

WRITE IN CLASS OR WRITE AT HOME?

A Master's Thesis

by

ELÇİN TURGUT

The Department of
Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Bilkent University
Ankara

July 2010

WRITE IN CLASS OR WRITE AT HOME?

Graduate School of Education
of
Bilkent University

by

ELÇİN TURGUT

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

in

The Department of
Teaching English as a Foreign Language
Bilkent University

Ankara

July 2010

BILKENT UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
MA THESIS EXAMINATION RESULT FORM

July 12, 2010

The examining committee appointed by the Graduate School of Education for the
thesis examination of the MA TEFL student

Elçin Turgut

has read the thesis of the student.

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

Thesis Title: Write in Class or Write at Home?

Thesis Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı
Bilkent University, MA TEFL Program

Committee Members: Vis. Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble
Bilkent University, MA TEFL Program
Asst. Prof. Dr. Aysel Bahçe
Anadolu University, Department of Basic Languages

ABSTRACT

WRITE IN CLASS OR WRITE AT HOME?

Turgut, Elçin

MA., Department of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı

July 2010

This study investigated the influence of writing context on the quality of students' writing assignments and composing processes. The study also examined the attitudes of students towards writing assignments composed in class and at home. The study was conducted with 48 pre-intermediate level students, two experimental groups, and their composing skill class teacher in the Preparatory School of English at Niğde University in the spring semester of 2010.

The data for the study were gathered through student questionnaires, interviews conducted with the students and written assignments of the participants. A four-week exploratory study was conducted with the participation of the experimental groups, which were assigned to write the same topics but in two different writing contexts. The participants' written assignments were collected each week and were scored by two raters. During the implementation, the interviews were conducted with the participants from both groups. The student questionnaire was distributed after the fourth week of experimental study.

The results of the students' scores for written assignments revealed no significant differences across the groups. However, the data gathered from the questionnaire illustrated a significantly higher preference for the home context. The

analysis of the qualitative data collected from the interviews supported this preference and suggested that the students were more positive towards out-of-school writing tasks.

ÖZET

SINIFTA YAZMAK YA DA EVDE YAZMAK

Turgut, Elçin

Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı

Temmuz 2010

Bu çalışma, yazma ortamının öğrencilerin yazma ödevlerinin kalitesi ve ödevlerin yazım süreçleri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmıştır. Çalışma ayrıca öğrencilerin sınıfta ve evde yazılan ödevlere karşı yaklaşımlarını da incelemiştir. Çalışma, 2010 Bahar döneminde Niğde Üniversitesi Hazırlık programında kayıtlı, orta düzey İngilizce yeterliliğine sahip 48 öğrenciden oluşan iki deney grubu ve bu sınıfların Yazma Becerileri Dersi öğretmeninin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Çalışmanın verileri öğrenci anketi, öğrencilerle yapılan mülakatlar ve öğrencilerin yazma dersi ödevlerinden elde edilmiştir. Dört haftalık deneysel çalışma, aynı konuları iki farklı ortamda yazmalarını istenen deney gruplarının katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Katılımcıların yazılı ödevleri her hafta toplanıp iki kişi tarafından değerlendirilmiştir. Deney çalışması süreci dâhilinde her iki gruptan öğrencilerle mülakatlar yapılmıştır. Öğrenci anketi deneysel çalışmanın dördüncü haftasının sonunda uygulanmıştır.

Öğrencilerin yazdıkları ödevlerin notlarına göre, gruplar arasında geçerli bir fark gözlemlenmemiştir. Ancak, anketten edinilen veriler, ev ortamının daha fazla tercih edildiğini geçerli olarak ortaya çıkarmıştır. Mülakatlardan edinilen veriler bu

tercihi destekler nitelikte olup öğrencilerin sınıf dışı yazma ödevlerine karşı daha olumlu yaklaşıklarını öngörmüştür.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The really challenging process of MA TEFL Program became endurable with the help of some precious people. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude for my thesis advisor and the director of MA TEFL Program, Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydinli, for her continuous support, invaluable feedback, and expert guidance throughout the study. She provided me with assistance at every stage of the process and increased my confidence in my own study. I would like to thank all the faculty members of the Program, Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble for his great understanding and friendly manner, Asst. Prof. Dr. JoDee Walters for her helping hand and intelligible advice which helped us survive and Asst. Prof. Dr. Philip Lee Durrant for being a great modal of discipline. It was a great pleasure to meet them, benefit from their experience, and work together during the hard times. I would also like to thank my committee member, Asst. Prof. Dr. Aysel Bahçe from Anadolu University, for her contributions and encouraging attitude.

I am grateful to the Rector, Prof. Dr. Adnan Görür, who gave me permission to attend this program. It is a great honor for me to work with such an insightful and supportive rector. I am also grateful to the director of the Preparatory School of Niğde University for his encouragement and understanding.

It was a wonderful experience to be a member of 2010 MA TEFL family. I owe special thanks to my friends whom I shared both sorrow and happiness during the year. I do not think that I could overcome the difficulties I faced without your kind helps and friendship throughout this process.

I am also indebted to my dear friend and colleague Mustafa Özdere for his precious help to carry out my study. He offered his support and experience as a

former MA TEFL student when I most needed it and made everything easier. I would like to express my special thanks to my colleagues and friends at Niğde University for their precious friendship and support.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to my family members. I owe so much to my father, my mother and all other precious relatives who supported and encouraged me during the most challenging year of my life as they have always done.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 - Attitudes towards writing skill class.....	43
Table 2 - The influence of the home context on comfort and success.....	43
Table 3 - Attitudes towards the class context.....	44
Table 4 – Perceived challenges and advantages of writing in class.....	45
Table 5 - The teacher factor in the class context.....	46
Table 6 -Preference for time allocation for planning	47
Table 7 - Preference for time allocation for planning	48
Table 8 - Time limitation in class	49
Table 9 - The time factor in different writing contexts.....	49
Table 10 - The influence of the time passed after pre-writing activities in class.....	50
Table 11 - Consulting with other people or working alone	51
Table 12 - External factors at home	52
Table 13 - External resource use and research facilities at home	53
Table 14 - Mean scores of the two groups	77

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - The Cognitive Process Model of the Composing Process (Flower & Hayes, 1981)	26
Figure 2 - Recursive Composing Model (R. White & Arndt, 1995)	27
Figure 3 - Frequency of the preferences for writing context	54
Figure 4 - Frequency of the reasons for preferring to write at home	55
Figure 5 - Attitudes towards writing class and writing assignments	58
Figure 6 - Time for thinking before writing in class	62
Figure 7 - Time for thinking before writing at home	62
Figure 8 - Time allocated for the whole assignment in class	63
Figure 9 - Time allocated for the whole assignment at home	64
Figure 10 - Time allocated for revision in class	65
Figure 11 - Time allocated for revision at home	65
Figure 12 - Sources of ideas when writing in class	66
Figure 13 - Sources of ideas when writing at home	67
Figure 14 - People consulted in class	68
Figure 15 - Did you consult anyone for the assignments at home?	69
Figure 16 - Resources used when writing in class	70
Figure 17 - Resources used when writing at home	71
Figure 18 - What did you do during the breaks in class?	72
Figure 19 - What did you do during the breaks at home?	73
Figure 20 - Composing process patterns of the CG	74
Figure 21 - Composing process patterns of the HG	75

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZET.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background of the study	1
Statement of the problem.....	5
Research questions.....	7
Significance of the study	7
Conclusion	7
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
Introduction.....	9
Writing.....	9
Academic Writing.....	10
Writing in L2	11
Writing in the EFL Context in Turkey	14
Written Products as Performance Criteria	17
Factors That Influence Writing Performance	18

Writing Context as a Factor Which Influences Writing Performance	20
Student's Attitudes as a Factor Which Influence Writing	
Performance.....	22
Composing Processes	25
Theories of Composing Processes.....	25
The Influence of Composing Processes on Writing Performance	27
Conclusion	29
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	31
Introduction.....	31
Setting and Participants	31
Instruments	34
Questionnaires	34
Interviews	35
Written tasks.....	36
Procedure	37
Data Analysis.....	38
Conclusion	39
CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS	40
Introduction.....	40
Data Analysis Procedures	42
Questionnaire	42
Participants' Overall Perceptions about the Writing Class.....	42
Participants' Attitudes towards Writing Context.....	43

time.....	47
external factors..	50
Two Open-Ended Questions.....	53
the first open-ended question..	53
the second open-ended question.....	58
Interviews.....	61
Time.....	61
External Factors.....	66
Composing Processes.....	71
Scores.....	76
Conclusion.....	77
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS.....	79
Overview of the Study.....	79
Discussion of Findings.....	81
Research Question 1: What are the students’ attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the contexts students write in?	81
Research Question 2/Sub-Section 1: What are the similarities and differences of completing writing assignments in-class and out-of-class in terms of students’ composing processes?.....	88
Research Question 2/Sub-Section 2: What are the similarities and differences between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of written products?.....	92
Pedagogical Implications.....	95

Suggestions for Further Research.....	96
Conclusion.....	97
REFERENCES.....	98
APPENDICES	102
Appendix A: Sample Pre-Writing Activities.....	102
Appendix B: Questionnaire in Turkish and in English.....	103
Appendix C: Student Interview in Turkish and in English	105
Appendix D: Transcripts of Students Interviews in Turkish and in English..	107
Appendix E: Writing evaluation rubric	109
Appendix F: Instructor and Student Consent Forms in English and in Turkish	110

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Writing is generally considered an essential component of second or foreign language learning. In many learning contexts, language learners are required to produce both personal and academic written texts to illustrate their writing abilities and language development, and to be graded. Taking this fact into consideration, it should be acknowledged that writing in ESL or EFL contexts is a heavy burden on students, as they have to deal with challenging language structures, new terminology, meaning, organization, and content while they are simultaneously struggling to overcome many other potential difficulties, like environmental distracters, time limitations, and stress. These difficulties that writers experience have led researchers to explore specifically the factors that may help improve students' writing performance and ease the writing process. Most of the previous studies on writing in Turkey have provided data about process writing, correction feedback on written works, and assessment of writing (Bayram, 2006; Görşen, 2003; Özant, 2000). However, many issues that are related to writing context still need to be explored.

This study seeks to determine the similarities and differences between in-class and out-of-class writing and to present the relationships between the context in which writing takes place and students' attitudes, composing processes and writing performance.

Background of the study

Writing, specifically in a second language, is a complex process influenced by many factors. At the individual level, these factors may range from the preferences of individual learners to their proficiency levels. According to cognitively oriented

research into second language writing, the complexity of writing is captured in its description as an activity made up of the interaction of a series of cognitive processes and mental representations that writers implement in order to generate, express and refine their ideas while producing a text (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Flower & Hayes, 1981). Beyond the complexity captured in this description, the challenging nature of writing has also been described as a “problem solving process, in which writers employ a range of cognitive and linguistic skills to enable them to identify a purpose, to produce and shape ideas” (White, 1995, p. 3).

The number of research studies conducted on second language writing has increased dramatically over the last thirty years. Different aspects of writing which interrelate closely with each other and influence writing performance have been explored. The composing processes of language learners have been investigated by several researchers to shed light on the procedures of writing which language learners engage in and the nature of their writing practices. A typical example of such studies is Boshier (1998), who conducted an empirical research study to explore composing processes of Southeast Asian students with different educational backgrounds. The study mainly aimed at investigating the relationship between composing process and writing performance.

Other studies which have looked at the relationship between writing processes and ultimate performance in writing include Sasaki (2000), who investigated the writing processes of EFL learners at three different levels of L2 writing ability both cross-sectionally and longitudinally. Expert, novice and less skilled writers’ composing behaviors were examined in order to reveal if students’ writing performance can be explained by their composing processes. Lee (2002) also

compared and contrasted students' composing processes when writing on paper and on the computer, both in terms of their average pause time and the amount of their pre-writing time, as well as the ultimate scores of their written products. The data revealed that while composing behaviors related to initial text production were similar across the modes, they differed in terms of revising processes since the paper mode made it extremely difficult to revise and modify the text once it was completed. It was also found that the participants spent less time on pre-writing on the computer, which was felt to lead to longer average pause times during text production. With respect to scores, even though the essays which were written on the computer were longer than the handwritten essays, there were no statistical differences across the modes.

Since writing performance is not a simple matter that can be explained or increased by specific, clear-cut factors, researchers have explored many factors that may influence achievement or performance in composing. Students' attitudes toward writing, is one of the factors that may have an influence on writing performance and so it has been the center of attention in many research studies. One study conducted with the participation of elementary school writers investigated whether writing attitude influences writing achievement or writing achievement influences attitude, or if they influence one another in a bidirectional and reciprocal way (Graham, Berninger, & Fan, 2007). The findings of the study contradicted Graham's (2006) conclusion that motivational variables shape students' writing development, at least in terms of their writing performance. Since better writers in the study did not have significantly more positive attitudes towards writing than the other participants with

lower scores, the data does not fit the views that writing performance influences writing attitude or they are bidirectional or reciprocal.

In terms of teaching practices, language learners are assigned to write both in the classroom and at home to improve their writing skills and to demonstrate their language development. Some different characteristics of the two writing contexts may influence students' writing performance. In order to shed light on this issue, several research studies have been conducted to explore various aspects of in-class and out-of-class writing contexts. At least two studies have been conducted to reveal whether any difference exists between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the time allotted to writing, and to determine possible differences between the scores of written products according to the context in which they are composed (Hartvigsen, 1981; Kroll, 2002). In the study that was conducted by Hartvigsen (1981), four specific comparisons between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks were made. The compared aspects of the essays written in the two different environments were: relationships between in-class and out-of-class tasks; the direction of the relation between the ranked ordered essays; differences between mean holistic scores assigned by independent readers to the essays; and differences between the mean numbers of words per T-unit and words per clause for the essays. According to the findings of the study, out-of-class writing was significantly better than in-class writing. Kroll's (2002) study on the other hand, focused on time. She focused on both the relationship between the element of time and the level of grammatical accuracy and whether time may be a key factor that increases or decreases the achievement in writing. Kroll (2002) found that having additional time

does not change the quality of written products that are written out-of-class.

Therefore, time cannot be the only reason for better quality written products.

In another research study conducted by McCarthy and García (2005), students engaged in a variety of writing practices at home and school, and the main focus of the study was on students' attitudes with respect in part to writing environment. A continuum of attitudes, from positive to negative, characterized students' attitudes toward both the writing context and the language that the writing tasks were completed in. Students' writing practices and attitudes toward writing were influenced by home backgrounds and classroom contexts. The study provided data which suggested that, more opportunities for writing both in English and in the native language are crucial to developing students' practices in both languages and developing more positive attitudes.

All these aspects which either are the components of writing skill in general or closely related to writing performance have been investigated by many researchers seeking better ways to teach writing. Thus, the findings of previous studies have provided valuable data on issues related to writing context, time, performance, and attitude. However, there is still a need for empirical studies presenting evidence on what kinds of differences there may be between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to students' composing processes, their writing performance, and ultimately, what their perceptions of the respective benefits and disadvantages of the two contexts.

Statement of the problem

Various factors that influence writing performance in a second language have often been explored in the literature (Manchón & Larios, 2007; Kuiken & Vedder,

2008; Lee, 2002; Bonzo, 2008). The environment of writing in relation to composing processes and the allocation of time has been probed by several research studies (Yi, 2007; Kroll, 2002). Since the writing skill is regarded to be an indispensable component of language learning, many other research studies have been conducted in order to find effective instructional techniques to improve students' written outputs (Scordaras, 2009; Storch, 2005). However students' attitudes towards writing tasks, composing processes and text quality of final written products are some other issues that have been taken into consideration by many scholars (Bosher, 1998); (Larios, Manchón, Murphy, & Marín, 2008), the place where writing takes place including factors like time, anxiety, plagiarism and composing processes have remained unexplored. Therefore, the field needs further research studies to analyze writing instructions to help foreign language learners improve their writing abilities.

Niğde University is a Turkish-medium university. Instructional practices in writing classes at the English preparatory school have fluctuated in recent years, sometimes favoring compulsory writing classes at school and sometimes preferring to assign students to write at home without including compulsory writing classes in the curriculum. However, whether there should be writing skill classes in the program and which writing environment is more effective for students' writing performance still remains unknown. Hence, this problem leads to uncertainty and disagreement in the curriculum development office in Niğde University when deciding the hours for the classes and the most appropriate context for writing assignments. This study intends to provide further evidence that may help in clarifying the value of allotting time for in-class and/or out-of-class writing.

Research questions

1. What are the students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the contexts students write in?
2. What are the similarities and differences of completing writing assignments in-class and out-of-class in terms of:
 - a) Students' composing processes,
 - b) Students' written products?

Significance of the study

Little research has investigated the advantages and disadvantages of in-class versus out-of-class writing assignments especially the elements of students' attitudes, composing processes and writing performance. Thus, the results of this study may provide important information by providing data on all of these issues.

At the local level, the current study will also be valuable for Niğde University, as both the language instructors and the administrators may exploit the data to decide on the percentage of in-class and out-of-class writing tasks to include in the curriculum. Through the results of this study, the current writing curriculum may be revised and altered to be more efficacious and responsive to the needs of students.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a brief summary and description of the issues related to writing context. The second chapter is a review of the literature on writing, academic writing, writing in L2, writing in the EFL context in Turkey, factors that influence writing performance, composing process, theories of composing processes and studies related to composing processes. The third chapter describes the setting,

the participants, the instruments and the procedures followed to collect and analyze data. The fourth chapter presents the procedures for data analysis and the results of the findings. The last chapter illustrates the discussion of the findings, pedagogical implications, limitations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This research study explores the possible effect of writing context on students' performance in writing in an EFL context. The study was conducted in the preparatory school of a Turkish-medium state university in Turkey. The main purpose of this study is to explore possible differences in writing performance, which may stem from the context where the writing samples are produced. In addition, the study focuses on composing processes in relation to the writing environment and students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks. It is hoped that the results of this study will inform decisions on what the percentage of in-class and out-of-class writing tasks should be, in order to meet the needs of preparatory school students in Niğde University.

This chapter reviews the literature on writing, writing in L1 and L2 classes, product- and process-based approaches to writing, including definitions and empirical studies. Additionally, it presents the literature on factors that influence writing performance and their relations to each other and to the writing process and written products.

Writing

The thing that makes learning how to drive hard is that you have to do many things, which you are still uninformed about how to do well, at the same time. Some of these concurrent skills are to control the wheel, to gear down or to speed up, to check the mirrors and to watch the road both ahead of and behind you. Quite similar problems seem to occur in learning how to write, since the writer has to deal with grammatical structures, relevant vocabulary, suitable conjunctions, organization,

coherence, relevance to the topic and aim, supporting ideas and many other things at the same time. Owing to these concurrent operations, “writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols. It is a thinking process and it demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable period of time” (White & Arndt, 1995, p. 3). According to a similar definition, “writing can be viewed as involving a number of thinking processes which are drawn upon in varied and complex ways as an individual composes, transcribes, evaluates and revises” (Arndt, 1987, p. 4). Writing has also been regarded “as a problem solving process in which writers employ a range of cognitive and linguistic skills to enable them to identify a purpose, to produce and shape ideas, and to refine expression” (White, 1995, p. 3). Taking all these definitions of writing into consideration, it can be concluded that writing is a demanding process for writers to engage in.

