Minister wants an investigation to be done to make sure that the housing guidelines were _____ applied in the town.

16. Tents and blankets seemed to be so _____ for the children and elderly people _____ against the _____ winter.

17. Village survivors were all _____ following Friday's earthquake that turned their brick homes into pieces.

18. After the quake hit their houses, many people had no choice but to sleep in their half _____ houses.

19. Hundreds of people marched through the ruined streets, protesting the governor, and _____ his resignation.

20. There were claims that some people were _____ tents and blankets.

21. Turkey has experienced a _____ of tragedies recently, each claiming hundreds of lives.

III) SENTENCE COMBINING/ TRANSFORMATIONAL AND STRUCTURAL EXERCISE

1. An earthquake struck Erzincan on Friday 13th (kill) about 500 people and (injure) thousands of others.

2. It (report) that the quake (measure) 6.8 on the Richter scale hit several other eastern provinces (cause) casualties and damage.

3. The quake damaged two hotels, office blocks, a hospital, a medical school, and many apartment buildings. (passive)

4. An avalanche closed the Erzurum-Erzincan railway. (passive)

5. The officials (report) that the quake (feel) very strong.

6. Erzincan (strike) by Turkey's worst earthquake in 1939, which (measure) 7.1 on the Richter scale, (kill) 30,000 people.

7. Soon after (receive) the news, Demirel (cancel) his plans and (fly) to Erzincan (supervise) the rescue efforts.

8. It (say) that many, tall buildings (collapse) in the centre of Erzincan. It has a population of 145,000. (which)

9. Local officials said, "62 students are trapped in the rubble of a (collapse) medical school."

10. They reported, "the electricity has been knocked out and telephone lines (damage) in Erzincan."

11. The power failures hampered the rescue efforts seriously. (passive)

12. The first calls from Erzincan asked for doctors and bulldozers _____(send) in from outside the quake zone.

13. The governor (accuse) of being incapable of (organize) the distribution of relief material.

14. Rescue teams are working hard to free people (trap) in the rubble of (flatten) buildings.

15. Demirel said, "the Public Works Ministry will make sure that the housing guidelines are strictly applied in the towns and cities which (situate) on the quake belt."

16. City officials said, "we have distributed enough number of tents and more will arrive soon."

17. It (report) that there are problems in (distribute) the relief material to the people.

18. Some families got four or five tents and tens of blankets. Some were unable to find one. (while/whereas)

19. Several demonstrators said, "Six days passed since the quake. We have received no aid." (although)

20. Relief aid is rushing into the region. Many of the local people have started to move out of the city. They managed to save some of their belongings. (Despite/who)

21. There are promises to treat all the wounds. Some questions naturally come to mind after these tragedies. (Despite/In spite of)

IV) Discussion Questions:

1. What did you feel when you heard the first news about the earthquake?

2. How would you have felt if you had been in Erzincan when the earthquake happened?

3. What were the first damages and the number of people killed and injured according to the first reports from the region?

4. What were the first problems that faced the local officials in the city centre that night and the following day?

5. How many people had been killed in the earthquakes in 1939 and 1983?

6. What sort of buildings generally collapsed in the quake?

7. What was the situation like in the following days after the quake? What about the death toll?

8. Was anything wrong with those high buildings that collapsed? Were they privately owned or state buildings?

9. What were the difficulties for the people? Were they able to get enough number of tents and blankets and food? How was the scenery in Erzincan during the first week after the quake, do you think?

10. What were the complaints from the people? Why did the people ask for the governor´s resignation?

11. What was the main reason behind village survivors´ complaints? What was the situation like in the villages of Erzincan?

12. What was the reason of people´s inability in obtaining tents and blankets according to the rumours?

13. What about the interest of the other countries in the quake?

14. Why do some quake victims move out of the city with the belongings that they saved from the quake?

15. Turkey has recently experienced a succession of strategies, avalanches in the east, explosion in Zonguldak mines and the earthquake. The result is a thousand of lives lost. What were the real reasons behind these tragedies in your opinion?