Academic Writing

Writing, like reading, has always been in the center of attention of language teachers and researchers and many research studies have been conducted to explore various aspects of these skills in the language teaching field. Early language teaching approaches such as the Grammar Translation Method and the Reading Method mainly focused on reading and writing as the target skills of the language that was taught. Instruction in languages such as Latin which is no longer a spoken language, may have contributed to this emphasis. Another reason that traditionally led writing to be given priority in language teaching is that writing easily fulfills the purpose of demonstrating students’ mastery of the target language:

Until the development of cheap sound recording equipment, writing was virtually the only way of obtaining evidence of a learner's performance, either as a record of what they could do, or as material for evaluation, as in written tests and examinations (White, 1995, p. iv).

For a long time, academic writing, which differs from personal writing in terms of content, style, organization, grammar, vocabulary and the intended reader, has been one of the requirements that students are supposed to meet in language learning classes. This is not merely because students are assessed through the production of written assignments, but also because academic writing can help them grapple with disciplinary knowledge as well as develop more general abilities to reason and critique (Hilgers, Hussey, & Stitt-Bergh, 1999). In addition, academic writing enables students to enter particular disciplinary communities whose written communication norms are the primary means by which academics transmit and evaluate ideas (Prior, 1998).

Writing in L2

Writing in L2 is an important dimension of the writing issue and there has been a long-term discussion among researchers as to which side is stronger. One side asserts that the processes in L1 and L2 are mostly similar while the other side suggests that, they are quite different, as writing in L2 is a more complex and demanding process for the students than it is in L1. According to the former point of view, writing in L1 and L2 share many common underlying processes (Krapels, 1990; Silva, 1993). Irrespective of the language in which writing takes place, a writer has to go through many steps to produce a successful written product, including:

- producing relevant ideas
- evaluating these ideas in relation to purpose, topic and audience

- considering the knowledge, attitudes and tastes of the intended reader
- making decisions about the amount of information shared with the reader, the kind of information that has to be explicit and the need for indirectness
- taking the separation in time and place between writer and reader into consideration
- conforming to conventions of style and format in the social group concerned
- conforming to grammatical and other language conventions
- organizing and structuring ideas, content and purposes into a coherent whole
- writing a draft
- revising and improving the draft
- producing a final revision to be published in some way (White, 1995, p. v)

On the other hand, the supporters of the second point of view suggest fundamental differences between the writing processes, writing purposes and constraints on writing performance in L1 and L2 (Matsuda, 1998; Silva, 1997; Silva, Leki, & Carson, 1997). These researchers also address concerns about fairness and cultural awareness, and raise many points of difference for the L2 writer such as:

- epistemological issues (distinct cultural socialization and belief systems)
- functions of writing

- knowledge storage (L1 based knowledge creates complexities for L2 writers)
- writing from reading (adds reading-skill complexities for L2 writers)
- audience awareness (English L2 audience sense may be culturally different from English L1 students)
- textual issues (cross-cultural discourse patterns, contrastive rhetoric)
- plagiarism (ownership of words vs. honoring authors and their writing)
- memorization, imitation and quotation (trying out the L2)
- students' right to their own language (whose English is right?)

Several research studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between L1 and L2 writing processes. One of these studies has explored what the common features observed in of L1 and L2 writers' outputs on the specific level of linguistic choices needed to order information within and across sentence boundaries are (Akyel & Kamisli, 1997). Another study examined whether writers from similar cultural backgrounds have similar writing patterns in their texts and whether these patterns vary according to the language which they write in (Uysal, 2008). A third study related to the same issue was conducted to reveal the possible influence of L2 writing instruction in an academic context on L1 and L2 writing strategies and attitudes (Kenkel & Yates, 2009). The data of Akyel and Kamışlı's (1997) study revealed that, the similarities are more frequent than differences between the participants' L1 and L2 writing processes. According to the data revealed by Uysal's (2008) study, there are similarities in number and type of constructions which L1 and L2 developing writers display since all developing writers, L1 or L2, are

constrained by the same obligations of information management. The data from Kenkel and Yates's (2009) research study illustrated that, there is bidirectional transfer between L1 and L2 and in the essays of the students.

Writing in the EFL Context in Turkey

Within the EFL context in today's Turkey, almost all universities' preparatory schools have writing classes which demand that students write in English for personal and academic purposes. As writing is a common objective, which students are supposed to achieve with the help of education and training they get at these universities, many studies have been conducted and articles have been written to explore various aspects of writing implementation and instruction in Turkey. The studies have looked at such things as differences between L1 and L2 writing, process writing, portfolios, text quality of written products, writing context, writing strategies, written feedback, collaborative writing, computer use in writing courses, content- and form-based writing courses, writing assessment types, students', teachers' and administrators' attitudes towards writing courses and written tests and so on.

Several research studies have explored the characteristics and effectiveness of feedback types such as individual feedback, peer feedback and teacher feedback. One of the studies was conducted to compare and contrast individual revision and peer feedback (Öztürk, 2006). Students' and teachers' writing feedback preferences were examined in another study (Sakallı, 2007). Another study related to the feedback and revision types issue explored the influence of training students to self-assess their own writing on participants' writing skill development and their understanding of teacher feedback (Kaya-Yıldırım, 2001). According to the findings of Öztürk's

(2006) study, peer revision provides students a more fruitful atmosphere to revise and improve their written products than they can do during individual revision. Additionally, the study revealed that students take the peer revision process seriously and they make more comments on their peer's product than they do while revising their own writings. The findings of Sakallı's (2007) study revealed that, students change their preferences of writing feedback in time, generally from direct feedback towards more indirect feedback. The reasons for the change have been related mainly to the students' perceptions of a development in their own levels of proficiency. Thus, teachers should have flexible feedback techniques to be more responsive to the students' needs and proficiency levels. The study which was conducted by Kaya-Yıldırım (2001), investigated revision and feedback types exploring the need for students' training to review their own writings. The study indicates that, students can make appropriate and useful comments on peer revision and provide some essential data on self-revision of writing. Interaction during a peer revision activity is an important learning tool, regardless of whether it leads students to achieve success in terms of revision. In some cases both the reviewer and the writer negotiated the meaning and the form, and they also worked hard to understand the essays' content. The learners suggested writing with their peers as they perceived the activity as a collaborative learning task. However, as was shown in another study, students need to be trained to be more attentive to the aims of feedback and the possible ways to give feedback. The findings illustrate that training the learners on the self-assessment of their writing skills is a worthwhile endeavor that helps students to raise a critical awareness towards their own language abilities and language performance. Also, when it becomes part of the everyday classroom instruction, self-assessment may

yield useful information both to the instructor and the students on their improvement within the course.

Another set of writing-related studies have investigated portfolios for instruction and assessment purposes in preparatory schools of Turkish universities. One of these research studies was conducted to reveal teachers' perceptions of project and portfolio use through a newly established writing program in an English-medium university. The main purpose of the study was to evaluate and improve the program -if needed- to be more responsive to the students' needs and the institution's objectives (Subaşı-Dinçman, 2002). Another study compared and contrasted inter-rater reliability of the current and the newly proposed portfolio assessment criteria in the foreign language department of a university (Türkkorur, 2005). A third study about portfolios was conducted to investigate the influence of writing portfolios on language learners' self confidence in writing and to reveal students' and teachers' perceptions of portfolio use as a self assessment tool (Bayram, 2006). The findings of these studies have provided various important data on portfolio use. Subaşı-Dinçman's (2002) study illustrated that the teachers were quite positive about the implementation of the new program about project work and portfolios despite the students' disinterest, the time constraints, and the tightly scheduled curriculum. Because the new program suggested process writing, which provided a tool that, language teachers had been seeking both for themselves and their students, teachers appreciated the implementation. According to the findings of the study which was conducted by Türkkorur (2005), there was no meaningful difference between raters on the two portfolio criteria. However, the teachers believed portfolios could be implemented as an effective practice on the condition that a more standard and

analytic form of criteria would be developed. In addition, the data revealed by the teachers' responses show that, increased training for teachers was suggested by many participants to achieve the goals set for the portfolio. Therefore, instructors should be well-informed about the rationale for the program through professional training in an attempt to make them capable of implementing portfolio assessment more effectively and consistently. The findings of Bayram's (2006) study revealed that, the students as well as the instructors favored using portfolios as a self-assessment tool in EFL settings, as foreign language learners are not usually provided with the opportunity to self assess their products and progress in writing classes.

Another research study was conducted to explore a different way of writing implementation, namely process writing. The study aimed to reveal teachers' and administrators' attitudes towards process writing and to develop a possible future implementation of process writing taking the participants' attitudes into consideration (Gümüş, 2002). The data from the study showed that a majority of the teachers valued the process writing implementation in their institution, and expressed positive feelings about the program. Like Türkkorur's study on portfolios, (2005), this study's results also pointed to the importance of teacher training. Therefore, even though the writing program was deemed appropriate to achieve the institution's objectives and to respond to the students' needs, pre-training sessions for teachers need to be included to ensure the program is efficacious and sustainable.

Written Products as Performance Criteria

British and American language teachers introduced the Current-Traditional Rhetoric approach to EFL countries in the early 1900s. The approach mainly emphasized the written product. This focus on students' writing as final texts or

products was widely acclaimed until the 1950s and 1960s in the EFL context. During those years, writing instruction was approached in a rather uniform way. Students did writing mainly on the four major rhetorical distinctions of description, narration, exposition and argumentation (Applebee, 1981). The linear composing model based on outlining, writing and editing was favored. Students wrote three to five-paragraph essays in one draft, and were given feedback specifically to correct their errors on several aspects of surface grammar. It was assumed that each student should work alone or only with the instructor on the summative feedback. Writing topics were usually derived from literacy source books and these texts were either used merely as models or even were totally imitated to compose essays. Basically, the emphasis in composing classes was on the form rather than students' processes of writing (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

A product-based approach has been and in some case continues to be used at many universities in Turkey to assess students' written assignments in writing classes. Many research studies have been conducted to explore various aspects of written performance, the factors that influence the text length, text structure and text quality of these products, and students' and instructors' perceptions of product-based assessment.

Factors That Influence Writing Performance

As with writing itself, writing performance is not a simple matter that can be explained or improved by a small number of factors. Individual differences, proficiency levels, learning styles, task characteristics, assessment type, students' cultural and educational backgrounds, teachers' expectations and time constraints may be considered as some of the factors that influence writing performance. Many

research studies have been conducted to explore different combinations of these factors and their relation to the writing performance.

A couple of studies have focused on the possible influence of writing mode on students' writing performance. The way in which the quality of the written products differs across paper and computer modes was investigated in Lee's (2002) study. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference between modes. Although the word-processed texts were longer than the hand-written ones, the longer sentences produced in the computer mode did not increase the essays' overall quality. However, another study which looked at the impact of using a word processor on second language writing quality revealed some contradictory data (Lee, 2004). According to the findings of that study, participants achieved higher success on the computer-delivered tests than the pen-and-paper tests. Participants in the study who regarded computer-delivered tests as a more authentic composing context and saw the chance for higher performance on the computer, believed the computer tests to be preferable to tests in their classes. The difference between the findings of these two studies may have stemmed from the time issue, which was mentioned in Lee's (2002) study. If they had had enough time and mastery on computers, the participants of the first study may have achieved greater success in the computer mode.

Keeping in mind that performance is not a simple issue which can be explained by just a few factors, Kuiken and Vedder (2008) conducted a study focusing on a different issue which can influence writing performance. The study first operationalized linguistic performance in terms of syntactic complexity, lexical variation and accuracy of learner output, and then investigated the effect of cognitive task complexity on these different aspects of writing performance. According to the

findings of the study, it was concluded that there is a relation across task complexity and linguistic performance but that task complexity has no effect on syntactic complexity and lexical variation. Therefore, increased task complexity does not necessarily lead to a better (or worse) written performance.

Writing Context as a Factor Which Influences Writing Performance

Writing context or writing environment, in other words, the actual place where writing occurs, is one of the factors that may influence writing performance. In many language learning contexts and at almost all education levels, learners are assigned to write both in the classroom as a requirement of their writing class and at home, mainly for their portfolios, or as process writing activities and homework.

In-class writing tasks constitute a considerable amount of writing activities that university level language learners are assigned. Some characteristics of classroom context may either increase or decrease students' writing performance. These characteristics are; time constraints, writing without the help of various external resources (in most cases), stress that may stem from being monitored by the instructor while writing, and having the opportunity to consult with the instructor or other students in order to negotiate meaning, structure or the organization related to the task.

The out-of-class writing context has distinctive characteristics which do not exist in an in-school writing context. Students have more time to write without stress that may stem from in-class time limits, they have access to various resources such as published and online books, journals, magazines, newspapers and dictionaries and the opportunity to revise their written products as much as they would like. On the other hand, they may not have the opportunity to consult with a teacher or other

students. This situation may lead students to spend much more time to access information on their own without immediate help or guidance by someone who is more equipped than they.

In order to shed light on the different characteristics of the two writing contexts that may influence students' writing performance, several research studies have been conducted. At least two studies have been conducted to reveal whether any difference exists between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the time allotted to writing, and to determine possible differences between the scores of written products according to the context in which they were composed (Hartvigsen, 1981; Kroll, 2002). On the basis of the findings of Hartvigsen's study, out-of-class writing produced significantly higher quality texts when compared to in-class writing. Kroll's (1990) study on the other hand, revealed that having additional time does not change the quality of written products that are written out-of-class (cited in Kroll, 2002). This contradiction in results suggests that time cannot be the only reason for better quality written products.

Several case studies of out-of-class writing have been conducted to examine students' beyond school personal writing experiences with texts such as short messages, online diaries, poems and short stories and to build understanding of the nature of students' composing practices outside of the classroom (Tan & Richardson, 2006; Yi, 2007). The study conducted by Yi (2007) revealed that the features of L1 composing at home may have important implications for comprehending the ways L2 composing unfolds. The researcher emphasizes the necessity of the teachers' awareness of their students' writing experiences beyond school to relate students' personal composing at home to the academic composing at school. The findings of

the study conducted by Tan and Richardson (2006) show that, instead of focusing on the contrast between school writing and out-of-school writing in content and form, attention should be on how to tap into students' expressive skills and engagement in informal writing to support school writing. Therefore, the researchers conclude that writing in school should be informed by outside practices so that students are equipped with appropriate literacy skills in a contemporary, fast-paced and digital society.

In another case study, this one conducted by Yi (2009), an immigrant student's out-of-school literacy practices and specifically, possible interconnectedness between her voluntary, non-academic writing out-of-class and her academic writing at school were examined. According to the study, writing practices in one context can positively impact those in another context. Therefore, given such free and unlimited choice of literacy activities across contexts, students can combine the achievements in each context to improve their literacy skills, thus becoming comfortable with various writing genres and activities. The study also concludes that teachers' awareness of students' writing experiences beyond the school and the interrelatedness of the two writing contexts should be given more importance, as several of the previous studies suggested.

Student's Attitudes as a Factor Which Influence Writing Performance

During the last three decades, there has been a rising interest in motivation, sometimes specifically in terms of its role in writing. The data gathered by relevant studies indicate that motivation is a critical factor which increases the effectiveness of learning in general as well as writing in particular (Alexander, 1998 as cited in Alexander, Graham & Harris, 1998; Corno & Rohrkemper, 1985; Schunk &

Zimmerman, 1994). Graham (2006, p. 17) suggested and reviewed evidence to support four essential hypotheses in a recent review of the literature (cited in Alexander & Winne, 2006):

- Skilled writers are more motivated than less skilled writers
- Developing writers become increasingly motivated with age and schooling
- Individual differences in motivation predict writing performance
- Instructional procedures designed to improve motivation enhance writing performance.

Graham concluded that, the evidence available indicates that motivation shapes development in writing (2006, as cited in Alexander & Winne, 2006). Nevertheless, as there is still limited evidence on the issue collected so far, further research is needed to assess whether the four hypotheses will be endorsed for various aspects of writing motivation including apprehension, interests, self-efficacy, attitude and attributions for success (Graham, et al., 2007).

Attitude is a continuum of constructive to destructive influence towards a specific issue. With the growing number of researchers who show concern about the role of motivation in writing, the connection between students' attitudes towards writing and their writing performance has become one of the popular research fields.

Some studies have investigated to what extent there is a relationship between the attitudes or beliefs of writers, and their writing performance (Graham et al., 2007; Reed, 1992; White & Bruning, 2005). The findings of the studies showed that decreased apprehension or anxiety leads to improved performance, specifically on the part of low ability writers (Reed, 1992). It was also shown that students with low

transactional beliefs scored low on organization and overall writing quality and students with high transactional beliefs scored high on idea-content development, organization, voice, sentence fluency, conventions, and overall writing quality (White & Bruning, 2005). The findings of another study are consistent with the conclusion that motivational variables shape students' writing development, at least in terms of their writing performance (Graham, et al., 2007).. They also provided support for previous studies which assert that individual differences in motivation can predict writing performance (Albin, Benton, & Khramtsova, 1996; Knudson, 1991; Madigan, Linton, & Johnston, 1996 as cited in Levy & Ransdell; Pajares, 2003). This is one of the four criteria that Graham (2006 as cited in Alexander & Winne, 2006) used to evaluate the claim that motivation is a catalyst for writing development. These findings corroborate the proposals asserting overall writing quality would be higher for individuals with higher levels of transactional beliefs than for individuals with high levels of transmissional beliefs. Additionally, when individuals have a positive attitude towards writing, they may invest more energy to compose whereas, individuals with negative attitudes are likely to invest little effort when they are required to write. Another difference between writers with positive attitudes towards writing and others with negative attitudes is that the former group chooses to write even if other options exist, whilst the latter group may avoid writing whenever possible. Thus, higher levels of writing experience by individuals with high transactional beliefs may increase scores on organization and conventions.

Composing Processes

Composing processes are the basic steps that students take before, while, and after producing a written text, including preparation, planning, joint constructing, independent constructing and revising. In today's ELT world, these steps are regarded as very important for composing a well designed and organized written work. Therefore language learners are usually taught and advised to organize their paragraphs and essays in light of these procedures. On the other hand, language learners may differ from one another in terms of applying some of these procedures because of their individual differences, cultural backgrounds, L1 writing experiences and familiarity with the writing content.

Theories of Composing Processes

In early research into writing, it was suggested that composing pursues a linear model. The stage model theory separated composing processes into linear stages such as pre-writing, writing and rewriting as the writer gradually develops his/her written product (Witte, 1989 as cited in Freedman, 2003). Some researchers on the other hand, proposed that composing is not a process that proceeds through discrete stages, following one activity after another. For example, on the basis of her studies with experienced and novice writers, Sommers (1980) redefined revising as a recursive process, thereby disputing the linear stage model of writing. She proposed that revising can interrupt other writing processes rather than being a separate and final process right after composing (as cited in Lee, 2002).

Sommers's view that composition is a recursive process has been supported by many researchers. One well-known process theory of composing, the Flower and Hayes' (1981) model, designates that, writing is best understood as a set of

distinctive thinking processes which writers use recursively during the act of composing. Their cognitive process model (see Figure 1) consists of three major elements: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing processes. They summarized four main components in the writing process: planning, translating, reviewing and monitoring. According to this model, the composing processes are organized hierarchically with these processes embedded within other components. For instance, planning is not an indivisible stage, but a distinctive thinking process which is used repeatedly during composing by writers, even though they may spend more time in planning at the beginning of a composing session.

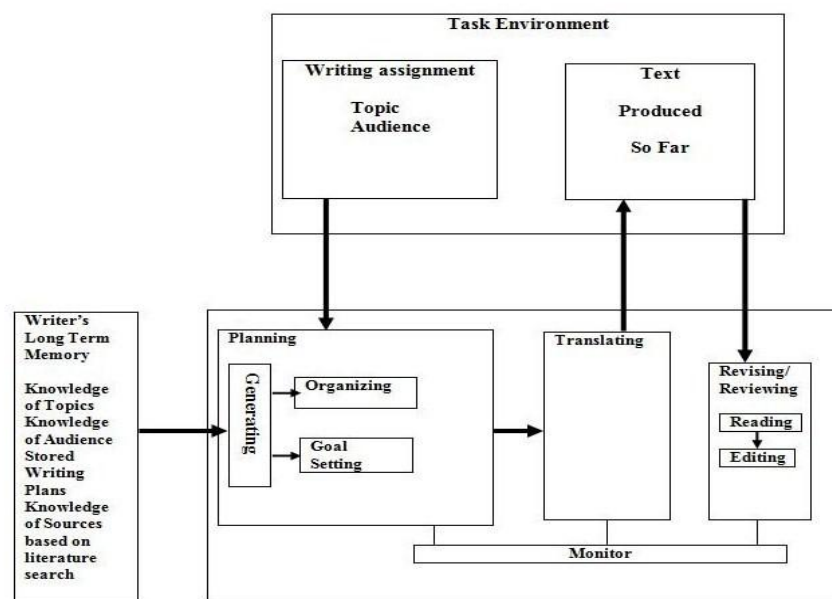


Figure 1 - The Cognitive Process Model of the Composing Process (Flower & Hayes, 1981)

White and Arndt (1995) also offer teachers a framework that tries to capture the recursive, non-linear, nature of writing. Generating ideas helps writers tap their long-term memory. Focusing refers to such activities as fast writing. Structuring is organizing and reorganizing text to present these ideas in an acceptable way.

Drafting is the transition from writer-based thought into reader-based text. Reformulation and the use of checklists in guiding feedback improve essential evaluating skills. Reviewing is the stage which may occur anytime and anywhere during all these stages in the development of a written text (see Figure 2).

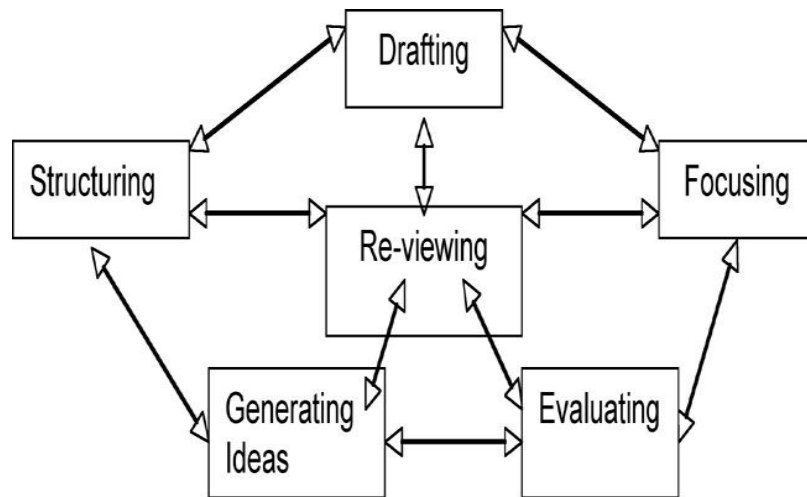


Figure 2 - Recursive Composing Model (R. White & Arndt, 1995)

The overall aim of these recursive processes is to produce meaningful, purposeful writing tasks that improve the writer's composing skills over several drafts. Collaboration across learners and teachers is considered as essential.

To sum up, the components of the composing process are now regarded as recursive elements, each of which influences the others, and each of which may be preceded or followed by another stage. Students may or may not use all these stages of the composing process.

The Influence of Composing Processes on Writing Performance

Although the field has various explanations about the composing process, whether these procedures may influence writing performance remains an ongoing debate. Some research studies have been conducted to shed light on the relationship

between the composing processes of language learners and the possible effects of these composing processes or some specific elements of these processes on students' writing performance.

Sasaki (2000) conducted a study to investigate both cross-sectionally and longitudinally the writing processes of EFL learners at three different levels of L2 writing ability. Experts versus novices and more versus less skilled writers were compared in terms of writing fluency, the quality/complexity of their written products, their pausing behaviors while composing, and the strategies they used. The data revealed that the experts spent a longer time planning a detailed organization at the beginning of composing session than students with lower proficiency levels. The experts also did not take breaks and stop to think as frequently as did novice writers after they had completed their overall plan. L2 proficiency level seemed to partially explain the difference in strategy use among different students, and at the end of six-months of instruction, it was noted that novice writers had begun to use some of the strategies expert writers used.

Similar to Sasaki, other studies also investigated in various ways the relationship between composing processes and proficiency levels of students interact. These studies focused on different proficiency level students' writing processes when they compose on screen (Slattery & Kowalsky, 1998) and the influence of proficiency level on the processing time allocated to writing processes and the planning process while composing an academic essay in a foreign language (Larios, et al., 2008). The findings of Slattery and Kowalski's (1998) study revealed that writing processes are differentially distributed depending on the writer's proficiency level. Specifically, lower- and upper-level students can learn and adopt different

types of writing strategies and, in doing so, begin to conceptualize written text in new ways. The findings of the second study (Larios, et al., 2008) illustrated that the participants' level of L2 proficiency influences the amount of time devoted to planning. This study revealed that, higher proficiency level students devoted more time to planning similar to the findings of Sasaki's (2000) study.

Another research study investigated the writing processes of three EFL learners with different educational backgrounds (Bosher, 1998). The purpose of the study was to explore whether the participants differed with regard to their writing processes, more specifically, the attention paid to various aspects of their writing and with regard to the strategies they used to generate solutions to perceived problems in their writing. The results of the study revealed that the students differed in their degree of metacognitive awareness, their ability to integrate information from reading into their writing, the amount of attention paid to different aspects of their writing, and the quality and variety of the problem-solving strategies they employed. The results also indicated that all three participants of the study had different strengths and weaknesses in terms of academic writing tasks. Therefore, the findings of the study suggest that L2 learners may not have similar development stages even though they are enrolled in the same class according to their overall language proficiency and writing test scores.

Conclusion

Writing is generally a compulsory target language skill that language learning students are supposed to gain in an EFL context. The related literature provides various and valuable evidence about how the implementation and instruction of writing courses should be carried out, from aspects of composing processes to factors

that may influence writing performance. However, it should be remembered that neither students nor teachers should expect sudden miracles to occur, such that elementary students suddenly become intermediate level writers as a result of activities they have engaged in, the strategies they have used, or the context in which they have written. Still, the language teaching and learning field is open to new and valuable studies that may provide information for better implementation practices. The present study will explore the influence of the writing context and students' attitudes towards writing on their writing performance, by focusing on composing processes in relation to the writing environment.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The overall aim of this study is to shed light on the issue of how writing classes should be conducted efficiently for EFL learners. To determine possible preferences in writing instruction, this exploratory study looks at the similarities and differences between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks. Students' attitudes towards the writing context, the composing processes of students completing in-class and out-of-class writing assignments, and the writing performance of students in these two different contexts, were analyzed to investigate the relationship between these factors and the context in which writing takes place. The research questions asked for this investigation were as follows:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the contexts students write in?
2. What are the similarities and differences of completing writing assignments in-class and out-of-class in terms of:
 - a) Students' composing processes,
 - b) Students' written products?

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in the Preparatory School of Niğde University from the beginning of the second week until the end of the fifth week in the spring term, 2010. In two departments of Niğde University, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering, thirty percent of the courses are taught in English. Consequently, students who are accepted into these departments in Niğde

University are subject to passing an English proficiency test. The students who cannot pass this test at the beginning of each academic year are taken into an English language program at the Preparatory School of Foreign Languages Department.

When the students register for the preparatory school, their English proficiency level is determined through a placement test. The students are separated into four proficiency levels: A1 (Beginner), A2 (Elementary), B1 (Pre-Intermediate), B2 (Intermediate). This academic year, based on the results of the test, the preparatory school students in Niğde University were placed into just three different level classes –A1, A2 and B1.

In the A2 and B1 level composing skills classes, the students become familiar with paragraph writing in the first term. Specifically, the students enrolled in the five A2 and the two B1 classes were taught writing strategies, the structure of a paragraph, the development of a paragraph and five different types of paragraph including descriptive, process analysis, argumentative, comparison-contrast and problem-solution paragraphs in the first term. A1 level students, on the other hand, were first trained in composing sentences, and their training on paragraph writing started in the second term. At the time of this study, the A2 and B1 level students were already familiar with the structure of paragraphs and different paragraph types. Since the participants would be assigned to write paragraphs in the conducting of this study, the A2 and B1 levels were first identified as the groups to be compared and contrasted. Subsequently, according to the students' scores for writing on the two midterm exams that were conducted in the first term, the B1 level class students were chosen as the final participants of the study, since their scores were almost equal. Moreover, a single instructor was needed to teach the two groups in order not to let

individual differences of two instructors influence the data that would be collected. For this reason, two B1 level classes, both of which had the same instructor for the composing skills courses, were chosen to participate in the study.

The number of participants involved in the study was 48. Nineteen of the students—three females, 16 males— were enrolled in one class and 29 of the students—three females, 26 males—were enrolled in the other. The participants were all teenagers and young adults between 18-24 years of age. These students were from two different departments in the university—Electrical and Electronics Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering. All participants were native speakers of Turkish and were in the pre-intermediate level English classes at the time of the study. Both classes had three hours of Composing Skills courses at school weekly and also had writing assignments to do at home. During the period of the study, one of the classes was chosen to be assigned in-class writing tasks while the other class was assigned the same tasks to be written at home. Although the writing contexts were different for the two classes, they were all given the pre-writing activities about the topic in the classroom. Appendix A illustrates sample pre-writing activities of the first experimental week. Since they did the actual writing at home, the home group students had two times longer class time for pre-writing activities such as discussion, outlining, semantic mapping and brainstorming than the in-class group had.

The number of participants changed for each instrument of this study. Although 48 participants were chosen at the beginning of the study, only 25 of these students wrote all four paragraphs by the end of the experimental period. Thus, the scores of 25 participants' assignments were used to compare their success in terms of the context they wrote. The interviews were conducted with the participation of 24

students from each class and the number did not vary across groups since the participants were chosen among the students who attended the classes on the interview days. The student questionnaire was distributed at the end of fourth experimental week, when there were 40 students who attended the classes. Therefore, 40 students participated in the survey.

Instruments

The data were collected through a questionnaire which was distributed to the participants immediately after the fourth and the last week of the experimental study, video- recordings of student interviews that were conducted once each week with randomly selected students, and comparisons of scores for the participants' writing assignments.

Questionnaires

A Likert-Scale questionnaire (see Appendix B) was developed by the researcher to obtain information about the participants' attitudes towards writing context. To prepare an appropriate attitude questionnaire, the literature was explored for related surveys and questionnaires. When the student questionnaire was developed by the researcher, four native English speaking and ten non-native English speaking language instructors were consulted with in order to reveal if there were any overlapping or double-barreled items. Based on their feedback, the questionnaire was revised for reliability and validity. In the questionnaire, the participants were asked a couple of general questions related to writing, for the primary purpose of distracting students from the true focus of the study, that is, their feeling about writing in different contexts. The questionnaire was written in Turkish to enable all participants to better understand the questions and to overcome the semantic and

conceptual problems that may stem from participants' reading and translating the questionnaire instrument by themselves.

Interviews

A student interview protocol (see Appendix C) was designed by the researcher to be used immediately after the participants completed their writing tasks each week. The interview was intended to explore the relationship between the writing context and the composing processes to reveal the similarities and differences of in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of students' composing processes. This interview was semi-structured and follow up questions were asked according to the short answers that participants gave to the questions. The total number of the questions in the interview was eight. The interview was designed in Turkish for the same reasons that the questionnaire was developed in Turkish. The interview was conducted by the researcher and the students' responses to the questions were video-recorded to be categorized later in terms of composing time, composing procedures and the external factors that the participants believed may have been influenced them either in a positive or in a negative way while writing the tasks. In the interviews, a randomly selected equal number of participants from the first group that had written the task in the classroom and from the second group that had written the same assignment at home, were asked how much time they had spent on different stages of composing process, which steps they had taken while composing the task and whether they had been inspired or distracted by any external factors while writing the assignments. The video recordings of student interviews were first transcribed in Turkish. Since the interview questions were mostly 'yes/no' questions and did not demand much interpretation, repeated patterns were identified by the researcher only.

The relevant responses were placed in the three categories that were identified beforehand, namely time, external factors and composing processes. Subsequently, the transcriptions of the interviews were translated into English and back translation was made by another English teaching instructor to ensure the accuracy of the translation. Samples of both the original Turkish transcripts and translated English transcripts can be seen in Appendix D.

Written tasks

The participants were assigned to write four different types of paragraphs over four weeks. The paragraph types were chosen from among those that the participants had been taught in the first term in order to ensure that, the participants can write these texts without much teaching because of the time limitation. A total of 48 paragraphs for each paragraph type—Argumentative, Process Analysis, Comparison/Contrast, and Definition—were collected over the four-week period. The writing topics assigned were, ‘Should attendance be compulsory for university level students’, ‘Describe the traditional Turkish wedding ceremony’, ‘Compare and contrast staying at a student dormitory and staying at home as a student’ and ‘Describe a good engineer’. Pre-writing activities including completing sample paragraphs, brainstorming, semantic mapping, outlining and free writing were developed by the researcher to remind the students of text types and to inform them about the paragraph topics. The paragraphs were evaluated according to an analytic rubric for scoring written products which was a slightly modified sample of the writing rubric currently used in Niğde University (see Appendix E). At the beginning of the study, the participants were provided rubrics and given basic guidelines to

inform them about the points according to which their written products would be scored.

Procedure

This research was carried out with the participation of two pre-intermediate level writing classes, which were chosen according to the average scores of the students for writing sections on the two midterm exams that were administered in the first term. The data were collected in three stages after the legal permission of the department was taken and the students and the instructor of the two classes signed the consent forms (see Appendix F) that indicated their agreement to participate in the study. First, one class was chosen to be assigned the writing tasks in the Composing Skills class, and the other class was assigned to write the same paragraphs at home. This choice was made randomly. All participants from both classes wrote the same four types of paragraph. The participants who wrote the paragraphs in the writing skills classroom were given a class hour and a break time, sixty minutes in total, to complete the assignments. The second class, on the other hand, was given the assignments during classtime on Tuesday and was asked to complete the assignments by Friday. To evaluate the written texts of the participants, the current rubric for the Composing Skills class that is used in the Preparatory School was used with slight modifications. While the original rubric emphasized, grammatical accuracy and organization and gave less attention to fluency, the scoring was altered to give equal emphasis to all three. The written texts were given scores first by the class instructor. They were also scored by the researcher. ‘Blind’ reading strategies were used by the researcher in order not to influence the results of the study, in other words, the class and personal information that was included on the

texts were covered and the texts were then photocopied by the instructor of the two classes before being submitted to the researcher to be scored. The second stage was comprised of the student interviews that were conducted by the researcher. Each week, six randomly chosen participants from the two classes were asked to reply to the interview questions to reveal their composing processes for the writing task they had just completed. The interviews were conducted in Turkish –the native language of the participants- and video-recorded. The interview records were transcribed and translated into English by the researcher. Back-translation was implemented by an English instructor to overcome the semantic and conceptual problems that may stem from the translation. The data collected from the interviews were analyzed to reveal the similarities and differences of the in-class and out-of-class composing processes in terms of time, composing steps and the sources that were used by the participants.

The third stage of data collection was a student questionnaire. A five-point Likert-Scale questionnaire was distributed to the participants to obtain information about their attitudes towards writing context. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and revised based on feedback from 10 English language instructors and MA students. In the questionnaire, the participants were asked general questions about writing, and more specific questions related to their feelings about writing in different contexts.

Data Analysis

The present study included both qualitative and quantitative research aspects. The qualitative data were produced by the semi-structured interviews with the students. Interviews were transcribed to shed light on the students' perceptions of the writing context. The transcripts were analyzed both qualitatively and by using

frequency counts of certain patterns. The elements of the composing process that were considered in the analysis were as follows:

- Time that was spent on the task by the participants,
- Steps that were taken by the participants while composing the paragraph,
- The external factors that the participants reported benefitting from or being distracted by while writing the paragraphs.

The first stage of the quantitative data analysis was the comparison of the scores that were given for the in-class and out-of-class writing tasks. An independent samples *t*-test was used to compare these scores to reveal whether there was a relationship between the writing context and the text quality of the written products.

At the second stage of the quantitative data analysis, students' responses to the questionnaire items were classified and grouped under time, external factors and composing processes categories. Frequencies and percentages were then calculated for responses in each category.

Conclusion

The central aim of this chapter was to outline an overview of the study, to describe the participants, to indicate the instruments that were used in gathering the data, to describe how the data were gathered and which steps were involved in the data analysis. In chapter four, the results of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study aimed to identify the possible similarities and differences between two writing contexts: in-class and at home. The study sought to identify the relationships between writing context and writing performance, students' attitudes towards writing in general and the context in which they write, and students' composing processes in the two contexts respectively. With this study, I attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the contexts students write in?
2. What are the similarities and differences of completing writing assignments in-class and out-of-class in terms of:
 - a) Students' composing processes,
 - b) Students' written products?

This study gathered data from a questionnaire, student interviews, and four sets of writing assignments from 48 students in both classes. The assignments were scored according to an analytic writing rubric. The questionnaire was designed to collect information about students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing assignments at Niğde University Preparatory School (Turkey). The questionnaire was completed by the 40 students who attended the class the day the questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire included 26 five-point Likert-Scale items and two open ended questions about students' perceptions of writing tasks, writing classes and writing contexts. The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical

Packages for Social Science (SPSS) 11.5. The frequencies and percentages for each questionnaire item were calculated to examine students' perceptions. Sub-groupings of questions were analyzed together to reflect the sub-categories in the questionnaire and to identify reoccurring patterns in the data. The data gathered through the two open-ended questions were analyzed through qualitative techniques.

With regard to the research question about the similarities and differences of in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of students' attitudes towards writing context, the results of the questionnaire analysis are presented in part one of this chapter. The first section of part one focuses on the analysis of the students' responses to the questionnaire items that aimed to assess their attitudes towards their writing class. The second section covers the analysis of the questionnaire items exploring the attitudes of participants towards the writing context. In the second section, the responses are analyzed in three sub-categories -attitude, time and external factors- to shed light on the relationships among these three factors and their effects on students' preferences for writing context. The third section presents the qualitative data obtained from the two open-ended questions in the questionnaire in an attempt to reveal participants' perceptions of writing context and their opinions about writing assignments.

I conducted 24 student interviews to investigate the composing processes of the students during their in- and out-of-class writing assignments, in an attempt to respond to the research question concerning the similarities and differences of in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of students' composing processes. Results of the qualitative analysis of the data gathered through the interviews will be presented in part two of this chapter.

Students of the first participant class were assigned to write four different types of paragraph in the classroom, while students of the second class wrote the same paragraphs at home. The written products of the participants were scored by two raters using the analytic writing rubric. The reliability analysis between the raters was acceptable with a value of .85. Since the data were found to be normally distributed, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the scores of the writing assignments which were written in-class and at home in order to respond to the research question addressing the similarities and differences of in- and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of written products.

The results of the data analysis related to the scores will be explored in detail in part three of this chapter.

Data Analysis Procedures

Questionnaire

I administered a questionnaire including 26 five-point Likert-Scale items and two open-ended items about students' attitudes towards writing context in an attempt to see whether in-class and out-of-class writing tasks had any impact on students' attitudes towards writing context.

Participants' Overall Perceptions about the Writing Class

I examined the frequency of the different responses to Q1, 'I am glad we have a writing course', in an attempt to shed light on the participants' overall feelings about the writing class.

Table 1 - Attitudes towards writing skill class

		SA		A		NAND		SD		Total			
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Q1	Class	5	27.8	8	44.4	3	16.7	–	–	2	11.1	18	100.0
	Home	12	54.5	8	36.4	2	9.1	–	–	–	–	22	100.0

Q1 I am glad we have a writing course

As is shown in Table 2, 72.2% of the participants who wrote the assignments in class and 90.9% of the participants who wrote the assignments at home agreed (A) or strongly agreed (SA) with Q1. Although the percentages illustrate an agreement for both groups, it is apparent that the home group (HG) valued the writing skills class more.

Participants' Attitudes towards Writing Context

Questionnaire items 6, 7, 8, 25 and 26 were included in the questionnaire to reveal the participants' attitudes towards writing context. Of these, Q7, 'I feel comfortable while writing assignments at home', and Q26, 'I think I am more successful when I write at home', were examined to shed light on the participants' preferences about writing at home (see Table 2).

Table 2 - The influence of the home context on comfort and success

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q7	Class	7	38.9	7	38.9	2	11.1	–	–	2	11.1	18	100.0
	Home	9	40.9	8	36.4	–	–	5	22.7	–	–	22	100.0
Q26	Class	6	33.3	6	33.3	2	11.1	3	16.7	–	5.6	18	100.0
	Home	7	31.8	8	36.4	5	22.7	2	9.1	–	–	22	100.0

Q7 I feel comfortable while writing assignments at home
Q26 I think I am more successful when I write at home

Table 2 shows that a majority of the participants agreed with both Q7 and Q26, and that the responses of the participants were very similar in both groups. In other words, no matter in which context the participants wrote their assignments,

most students (77.5%) generally agreed that they feel comfortable writing at home and a majority (67.5%) believe they are more successful when they write at home.

I examined Q6, 'I enjoy writing paragraphs in class'; Q8, 'I feel confident while writing in class' and Q25, 'I think I am more successful when I write in class', together in the same category to shed light on students' feelings about writing in class, and the extent to which they feel confident and successful when writing in class (see Table 3).

Table 3 - Attitudes towards the class context

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q6	Class	2	11.1	22.2	3	16.7	4	22.2	5	27.8	18	100.0	
	Home	3	13.6	18.2	3	13.6	7	31.8	5	22.7	22	100.0	
Q8	Class	–	–	27.8	2	11.1	6	33.3	5	27.8	18	100.0	
	Home	5	22.7	13.6	5	22.7	5	22.7	4	18.2	22	100.0	
Q25	Class	1	5.6	5.6	7	38.9	6	33.3	3	16.7	18	100.0	
	Home	1	4.5	9.1	11	50.0	4	18.2	4	18.2	22	100.0	

Q6 I enjoy writing paragraphs in class

Q8 I feel confident while writing in class

Q25 I think I am more successful when I write in class

As is illustrated in Table 3, almost the same number of the participants from the class group (CG) and the HG either strongly disagreed (SD) or disagreed (D) (50.0% SD&D in the CG, 54.5% SD&D in the HG) with Q6. The percentages of the responses for Q6 reveal that neither group of participants reported enjoying writing in class. The responses of the participants from the CG for Q8 illustrate similarity with Q6, with 61.1% disagreement, while the percentages of disagreement and agreement are almost identical according to the responses of the HG (36.3% SA&A / 40.9% SD&D) for the same item. In other words, the CG both did not enjoy and did not feel confident about writing in class, but the HG, while reporting that, they did not enjoy in-class writing, nevertheless felt confident writing in this context. Percentages of the responses for Q25 differ according to the participants' writing

context. While half of the CG participants disagreed with Q25, a large number (38.9%) were more neutral. On the other hand, the HG was a little bit less negative, with the larger percentage (50.0%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing (NAND) and the slightly smaller group (36.4%) strongly disagreeing and disagreeing. The results for Q25 can be interpreted as implying that, even though the HG tended towards the neutral side and the CG towards the disagreeing side, there is still a broad pattern here of neutral/disagreement in terms of the perceived success in the assignments which are written in class.

Q12, ‘I have difficulty in writing the assignments in class’, and Q13, ‘I can concentrate more while writing in class than I can concentrate while writing at home’, were examined together, to reveal the perceived challenges of writing in class.

Table 4 – Perceived challenges and advantages of writing in class

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q12	Class	3	16.7	4	22.2	4	22.2	7	38.9	–	–	18	100.0
	Home	4	18.2	5	22.7	3	13.6	7	31.8	3	13.6	22	100.0
Q13	Class	1	5.6	3	16.7	2	11.1	5	27.8	7	38.9	18	100.0
	Home	2	9.1	2	9.1	4	18.2	8	36.4	6	27.3	22	100.0

Q12 I have difficulty in writing the assignments in class

Q13 I can concentrate more while writing in class than I can concentrate while writing at home

Table 4 shows that a majority of the participants in each group disagreed with Q13 (66.7% SD&D in the CG / 63.7 SD&D in the HG). The results simply illustrate that the participants do not feel they can concentrate better while writing in class than when at home. Q12 resulted in an interesting distribution. When I calculated the responses in groups of two, one of which combined strongly agree and agree, and the other combined strongly disagree and disagree, I could not find a meaningful difference between the responses in the HG (40.9% SA&A / 45.4% SD&D). Even

more surprising than the responses of the HG, the percentages of Class Group participants' responses to the same question were exactly identical in agreeing and disagreeing fields (38.9% SA&A / 38.9% SD&D). In other words, the responses were completely mixed showing no pattern whatsoever in the respondents' feeling about whether they consider it difficult to write in class or not. In order to understand students' attitudes towards the teacher when they are writing in class, I analyzed the responses of the participants to Q9, 'I am afraid of making mistakes since the teacher is watching me while writing in class', Q10, 'The teacher motivates me while writing in class' and Q11, 'I am disturbed when my teacher is around me while I am writing in class' in the same category.

Table 5 - The teacher factor in the class context

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q9	Class	–	–	3	16.7	2	11.1	8	44.4	5	27.8	18	100.0
	Home	1	4.5	2	9.1	3	13.6	10	45.5	6	27.3	22	100.0
Q10	Class	–	–	5	27.8	1	5.6	9	50.0	3	16.7	18	100.0
	Home	4	18.2	7	31.8	6	27.3	3	13.6	2	9.1	22	100.0
Q11	Class	1	5.6	–	–	4	22.2	10	55.6	3	16.7	18	100.0
	Home	4	18.2	1	4.5	2	9.1	11	50.0	4	18.2	22	100.0

Q9 I am afraid of making mistakes since the teacher is watching me while writing in class

Q10 The teacher motivates me while writing in class

Q11 I am disturbed when my teacher is around me while I am writing in class

Table 5 reveals that, in general, both groups lean towards disagreement with Q9 and Q11, in other words, neither group really finds the teacher's presence disturbing. Turning to Q10, which asks about the teacher's overt positive influence, you see something really interesting. The HG seems to have a higher opinion that the teacher motivates them, whereas the CG is far less sure. One possible reason for this could be that the HG just spent a month struggling to write things at home and is now thinking that the teacher's presence would have made things better/easier.

time. Participants' perceptions about time related issues while writing in different contexts were examined through the analysis of eight questionnaire items, namely, Q2, Q4, Q5, Q14, Q15, Q17, Q18 and Q24.

In order to reveal participants' attitudes towards allocation of time for thinking about the assignment before they start to write, Q5, 'I prefer to think about the topic for a long time before starting to write', was analyzed through the responses of the two groups' participants.

Table 6 -Preference for time allocation for planning

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q5	Class	2	11.1	11	61.1	1	5.6	4	22.2	_	_	18	100.0
	Home	4	18.2	9	40.9	2	9.1	7	31.8	_	_	22	100.0

Q5 I prefer to think about the topic for a long time before starting to write

As is illustrated in Table 6, the majority of the participants in each group agreed with Q5. However, the perceived value of spending a long time before composing the assignments is bigger for the participants in the CG than it is for the students in the HG. The results can simply be interpreted as, the less time the participants have, the more they value the time issue.

Following the analysis of participants' general beliefs about the time issue, the results for Q2, 'I believe I can write better if I have more time to think about the topic in writing class' and Q4, 'I believe I can write better if I have more time to write the assignments in writing class' were examined to reveal whether there is a perceived correlation between having more time to think and/or to write and writing better.

Table 7 - Preference for time allocation for planning

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q 2	Clas	1	55.	7	38.	1	5.6	-	-	-	-	1	100.
	s	0	6		9							8	0
	Hom	1	45.	6	27.	4	18.	2	9.	-	-	2	100.
	e	0	5		3		2		1			2	0
Q 4	Clas	1	55.	7	38.	1	5.6	-	-	-	-	1	100.
	s	0	6		9							8	0
	Hom	8	36.	8	36.	4	18.	2	9.	-	-	2	100.
	e		4		4		2		1			2	0

Q2 I believe I can write better if I have more time to think about the topic in writing class

Q4 I believe I can write better if I have more time to write the assignments in writing class

As is illustrated in Table 7, none of the participants in the CG disagreed with Q2 and Q4. There is a slight difference between the responses of the participants in the HG, although only 9.1% of the participants, who wrote the assignments at home, disagreed with these questionnaire items. The slight difference between the two groups' responses to the same questionnaire items is not surprising due to the fact that the CG was exposed during the research period to the influence of time constraints in class, while the HG had plenty of time at home to write the assignments. To sum up, the results that Table 7 reveal may be interpreted as implying that the majority of the students, no matter in which context they write, think they would write better assignments if they were given more time.

In order to shed light on the possible positive and negative effects of time constraints in writing class on participants' concentration and on their ability to organize themselves, Q14, 'Time constraints in writing class make me have difficulty in concentrating on the assignments' and Q15, 'Having time limits in class helps me organize my assignments better', were analyzed.

Table 8 - Time limitation in class

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q1 4	Class	7	38.	7	38.	1	5.6	3	16.	-	-	1	100.
	Home	7	31.	9	40.	3	13.	2	9.1	1	4.5	2	100.
Q1 5	Class	-	-	1	5.6	2	11.	9	50.	6	33.	1	100.
	Home	1	4.5	2	9.1	2	9.1	1	63.	3	13.	2	100.

Q14 Time constraints in class make me have difficulty in concentrating on the assignments

Q15 Having time limit in class helps me organize my assignments better

Table 8 shows that more than 70% of the participants in both groups believe that they have difficulty in concentrating on the assignments due to the time constraints in writing class (77.8% SA&A / 72.7% SA&A respectively). Q15, on the other hand, which asks whether the imposed time limit has a positive, motivating effect, received the opposite results. The results for Q15 are not surprising when the participants' attitudes towards Q14 taken into consideration. It can be concluded that the majority of the participants in each group find that time limits in class have a negative rather than a positive influence on them.

Q24, 'I have more time to revise the things I write at home than I have in class' and Q18, 'I write longer and more detailed assignments at home since I have more time to write than I have in class' were analyzed to reveal how the lack of time limits at home affect students' revising and writing processes.

Table 9 - The time factor in different writing contexts

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q18	Class	6	33.3	7	38.9	2	11.1	2	11.1	1	5.6	18	100.0
	Home	6	27.3	11	50.0	2	9.1	1	4.5	2	9.1	22	100.0
Q24	Class	3	16.7	8	44.4	4	22.2	2	11.1	1	5.6	18	100.0
	Home	9	40.9	9	40.9	2	9.1	1	4.5	1	4.5	22	100.0

Q18 I have more time to revise the things I write at home than I have in class

Q24 I write longer and more detailed assignments at home since I have more time

As Table 9 presents, overall the participants in both groups tended to agree with both of these questions. In other words, the majority felt that, they had more time to revise at home, and that they could write longer and more detailed works at home because they do not have time constraints at home. Interestingly, the HG, responding with the experience of having actually written at home for the previous four weeks, was even much stronger than the CG in recognizing that greater time at home allowed them to revise and write longer, more detailed texts.

The last questionnaire item that was examined to reveal the participants' attitudes towards time-related factors under the heading of writing context was Q17, 'I forget the things that I thought in class when I write the assignment at home'. The item was included in the questionnaire to shed light on the possible negative influence of the time period between the writing class and actual completion of the assignment at home on students' writing performance.

Table 10 - The influence of the time passed after pre-writing activities in class

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q17	Class	1	5.6	4	22.2	4	22.2	6	33.3	3	16.7	18	100.0
	Home	2	9.1	3	13.6	7	31.8	8	36.4	2	9.1	22	100.0

Q17 I forget the things that I thought in class when I write the assignment at home

As is illustrated in Table 10, in both groups the number of participants who disagreed with Q17 is higher than the number of the participants who agreed. On the other hand, a quite high number of participants (27% on average) could not decide whether the time between being assigned the writing and composing it makes them forget their opinions they thought at the first glance in class.

external factors. In order to reveal whether there is a tendency among the participants to ask help from or to be distracted by other people more frequently

while writing in a specific context and if participants have similar tendencies to use external resources when they write in class and at home, Q3, Q16, Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22 and Q23 were analyzed and interpreted.

I first examined the results for questionnaire items that are related to the human factor. In order to understand whether the participants prefer to ask help from other people when they are writing or whether they think they are more successful when they write alone without any help or suggestions, I analyzed the results for Q19, ‘I enjoy writing in class since I can consult my teacher and friends’, Q21, ‘I have difficulty in finding good ideas while writing at home’ and Q22, ‘I enjoy writing at home since I can create better ideas when I am alone’.

Table 11 - Consulting with other people or working alone

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q19	Class	2	11.1	8	44.4	2	11.1	6	33.3	–	–	18	100.0
	Home	3	13.6	9	40.9	4	18.2	4	18.2	2	9.1	22	100.0
Q21	Class	–	–	4	22.2	1	5.6	11	61.1	2	11.1	18	100.0
	Home	1	4.5	2	9.1	1	4.5	12	54.5	6	27.3	22	100.0
Q22	Class	3	16.7	8	44.4	4	22.2	3	16.7	–	–	18	100.0
	Home	7	31.8	8	36.4	5	22.7	1	4.5	1	4.5	22	100.0

Q19 I enjoy writing in class since I can consult my teacher and friends

Q21 I have difficulty in finding good ideas while writing at home

Q22 I enjoy writing at home since I can create better ideas when I am alone

The results show that, even though a majority of the participants expressed agreement with Q19, which means that both group’s participants value the suggestions and guidance of their teacher and their friends about their writing assignment, both groups also reported that, they feel they can easily find ideas when they write at home alone. By generally disagreeing with Q21, the participants in both groups rejected the idea that they have difficulty when writing alone at home.

While the responses of both groups were generally very similar, it is interesting to note that in all cases the HG, with their four-week experience of having

done assignments in this way, tended to be slightly more positive about their ability to get ideas when writing at home.

In an attempt to understand whether the participants are distracted by other people around them when they write at home, I analyzed Q23, 'I am disturbed by the factors like TV, my home mates or guests while I am writing at home'.

Table 12 - External factors at home

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q23	Class	3	16.7	4	22.2	2	11.1	5	27.8	4	22.2	18	100.0
	Home	4	18.2	2	9.1	1	4.5	9	40.9	6	27.3	22	100.0

Q23 I am disturbed by the factors such as TV, my home mates or guests while I am writing at home

Table 12 reveals that half of the participants in the CG and more than half of the participants in the HG disagreed with Q23 with total of 50% and 68.2% in the Disagree and Strongly Disagree fields respectively. On the other hand, almost 40% of the participants in the CG agreed with the same questionnaire item. It can be simply concluded that, a majority of the participants in the HG feel comfortable even if there are other people around them when they are writing at home, while the participants in the CG do not have a precise attitude towards this issue. Given that the HG had most recently experienced writing in the home context, we can perhaps give greater emphasis to their responses to this question, and assume that external factors like friends and TV do not present a major obstacle to writing at home. The results for Q3, 'I use external resources more frequently when I write at home than I do in class', Q16, 'I like writing at home since I can do research on the topic before writing' and Q20, 'I write better at home than in class since I have more resources to use at home than in class' were examined to shed light on the issue of resource use in the two writing contexts: in-class and at home.

Table 13 - External resource use and research facilities at home

		SA		A		NAND		D		SD		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q3	Class	10	55.6	4	22.2	2	11.1		5.6	1	5.6	18	100.0
	Home	10	45.5	7	31.8	2	9.1		9.1	1	4.5	22	100.0
Q16	Class	6	33.3	6	33.3	1	5.6		22.2	1	5.6	18	100.0
	Home	7	31.8	8	36.4	3	13.6		13.6	1	4.5	22	100.0
Q20	Class	6	33.3	7	38.9	2	11.1		16.7	–	–	18	100.0
	Home	5	22.7	10	45.5	3	13.6		18.2	–	–	22	100.0

Q3 I use external resources more frequently when I write at home than I do in class

Q16 I like writing at home since I can do research on the topic before writing

Q20 I write better at home than in class since I have more resources to use at home

The results presented in Table 13 reveal that, almost identical percentages of the participants in each group agreed with Q3, Q16 and Q20. There is a parallelism both between the two groups and in their responses, which are uniformly positive. The results may be interpreted as implying that, the majority of the students, regardless of the context in which they wrote the assignments, think that, writing at home allows them more access to resources, and this improves their writing.

Two Open-Ended Questions

The participants' responses to the two open-ended questions in the questionnaire were analyzed and interpreted qualitatively in this section. The responses were grouped under sub-categories to reflect the relationships among them. The main aim of the two open-ended questions was to highlight the participants' attitudes towards the writing skill class and writing assignments which were written both in class and at home. The first question was asked to reveal their preferences for writing context.

the first open-ended question. As the first open-ended question of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to comment generally on where they preferred to prepare their writing assignments. The first question was responded to by 38 of the 40 participants, 16 of whom were in the CG and 22 in the HG. More

than half of the participants in both groups stated that they prefer writing the assignments at home. The findings are summarized in Figure 3.

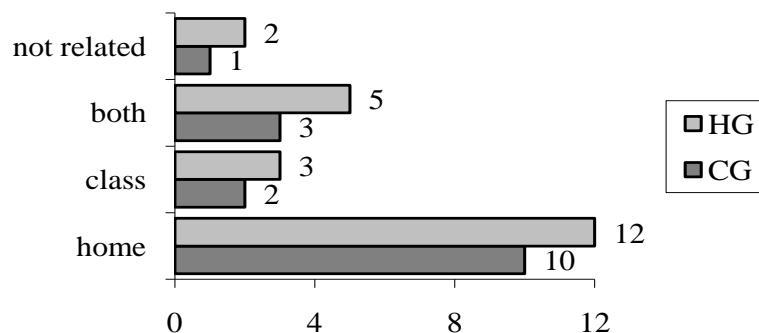


Figure 3 - Frequency of the preferences for writing context

As is illustrated in Figure 3, out of 16 participants in the CG who responded to the first open-ended question, ten students stated that writing assignments at home is preferable for them. The results for the HG are parallel, with a total of 12 participants who preferred writing at home. Two participants in the CG and three participants in the HG, both of which constitute less than 15% of the participants in each group, favored writing in class over writing at home. In addition to the participants who had explicit preferences either for writing in class or for writing at home, three out of the 16 participants in the CG and five out of the 22 participants in the HG stated that both writing contexts have some advantages and disadvantages, while three other participants, one from the CG and two from the HG, wrote unrelated responses to the question. The reasons cited for both groups' participants' preferences for writing at home are illustrated in Figure 4.

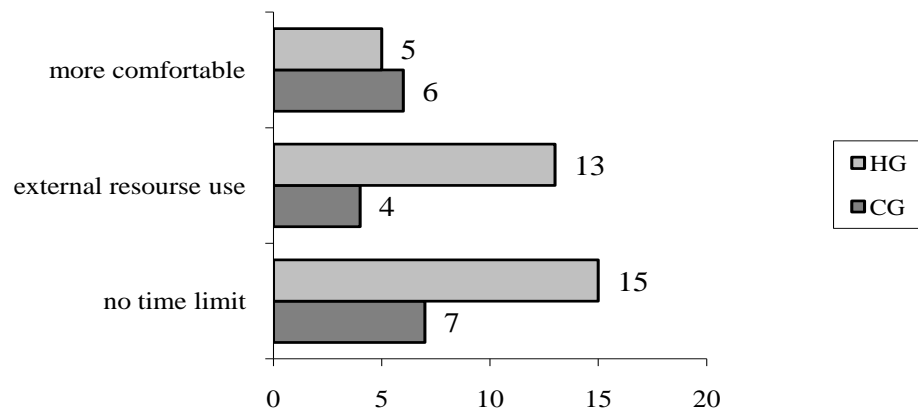


Figure 4 - Frequency of the reasons for preferring to write at home

The three main reasons for the participants' reported preference for writing at home were: having no time limit, feeling more comfortable and stress-free, and being able to do research and use external resources for the assignments when writing at home. The frequencies presented in Figure 4 are more than the total number of the participants in each class as the data show all people who mentioned the three main reasons alone as well as those who wrote down one reason in combination with another one. 15 participants in the CG and 7 participants in the HG mentioned the time factor as their main reason for preferring the home context to write assignments. The extracts present the opinions of two participants in the CG and one from the HG, regarding the time concept in homework assignments:

Since I have more time at home, I write easier and feel more comfortable at home. (P*6 - CG)

Due to the fact that, we have less and limited time in class, the possibility to make mistakes is higher. I can write better and more detailed at home. (P9 - CG)

I can think intensively and write more fluent / coherent at home. The time limit in class prevents me from writing better. (P1 - HG)
(*participant)

The extracts illustrate that having time constraints in class makes students feel stressed and worried about making mistakes. Writing at home, on the other hand, is preferred, since the participants have more time to complete the assignment and thus can prepare more accurate and complete essays. Additionally, as the first extract illustrates, Participant 6 in the CG relates having more time at home to feeling more comfortable. These extracts also illustrate how the majority of the responses to the open-ended questions refer to more than one factor that influences the participants' attitudes towards the issue.

The second main reason that the participants mentioned for preferring to write at home is having a more comfortable and stress-free atmosphere. As is presented in Figure 4, six of the CG participants and five of the HG participants mentioned the comfort issue as an explanation for their writing context preferences. The extracts below illustrate the ideas of two other participants related to the comfortable atmosphere of the home context:

Being alone at home when I am writing an assignment makes me feel more comfortable, so I write effective and intelligible assignments at home. (P7 - CG)

I can write more comfortably being more focused on the assignment at home. (P18 - HG)

In these extracts, each participant explicitly stated his/her preference for the home context, pointing out that they feel more comfortable and focused on the assignment when they are writing at home. While both expressed similar feelings, the participant in the CG relates feeling more comfortable to writing high quality assignments. The participant in the HG on the other hand, states that he/she can concentrate on the task easier as the home context is more comfortable and peaceful.

The third reason for participants' preferences for writing at home is related to having the opportunity to search and use external resources at home while doing the writing assignment. Figure 4 also presents a striking difference between the two groups with regards to resources, as the CG participants do not seem to recognize what an advantage for resources writing at home might be, with only four participants noting it as opposed to a much larger 13 participants in the HG pointing out this advantage. The extracts below illustrate the opinions of some of the HG students about research and external resource use opportunities at home:

Since I have limited grammar skills and I get nervous easily, I make so many mistakes when writing in class. However, I can correct my mistakes by consulting a lot of external resources when I write at home. (P27 - HG)

Writing at home provides me with the opportunity to search better and to write being more focused and careful. I can't concentrate on writing assignments in class. (P34 - HG)

When you are writing in class, you don't have much opportunity to analyze the topic or assignment since you are supposed to complete the assignment in 45 minutes. However, you can write more detailed assignments being more focused on the issue due to various external resources that you have when writing at home. (P37 - HG)

The participants who mentioned the advantage of writing at home related this advantage to three main issues, namely, writing more detailed assignments, correcting mistakes and writing more carefully. When all the extracts that have been analyzed so far are taken into consideration, it may simply be concluded that writing at home was preferred by the participants of both groups due to three main factors: time, comfort, and external resources. Moreover, these factors generally overlap in many responses. However, the most frequently mentioned factors that make the groups prefer writing at home are not exactly identical. While the most frequently mentioned factor within the CG is the time issue, the HG adds external resource use

to time as the most frequent reason for their context preferences. Overall, the HG values the time issue more than the CG. The only factor that the CG mentions more frequently than the HG is comfort. The responses of the two groups may be interpreted as implying that the CG experienced a somehow limiting and uncomfortable class context during the experimental period, and so their most frequent reason for preferring the home context is thinking that it would be more comfortable for them.

the second open-ended question. The second open-ended question of the questionnaire was asked in order to understand the participants' overall opinions about their writing classes and writing assignments. The question was responded to by 35 participants, 13 from the CG and 22 from the HG, and the responses were grouped under three categories showing their attitudes towards writing class and the assignments of the class according to the context in which they wrote. The findings are summarized in Figure 5.

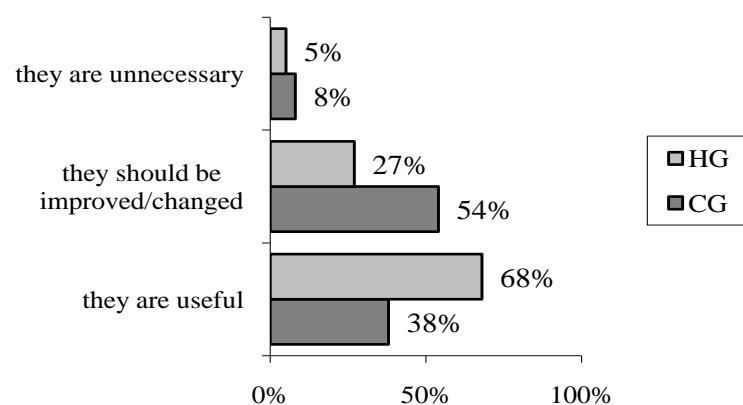


Figure 5 - Attitudes towards writing class and writing assignments

As is presented in Figure 5, a fairly striking difference can be observed between the two groups. A majority (68%) of the participants in the HG stated that the writing

class and the writing assignments are useful, whereas less than half (38%) of the participants in the CG were equally positive. The most frequent response of the participants in the CG (54%) showed that they believe the class and the assignments should be improved or changed in order to get more benefit from the course. Conversely, only 27% of the HG suggests a revision for the course. Almost an equal number of participants in each group found the writing class unnecessary, and the percentage of these participants is less than 10% in both groups.

As the most frequent two responses, the reasons for the participants' appreciating the writing class and their suggestions for improving the writing class were analyzed in detail. The following extracts illustrate the opinions of five participants in the two groups who stated that writing class is necessary and useful:

They provide very good practice indeed, because we may have the opportunity to write an article for a journal related to our profession when we achieve our goals in the future. (P10 - CG)

I believe writing classes improved my writing skills. (P2 - CG)
I think writing classes are quite useful. Writing is a good practice to revise newly-learned grammar structures and vocabulary. I am definitely sure that writing contributes to me a lot. (P24 - HG)

To be honest, writing classes are the most enjoyable part of learning English. You experience the nice feeling of expressing your opinions in English. (P25 - HG)

Writing classes are extremely useful. I have never written an article before, and it's more difficult to write an article in English but, I think it will be useful for me in the future. (P28 - HG)

The extracts present, independent from the contexts the students wrote in, that the participants think that writing class is necessary and useful for them since it provides them with an opportunity to practice language structures and vocabulary they previously learned, to develop themselves for their future goals and needs, and the pleasure of enjoying the skills they have gained in a foreign language.

In order to understand the reasons for thinking the class should be improved or changed, the opinions of four participants are presented below:

Writing classes improve our writing skills. It would be better if we had more writing classes. (P20 - HG)

Writing classes are good, but they would be better if we were given more information about the topics. For example, we can write a sample paragraph. If we do that we can write easier. (P32 - HG)

Writing classes are definitely necessary. Especially their being academic is more advantageous. I think they will help us a lot in our profession. However, choosing better topics may be more attractive and interesting for students. (P37 - HG)

I think writing classes are not so essential. If better topics are chosen, they may be more useful. (P16 - CG)

The extracts illustrate three suggestions for better writing classes which are choosing better topics to assign, giving more information and samples before assigning students to write, and simply having more writing classes. Although these participants stated that writing classes should be revised or improved for greater benefit, only one of the comments—P16 CG—suggesting improvement or change was actually critical of the overall usefulness of the writing classes.

In order to try and understand the students' reasons for thinking that the writing class is unnecessary, two extracts were analyzed:

Writing classes are absolutely nonsense. (P9 - CG)

Writing classes are usually unnecessary. Our grades at exams are always the same no matter how much we study. (P18 - HG)

The extracts were cited due of the fact that, they were the only two relevant responses. As P9 did not explain the reason for his/her opinion, it may just be assumed that the participant did not enjoy the writing activities implemented in class, or perhaps simply does not enjoy writing. On the other hand, P18 in the HG has a

reason for his/her response. The participant states that having writing classes and doing writing assignments at home did not increase their grades on the exams. Clearly this participant did not see immediate benefits from the writing classes to help him/her be more successful on the exam writing sections.

Interviews

Student interviews, which included eight questions, were conducted with the participation of 12 students from each class, in order to investigate the composing processes of the students during their in- and out-of-class writing assignments. The interview data were used in an attempt to respond to the research question: what are the similarities and differences of in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of students' composing processes. Results of the qualitative analysis of the data gathered through the interviews were grouped into three categories, namely, time, external factors and composing process.

Time

In order to shed light on the differences between the two groups for time allocated for the pre-writing thinking procedure and for the composing of the assignment overall, the participants were asked three questions. The first interview question (IQ1) directly asked how much time the student spent on thinking before starting to write the assignment. The average time for thinking before writing was 13 minutes for the participants who wrote the assignments in class. Figure 6 illustrates the responses of the in-class group participants for IQ1. The groupings here have been made according to the participants' actual responses, instead of a pre-planned categorization.

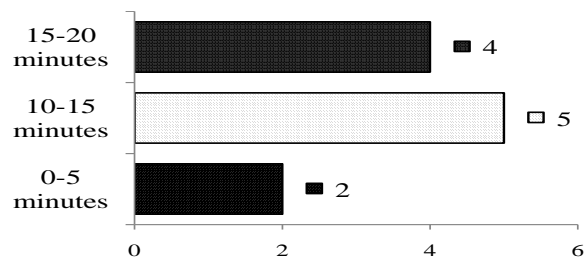


Figure 6 - Time for thinking before writing in class

As is presented in Figure 6, a plurality of the participants (5), reported thinking for 10 to 15 minutes about the assignment before they start to write. Four of the participants in the writing in class group felt that they spend about 15 to 20 minutes before starting to compose, while the other two participants from the same group said that they thought for five or fewer minutes.

The results for the second group were considerably different. The average time for thinking before writing was about 64 minutes for the participants who wrote the assignments at home. Figure 7 shows the results for IQ1 with regard to the responses of the second group.

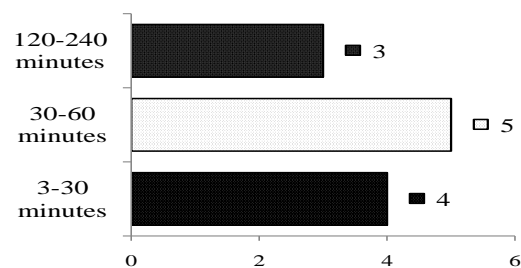


Figure 7 - Time for thinking before writing at home

Comparing the data in Figures 3 and 4 illustrates that the group who wrote the assignments at home allocated more than five times the average number of minutes than the in-class group to pre-writing thinking. The longest time that was spent in class was 20 minutes for thinking about the assignment as a pre-writing activity, while the longest time allocated at home for the same activity was estimated at between two to four hours.

The second time-related question in the interview was IQ3, how much time the assignment took in total. The average time allocated by the participants who wrote in class for the whole assignment was more or less 46 minutes. The detailed responses for IQ3 are illustrated in Figure 8.

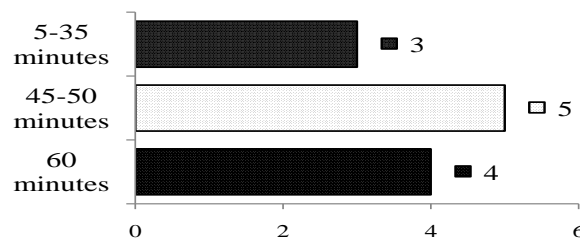


Figure 8 - Time allocated for the whole assignment in class

Unsurprisingly, given the limited class time, the responses in this group do not vary dramatically. Five of the participants who wrote the assignments in class spent 45 to 50 minutes to complete the whole assignment including pre-, while- and post-writing activities. Four of the participants reported spending the whole hour, while three of the participants spent between five and thirty five minutes for the whole assignment.

Figure 9 shows the results for the responses to IQ3 of the group who wrote the assignments at home. The average time which was spent by the group for the whole assignment was almost 125minutes.

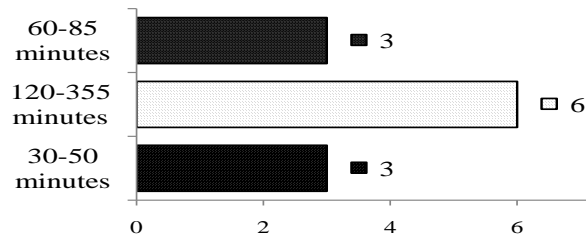


Figure 9 - Time allocated for the whole assignment at home

Half of the participants who wrote the assignments at home spent 120 to 355 minutes to complete the whole assignment, whilst three of the participants spent 60 to 85 minutes, and three other participants spent just 30 to 50 minutes for the whole assignment. According to the data presented in Figure 9, half of the students in the HG could have in principle completed the assignments in class, at least in terms of time.

IQ4, which asked whether the students made revisions and if so, how much time they spent on these, was the third interview question. Only three participants stated that, they did not revise the assignment when they completed writing. Figure 10 shows the results for the responses of the nine in-class participants who reported revising. The average time spent by this group for revision was almost 5 minutes, while the longest time spent for revising by a participant in this group was 10 minutes.

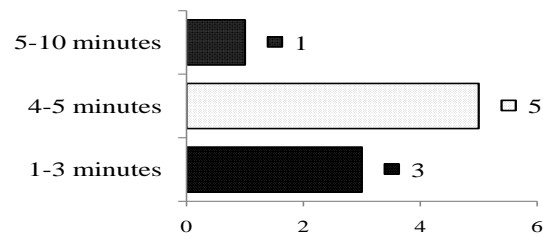


Figure 10 - Time allocated for revision in class

Among the group who wrote at home, the number of participants who stated that they revised the assignments after writing was the same as with the class group (nine participants). The average time for revision procedures after completing the assignments was nearly 16 minutes for the participants who wrote the assignments at home. Figure 11 shows the results for IQ4 with regard to the responses of the home group.

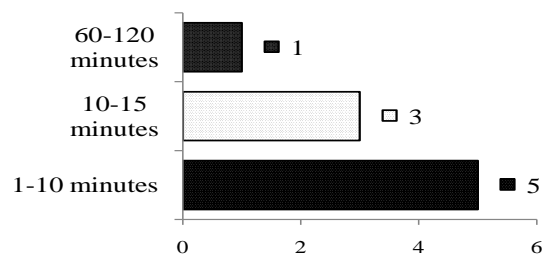


Figure 11 - Time allocated for revision at home

Five out of the nine participants who wrote the assignments at home spent 1 to 10 minutes to revise the assignment, whilst three of the participants spent 10 to 15 minutes, and one participant reported spending 60 to 120 minutes for the revision.

The data analyzed so far indicates that the participants allocated considerably more time to revising when they were assigned to write at home.

External Factors

In order to understand the influence of external factors related to writing assignments for the two experimental groups, the participants were asked three questions, namely, IQ5, 'how did you get ideas for the things that you wrote to form the paragraph', IQ6, 'did you get any help from other people before or while writing, or when revising your assignment' and IQ7, 'did you use any kind of resources for the assignment'. For the CG, the only 'external resources' available were dictionaries, the writing class hand-outs and course books of any other classes that the students might have with them. The HG, on the other hand, had a more or less limitless number of resources potentially at their disposal, either in the form of published hard copy or electronic materials. Additionally, the participants who responded positively to IQ6 and IQ7 were asked to provide details about the people and resources they consulted for the writing assignments (See Figures 14, 15, 16 and 17).

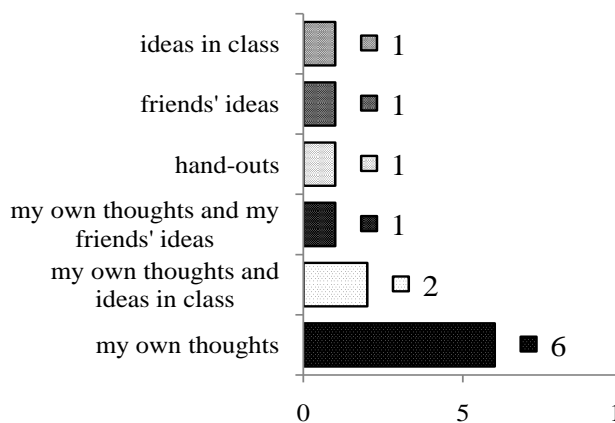


Figure 12 - Sources of ideas when writing in class

For the fifth question in the interview, half of the participants who wrote the assignments in class said that they simply used their own experiences and thoughts to compose the assignment. Two participants said that they used both their own thoughts and the ideas they discussed in the classroom during pre-writing activities. The other four responses, each of which was stated by just one participant, were ‘my own thoughts and my friends’ ideas’, ‘the hand-out that was distributed for writing classes’, ‘my friends’ opinions’ and ‘ideas that were agreed in class during pre-writing activities’.

Figure 13 shows the results for the same question, IQ5, responded to by the group who wrote the assignments at home.

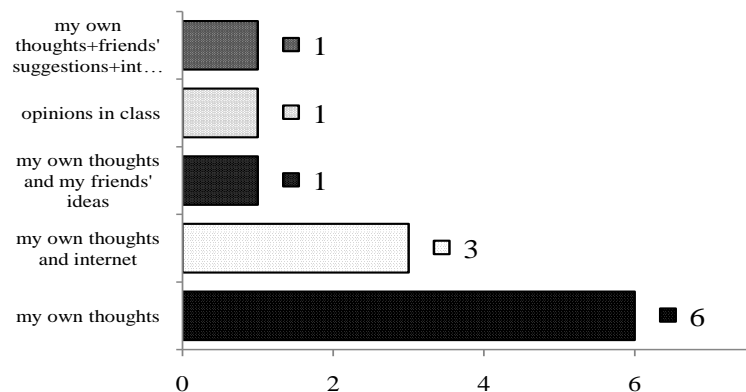


Figure 13 - Sources of ideas when writing at home

The results are identical for the two groups with regard to the most frequent response (my own thoughts/opinions), with six participants again stating that they relied on their own ideas when writing assignments at home. It's quite interesting that the home group didn't mention the handouts despite having the same pre-writing activities in class. Thus, they don't seem to be making use of the course handouts

when they go home to write. The rest of the results are again fairly similar, except for the internet, which was used by four participants in the home group. Therefore, the most distinguishing difference between the CG and the HG culminates in the Internet. On the other hand, it may be controversial whether the Internet is a positive or negative contribution to the students' writing as it allows for research on a topic, but opens up possibilities for plagiarism.

The second question related to external factors in the student interviews was IQ7, 'did you get any help from other people before or while writing, or when revising your assignment'. Only two out of the 12 participants in the class group responded to this question negatively. The results for the other ten participants, who reported taking help from other people while doing the writing assignments, are shown in Figure 14.

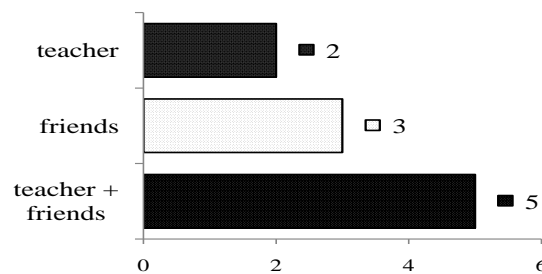


Figure 14 - People consulted in class

Unsurprisingly, the only people consulted were the teacher and friends. A total of five participants reported consulting both the teacher and friends while doing the writing assignments. Only consulting friends constituted the second most

common response (3) and just asking for help from the teacher was the last response (2).

Interestingly, the participants in the home group were much less likely to consult anyone during the writing process. Contrary to the class group, 10 out of 12 participants from the home group stated that they did not consult any other people while composing the assignments. The results for IQ6 are illustrated in Figure 15.

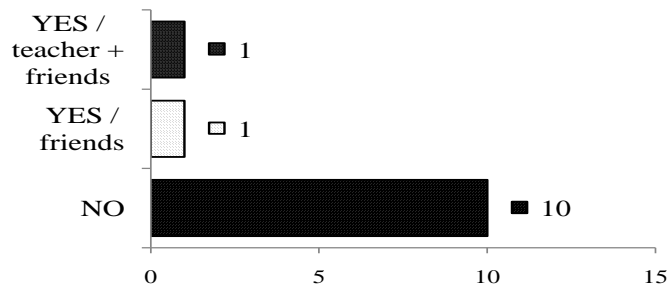


Figure 15 - Did you consult anyone for the assignments at home?

Out of the two participants who did, one stated that he/she consulted his/her friends and the other reported consulting his/her teacher and friends. It may be simply concluded that the participants in the home group did not have people around them to consult when writing the assignments at home, so the majority of them did the assignments without getting any help or suggestions. The findings are quite surprising as the HG participants had three days to submit the assignments and they had the opportunity to ask help from their friends, other teachers at school or anyone else who could guide them in this period. Yet, it seems that, they did not use the facility to consult with other people even though they could have. Still, there is a need for questioning whether it is preferable for students to be consulting with

someone for their writing assignments or not. At some levels of proficiency, it might be a benefit to language learning if there is some kind of interaction going on, even during the writing process. When the writing becomes more and more complex at a very high proficiency level, the need for more interaction in the pre-/during-/post processes of writing may become less essential due to the fact that students can handle the issues such as grammatical structures, terminology and organization even without help.

The third interview question asked the participants about additional external factors which may have influenced their composing processes: IQ7, 'did you use any kind of resources for the assignment?' Eleven out of 12 participants from the class group said that they used external resources while writing the assignments. The results are presented in Figure 16.

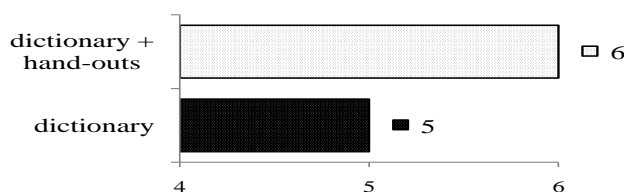


Figure 16 - Resources used when writing in class

Six out of the 11 participants who used external resources in class stated that they consulted dictionaries for unknown vocabulary, the other five participants said that they used both dictionaries and the class hand-outs while writing the assignments in class.

The results of the same interview question for the home group were the same with regard to the number of the participants who used external resources while writing the assignments. However, the resources which were used by the home group are slightly more diverse than those of the class group, as is illustrated in Figure 17.

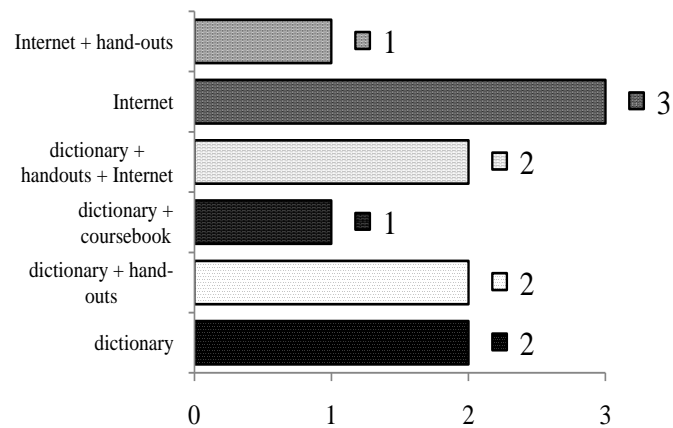


Figure 17 - Resources used when writing at home

Figure 17 shows that the diversity of the external resources which were consulted by students while doing writing assignments at home is remarkable. Students consulted a combination of dictionaries, course books and class handouts as external resources for writing assignments at home. The biggest difference though is that several of them used the Internet. The Internet factor in the home context forces us to think whether language teachers or instructors should encourage Internet use for writing assignments. While it does offer a tremendous variety of resources that may help in the composing process, it also may raise concerns about the potential of plagiarism.

Composing Processes

In an attempt to shed light on the difference between the composing processes of the participants from the two groups, the participants were asked two questions,

IQ2 and IQ8, in the interviews. The first question, IQ2, was, ‘did you complete the assignment at once or did you take breaks’; and ‘if you took any breaks, did you keep thinking about the topic during these breaks’. Seven participants from the class group stated that they did not take any breaks while they were doing the assignments, whilst five of them said they took breaks for a couple of reasons. Figure 18 illustrates the five participants’ reasons for taking breaks.

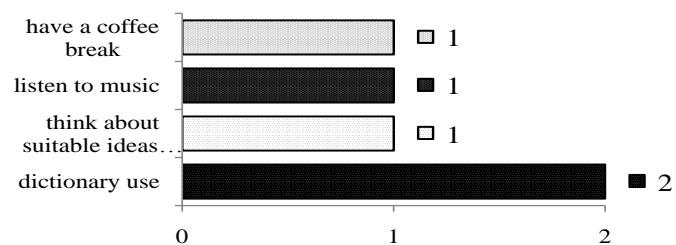


Figure 18 - What did you do during the breaks in class?

As is presented in Figure 18, three out of five participants took assignment related breaks, such as consulting a dictionary or thinking about some ideas to include in the assignments. In a sense, these durations might not actually be considered as breaks, as they are very much a part of the writing process. Two participants, on the other hand, took breaks related to their individual needs and preferences, such as listening to some music and relaxing, or having a coffee during the break time before going to class and starting to write again.

Although the number of the HG participants who took breaks is the same as the CG students, their reasons for taking breaks are slightly different. Figure 19 shows the reasons for the five participants who took breaks while doing the assignments at home.

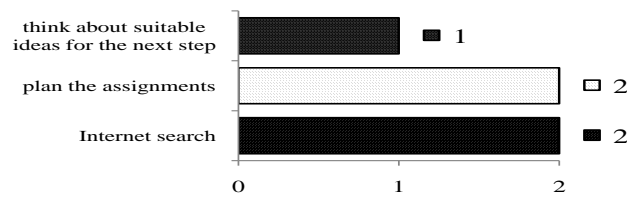


Figure 19 - What did you do during the breaks at home?

Contrary to what might be expected, first it is interesting that so few home group participants reported taking breaks. Of those who did, all five participants took assignment related breaks, such as searching on the internet, planning the assignment or thinking about suitable ideas for the next step in the assignments. The results show that even though the participants of the home group had more time and chance to take breaks for any reason, they generally preferred to complete the assignment at once. The participants claimed that they merely took short breaks for doing assignment-related activities. However, the results seem a bit misleading since their responses to this question seem at odds with their responses to IQ3, which revealed that the average time spent by the group for the whole assignment was more than two hours. It is quite impossible to take two to six hours to write a paragraph without taking long breaks, and these breaks cannot be easily filled only with thinking about the assignment. Thus, even though these results seem to lead to the conclusion that the HG was very focused on the assignments, it may be more accurate to say that the CG students were just more aware of every minute—since the time was so limited—and so were very conscious of any breaks they took in writing. The contradiction between the HG students' responses and the reality about these breaks may have

stemmed from the HG, which had so much time to write, not clearly remembering the actual breaks they took by the time they were interviewed.

The other interview question that was asked about composing processes was IQ8: 'what is the procedure of doing the assignment that you followed step by step'.

Figure 20 presents the results of the in class group's responses.

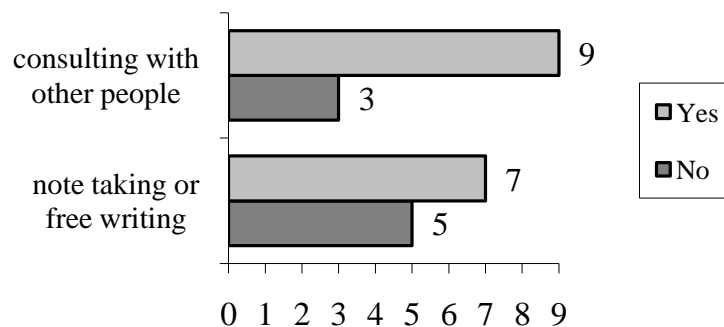


Figure 20 - Composing process patterns of the CG

Figure 20 illustrates that consulting with other people and note taking are the most frequent features mentioned in the composing processes of the class group's participants. Nine out of 12 participants stated that they consulted with each other and with their teacher either during or right after composing the assignments. The main reasons for the interaction were to ask for suggestions about the text, and to have someone else check the assignment and give feedback. Seven of the participants also stated that they jotted down notes or did some kind of free writing before starting to actually write the assignment, in order to organize their ideas. Five out of 12 participants said that they wrote the assignments without using any pre-writing strategies such as note taking, free writing or outlining a sample paragraph.

The responses of the home group's participants for the same question were analyzed in an attempt to reveal repeated patterns in their composing processes.

Figure 21 illustrates the results.

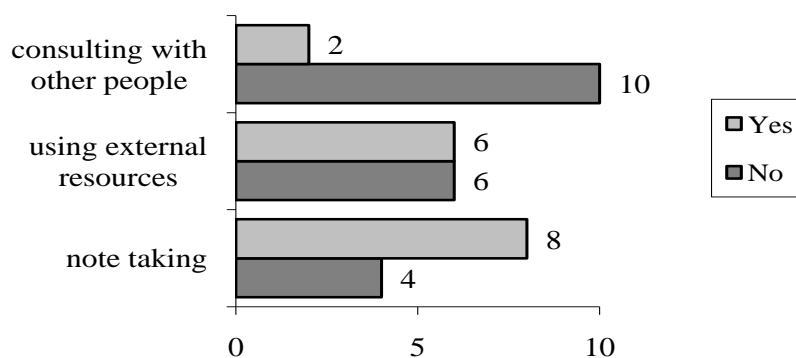


Figure 21 - Composing process patterns of the HG

As is presented in Figure 21, searching for information from external resources is a frequent feature in the composing processes of the home group participants, in addition to consulting with other people and note taking, which were also seen in the in-class group. However, the frequencies of these responses differ. Pre-writing activities such as taking notes, free writing or drawing semantic maps constitute the most frequent pattern of the home group's composing processes, with eight out of 12 participants reporting doing this. The second most frequent feature is searching for information from external resources such as the Internet, textbooks and grammar books, which was noted by six participants. The third feature, namely asking for other people's help, is less frequent in the composing processes of the participants from the home group than it is in the composing processes of the class group. Only two out of 12 participants reported consulting with other people at any point of the writing process at home. These two participants in the HG cited similar

reasons to the participants in the CG for consulting—asking suggestions and having someone else check their assignments. Also similar to the class group, the main reasons for the interaction at home were asking suggestions and having someone else check over the assignment.

Scores

The written products of 25 participants, 11 in-class and 14 out-of-class assignments, were scored independently by two raters using an analytic writing rubric. To test the inter-rater reliability between the two raters, I administered a reliability analysis on SPSS. The reliability score was .85. Statistical tests for normal distribution were conducted and the data were found to be normally distributed. Following this, the mean scores for each student from the two raters were calculated. An independent sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the overall scores of the writing assignments which are written in-class and those written at home in order to look for a possible relationship between writing context and the quality of the written products. The overall difference between the combined scores for the four writing assignments of the two groups was not found to be statistically significant. Looking at the results on a week-by-week basis however, the group which wrote the assignments at home was generally more successful with regard to the scores for the first three weeks, while the participants who wrote the assignments in class got higher scores for the fourth week's assignment than the other group. The differences between the scores for the two groups are illustrated in Table 14.

Table 14 - Mean scores of the two groups

	Group	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Interraters' MEAN1	In-class	11	70.00	12.94	3.90
	At home	14	72.50	16.46	4.40
Interraters' MEAN2	In-class	11	64.09	15.70	4.73
	At home	14	71.25	13.71	3.66
Interraters' MEAN3	In-class	11	70.90	11.47	3.45
	At home	14	73.03	10.97	2.93
Interraters' MEAN4	In-class	11	65.45	12.54	3.78
	At home	14	61.42	16.34	4.36

One possible explanation for the similar results was that the participants were not assigned highly academic topics to write about during the four-week experimental period. Rather, the assignment topics were ones that the students could write about just by thinking of their own opinions, and putting down their ideas. It can be assumed that if the participants were assigned more academic writing assignments, ones which required or at least would have benefited more from research and external resource use, the difference between the scores of the two groups might have been higher.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the analyses of the data collected through a questionnaire, student interviews and four sets of writing assignments were presented. The quantitative data revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores given to assignments written in class and assignments written at home. However, the quantitative data reveal that for the first three weeks, the assignments written at home were more successful than the assignments written in class. The data gathered from the questionnaires illustrated that a majority of the participants prefer writing at home in terms of factors such as having more time,

having access to external resources such as the Internet, and generally being in a more comfortable or stress-free atmosphere while writing assignments. The next chapter will include further discussion of the findings in light of the related literature.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview of the Study

This study aimed to shed light on two different ways of implementing writing courses and giving assignments, in order to reveal an efficient way of teaching writing which responds to students' needs and expectations. This study was conducted with the participation of 48 pre-intermediate students from two groups enrolled in the Preparatory School of English at Niğde University.

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the contexts students write in?
2. What are the similarities and differences of completing writing assignments in-class and out-of-class in terms of:
 - a) Students' composing processes,
 - b) Students' written products?

In an attempt to fulfill the aims of the study, three sets of data were collected, namely, the students' written products, student interviews, and student questionnaires. Both groups of student participants had two-hour writing classes each week during the four-week experimental period. The groups were assigned the same four paragraph topics. One of the groups wrote the assignments in one class hour during their weekly writing classes, while the other group wrote the assignments at home as homework. The participants who were assigned to write at home were given three days to complete and submit the homework. Both groups did the same pre-writing activities in writing classes during the experimental period. Student

questionnaires, which were distributed to all participants in both groups immediately after the fourth experimental week, were used as the first instrument of the study in order to respond to the first research question. Student interviews were conducted each week with the participation of three students from each group. The interviews aimed to shed light on the similarities and differences of the participants' composing process patterns, in an attempt to respond to the first sub-section of the second research question. Four sets of written products were used as the third instrument of the study, and the scores given to these written products were analyzed to reveal any kind of similarity or difference between the qualities of the products which were written in class and at home, thus responding to the second sub-section of the second research question.

The data gathered through the study were analyzed in three stages. First, student questionnaires were analyzed in SPSS to reveal the participants' attitudes towards writing context and to shed light on the issue of how writing context might influence students' perceptions of writing classes and assignments. Second, student interviews were transcribed and categorized in pre-determined patterns to explore the similarities and differences of the participants' composing processes in both the classroom and home contexts. Finally, the scores given by the raters were analyzed in SPSS. Preceding the independent samples *t*-test, which was run to compare the scores for the two groups' written assignments, an inter-rater reliability test was conducted to ensure the scores given by the two raters were reliable.

In this chapter, the major findings of the study will be summarized and discussed. The chapter will also present pedagogical implications drawn from the findings, the limitations of this study, and suggestions for further studies.

Discussion of Findings

This section presents the findings of the study and discusses them in three different sub-sections in relation to the two research questions and the sub-sections of the second RQ: students' attitudes towards writing context, possible similarities and differences between the assignments completed in-class or at home in terms of students' composing processes, and quality of the written products.

Research Question 1: What are the students' attitudes towards in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in relation to the contexts students write in?

In order to respond to the first RQ, the participants were distributed an attitude questionnaire. The questionnaire included two sections, the first of which consisted of 26 five-point Likert Scale items and the second consisted of two open-ended questions. The data gathered from the first section of the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively, while the second section responses were analyzed qualitatively. All participants were asked to respond to the questionnaire items which were related to both contexts regardless of the context they wrote during the present study, as it was felt that they had sufficient experience of both in-class and out-of-class writing from the previous term on which to base their answers. It was expected however, that they would be most affected by their experiences during the four-week experimental period, and that those differing recent experiences might lead the two groups' members to respond in different manners.

Participants' responses to four questions in the first section of the student questionnaire, namely Q3, Q7, Q9 and Q19, illustrated results that showed no apparent connection with writing context, as the responses in each group were identical. These questions were related to external resource use, feeling comfortable

at home, feeling threatened in class by the presence of the teacher in class, and consulting with the teacher and friends in class respectively. According to the results for Q3 and Q7, all participants, regardless of where they had done their writing tasks for this particular study, stated that they use external resources more frequently when they write at home, and that they feel comfortable while writing at home. The results for Q7 suggested similar results to Ulusoglu-Darn and Darn's study (2006) revealing that, students in both groups feel more comfortable when writing in the home context which is seen neither as threatening nor as limiting to the development of confidence both in themselves and their writing ability.

On the other hand, students do not see the teacher as a threatening factor in the class context, as participants' responses to Q9 reveal that neither group is afraid of making mistakes when the teacher is by them. Even though the results for Q7 and Q9 seem to contradict with each other, the reason for the opposing views can be interpreted as the participants recognizing that their teacher is there to guide and help them instead of detecting their mistakes and criticizing them harshly. The participants may still feel more comfortable while writing at home; however, due to the relatively unlimited time and external resource facilities which are not available in the class context. The responses to Q19 shed light on the importance of asking help from the teacher or friends when writing and the participants' responses show that they value consulting with someone else when they are writing in class. The results for Q19 may be linked to the findings of Öztürk (2006), whose study revealed that students take peer revision serious and they value their peer's (and their teacher's in the present study) comments and revision.

The responses to Q10 'The teacher motivates me while writing in class' reveal some of the most interesting data, since a majority of the CG disagrees with the question, whilst half of the participants in the HG agree with Q10. The participants in the CG state that their teacher does not motivate the students when they are writing in class. However, the participants in the HG assert that the teacher does help students by motivating them to write in class. Due to the fact that both groups had the same instructor and all participants have some background experience of writing in both contexts, the difference between the attitudes of two groups towards the motivating role of teacher may have simply stemmed from individual differences in the two groups, and members individual relations with the teacher. Another possible reason for the difference between the participants' perceptions of their teacher and his motivating role may have stemmed from the fact that, the teacher guides and helps the students more frequently during the pre-writing activities than he does when they start writing. If this is the case, the HG participants may have been influenced by their extended pre-writing activity sessions that took place in-class during this specific study.

The other eight questions, namely Q1, Q2, Q4, Q5, Q8, Q23, Q24 and Q25 have different responses according to the students' writing context, although there is no extreme difference between the result in terms of agreeing or disagreeing. Q1 is a general attitude assessing item which questions whether participants value writing skill class or not. While a majority of the participants in each group agree with this question, the percentage of agreement in the HG is higher than it is in the CG. The data so far illustrate that a majority of the participants seem to prefer writing in the home context. Thus the reason for the difference between the responses for Q1 (I am

glad we have a writing course) may have stemmed from the fact that the home group write the assignments at home and they only do the pre-writing activities at school, while the CG do all writing activities in the class atmosphere. The participants have some enlightening reasons for their context preference, one of which is having plenty of time at home to write the assignments, whilst they are limited by class hour while writing in class.

The participants' responses to the questionnaire items asking whether they can write better if they have more time to organize and compose the assignments reveal a positive relation between the participants' context preference and the perceived limitations of in-class writing. A majority of the participants in both groups assert that they can write better if they allocate more time for planning and writing the assignments in class. Another interesting point that the responses to Q2 (I believe I can write better if I have more time to think about the topic in writing class) and Q4 (I believe I can write better if I have more time to write the assignments in writing class) reveal is that the participants in the CG seem to be more aware of the limitations of the class context with a total of 20% more agreeing with both questions. The participants' responses to Q5 also support the same conclusion since the CG students prefer to have more time to think about the topic.

The results to Q8 reveal another interesting point, namely, more participants in the HG agree with the statement they feel confident while writing in class. Q23, which asks whether the participants are disturbed by other people around them when they are writing in the home context, reveals that a majority of the participants in the HG (70%) feel confident despite their home mates, guests or other external factors

such as TV. However, only half of the participants in the CG state that, the external factors at home do not influence them negatively.

Participants' responses to another question in the questionnaire, Q24, indicated that, more participants in the HG report writing longer and more detailed assignments at home as they have more time there. Although a majority of the participants in the CG agree with the same question, the percentage of agreeing in this group is 21% less than the percentage of agreeing in the HG. The reason for the difference may again be linked to being familiar or aware of the situation in a specific context.

The last question, which has an almost 15% difference across groups, is Q25 (I think I am more successful when I write in class). Nearly equal numbers, and a vast majority in each group, display the respondents' attitudes that they do not feel more successful when writing in class. When the percentage of agreeing in each group is taken into consideration, neither the CG nor the HG participants think they are more successful at in-class writing assignments and the results show parallelism with the previously mentioned responses indicating a common preference of the home context.

The data gathered from the two open-ended questions can be categorized in three sections, the first of which is preference for writing context. The participants' responses to the first open-ended question, about students' preferences for writing the assignments in class or at home, indicate that a slight majority of the participants in each group prefers writing in the home context. According to the responses in both groups, almost 60% of the participants believe writing at home is more advantageous than writing in class, while about 20% feel that both contexts have some advantages.

Only 13% of the remaining participants in both groups state that they prefer writing in class, and 7% of the participants give unrelated responses to the question.

Therefore, there seems a tendency among both groups which shows the home context as the preferred context of the participants.

The participants' responses to the first open-ended question also reveal another important piece of data which is why a majority of them prefer the home context or some of them value both writing contexts. The participants in each group explain their preferences mentioning similar factors such as having more time to write and having more external resources and research facilities in the home context. The data present the fact that, regardless of which context the participants write in, they are aware of the differences between the two writing contexts and they see having more time and external resources at home as the main factors for being successful at writing. Feeling more comfortable when writing at home, is the third factor that many participants in both groups mention as the explanation of their tendency to prefer the home context.

The second open-ended question in the student questionnaire asks participants to explain their broad opinions about the writing class and assignments, paying attention particularly to the issue of motivation. Almost 70% of the participants in the HG think that the writing class and assignments are useful for their writing skill development, whilst more than half of the participants in the CG state the class and the assignments are helpful but they should be improved or changed to be more valuable and responsive to students' needs. The results may be related to the fact that most of the participants in each group ultimately preferred to write at home and a majority of the participants who write at home are satisfied with the class and the

assignments. The HG participants' responses to this question seem to show a contradiction with Graham's study (2006), which revealed that, motivation shapes writing development, due to the fact that, even though students had a clear consensus with the home context preference, this context neither increased the HG participants' scores nor helped them develop their writing skills more than the CG.

Since no more than 10% of the participants in both groups stated they find writing class and assignments unnecessary, it can be concluded that almost all participants value the writing class curriculum in the Preparatory School of Niğde University. In those cases when the respondents said there should be changes, the main reasons for the participants' wanting modifications to the writing class were not having interesting writing topics, not being well informed by the topics, not being provided sample paragraphs, and having only two hours of writing class. The final two suggestions may be somewhat questionable, since students are indeed provided sample paragraphs and the overall curriculum of the program does not allow allocating more than two hours for writing class. Therefore, the first two demands should be given attention. If students are assigned more interesting topics to write and are informed about these topics in detail, it may be helpful to increase their motivation and success in writing class.

The data analyzed and discussed so far illustrate four important similarities, which can be grouped into two, those which are common in both groups, and those that are different between the groups who write in class and at home. In the first category, all the participants seem to value the home context for writing assignments because of the benefits it offers with respect to external resource use (particularly the internet) and because of feeling comfortable while writing at home. Moreover, the

participants do not see their teacher as a threat even though s/he corrects students' mistakes and criticizes them, instead, they value in class writing since consulting their teacher and friends in class helps them improve their writing skill.

Turning to the responses which differ across groups, it can be seen that in terms of the influence of having more time on writing more detailed assignments and being successful, the teacher's motivating role, feeling comfortable and successful in class, and being comfortable with the external factors at home, the participants are more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the writing context that they write in. In other words the CG participants have more precise opinions about the challenges and facilities of the class context, whilst the HG participants are more aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the home context.

The responses also illustrate agreement on a home context preference in relation with time and comfort factors. The participants' responses to the open-ended questions support the data discussed so far and indicate that the participants value writing class and almost all of the students are satisfied with the writing class curriculum with some slight exceptions. It can be concluded that, the participants have positive attitudes towards the writing course but particularly so on condition that they are assigned to write at home.

Research Question 2/Sub-Section 1: What are the similarities and differences of completing writing assignments in-class and out-of-class in terms of students' composing processes?

In an attempt to respond to the first sub-section of the second RQ, 12 randomly chosen participants in each group were interviewed during the experimental period. The interview consisted of eight questions which were

categorized in three groups according to time, external factors and composing process issues. The data retrieved from the student interviews were analyzed qualitatively.

The first difference between the groups is that, participants in the HG allocated more time to planning, writing and revising the assignments than their peers in the CG did. Even though this result may be a natural consequence of having more time at home, students in the HG could have, of course, chosen to write the assignments using less time than they did. Although, the participants did not mention during the interviews why they allocated more time at home, or whether they felt this was a good or bad thing, their responses illustrate that students believe they write better when they have more time.

The second difference revealed from the interviews is that the participants in the HG used more external resources and they did research more frequently than did the students in the CG. Due to the fact that these participants had more resources at home, these results are hardly surprising. However, there is also a similarity between the groups as they both cited their “own opinions” as the main source for their assignments. The participants in the CG mention their friends’ and teacher’s opinions as the second source to be taken benefit of when writing the assignments in class, whilst the Internet is noted as the second source for participants in the HG to find new or supporting ideas for their writing assignments. The difference stems from the obvious fact that the participants in class do not have Internet access, while some of the participants of the HG have computers and Internet access either at home or at the student dormitories.

Interestingly, the number of the students in the HG who use the Internet to search for the assignments is only four, according to their responses to the fifth interview question. The reason for this surprising data may be that some of the students in the Preparatory School do not have a real mastery of computers and Internet use. More likely perhaps, the participants may not have felt the need to search on the internet in preparing for the assignments, since they were assigned to write non-academic, personal opinion paragraphs rather than academic ones. Thus, if the participants had been assigned to write about more academic topics during the experimental period, the frequency of the HG participants searching from the Internet and using external resources—or the problems cited by the CG due to a lack of such resource possibilities—may have increased.

Another difference across the groups and related to external factors is that almost all the participants in the CG reported consulting with other people while writing, whilst almost none of the participants in the HG consulted other people for their assignments. The difference between the responses of each group seems again to be linked to groups using whatever facilities they have. In other words, the CG reported taking advantage of their teacher and friends in completing their assignments, while the HG reported relying on external resources—primarily the Internet—to improve the paragraphs they were assigned to write.

The last purpose of the interviews was to reveal details into the stages and steps of the students' composing processes. Almost all participants in both groups stated that during the writing process they only took assignment-related breaks, such as thinking about new ideas or searching for the next step. In other words, even though the HG in particular could have taken numerous breaks, once they started

writing, they reported that they tended to complete the assignment in one setting, interrupting the writing only for brief periods of reflection about the assignment itself. On the other hand, the HG participants' responses to total time allocated to the assignments show some discrepancy with the findings related to the breaks, as they also reported they spent more than two hours to complete the task even though it is highly unlikely they would take that much time to compose a paragraph only with taking short, assignment based breaks. Thus, the reality about these breaks may be that the HG did not remember the actual breaks they took by the time they were interviewed.

On the other hand, various similarities between the two groups' composing processes also emerged. While the participants in the CG mention consulting other people and note taking or free writing as the main stages of their composing processes, the HG participants really only add searching from external resources to these same stages. The main steps of the participants' composing processes were therefore quite similar.

A final similarity between the two groups' composing processes is that a majority of the participants in both groups reported following a linear order of composing, comprised of some pre-writing activities, the actual writing, and some form of editing/rewriting as noted by Witte (1989). While some participants reported following a recursive order of composing, in other words, revising as a concurrent step with composing instead of seeing revision as a separate and final process after writing (Lee, 2002), there were no patterns showing any difference in this practice between students in the CG or the HG. In conclusion, it can be interpreted according to the interview data that students followed largely similar composing processes

regardless of which context they were writing in, with a few exceptions, primarily, that they made greater use of external resources (in particular the Internet) when writing at home, and they relied more on friends and the teacher when they were writing in class.

Research Question 2/Sub-Section 2: What are the similarities and differences between in-class and out-of-class writing tasks in terms of written products?

In an attempt to respond to the second and last sub-section of the second RQ, the texts by the 25 participants who completed all four assignments were scored and compared using an independent sample *t*-test. The difference between the scores for the four writing assignments was found to be not statistically significant. However, when just the first three weeks were taken into consideration, the group who wrote the assignments at home was found to be more successful. It can be speculated that the non-significant difference between the results stemmed from the participants' not being assigned academic topics to write about during the four-week experimental period. Perhaps if the participants had been assigned more academic writing assignments, which might have required more planning time, more complex outlining, and more research and external resource use, the differences between the scores of the two groups might have been greater. The results can also be interpreted as implying that the HG may have compensated for the absence of the teacher with either external resources or relatively unlimited time they had at home as the CG was not more successful than the HG.

Another interesting point that can be raised in relation to the scores might be the issue of plagiarism. Many people see Internet access as a negative factor since it gives students an easy source for plagiarizing materials. However, the participant

groups in this study did not apparently use the Internet for plagiarism. This assumption is based on the speculation that if the HG had plagiarized, they would either have had much higher scores for the assignments as plagiarized texts would presumably have been of high quality(but the raters somehow did not notice this as potential plagiarism), or much lower scores, since the raters had noticed and failed students for plagiarism. As it was however, the data indicated that there was not a significant difference between the text qualities of the two groups' written assignments.

Although the results for scores illustrate no apparent difference across writing contexts, the findings of the student questionnaire and the interviews reveal that students nevertheless believe in the positive influence of the home context on their success at writing assignments. In addition, even though the students did not have statistically significant higher scores at home, language teachers can still feel comfortable assigning some writing tasks at home in order to use limited class time more effectively and to provide students with more writing practice, which cannot be obtained simply in a two-hour writing class.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study ultimately stems from the participants' proficiency level. Due to the fact that they were pre-intermediate level students and they had not yet mastered paragraph or essay writing by the time the experimental study started, they were assigned to write non-academic paragraphs relying on their personal experiences and ideas instead of paragraphs/essays on more academic topics. With higher proficiency level participants, more academic-based writing assignments could have been given, and this could have changed the results for all

three aspects of the study –students’ opinions, the composing processes they reported following, and even the actual scores received.

Another limitation of the study is that, although both groups did the same pre-writing activities in writing classes during the experimental period, the implementation of these activities was not similar. The in-class group allocated one class hour for the activities, whilst the home group had two class hours to do the same activities. Therefore, the difference between the groups in terms of allocated time for the same activities might have influenced the findings.

Moreover, the study seems to have a limitation that stems from writing class instruction. The writing skill course instructor stated that with the in-class writing group he naturally provided guidance and help on questions of grammatical structure, new vocabulary, or relevance of ideas. There can be little question that this guidance from the teacher may have influenced the CG participants’ scores in a positive way and thus minimized or offset the HG participants’ advantages stemming from access to external resources and the Internet. On the other hand, this may not be considered as a limitation, but rather as a reflection of the true differences between the two contexts. The fact is that both writing contexts have some advantages and disadvantages. The teacher’s presence might very well be an advantage for students completing their writing tasks in class. Hence, rather than considering this issue necessarily as a limitation, we might view this simply as further information about the two writing contexts that needs to be taken into consideration when deciding on writing instruction practices.

In total, 48 students from two classes participated in the study. However, only about one half of the participants’ assignments could be analyzed for the purpose of

answering the third sub-section of the RQ, since only 25 of the participants wrote all four paragraphs they were assigned during the experimental period. Having only a limited number of participants' assignments, is the fourth limitation of this study. If all participants had written the assignments regularly, or had more students participated in the study, the results for the scores may have been different.

The final limitation of the study is that the participants were asked short answer questions during the interviews and, despite the follow-up questions, some of their responses remained unclear or lacking details. An interview design that included more open-ended questions could have revealed more extensive data on the possible reasons and rationales behind the students' attitudes and behaviors.

Pedagogical Implications

This study revealed that students preferred writing at home, even though their ultimate scores received for written assignments did not differ across writing contexts. In relation to the overall findings of the study, the writing class curriculum at Niğde University and in similar preparatory school contexts may be modified to categorize the assignments which can be written in either context or which should be assigned as homework. Non-academic writing topics can be written in both contexts, although it should not be ignored that students report preferring the home context. Assignments which require research and more time to be written, on the other hand, might be given as homework to increase both the motivation of the students and the possibility to compose well-developed writing assignments benefiting from the time and resource factors.

Language teachers may ask their students' preferences about writing context and other issues related to the implementation of composing classes and assignments to help them develop positive attitudes towards writing in the target language.

Suggestions for Further Research

The results of this study indicate a number of areas that would benefit from further research. First, as this study was conducted with the participation of pre-intermediate students, further research studies need to be made with other proficiency level students as well, specifically with higher levels. Due to the fact that as proficiency level becomes higher, writing topics necessitate more research, more complex grammar structures and terminology knowledge, the home context may be found to be more advantageous for writing skill development. Moreover, higher level students can be assigned both academic and non-academic topics in order to reveal the relation between writing genres and writing context.

Furthermore, as this study was conducted in just four weeks including only the first drafts of the participants' assignments, a longitudinal study examining the results for the second or final drafts of the assignments may shed further light on the data. As writing is one of the productive skills that take a long time to achieve mastery in, and various drafts of the same assignments may differ in terms of quality, a longitudinal study may reveal interesting data about writing skill development.

Finally, a study which includes teachers' perceptions of writing context may reveal some other issues related to the similarities and differences of the writing environment. Language teachers may realize some benefits or drawbacks of a specific writing context related to the students' needs and success better than the students themselves, since they very well know their students and their writing skill

development, which is assessed in various ways during their education in the program. Additionally, teachers' attitudes towards writing context may reveal some issues that have not been mentioned by the students in this study either because these issues are not directly related to students themselves or because they are not aware of the issues.

Conclusion

This study was aimed at comparing the classroom and the home as writing contexts in terms of students' attitudes, their composing processes and quality of the written assignments. The study was conducted with the participation of 48 students enrolled in the Preparatory School of Niğde University. The data were gathered through a student questionnaire, student interviews and scores for the participants' written products. The data collected through the study illustrated that there are more similarities between the writing contexts than differences, but that a majority of the students reported preferring to write at home. In the light of this study's findings, writing tasks can be assigned both in class and at home since writing context does not appear to influence the assignments' quality. Nevertheless, it should be taken into consideration that the students seem to enjoy home writing more than in-class writing. Therefore, to achieve a good balance between the two contexts, it might be recommended that assignments which require research and a longer time to be written might be assigned as homework, while some simpler topics might be written about in the classroom with the guidance of the class teacher and other students. Thus, a combination of in-class and out-of-class writing might be the most appropriate way of teaching writing.

REFERENCES

- Akyel, A., & Kamisli, S. (1997). Composing in first and second languages: Possible effects of EFL writing instruction. In K. H. Pogner (Ed.), *Odense Working Papers: Text and interaction* (pp. 69-107). Odense: University Press.
- Applebee, A. (1981). *Writing in the secondary school*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Arndt, V. (1987). Six writers in search of texts: A protocol-based study of L1 and L2 writing. *ELT Journal*, 41, 257-267.
- Bayram, F. (2006). *The Role of Writing Portfolios in Increasing Learners' Confidence in Writing and Promoting Their Attitudes towards Writing*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Bereiter, C., & Scardamalia, M. (1987). *The psychology of written composition*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bonzo, J. D. (2008). To assign a topic or not: Observing fluency and complexity in intermediate foreign language writing. *Foreign Language Annals*, 41, 722-735.
- Bosher, S. (1998). The composing processes of three Southeast Asian writers at the post-secondary level: An explanatory study. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 7(2), 205-241.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 32(4), 365-387.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. London: Longman.
- Graham, S. (2006). Writing. In P. Alexander & P. Winne (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 457-478). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Graham, S., Berninger, V., & Fan, W. (2007). The structural relationship between writing attitude and writing achievement in first and third grade students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 32(3), 516-536.
- Gümüş, Ö. (2002). *Teachers' Attitudes and Understandings About Process Writing in the School of Foreign Languages at Muğla University*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

- Hartvigsen, M. K. (1981). *A comparative study of quality and syntactic maturity between in-class and out-of-class writing samples of freshmen at Washington State University*. Unpublished doctorate thesis, Washington State University, Washington, the USA.
- Hilgers, T. L., Hussey, E. L., & Stitt-Bergh, M. (1999). As you're writing, you have these epiphanies: What college students say about writing and learning in their majors. *Written Communication, 16*, 317-353.
- Kaya-Yıldırım, İ. (2001). *The Effect of Training Students on Self-Assessment of Their Writing*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Kenkel, J., & Yates, R. (2009). Interlanguage grammar of information management. *Written Communication, 26*(4), 392-416.
- Krapels, A. R. (1990). An overview of second language writing process research. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 37-56). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kroll, B. (2002). What does time buy? ESL student performance on home versus class compositions (ed.). In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 140-154). Northridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2008). Cognitive task complexity and written output in Italian and French as a foreign language. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*, 48-60.
- Larios, J. R., Manchón, R., Murphy, L., & Marín, J. (2008). The foreign language writer's strategic behavior in the allocation of time to writing processes. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*, 30-47.
- Lee, Y. J. (2002). A comparison of composing processes and written products in timed-essay tests across paper-and-pencil and computer modes. *Assessing Writing, 8*, 135-157.
- Matsuda, P. K. (1998). Situating ESL writing in a cross-disciplinary context. *Written Communication, 15*, 99-121.
- McCarthy, S. J., & García, G. E. (2005). English language learners' writing practices and attitudes. *Written Communication, 22*(1), 36-75.
- Özant, M. (2000). *The Effects of Process Writing on Turkish EFL students*. Unpublished master's thesis, Boğaziçi University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Öztürk, B. (2006). *Impact of Peer Revision on Second Language Writing*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

- Prior, P. A. (1998). *Writing/disciplinarity: A sociohistoric account of literate activity in the academy*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Reed, W. M. (1992). The effects of computer-based writing tasks and mode of discourse on the performance and attitudes of writers of varying abilities. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 8(1), 97-119.
- Sakallı, R. (2007). *Investigating Change in Students' Writing Feedback Style Preferences*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Sasaki, M. (2000). Toward an empirical model of EFL writing processes: An exploratory study. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(3), 259-291.
- Scordaras, M. (2009). Just not enough time: Accelerated composition courses and struggling ESL writers. *TETYC*, 36, 270-279.
- Silva, T. (1997). Differences in ESL and native-English-speaker writing: The research and its implications. In C. Severino, J. C. Guerra & J. E. Butler (Eds.), *Writing in multi-cultural settings* (pp. 209-219). New York: Modern Language Association.
- Silva, T., Leki, I., & Carson, J. (1997). Broadening the perspective of mainstream composition studies. *Written Communication*, 14, 398-428.
- Slattery, P. J., & Kowalsky, R. (1998). On screen: The composing processes of first-year and upper-level collage students. *Computers and Composition*, 15, 61-81.
- Sommers, N. (1980). Revision strategies of student writers and experienced adult writers. *College Composition and Communication*, 31, 378-388.
- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14, 153-173.
- Subaşı-Dinçman, M. P. (2002). *Teachers' Understandings of Projects and Portfolios at Hacettepe University School of Foreign Languages Basic English Division*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Tan, K. E., & Richardson, P. W. (2006). Writing short messages in English: Out-of-school practices of Malaysian high school students. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 45, 325-340.
- Türkkorur, A. (2005). *Writing Portfolio Assessment and Inter-Rater Reliability at Yıldız Technical University School of Foreign Languages Basic English Department*. Unpublished master's thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey.

- Ulusoglu-Darn, B., & Ulusoglu, S. (2006). Journal writing: A study of change
- Uysal, H. H. (2008). Tracing the culture behind writing: Rhetorical patterns and bidirectional transfer in L1 and L2 essays of Turkish writers in relation to educational context. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 17*(3), 183-207.
- White, R., & Arndt, V. (1995). *Process writing*. Malaysia, CL: Longman.
- Yi, Y. (2007). Engaging literacy: A biliterate student's composing practices beyond school. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 16*, 23-39.
- Yi, Y. (2009). Adolescent multilingual writers' transitions across in- and out-of-school writing contexts. *Journal of Second Language Writing*.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Pre-Writing Activities

Private cars are becoming a very controversial issue these days but they are important in our modern lives for two main reasons, poor public transport and business. Many people in the world live in towns, villages and even cities that do not have good buses or trains. Without cars these people could not travel to work, to the shops or do many other important things. Also, in many towns and cities buses stop before midnight but in today's busy world people are busy twenty four hours a day. The next point is that cars help the economy in two ways. First, the car industry gives many people in the world jobs and helps countries to develop. Second, many people today need cars in their work. Doctors need to visit patients; salespeople need to visit customers and computer technicians need to visit businesses. In conclusion, although cars can cause problems it is impossible to live without them in modern life.

- A. Choose the most suitable “title” for the paragraph. Explain why you think that is the most suitable title.
 - I. Cars and Modern Life
 - II. Can Cars Develop Countries?
 - III. Advantages of Private Cars
 - IV. Car Prices
- B. Read the paragraph again and underline the transition words that link the sentences and provide the paragraph with fluency.
- C. Explain why we use the transition words that you have underlined.

Appendix B: Questionnaire in Turkish and in English

Bölüm I: Aşağıdaki cümleler için kendi açınızdan en uygun seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
S1					
S2					
S3					
S4					
S5					
S6					
S7					
S8					
S9					
S1					
0					
S1					
1					
S1					
2					
S1					
3					
S1					
4					
S1					
5					
S1					
6					
S1					
7					
S1					
8					
S1					
9					
S2					
0					
S2					
1					
S2					
2					
S2					
3					
S2					
4					
S2					
5					
S2					
6					

Bölüm II: Aşağıdaki iki soruyu cevaplayınız.

1. Yazma dersi ödevlerinizi evde ya da sınıfta yazmanın üzerinizdeki etkisini kısaca açıklayınız.
2. Yazma dersleri ya da ödevleri hakkında fikirlerinizi açıklayınız.

Section I: Tick the most suitable choice for the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q1	I am glad we have a writing course.				
Q2	I believe I can write better if I have more time to think about the topic in writing class.				
Q3	I use external resources more frequently when I write at home than I do in class.				
Q4	I believe I can write better if I have more time to write the assignments in writing class.				
Q5	I prefer to think about the topic for a long time before starting to write.				
Q6	I enjoy writing paragraphs in class.				
Q7	I feel comfortable while writing assignments at home.				
Q8	I feel confident while writing in class.				
Q9	I am afraid of making mistakes since the teacher is watching me while writing in class.				
Q10	The teacher motivates me while writing in class.				
Q11	I am disturbed when my teacher is around me while I am writing in class.				
Q12	I have difficulty in writing the assignments in class.				
Q13	I can concentrate more while writing in class than I can concentrate while writing at home.				
Q14	Time constraints in writing class make me have difficulty in concentrating on the assignments.				
Q15	Having time limit in class helps me organize my assignments better.				
Q16	I like writing at home since I can do research on the topic before writing.				
Q17	I forget the things that I thought in class when I write the assignment at home.				
Q18	I write longer and more detailed assignments at home since I have more time to write than I have in class.				
Q19	I enjoy writing in class since I can consult my teacher and friends.				
Q20	I write better at home than in class since I have more resources to use at home than in class.				
Q21	I have difficulty in finding good ideas while writing at home.				
Q22	I enjoy writing at home since I can create better ideas when I am alone.				
Q23	I am disturbed by the factors like TV, my home mates or guests while I am writing at home.				
Q24	I have more time to revise the things I write at home than I have in class.				
Q25	I think I am more successful when I write in class.				
Q26	I think I am more successful when I write at home.				

Section II: Additional ideas and suggestions

1. Explain the influence of writing the composing class assignments in class or at home on you briefly.
2. Explain your opinions about writing classes or writing assignments.

Appendix C: Student Interview in Turkish and in English

MÜLAKAT

1. Size verilen konuda paragraf yazmaya başlamadan önce konu hakkında ne kadar düşündünüz?
2. Ödevi, yazmaya başladığınız ilk seferde tamamladınız mı yoksa ara verdiniz mi? Ara verdiyseniz bu arada ya da aralarda konu üzerinde tekrar düşünüp düşünmediğinizi öğrenebilir miyim?
3. Ödevin tamamlanması tam olarak ne kadar zamanınızı aldı?
4. Ödevin yazım aşaması tamamlandıktan sonra yazdıklarınızı tekrar gözden geçirdiniz mi? Cevabınız evetse, bu işlem ne kadar sürdü?
5. Paragrafı yazmakta kullandığınız fikirlere nasıl karar verdiniz?
6. Ödevinizi yazmaya başlamadan önce, yazarken ya da bitirdikten sonra herhangi birinden yardım aldınız mı? Cevabınız evetse, kimden ve ne tür bir yardım aldığınızı anlatır mısınız?
7. Ödeviniz için herhangi bir kaynaktan faydalandınız mı? Cevabınız evetse, hangi kaynaktan ne şekilde yararlandığınızı anlatır mısınız?
8. Sizden istenilen ödevini hazırlarken aşama aşama neler yaptığınızı öğrenebilir miyim?
9. Yazma ödevinizin tamamlanma süreciyle ilgili bizim bahsetmediğimiz ve eklemek istediğiniz başka bir konu var mı?

INTERVIEW

1. Could you please tell me how much time you spent on thinking about the topic and the details that you plan to include in your writing assignment before you started to write?
2. Did you complete the assignment at once or did you take breaks? If you took breaks, could you tell me whether you thought on the topic during these breaks or not?
3. Could you please tell me how much time the assignment took totally?
4. Did you make revisions when you finished writing? If you did, how much time did you spend on revision?
5. How did you get the idea of the things that you wrote to form the paragraph?
6. Could you please tell me whether you got any help from other people before or while writing, or revising your assignment? If you did, what kind of advice or help did you get?
7. Did you use any kind of sources for the assignment? If you did, could you please explain what kind of sources you used and what kind of information you got from them?
8. Could you please describe the procedure of doing the assignment that you followed step by step?
9. Would you like to add anything that we have not mentioned related to the composing processes of your writing assignment?

Appendix D: Transcripts of Students Interviews in Turkish and in English

Öğrt: İlk soru. Yazmaya başlamadan önce konu ve ödevde dâhil etmeyi planladığınız detaylar hakkında düşünmek için ne kadar zaman harcadığınızı söyler misiniz?

Öğrc: Ya, aslında konunun tam olarak ne olduğunu anlamaya çalışıyorum. Önce İngilizce tasarısını hazırlamadan önce Türkçe düşünmeye çalışıyorum. Yani, konunun ana teması ne olabilir, onun üzerine neler yazabilirim... Önce onu düşünüyorum. Sonra onu İngilizceye çevirmeye çalışıyorum.

Öğrt: Anladım. Peki, yazmaya başlamadan önce bu düşünme süreci bugünkü ödev için ne kadar zamanınızı aldı?

Öğrc: Ya, bugünkü en fazla on dakika.

Öğrt: On dakikanızı aldı. Tamam. Ödevi yazmaya başladığınız ilk seferde tamamladınız mı yoksa herhangi bir kaynaktan faydalanmak ya da başka herhangi bir neden için ara verdiğiniz oldu mu? Mesela telefon görüşmesi için.

Öğrc: Yok. Telefon görüşmesi değil de... Mesela aklımıza uygun kelime gelmiyor. Bu yüzden İngilizce sözlükten faydalanıyoruz. Ara verdim.

Öğrt: Kaynaklardan yararlanmak için ara verdiniz. Bu aralarda da konu hakkında düşünmeye devam ediyordunuz o halde?

Öğrc: Evet.

Öğrt: Ödevin tamamlanması tam olarak ne kadar zamanınızı aldı?

Öğrc: Yaklaşık olarak 25-30 dakikada hazırды ödev.

Öğrt: Ödevi bitirdiğinizde yazdıklarınızı tekrar gözden geçirdiniz mi?

Öğrc: Evet. Yazım, dilbilgisi, noktalama hataları, kâğıt düzeni...

T: The first question. Could you please tell me how much time you spent on thinking about the topic and the details that you plan to include in your writing assignment before you started to write?

S: Well, actually I try to understand what exactly the topic is. First, I try to think in Turkish before I prepare the rough draft of the assignment in English. I mean, what the main theme of the topic can be, what I can write about it... First, I think about that. Then, I write them on a piece of paper in Turkish. Then, I try to translate them into English.

T: I got it. How long did this pre-writing process take for today's assignment?

S: Well, today's was at most 10 minutes.

T: Took your ten minutes. Okay. Did you complete the assignment at once or did you take breaks to search something from external resources or any other things? Maybe for a phone call...

S: No. Not for a phone call but for example we cannot find appropriate vocabulary so we take benefit from English dictionaries. I took breaks.

T: You took breaks to look vocabulary up in the dictionary. You were still thinking about the topic during these breaks then?

S: Yes.

T: How long did the assignment take totally?

S: The assignment was done in 25-30 minutes.

T: Did you revise the things you wrote when you completed the assignment?

S: Yes. 2-3 minutes. Hand-writing, grammar, punctuation mistakes, page layout...

Appendix E: Writing evaluation rubric

SCORING RUBRIC

	Maximum Score	Actual Score
Format and Mechanics – 5 points		
There is a title that reflects the topic efficiently.	2	
There is a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark after each sentence. (Less than 5 errors)	1	
Capital letters are used correctly. (Less than 5 errors)	1	
The spelling is correct. (Less than 5 errors and providing that the errors do not violate the meaning)	1	
Total	5	
Content and Organization – 70 points		
The paragraph fits the assignment.	10	
The paragraph is coherent and cohesive. (All the sentences support the same idea and there is a fluent transition between them.)	10	
The paragraph begins with a topic sentence that has both a topic and a controlling idea.	10	
The paragraph contains several specific and factual supporting sentences that explain or prove the topic sentence.	10	
The supporting sentences are clarified and the meanings of the supporting ideas are enhanced by at least one example or fact.	10	
The paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence.	10	
The sentences in the paragraph are placed in a logical order. (The order may be sequential, chronological or importance.)	10	
Total	70	
Grammar and sentence structure – 25 points		
Grammar rules are applied correctly.	10	
Transitions are used correctly and effectively to serve as a bridge among the sentences.	5	
Suitable grammar structures and vocabulary items that reflect the proficiency levels of students are used.	10	
Total	25	
Grand Total	100	

Appendix F: Instructor and Student Consent Forms in English and in Turkish

Instructor Consent Form

Dear Colleague,

You have been asked to participate in a study whose aim is to explore second language writing acquisition and the process of writing ability development of tertiary level students.

In order to achieve the goals of the study, you will be asked to provide the researcher with written samples of your students whom you have been teaching writing classes. Your students will be interviewed four times during the experimental period, and they will be asked to reply to a questionnaire at the end of this period. The researcher will be present during the interview and questionnaire sessions.

Your participation in this study will bring valuable contribution to the findings of the study. Your personal information will not be revealed and this study involves no risk to you.

I would like to thank you once again for your participation and cooperation.

Elçin Turgut

MA TEFL Program

Bilkent University

eturgut@bilkent.edu.tr

I have read and understood the information given above. I hereby agree to my participation in the study.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Öğrenci Onay Formu

Sayın Katılımcı,

Amacı ikinci dilde yazma becerisi edinimi ve üniversite seviyesindeki öğrencilerin yazma gelişim süreçlerini araştırmak olan bir çalışmaya katılımınız istenmektedir.

Çalışmanın hedeflerine ulaşılabilmesi için, sizden çalışmaya süresince dört kez mülakata katılmanız, çalışma süresi bitiminde bir anket doldurmanız talep edilecek ve bazı yazılı çalışmalarınız incelenecektir. Araştırmacı, mülakatlar ve anket çalışmaları süresince hazır bulunacaktır.

Bu çalışmaya katılımınız, çalışmanın bulgularına değerli katkılar sağlayacaktır. Kişisel bilgileriniz saklı tutulacak olup çalışma sizin için hiçbir sakıncaya neden olmayacaktır.

Bir kez daha katılımınız ve desteğiniz için teşekkür ederim.

Elçin Turgut

MA TEFL Programı

Bilkent Üniversitesi

eturgut@bilkent.edu.tr

Yukarıda verilen bilgiyi okuyup anladığımı ve çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğimi beyan ederim.

Ad:

İmza:

Tarih:

Student Consent Form

Dear Participant,

You have been asked to participate in a study whose aim is to explore second language writing acquisition and the process of writing ability development of tertiary level students.

In order to achieve the goals of the study, you will be interviewed four times during the experimental period, will be asked to reply to a questionnaire at the end of this period, and some written samples that you have produced will be analyzed. The researcher will be present during the interview and questionnaire sessions.

Your participation in this study will bring valuable contribution to the findings of the study. Your personal information will not be revealed and this study involves no risk to you.

I would like to thank you once again for your participation and cooperation.

Elçin Turgut

MA TEFL Program

Bilkent University

eturgut@bilkent.edu.tr

I have read and understood the information given above. I hereby agree to my participation in the study.

Name:

Signature:

Date: