

**DEVELOPING SENTENCE COMPLEXITY IN STUDENTS' WRITTEN TEXTS
WITH SENTENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

by

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WITH SENTENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

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ABSTRACT

The multifaceted nature of writing, encompassing cognitive, linguistic, and contextual aspects, presents challenges for learners striving to produce high-quality written work. Linguistic proficiency demonstrated in a text is the fundamental aspect among the interrelated elements that contribute to the overall quality of students' written products. Studies in second-language writing consistently indicate that well-crafted compositions are associated with linguistic sophistication and diversity, which can be enhanced through explicit teaching. This quasi-experimental research investigates the effectiveness of sentence-based practice in enhancing sentence complexity in second-language writing. The literature provides research endeavors on various sentence-based practices that have been proposed, such as sentence combining and translation, to support learners in improving sentence complexity. However, such practices need to be reconsidered since prior investigations in the specific context of a preparatory department at a private university in Turkey have proven insufficient for students to transfer complex structures, particularly subordination, into their written performance. Thus, this study proposes an alternative practice that integrates translation into traditional sentence-combining tasks to enhance the density of subordination in students' written output. Additionally, the study explores the correlation between the density of subordination and the quality scores assigned by raters at the institution. With this purpose, an intervention and a placebo were administered to two intact CEFR level B2 upper-intermediate classes over fourteen weeks. The data collected from the writing exams before, during, and after the treatment provided data for analysis. Subordination density in participants' compositions was calculated, and overall writing scores were evaluated using the institution's and IELTS writing rubrics. The subordination density scores between and within the groups were compared using repeated measures

ANOVA. The results indicated that sentence-combining merged with translation promotes students' ability to write complex sentences with increased subordination. Furthermore, the comparison of post-test results revealed a significant difference in writing performances between the treatment and control groups, irrespective of the rubric used. Notably, overall writing scores assessed by the IELTS rubric positively correlated with the subordination density of participants' written products. Finally, based on inferences drawn from the findings of this study, potential implications and applications were identified and summarized to conclude the present study.

Keywords: second-language writing, writing quality, sentence complexity, subordination density, sentence combining, translation.

ÖZET

Bilişsel, dilbilimsel ve bağlamsal yönleri kapsayan yazının çok yönlü doğası, yüksek kaliteli yazılı metinler üretmeye çalışan öğrenciler için zorluklar içerir. Bununla birlikte, bir metinde ortaya konulan dilsel yeterlilik, yazı kalitesine katkıda bulunan birbiriyle ilişkili unsurlar arasında en temel unsurdur. İkinci dil yazımındaki çalışmalar yazı kalitesinin, metnin içerdiği dilsel karmaşıklık ve çeşitlilik ile ilişkili olduğunu ve bunun da doğrudan öğretim yoluyla geliştirilebildiğini göstermektedir. Bu yarı-deneysel araştırma, ikinci dil yazımında cümle karmaşıklığını arttırmada cümle temelli alıştırmaların etkinliğini araştırmaktadır. Alanyazını, öğrencileri cümle karmaşıklığını geliştirmede desteklemek için cümle birleştirme ve çeviri gibi çeşitli cümle tabanlı uygulamalar yönelik araştırmalar sunmaktadır. Bu tür çalışmaların sunduğu olumlu verilere rağmen, Türkiye'de özel bir üniversitenin hazırlık birimi bünyesinde gerçekleştirilmiş bir ön araştırma, cümle birleştirme ve çeviri gibi uygulamaların öğrencilerin hedef dilde öğrendikleri karmaşık cümle yapılarını, özellikle yan cümlecik oluşturma açısından, yazılı performanslarına aktarabilmelerini için yetersiz kaldığını göstermiş ve sonuçlar uygulamaların yeniden gözden geçirilmesini gerektirmiştir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışma, öğrencilerin yazılarındaki yan cümle yoğunluğunu arttırmak için çeviriyi geleneksel cümle birleştirme aktivitesi ile birleştiren alternatif bir uygulama önermektedir. Aynı zamanda çalışma, yan cümle yoğunluğu ile öğrencilerin kompozisyonlarına verilen değerlendirme notları arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmaktadır. Bu amaçla, CEFR B2 seviyesine karşılık gelen iki sınıf seçilmiş ve önerilen aktivite deney grubuna on dört hafta boyunca uygulanmıştır. Kontrol grubu ise klasik cümle birleştirme aktiviteleri yapmışlardır. Uygulama öncesinde, sırasında ve sonrasında katılımcıların kompozisyonları incelenmiş ve yan cümle yoğunlukları hesaplanmıştır. Yan cümle yoğunluk puanları, ANOVA kullanılarak karşılaştırıldı. Sonuçlar, önerilen alternatif uygulamanın, öğrencilerin

karmaşık cümleler kullanarak yazma yeteneklerini geliştirdiğini göstermiştir. Ayrıca, deney ve kontrol grupları arasındaki yazma performansları açısından anlamlı bir fark olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Özellikle, IELTS dereceli puanlama anahtarı ile değerlendirilen genel yazı puanlarının metinlerindeki yan cümle yoğunluğu ile ilişkili olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Son olarak, çalışmanın bulgularından elde eden sonuçları değerlendirmesi özetlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ikinci dilde yazma, yazı kalitesi, cümle karmaşıklığı, yan cümle yoğunluğu, cümle birleştirme, çeviri.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
ÖZET.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xiv
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Background.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	6
1.3. Significance of the Study.....	11
1.4. Purpose of the Study.....	14
1.5. Research Question and Hypothesis.....	17
1.6. Limitations And Delimitations.....	17
1.7. Definition Of Terms.....	19
CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
2.1. Second Language Writing.....	21
2.2. Writing Quality.....	25
2.3. Syntactic Complexity.....	35
2.4. Merging Sentence-Combining with Translation.....	41

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY.....	45
3.1. Participants.....	46
3.2. Instrumentation.....	46
3.2.1. Data Collection Instruments.....	46
3.2.2. Writing Rubrics.....	46
3.3. Research Setting.....	47
3.3.1. Foreign Language Program.....	47
3.3.2. Instruction.....	48
3.3.3. Assessment.....	48
3.3.4. Writing Context.....	49
3.4. Procedures	51
3.4.1. Pilot Investigation.....	51
3.4.2. The Control and the Experimental Groups.....	51
3.4.3. Treatment Procedures.....	52
3.5. Data Collection.....	54
3.6. Data Analysis.....	54
CHAPTER IV: RESULTS.....	57
4.1. The Results of Comparisons of Subordination	57
4.1.1. Within Subjects Effects.....	58
4.1.2. Between Subjects Effects.....	59
4.1.3. Pairwise Comparisons.....	60

4.2.	The Results of Comparisons of Total Quality Scores	61
4.3.	Correlation Between Subordination Density and the Total Quality Scores.....	63
4.4.	The Subsequent Analysis.....	64
CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION.....		66
5.1.	The First Research Question.....	67
5.2.	The Second Research Question.....	74
CHAPTER VI. CONCLUSION.....		76
6.1.	Summary.....	77
6.2.	Implications and Applications.....	79
6.3.	Further Research Suggestions.....	82
REFERENCES.....		86
APPENDIX A: REVIEW HANDOUTS.....		99
APPENDIX B: SAMPLE INTERVENTION WORKSHEETS.....		104
APPENDIX C: WRITING EXAMS.....		106
APPENDIX D: INSTITUTION’S WRITING RUBRIC.....		108
APPENDIX E: EILTS WRITING RUBRIC.....		109

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Conceptualization of Writing Quality 34

Figure 2 Conceptualization of Writing Quality at the Institution.....50

Figure 3 Treatment Scheme.....54

Figure 4 Changes in Average Subordination Density Between the Treatment and Control
Groups over Time.....60

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 The distribution of measures applied in studies published from 1998 to 2018.....	37
Table 2. Assessment components and weights in each POP at all levels.	49
Table 3. Syntactic structures included in the intervention.	52
Table 4. Segmentation of text into sentences, T-units, and clauses.	55
Table 5 Descriptive Statistics for Subordination Density.....	58
Table 6. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Subordination Density.	59
Table 7 Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Subordination Density Between Groups.....	60
Table 8 Descriptive Statistics for Total Quality Scores.....	61
Table 9 T-test results of overall quality scores following the institution's and IELTS writing rubric for pretest and posttest	62
Table 10 Results of Spearman Correlations.....	63
Table 11 Descriptive Statistics for the Density of Coordination Connectors and Target Structures.....	65
Table 12 T-Test Results for the Density of Coordination Connectors and Target Subordinate Structures.....	65

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALM	Audio-Lingual Method
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CAF	Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
GTM	Grammar Translation Method
CPT	Clauses per T-unit
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
M	Mean
MLS	Mean Length of Sentence
MLC	Mean Length of Clause
MLTU	Mean Length of T-unit
POP	Phase of Progress
SD	Standard Deviation
TOEFL iBT	Test of English as a Foreign Language- Internet-Based Test
TPS	T-units per Sentence
UEPE	University English Proficiency Exam

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Reasonable writing ability is essential for students who want to complete their university education and pursue an academic career. Therefore, English medium universities in Turkey include writing courses in their preparatory school curriculums. These programs aim to develop the academic writing abilities of students to fulfill their course requirements. With this purpose, the departments supplement their mainstream class materials with skills books for academic writing and support the instruction by offering additional assisting materials. Students need to complete writing tasks throughout the program to meet the course requirements. Also, the exit exams of these preparatory departments include a separate writing section that contributes considerably to their total. Thus, developing good writing ability in the target language is crucial for success in the preparatory department and undergraduate programs.

Furthermore, considering the complexity of the cognitive, linguistic, and contextual aspects of writing ability, it is challenging for learners to progress to a proficient level and produce quality written products (McNamara, Crossley, & McCarthy, 2009; Saddler, 2012; Kim & Yoon, 2014).

Much work has been done on teaching and developing writing skills in the L2 context, and this area of study has developed into a unique discipline as a result of the contributions of many accomplished scholars to numerous important journals and publications. At the beginning of this paper, a historical overview would be beneficial and instructive to understand the present state of second-language writing. During the initial period of the 19th century, the primary approach utilized in language instruction was

known as the Grammar Translation Method, henceforward GTM), which held a prominent position in the field. Its premise was to make the learners reach literary mastery of the target language, focusing on grammar, reading, and writing through teaching practices, including learning grammatical rules and translating sentences between the target and the native language (Brown, 1994; Larsen-Freeman, & Anderson, 2011). However, in the 1960s, the Audio-Lingual Method, henceforth ALM, which emerged out of the interaction of the principles of structural linguistics and behavioristic psychology, changed the popular paradigm of the previous period in language learning and teaching and placed speech, rather than reading and writing, at the primary focus. Writing became an auxiliary activity that promoted the ultimate goal of developing oral competence (Raimes, 1991). Under the influence of ALM, the writing activity repertoire included sentence-based grammar practice techniques in foreign language instruction settings (Raimes, 1991). Although classroom activities also involved processing texts and producing outcomes as a connected discourse, the attention was still on form at the sentence level rather than discourse. GTM and ALM provided students with a tool to use and consolidate language knowledge ignoring the complexity of writing itself (Zamel, 1982). According to Manchon (2019) and Ortega (2011), the approaches utilized during this period exhibited elements that emphasized the integration of writing as a means to facilitate language acquisition referring to writing-to-learn-language orientation.

Meanwhile, in the late '60s and early '70s, Kaplan (1966) introduced the concept of contrastive rhetoric and stated that the writing pattern of English texts has linear development. Alongside the focus on the structural aspects of writing, there was a recognition of the significance of organizing ideas within paragraphs. This attention gave rise to the emergence of writing tasks and exercises such as determining or writing a topic

sentence, supporting ideas or examples, outlining, paragraph reordering, or completions (Kaplan, & Shaw, 1983, as cited in Hyland, 2010). Such developments in text-based research of the period started to shift the attention from the form to the writer and, of course, from behavioral to a more cognitivist perspective (Connor, 1990).

By the 1980s, research on composing processes in the mother language led researchers and educators to question the form-based approaches to second-language writing and formed the foundations of the process movement (Silva, 1993). Yes, because the product approach's highly specific, focused, and prescriptive writing practices gave learners security in terms of accuracy at the expense of context, creativity, and personalization, not corresponding to what writers do in real life (Ivanic, 2004). The stages the authors went through while writing rather than the end product became important with the emergence of new concepts such as process, generating ideas, drafting, feedback, and revision (Zamel, 1982; Raimes, 1983). Accuracy, of course, was not ignored, but the focus of writing instruction was the writer. For example, researchers such as Flower and Hayes (1981), Zamel (1983), Raimes (1985), and Spack (1988) investigated what writers did while producing their written products shaping subsequent studies focused on the cognitive processes associated with the act of writing. Writing did not seem to be a linear but a recursive process of discovery and development of meaning through which the writer goes back during the editing process (Hairston, 1982). Soon, this perspective manifested itself in classroom applications. Since planning, drafting, feedback, and editing became popular in writing classrooms, writing pedagogy started considering relevant strategy training (Hyland, 2003; Swales & Feak, 2012; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2013; De Silva, 2014).

When the process approach was growing, studies focused not only on the writer but also on texts and readers (Hyland, 2009). Focus on content and reader brought up academic

demands, and the instruction about the expected forms of academic readers took its place in teaching writing for academic purposes (Leki, 1995; Silva & Matsuda, 2000). By the early 1990s, unlike in GTM and ALM, writing was no longer a tool for learning languages but a distinct skill, forming the foundations of learning-to-write orientation (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016).

Since then, it has been a popular approach in L2 writing classrooms. During the stages of the process, the student writers hopefully raise awareness that a well-written text is a product of recursive processes of planning, drafting, and editing considering form, content, and the reader. Students can also gain advantages from the explicit instruction provided by the teacher, particularly when it pertains to specific aspects of writing.

In the 1990s, the interest shifted from cognitive issues with the rise in cultural studies and added new dimensions to process research and pedagogy (Silva & Leki, 2004). The term "post-process" emerged within the field, acknowledging the social and cultural dimensions inherent in writing (Trimbur, 1994). The process paradigm also included social perspectives (Matsuda, 2003). It was not merely a personal activity since the interaction of the writer and the social context affects the process, shaping the content and the style (Canagarajah, 2002). Although this view mainly received attention in the context of L1 writing pedagogy, it soon found its way to L2 writing context, and collaborative writing activities such as pair or small group writing or sharing of texts took their place among teaching methods in writing in the second language classrooms (Storch, 2005; Storch, & Wigglesworth, 2010; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Slavkov, 2015).

All in all, writing in a second language has become an interdisciplinary field of research thanks to the contribution of decades of research (Fujieda, 2006). The theories rooted in disciplines have evolved, defying or completing each other and shaping our

pedagogical practices (Atkinson, 2011). Writing for language learning and writing to learn writing go hand in hand in language classrooms, complementing one another, even if the process approach to writing instruction is prevalent in the curriculum of preparatory programs of private universities (Hyland, 2003). Thus, it may not be quite accurate to claim that older theories have lost their validity or that modern theories are superior to traditional understanding because these orientations reflect themselves in classroom practices in an eclectic fashion in different combinations (Hyland, 2010).

Today, instructors do their best to help their students produce quality written products in the target language. Accumulated knowledge from the field, their experiences and assumptions, and the requirements of the curricular policies are the resources they have to achieve this goal. However, it is a challenging mission. Creating a good quality written text depends on a long list of elements such as task type and content (Kim & Crossley, 2018), grammar (Ortega, 2015), vocabulary (Kyle & Crossley, 2016), coherence (Crossley & McNamara, 2012), and cohesion (Crossley, Kyle, & McNamara, 2016). Still, developing a certain degree of command of linguistic knowledge of the second language is the most crucial element because sentence generation is a foundational tool for student writers to perform all these challenging aspects while creating their texts (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Schoonen et al., 2010; Schoonen, 2012; Marlowe, 2019).

Verspoor, Schmid, and Xu (2012) state that “learners advance in their language proficiency by transitioning from basic and commonly used structures to more intricate and less common ones” (p. 256). The complexity of sentences moves from short with simple coordinations to longer and elaborated ones with phrasal enrichment and subordination. Consequently, numerous studies have concentrated on investigating the progression of sentence complexity in L2 writing across various levels of proficiency. Among two other

elements of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (i.e., CAF), complexity has frequently served as a measure of proficiency and performance quality mainly because it is an accurate metric to reflect the increase in proficiency and performance (Norris & Ortega, 2009; Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012; Rosmawati, 2019).

Considering the significant contribution of the ability to produce relatively complex sentences to writing performance, instruction and practice in this respect become essential for teaching and learning. Hence, this research examines the efficacy of sentence-based exercises in improving the intricacy of sentences in second-language writing. Additionally, it aims to illuminate the progression of learners' proficiency in this area.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In my role as a writing instructor at the institute, I frequently witness how syntactic complexity in the written products of my students correlates differently with their proficiency level. Based on their achievements in the course, our students advance to the higher phases of progress in their program from A1 to B2 level on the CEFR. By the time they reach level B2, they have already learned about nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, phrase and sentence structures, and academic writing discourse patterns. These students do well on grammar tests and get satisfactory grades. Therefore, the program at the institution assumes that those who prove eligible to be at B2, have already established enough repertoire of grammatical structures necessary for coordination, subordination, and phrase-level elaboration.

The institution has established a set of academic writing objectives aligned with the B2 level on CEFR, which requires students to produce coherent and cohesive written pieces on various familiar topics. Specifically, students explain the causes of situations,

discuss potential solutions and provide their opinions while completing writing tasks. In addition, the writing should adhere to the expected organization for the genre (i.e., academic essay). Following this organizational pattern, the department standards expect the students to begin their academic writing with a topic sentence that identifies the main idea. Next, they should present supporting sentences that express their ideas and provide explanations and examples to support them. Finally, it is important to include a closing statement reiterating the text's central idea. The department's writing rubric evaluates this organizational pattern, along with a relatively high degree of accuracy and variety, as indicative of a high-quality text. As a result, instructors strive to ensure that their students can write these sentences to meet the institution's expectations.

Teachers often provide students with the pre-constructed topic, supporting and concluding sentence patterns in their lessons to facilitate this process. The following list shows a few examples drawn from supplementary materials and lecture notes of the instructors and the students.

- 1- There are several reasons for ...
- 2- There are various reasons why...
- 3- Another reason that we can discuss is that...
- 4- The last but not the least important reason that we can discuss is...
- 5- In conclusion, these are the most important factors which lead to...
- 6- All in all, as we have already mentioned, these are the most important reasons why...

As evidenced by prior investigation, students often rely heavily on these pre-constructed sentence patterns when composing topic, supporting, and concluding sentences in their written works. In doing so, they generally eschew the creation of original sentence constructions. From their perspective, this strategy may be logical, as it ensures the expected organizational pattern of the department, at least with the topic, supporting, and concluding sentences arranged in their proper places. Also, examples of complex structures in these pre-constructed sentences (e.g., a noun or relative clause subordination) show variety to the reader. Additionally, they may think reliance on pre-constructed sentence patterns mitigates the risk of making grammatical errors and shows the reader their degree of grammatical control.

However, students often struggle to fully grasp the complex structures in these pre-constructed patterns. As my earlier investigation has shown, students often employ these patterns by rote memorization rather than thoroughly understanding their underlying grammatical structures. In support of this assertion, I have included below a few examples compiled from student writing samples during the preliminary examination before the commencement of this study.

- 1- There are several reasons for online education is beneficial.
- 2- There are various reasons why online education.
- 3- Another reason that we can discuss is that internet connection.
- 4- The last but not the least important reason that we can discuss students can enter lessons at home.
- 5- In conclusion, these are the most important factors which lead to online education is beneficial.

- 6- All in all, as we have already mentioned, these are the most important reasons why online education.

In the first example sentence, the verb "is" should not be used after the preposition "for". In English grammar, a preposition is followed by a noun or pronoun, and then by a verb in its correct form. The correct form is "why," which introduces a dependent clause explaining the reasons. Therefore, the sentence should be "There are several reasons why online education is beneficial. It is otherwise in the second and the last example. "There are various reasons why online education" should be "There are several reasons for online education", and "All in all, as we have already mentioned, these are the most important reasons why online education" should be "the most important reasons for online education."

The mistake in the third example is using "that" instead of "the ." "That" introduces a noun clause, while "the" refers to a specific thing or object. In this case, the sentence should be "Another reason that we can discuss is the internet connection," which refers to a specific internet connection.

The sentence in the fourth example lacks a preposition to connect the clause "that we can discuss" to the rest of the sentence "students can enter lessons at home". That" should be added to clarify the relationship between the clauses. The corrected sentence should read, "The last but not least important reason that we can discuss is that students can enter lessons at home".

The mistake in the fifth example is using the verb "is" after "online education," which results in a grammatical error. Instead, the sentence should be "These are the most important factors which lead to online education being beneficial."

Based on the outcomes of these prior error analyses, students have not yet mastered the structures of noun clauses and relative clauses in the pre-constructed topic, supporting, and concluding sentences. Furthermore, scrutinizing the written works revealed an absence of relative or noun clauses in the sections where the student writers elaborated or exemplified their supporting ideas. In instances with a few examples of complexity through subordination, they were mainly time adverbial clauses with "when" or conditional clauses with "if ."Consequently, students in this institution tend to express themselves using relatively simple sentences and coordination (e.g., and, but, and so), lacking complexity at the subordination level, particularly through relative and noun clauses.

In preceding investigations, I instructed students to compose academic paragraphs in their native language. An analysis of their written output demonstrated a relatively high degree of subordination, especially through the utilization of nouns and relative clauses. Additionally, the students displayed competence in generating substantive content, unlike their subsequent attempts in the target language. This observation indicates that restricted mastery of the intricate linguistic structures of the target language impedes their ability to express ideas commensurate with their cognitive ability and personal styles reflected in their compositions in their native language.

To conclude, the restricted command of intricate sentence structures among students at the institution poses a challenge to their proficiency in expressing ideas effectively in academic writing. This identified problem has driven the impetus for the current research endeavor, which aims to identify effective strategies for improving students' ability to utilize complex sentences, specifically through subordination, in their compositions.

1.3. Significance Of The Study

Higher education places the expectation to produce written assignments that articulate ideas effectively upon university-level students, and this necessitates the employment of intricate sentence structures (Swales, & Feak, 2012). The ability to express intended meaning clearly through complex sentences requires writers to have control over grammar, and direct instruction can foster this ability (Saddler. 2012). Numerous research investigations have demonstrated that the development of syntactic complexity in writing occurs gradually, influenced by both overall language proficiency and instructional interventions (Ortega, 2003; Bulté & Housen, 2014). The literature also highlights reports on the usefulness of various classroom practices that can be useful for improving sentence complexity with small to moderate effect sizes. For instance, Graham and Perin (2007) analyzed four different instructional programs, which included teaching text structure and generation, modeling exemplary texts, providing explicit grammar instruction, and employing sentence-combining techniques. According to their findings, Graham and Perin (2007) discovered that the most significant impact was observed in the instructional methods involving teaching text structure and facilitating practice through sentence combining. In a more recent study, Marlowe (2019) compared the effects of sentence combining, translation, and timed writing practice on developing sentence complexity. He reported evidence that sentence combining and translation had a significant effect but failed to observe any significant effect of timed writing. However, the students at the institution already engage in sentence-combining activities through skill books and provided supplementary materials. Despite this, as prior investigations have shown, such intervention is insufficient to enable them to adequately transfer complex structures learned in grammar lessons, especially subordinate relative clause and noun clause

structures, into their written performance. At this point, reconsidering sentence-based practice to improve the syntactic complexity seems necessary for the students. Therefore, as the first issue of concern, this study addresses the problem of determining an effective classroom practice promising some potential to help student writers improve syntactic complexity in their written products.

The ability to master grammar features within a language is critical for ensuring the accurate and lucid expression of ideas and producing high-quality written works. Standardized tests support this claim by highlighting syntactic elements as a fundamental characteristic of quality writing (Yang, Lu, & Weigle, 2015). For instance, the assessment rubrics utilized in these examinations explicitly address the inclusion of diverse sentence structures, with criteria such as "demonstrating a varied use of syntax" (TOEFL iBT, band 5), "employing a broad range of structures with fluency and accuracy" (IELTS, band 9), or "utilizing only a limited range of structures with infrequent use of subordinate clauses" (IELTS, band 5). Furthermore, previous research studies have established a significant correlation between syntactic complexity, proficiency, and the overall quality of writing (Norris & Ortega, 2009; Lu, 2011; Yang, Lu, & Weigle, 2015; Lu, 2017).

Research consistently shows that linguistic indices are credible predictors of evaluations of essay quality (Crossley & McNamara, 2014). However, existing literature indicates that the association between syntactic complexity in written texts and the quality of writing is multifaceted and complex. The conceptualization of complexity involves elements such as the length of syntactic units, elaboration, coordination, and subordination (Norris & Ortega, 2009; Verspoor, Schmid, & Xu, 2012). Also, the degree of complexity is susceptible to interactions among these elements (Ortega, 2003). Moreover, exploring the connection between syntactic complexity and writing quality introduces additional aspects

that extend beyond syntactic elements. These aspects encompass the writer's capacity to account for the specific demands of various contexts (Lu, 2011; Crossley & McNamara, 2014). For example, different genres, tasks, and content demand varying degrees of complexity (Yoon & Polio, 2016), while other factors such as the writers' L1 background (Ortega, 2015; Lu & Ai, 2015), and proficiency level (Bulté & Housen, 2014) influence the raters' judgments. Consequently, studies report contradicting results, and L2 writing assessment and research have yet to reach a consensus regarding the precise definition of syntactic complexity and its relationship with quality.

While the study's primary objective is to investigate potential classroom practices to facilitate the development of syntactic complexity through subordination, the ultimate goal is to enhance writing quality. This particular focus has prompted a secondary inquiry as to whether the capacity to construct complex sentences through subordination equates to quality writing within the scope of this investigation.

As mentioned before, research provides evidence for a positive relationship between subordination density and writing quality judgments. However, research also reports that different subordination types (e.g., adverbial, noun, adjective, finite and non-finite) may function differently in different contexts (Yang, Lu, & Weigle, 2015). For example, Mazgutova and Kormos (2015) investigated the syntactic and lexical development of non-native English-speaking students in an intensive English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program. The analysis conducted in this study examined two separate proficiency groups: intermediate-level students who were preparing for undergraduate studies in the UK and upper-intermediate-level participants who intended to pursue postgraduate studies. The findings revealed that the lower proficiency group exhibited a higher frequency of complex noun phrases and conditional clauses while demonstrating a decreased use of relative

clauses and prepositional phrases. Moreover, there was a decline in the utilization of infinitive clauses but an increase in the elaboration of noun phrases observed in the higher proficiency group. Verspoor, Schmid, and Xu (2012), on the other hand, analyzed written texts provided by 489 Dutch students who were attending a high-level academic program before university. These students demonstrated diverse proficiency levels. The study revealed that the frequency of adverbial clauses tends to increase at intermediate proficiency levels, while the occurrence of relative clauses becomes more prevalent at advanced proficiency levels.

Therefore, the intricate nature of the development of complexity and writing quality is a multifaceted phenomenon that necessitates thorough examination in research. When investigating a specific facet of syntactic complexity, it is crucial to take into account the existence of the correlation between the specific element under scrutiny and the overall writing quality within its appropriate context.

Therefore, as the second issue of concern, this study investigates the correlation between the density of subordination in the student writers' texts and the raters' quality judgments.

1.4. Purpose Of The Study

Marlowe (2019) posited that the development of syntactic complexity posed a significant challenge for Japanese learners of English. In his longitudinal research, he conducted a study involving 105 participants to explore the efficacy of various activities in improving the syntactic complexity of narrative writing samples among university-preparatory students in Japan. The study's findings indicated that sentence-based writing practice utilizing sentence combining and translation activities yielded significantly better

outcomes than timed writing activities in terms of improving syntactic complexity in the written texts of the learners.

Comparable to Marlowe's (2019) findings, students enrolled in the institution's preparatory department encounter challenges in transferring their knowledge of more complex sentence structures into their writing. They actively participate in numerous sentence-combining exercises provided by the department's mainstream skill books and supplementary materials. However, preliminary investigations demonstrate that the current classroom practices are inadequate in fostering improvement in complexity, as evidenced by the lack of sentence variety in terms of subordination in their academic writing tasks.

The written productions often fail to align with the higher evaluation bands articulated in the institution's writing rubric, such as "the appropriate utilization of a diverse range of structures that align with the level of proficiency and task requirements" (band 3) or "an adequate variety of appropriate structures suitable to the level and the task" (band 2). The circumstance has made it necessary to look for more productive solutions.

Thus, this study proposes an alternative practice method by integrating translation into the traditional sentence combining tasks. Integrating translation into sentence-combining activities may shift students' focus toward meaning. For instance, students form a single sentence out of two sentences using appropriate subordination first in their mother language. Then, they translate the resulting sentence into English. Such an approach may increase the likelihood of students recognizing the meaning and function of the structure rather than solely concentrating on the rule and accuracy of the target grammar structure. This alternative activity design may encourage students to prioritize meaning because, as Cook (2010) notes, "translation involves conveying the intended meaning from one language to another" (p. 55).

Therefore, the key objective of this study is to explore the possible impact of incorporating translation into sentence-combining exercises to enhance the density of sentence complexity, particularly at the level of subordination, in the students' written output. The results of this study may inspire educators to pinpoint context-specific issues of restricted syntactic complexity in students' written work and employ innovative teaching methods to tackle them.

Irrespective of the techniques employed to enhance sentence complexity in writing classrooms or target syntactic structures emphasized in teaching objectives, the fundamental goal of writing instructors is to increase the caliber of students' writing. Thus, even if this study demonstrates the efficacy of the alternative sentence-based practice, it leaves an important question unanswered regarding the nature of the relationship between writing quality and sentence complexity within the unique context of this study.

Hence, the secondary objective of this study is to examine whether there is a correlation between the density of subordination in students' written works and the quality scores assigned by raters at the foreign language department of the institution.

The results of this study can provide insights into the factors that influence the perceived quality of written texts in the target language. By comprehending the connection between sentence complexity and writing quality, it becomes possible to create instructional materials and strategies that focus on the specific syntactic structures closely related to high-quality writing in the context of the institution.

1.5. Research Question And Hypothesis

Specifically, this study addresses the following research questions:

- What is the relationship between sentence-combining tasks merged with translation and students' ability to write complex sentences by using subordination?
- Do the subordination index scores of students' academic written products correlate with the scores from raters using analytic writing rubrics?

1.6. Limitations And Delimitations

The most important limitation is that the findings are based on a limited number of participants. Also, this study targeted Turkish university prep students at a private university in Turkey. Institutions have unique contexts with diverse policies and educational practices, even in similar instructional contexts. Therefore, the generalization of the findings may not be appropriate for all contexts and may require validation in different contexts before implementing the processes.

Complexity measures in the field of second language writing refer to various metrics used to assess the complexity of a written text in terms of its vocabulary, syntax, and discourse. These measures are used to evaluate the language proficiency of second language learners, assess their progress over time, and design instructional interventions to improve productive skills. Syntactic complexity metrics calculate the mean length of syntactic units (Norris & Ortega, 2009), the density of coordination (Lu, 2010), and subordination (Ortega & Byrnes, 2008). These measures are often used in combination to provide a more comprehensive picture of a text's complexity.

Among these various complexity measures in the field, this study employs the subordination index to measure complexity because of several reasons. First, it is an effective metric for measuring syntactic complexity, particularly in the area of subordination, as it focuses on the degree of sentence complexity related to the use of subordinate clauses (Lu, 2010). Moreover, the subordination index is easily calculated and can be applied to a wide range of text types, making it a versatile tool for measuring complexity in various settings. Additionally, the subordination index can help identify specific areas of difficulty for language learners, which can be targeted for improvement through instruction and intervention. Overall, the subordination index is an appropriate metric for measuring complexity in the context of this study, as it aligns with the research question that specifically seeks to improve complexity at the subordination level.

Studies in the field have often considered error-free sentences, T-Units, and clauses when evaluating production and performance to distinguish proficiency and measure accuracy (Larsen-Freeman, 1978; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009; Marlowe, 2019). However, as defined in the analytic rubrics used in popular standard tests and at the preparatory departments of the institutions, minor errors are excused at higher band descriptors. For example, based on the TOEFL iBT criteria, a raw score of 4 indicates that the written work demonstrates relatively proficient use of language and vocabulary, despite some minor grammatical errors. The rubric delineates the criteria as exhibiting proficiency in language usage, showcasing a variety of syntax and a wide range of vocabulary, although occasional minor errors in structure, word form, or idiomatic language may be noticeable, they do not impede understanding (TOEFL IBT, band 4). Regarding the grammatical range and accuracy standards in the IELTS writing rubric, it states that some errors in grammar and punctuation may occur, but they seldom hinder communication

(IELTS, band 6). Compositions with sentences with only a few occasional errors are evaluated in band 7. If the majority of sentences are error-free, with only very sporadic errors or inaccuracies, the composition deserves a score in band 8. In accordance with the rubric employed by the institution, a written work that is “easy to follow and errors do not interfere with understanding; there is little to no strain on the reader” merits a raw score of 4 or 5 out of a possible 6.

For this reason, minor errors and inappropriacy (e.g., third person singular "s," article mistakes, or preposition mistakes) were excused during subordination index calculations unless they seriously reduce comprehension, break English sentence patterns, or make target subordinating grammar structures inaccurate.

1.7. Definition Of Terms

- a) **Writing Quality:** It pertains to the evaluation given to the learner's written work by assessors using a standardized scoring rubric. (McNamara, Crossley, & McCarthy, 2009).
- b) **Syntactic Complexity:** Ortega (2003) states that complexity can be defined as the variety of linguistic structures used in language production and the level of sophistication exhibited by these structures (p. 492). It is a measure of the richness and diversity of sentence forms and their components, such as clauses and phrases (Norris & Ortega, 2009) which can affect the readability, comprehensibility (Simpson-Vlach & Ellis, 2010), and perceived quality of written communication (Crossley, Roscoe & McNamara, 2013). Syntactic complexity is typically assessed by analyzing features such as sentence length, subordination, embedding, and lexical diversity (Bulté & Housen, 2012) a key indicator of language proficiency,

cognitive development, and discourse effectiveness in various contexts and populations (Biber, 2006).

- c) T-unit: A T-unit, as defined by Hunt (1965), is a basic unit of analysis in linguistic discourse that consists of an independent clause with any dependent clauses embedded in or attached to it. This unit is a standard measure of syntactic complexity and length in both written and spoken language. Research on language development and proficiency has widely employed T-unit analysis both in first-language (L1) and second-language (L2) settings. The T-unit is a useful tool for analyzing data related to language structure and development, particularly for writing proficiency (Crossley & McNamara, 2014). An increase in the number, length, and complexity of T-units correlates with writing ability (Lu, 2010).
- d) Clause: A subject and a predicate form a clause. It is the building unit of a sentence and may or may not convey a complete thought because it can behave like a noun, adjective, or adverb.
- e) Subordination: It refers to the grammatical relationship between clauses or phrases in a sentence where one clause or phrase is dependent on another. In a subordinate construction, one element (the subordinate clause) serves to modify, complete, or provide additional information about the main clause. The subordinate clause cannot stand alone as a complete sentence and relies on the main clause for its meaning and grammatical integrity.
- f) Subordination Index: It is Clauses per T-unit (CPT). It is the proportion of the total number of clauses to the total number of T-units and shows the subordination ratio. Although some reports claim that its relationship with language proficiency level is

insignificant (Cumming et al., 2005; Lu, 2011; Knoch et al., 2014, as cited in Marlowe, 2019), it provides a general indication of complexity in terms of the amount of subordination.

- g) **Sentence Combining Merged with Translation:** It is a hybrid design of classical sentence combining and sentence translation that requires combining two or more simple sentences to form one more complex statement in the mother tongue and translating the complex sentence into the target language.

CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of the main themes relevant to the focus of this research. First, it presents a working definition of the writing construct and factors influencing writing quality. Then it attempts to establish a theoretical framework for the context of the present study. Also, it explains the concept of syntactic complexity and its relationship to writing quality by exploring the existing research on syntactic complexity measures and justifies the appropriate measure for this study. Finally, it presents the sentence-combining merged with translation, explaining why the study utilizes this hybrid practice.

2.1. Second Language Writing

In second language writing research, various approaches provide comprehensive accounts of the multifaceted nature of L2 writing. Among these approaches, three complementary orientations are writing-to-learn-language, writing-to-learn-content, and learning-to-write (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016). These three orientations entail

different pedagogical strategies emphasizing language, contexts of use, and the writer, respectively (Ortega, 2011).

First, writing-to-learn-language orientation asserts that writing fosters language acquisition and development (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Through engagement in writing tasks, learners can practice and reinforce their understanding of the target language (Ferris, 2003) in a meaningful and purposeful manner (Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2008). Writing serves as a means of learning a language that requires critical thinking, reflection, and analysis, which are integral to effective learning (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016).

Previous research has demonstrated the effectiveness of writing tasks in facilitating language acquisition and development across various levels of language proficiency. For example, Kim (2008) conducted a study to examine the influence of task involvement and learner proficiency on the acquisition of vocabulary in a second language. The study included three experimental groups: a reading group, a composition writing group, and a dictation group. The results revealed that tasks requiring a higher level of generative processes, such as composition writing, yielded more significant improvements in vocabulary acquisition for unfamiliar words compared to less generative tasks like reading or dictation. Similarly, in a more recent study, Zhan, Sun, and Zhang (2021) investigated compositions written by postgraduate students studying English as a foreign language across various academic disciplines. They explored the impact of task complexity on the complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) of writing in English. The findings indicated that task complexity had a notable influence on the syntactic variation observed in the compositions. These findings suggest that modifying the complexity of writing tasks has the potential to enhance language learning

Secondly, writing-to-learn-content orientation emphasizes the reader and the contexts in which written text is produced (Ortega, 2011). The orientation holds that learners can maximize their learning through writing as a resource (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016). Specifically, learners gather information from diverse sources within the content area and effectively convey this information in written form. Through this process, students learn about the subject matter they have read and written about and develop the capacity to transfer it to other contexts. Writing-to-learn-content orientation posits that writing is a powerful tool for improving knowledge acquisition in content areas (Hirvela, 2011).

A large-scale multi-institutional study stands out among the scholars who have shown the promoting effect of writing in learning content knowledge. Anderson and colleagues (2015) quantitatively analyzed a large data set obtained from a survey with 20,000 undergraduate students across 12 US universities. They found that writing assignments that included interactive processes (e.g., peer feedback and revision) and meaning-making tasks (e.g., analyzing and synthesizing information) promoted student content learning effectively. Based on their findings, they suggested pedagogical recommendations for teaching through writing.

Thirdly, Cumming (2001) states that learning-to-write orientation regards writing as a process for generating a cohesive and meaningful written text. The orientation has gained increasing prevalence in contexts related to English for Academic Purposes. That may be why a considerable portion of the knowledge acquired on learning-to-write orientation comes from studies conducted in academic settings (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016).

In a comprehensive analysis conducted by Riazi and Haggerty (2018), a thorough examination was conducted on 272 empirical research articles published in the Journal of

Second Language Writing between 1992 and 2016. The review aimed to provide a historical overview and synthesis of the literature. The study revealed that the predominant research contexts consisted of undergraduate university students, with a particular focus on topics such as feedback and writing instruction. The investigations identified various theoretical orientations employed in the studies, including cognitive processes, genre analysis, contrastive rhetoric, and the social aspects of writing. Drawing on the principles of cognitive psychology, the first category of research on writing has examined the behaviors of proficient writers during the writing process (Hyland, 2011). Consequently, writing has become the subject of investigation as a complex process involving ongoing and iterative cognitive activities such as planning, formulating, evaluating, and revising (Hyland, 2009). The second type of research has concentrated on the outcomes of writing. They have investigated linguistic and rhetorical features in texts to understand how writers use language to produce meaningful and well-structured discourse (Hyland, 2011). This approach views writing as arranging words, phrases, and clauses to construct coherent and purposeful prose (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchon, 2016). The third category of studies has expanded the scope of the investigation to the role of readers in writing, adding a social dimension to writing research by exploring how writers interact with their audience to create texts (Hyland, 2009). Writing is an activity shaped by expectations and requires responsiveness to a particular audience (Hirvela, Hyland, & Manchón, 2016). These studies have shaped the framework of learning-to-write orientation that centers around the writer, written products, and the role of readers (Hyland, 2009). Within this framework, writing is a cognitive and linguistic process of composing, revising, and editing a written text (Hyland, 2009) in a language other than the writer's first language (Silva, 2016) shaped by complex interactions between the writer, the text, and the context (Manchón & Matsuda, 2016).

The relative importance of each writing orientation can vary depending on the teaching and research environment (Manchon, 2012). In the context of the present study, writing instruction aims to equip students with the requisite skills to produce written work in their academic pursuits proficiently. The program provides students with clear and explicit instruction on creating accurate texts that follow the established organizational conventions of academic writing. This instruction involves a multi-stage approach that includes planning, drafting, receiving feedback, and editing. As such, this study aligns with the learning-to-write orientation in defining writing.

2.2. Writing Quality

In any given context, the path to becoming a skilled writer involves the development of skills that contribute to the overall quality of the written product. Since writing quality is a multifaceted construct encompassing several interconnected features, defining it is a challenging task. Consequently, scholars have attempted to identify factors that might contribute to writing quality. These contributions have significantly advanced the theoretical understanding and conceptualization of the concept.

One standard dimension of writing quality is linguistic accuracy, which involves using correct grammar and appropriate vocabulary. Second-language writing research has consistently reported similar findings, indicating that high-quality compositions are primarily associated with linguistic sophistication and lexical diversity. For instance, Bachman and Palmer (1996) assert that the language ability (i.e., syntax and lexis) demonstrated in the text is the most general element determining the writing quality, as these elements are essential in creating meaning. Many contemporary researchers agree with this perspective. Schoonen, van Gelderen, Stoel, Hulstijn, & de Glopper (2010) argue that L2 writers require more linguistic knowledge to communicate proficiently with

accuracy and clarity effectively. Their longitudinal study with 389 students from different languages as their L1 (Dutch, Sranan Tongo, Turkish, Moroccan Arabic, or Berber language) aimed to model the development of first language (L1) and English as a foreign language (EFL) writing proficiency. The researchers used a process-oriented approach to writing, focusing on specific dimensions of writing performance, such as fluency, complexity, accuracy, and lexical sophistication. In addition, they employed various measures to assess the quality of participants' writing samples at multiple time points with a holistic rating approach. This approach employed a scale of benchmark texts that could serve as an interval scale, providing a standardized reference for evaluating the quality of the written samples. The results revealed that linguistic knowledge significantly contributed to predicting English writing proficiency.

Similarly, McNamara, Crossley, and McCarthy (2010) conducted a study that analyzed linguistic features in untimed essays written by college students to identify differences between low and high-quality compositions. Their findings revealed that three key factors (i.e., increased syntactic complexity, enhanced lexical diversity, and reduced word frequency) significantly predicted essay quality.

Moreover, Crossley and McNamara's (2012) research emphasized the significance of linguistic knowledge, while Kyle and Crossley (2016) focused on lexical features. Crossley and McNamara (2012) gathered data from 106 undergraduate participants. The participants completed various writing tasks, such as argumentative essays and summaries, and their work was assessed for cohesion and linguistic features. In addition, they measured linguistic sophistication by utilizing a computational tool that evaluated the complexity and diversity of vocabulary and grammatical structures. The findings indicated a positive correlation between linguistic sophistication and writing proficiency.

Finally, Kyle and Crosley (2016) analyzed the lexical features in the written texts of 70 undergraduate students enrolled at a university in the United States. The participants were from diverse language backgrounds with varying levels of English proficiency. The researchers observed that learners who demonstrated higher levels of lexical sophistication tended to produce essays better in terms of overall quality. These studies highlighted the importance of linguistic features in developing writing proficiency and provided valuable insights into the relationship between linguistic sophistication and writing quality.

Textual knowledge is another significant dimension in enhancing writing quality, as highlighted by Bachman and Palmer (1996). It refers to the understanding and application of textual features, structures, and conventions that contribute to coherence in written discourse. L2 writers who possess a higher level of textual knowledge are more capable of effectively connecting ideas within a text, resulting in improved coherence (Crossley & McNamara, 2012).

Coherence pertains to the overall unity, organization, and clarity of a written piece, indicating the logical connection between ideas and the text's comprehensibility. It reflects the extent to which thoughts are logically linked and the ease with which the text can be understood. On the other hand, cohesion refers to the linguistic strategies and devices utilized to establish connections and maintain a logical flow within the text. It includes cohesive elements like pronouns, conjunctions, and lexical repetition that contribute to the creation of a cohesive structure and the linkage of ideas. Research has shown a positive relationship between coherence and the quality of writing. For instance, Crossley and McNamara (2010) conducted a study focusing on the correlation between cohesion, coherence, and expert evaluations of writing proficiency. They employed a computational linguistic approach to analyze a corpus of written essays, which were then evaluated by

experts using a holistic grading scale to assess overall quality. The study investigated how cohesion and coherence were associated with expert evaluations of writing proficiency. The findings indicated that the overall coherence of a text was the most influential predictor of essay quality. The researchers found that coherence accounted for a significant portion of the variation in writing quality ratings, explaining approximately 65% of the observed differences. This suggests that experts consider coherence to be a crucial indicator of proficient writing.

Another notable research study that explored the connection between textual features and writing proficiency was conducted by Crossley, Kyle, and McNamara (2016). In this study, the researchers focused on the acquisition and utilization of cohesive devices in second language (L2) writing and its correlation with assessments of essay quality. They selected a group of participants and analyzed their written essays to identify the presence and usage of cohesive devices. The researchers then evaluated the quality of the essays using a composition grading scale that considered five analytical aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The findings indicated a positive relationship between the development and effective utilization of cohesive devices and higher evaluations of essay quality.

At this point, notably, cohesion plays a facilitating role in text comprehension and is believed to be connected to essay coherence. However, coherence does not solely rely on the use of cohesive devices. Achieving coherence in a written composition can involve conceptual factors such as rhetorical structures, paragraphing, and appropriate transitions between sentences and paragraphs. Interestingly, the literature presents contrasting findings to those of Crossley, Kyle, and McNamara (2016). For instance, while Crossley and McNamara (2010) indicated that overall coherence is a predictive factor of essay

quality, their analysis using cohesion indices provided by Coh-Metrix revealed that raters' judgments of coherence were not positively correlated with cohesive devices. The researchers found that most cohesive devices showed a negative correlation with higher quality ratings, except for subordinating conjunctions.

Another piece of evidence comes from McNamara, Crossley, and McCarthy (2010). Using a holistic rubric, they used linguistic indices of cohesion and language sophistication to analyze a corpus of 120 argumentative essays scored by expert raters. The results indicated that cohesion did not distinguish the low- and high-quality essays. The researchers say that while cohesion indices provide a reliable and valid assessment of cohesion in text, it is important to consider the distinction between cohesion and coherence when making judgments about writing. As mentioned earlier, cohesion refers to the textual cues present within the text, while coherence is a subjective interpretation made by the reader. Skilled readers with extensive knowledge in a particular domain can still comprehend and derive meaning from texts with low cohesion, as they are capable of generating inferences while reading. Furthermore, the presence of cohesion in the text may not significantly impact skilled readers who possess sufficient domain knowledge.

Therefore, when considering the relationship between textual factors and writing quality, it is prudent to recognize the role of cohesion as a facilitator of coherence rather than a contributor to the overall perception of writing quality.

However, judging the quality of writing requires more than the linguistic and textual characteristics of the text. For instance, the task's nature, the content's richness, and genre type are other factors related to evaluating a written discourse.

One important consideration is the nature of the task itself. Different writing tasks may require varying levels of complexity and demonstrate distinct characteristics. For instance, an academic essay can demand more formal language, coherent argumentation, and appropriate citation, while a creative writing piece may prioritize narrative techniques and imaginative expression. Task-specific criteria are therefore essential for evaluating the quality of writing in relation to its intended purpose. Another significant factor is the richness of the content. A well-written piece goes beyond syntactic and textual qualities and includes the depth, accuracy, and relevance of the ideas presented. The content should demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic, critical thinking, and the ability to support arguments with evidence and examples. Assessing the content quality requires considering the logical progression, and depth of analysis presented in the written discourse. Several researchers have emphasized the role of task-specific and content-specific criteria on writing performance in literature. For instance, Yang (2014) conducted a study to explore the connections between the cognitive complexity of independent writing tasks, the quality of second language (L2) writing, and the complexity, accuracy, and fluency of L2 writing. The study involved 375 Chinese university students. The participants' writing samples were analyzed to assess their complexity, accuracy, and fluency, while expert raters evaluated the writing quality using the TOEFL iBT Test Independent Writing Rubrics. The findings indicated that the nature of the writing task influenced the assessment of writing quality. Different types of rhetorical tasks, such as expository, argumentative, or narrative, required different language production features. Additionally, the study highlighted that researchers examining adult ESL writing observed higher lexical diversity and linguistic complexity in essays on familiar topics compared to those on less familiar topics, resulting in higher performance scores. Yang (2014) said that this can be attributed to the familiarity

with the topic aiding in meeting the task requirements and generating suitable content (p.7).

Similarly, Crossley, Muldner, and McNamara (2016) asserted the significance of task-specific and content-specific criteria in assessing writing performance. They examined the relationship between essay content and raters' assessments. The study concentrated on two categories of writing tasks: source-based and independent writing tasks. In source-based tasks, students are required to reorganize information obtained from reference sources. On the other hand, in independent tasks, students generate ideas based on their background knowledge and experiences. Therefore, the quality of the content was in relation to the accuracy of the information in the former but the relevance, originality, and elaboration of ideas in the latter. Additionally, they looked at the cognitive processes involved in idea generation including utilizing diverse linguistic and cognitive strategies. They examined how these processes influenced the overall writing performance. The results indicated that student essays containing original and elaborate ideas were of high quality. The researchers also reported that successful idea generation is strongly predicted by language features such as using more complex words, semantic similarities between paragraphs, fewer word repetitions, and fewer exemplifications. The study highlighted that essays with content and language code suitable for the task deserve higher quality ratings.

The control of genre-specific features of the writer in the text is another critical factor in ratings of writing performance. For instance, Beers and Nagy (2009) investigated the relationship between syntactic complexity and writing quality in adolescent writers. They collected writing samples from 43 participants. The researchers used two different measures of syntactic complexity (i.e., the Clauses per T-Unit (C/T) measure and the Syntactic Complexity Index). Besides, the writing quality was assessed in two genres (i.e.,

narrative and expository). Their findings suggested that the genre of the writing task may influence the relationship between syntactic complexity and writing quality.

Texts within the same genre share similarities in their overall structure, style, and conventions, while the specific rhetorical context of a writing task can result in variations in performance and quality (Schoonen, 2012). Thus, completing a successful writing task requires knowledge of the topic and an understanding of the conventions and practices of the genre to achieve the task's goals. In their study, Bouwer, Béguin, Sanders, and van den Bergh (2015) examined the main effect of genre on writing scores. They collected writing samples from 67 Dutch students. The participants wrote in different genres (i.e., argumentative and narrative). Then trained raters scored the writing samples using a holistic scoring rubric. Including genre as a facet in evaluating writing performance, the researchers showed that writing performance differs substantially between writing tasks. Therefore, they suggested including different tasks in multiple genres in the writing assessment for future implications.

In summary, to produce high-quality texts, writers need to possess various types of knowledge (Hyland, 2011, p. 31). This includes content knowledge, which refers to their understanding of the ideas and concepts related to the topic they are writing about. Additionally, writers should have system knowledge, which entails familiarity with the syntax, vocabulary, and appropriate formal conventions of the language. Process knowledge is also essential, as writers should be aware of how to effectively plan and carry out a writing task. Genre knowledge is important as well, as writers need to understand the communicative purposes of the specific genre they are working with and its value in particular contexts. Lastly, writers should have context knowledge, which involves

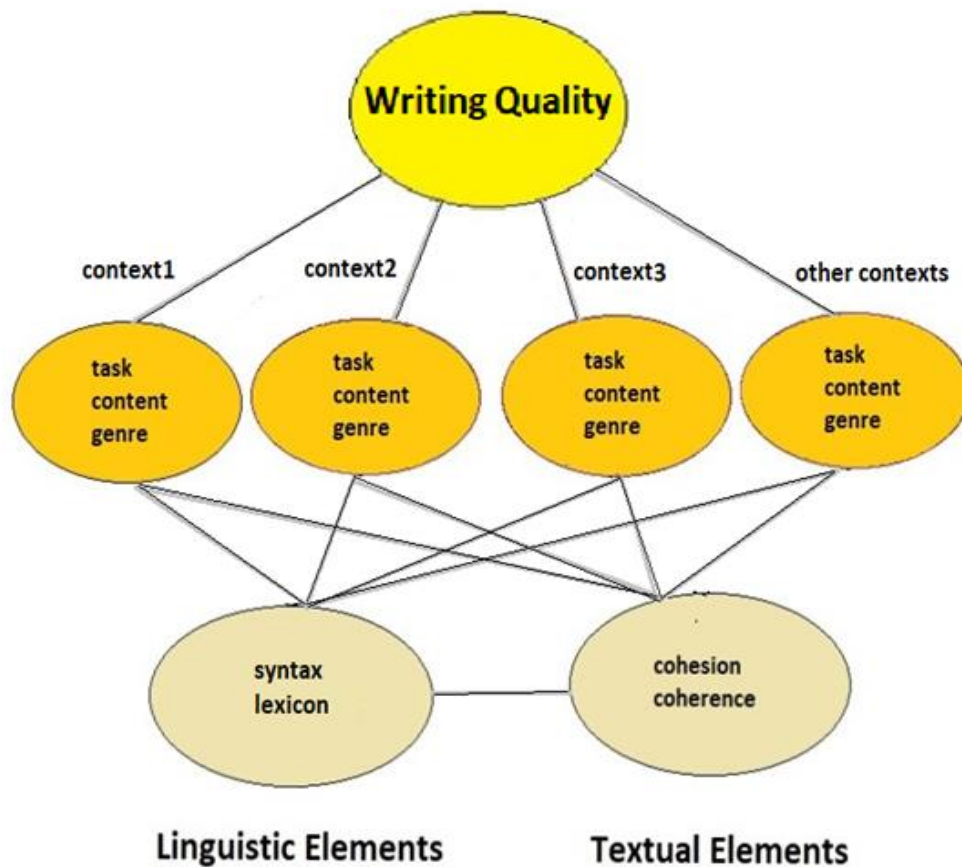
considering readers' expectations, cultural preferences, and the relationship of their text to other relevant texts.

However, the multifaceted nature of good writing defies a singular set of predetermined attributes within diverse contexts (Crossley & McNamara, 2011) and within the established norms and expectations of a particular context (Ortega, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to identify and reformulate the standards for writing quality within each teaching, assessment, and research context because variations may arise while practicing instruction, evaluation, and inquiry.

At this point, it is reasonable to conclude that task characteristics, content area, and genre play a fundamental role in shaping the frame of the writing context. Within the established frame, the writer can utilize linguistic and textual elements accurately and appropriately as crucial resources to furnish pertinent content and accomplish the intended task objectives. Based on this understanding, in the context of this study, the concept of writing quality encompasses elements of task, content, and genre as broad factors that define the parameters of the writing contexts. Additionally, it incorporates linguistic and textual features as instruments for generating a discourse that meets the expectations of each specific context. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptualization of writing quality within the context of the present study.

Figure 1

Conceptualization of Writing Quality



In EFL and ESL programs, comprehensive and detailed scoring instruments are employed to assess the writing output of second language learners. These instruments consist of holistic and analytic approaches and are guided by descriptive criteria. As Hirvela, Hyland, and Manchón (2016) state, these criteria encompass the linguistic, textual, and contextual elements previously discussed in this chapter. Following the scoring rubrics, the raters employ these interrelated elements in varying degrees and permutations. For example, during the decision-making processes raters consider accuracy and variety of grammar and vocabulary, coherence, organization, content, and task fulfillment as

documented by Cumming, Kantor, and Powers (2002). The researchers conducted three coordinated studies to develop a descriptive framework for understanding the decision-making processes in rating EFL writing tasks. The participants in their investigation were experienced TOEFL essay raters from various universities in Toronto and the United States. Through qualitative analysis of think-aloud protocols and interviews with the raters, the researchers aimed to gain insights into their decision-making strategies when evaluating writing tasks. The findings revealed that raters mentioned three text qualities most frequently. The first was “rhetorical organization including introductory statements, development, cohesion, and fulfillment of the writing task”. The second was “the expression of ideas including logic, argumentation, clarity, uniqueness, and supporting points”. And the third one was “accuracy, variety, and fluency in grammar and vocabulary” (Cumming, Kantor, & Powers, 2002, p.72).

Comparable to the observations of Cumming, Kantor, and Powers (2002), raters in the institution evaluate the written work of the students using the institution’s analytic writing rubric in the context of the present study. Therefore, drawing on McNamara, Crossley, and McCarthy’s (2010) definition (p.76), this study operationally defines writing quality as the grade assigned to the student’s written output.

2.3. Syntactic complexity

Writers produce well-organized discourse by carefully selecting proper vocabulary and forming clear and diverse sentences (Tillema, 2012). Achieving sentence diversity requires altering sentence type, length, and structure. Given that the sentence is a crucial building block of written language, strengths or weaknesses in sentence generation would influence other aspects of writing (Marlowe, 2019). Therefore, sentence generation has consistently been at the core of most second-language writing studies, and “complexity has

been proposed as an index of language development and as an indicator of proficiency” (Bulte’ & Housen, 2014, p.43). Moreover, it has often served as a valid indicator of L2 performance. Scholars have demonstrated a relationship between syntactic complexity and scoring rubrics (Guo, Crossley, & McNamara, 2013), the aspects of L2 writing that raters focus on (Cumming, Kantor, & Powers, 2002), and writing quality (Ortega, 2003; McNamara, Crossley, & McCarthy, 2010; Lu, 2011; Kyle, 2016; Kim & Crossley, 2018).

Theoretically, syntactic complexity refers to the degree of intricacy and diversity in the syntactic structures observed in second-language production (Lu, 2011; Ortega, 2015). Operationally, it is a multifaceted construct encompassing various interacting levels (Norris & Ortega, 2009). Linguistically, syntactic complexity can be analyzed at phrasal levels (Biber, Gray, & Poonpon, 2011) and at clausal levels (Yang & Weigle, 2015), either independently (Norris & Ortega, 2009) or in combinations (Lu, 2011), in terms of coordination, subordination, and elaboration (Bulté & Housen, 2012).

Norris and Ortega (2009) state that measures and instruments, which offer a quantitative indication of the level of complexity, rely on four primary parameters: length, ratio, index, and frequency.

Firstly, as Ortega stated (2003), the most common complexity measures used in L2 writing studies are length measures (i.e., mean length of sentence (MLS), mean length of clause (MLC), and mean length of T-unit (MLTU). Secondly, ratios measure subordination, coordination, and particular structures concerning linguistic units (Lu, 2011), with subordination measures playing a dominant role among ratio-based measures. Thirdly, frequency-based measures typically involve a set of grammatical features. By calculating the frequency of each feature individually, scholars can conduct more focused analyses and distinguish the unique contributions each feature makes to overall

grammatical complexity (Lan, Liu, & Staples, 2019). On the other hand, the application of index-based measures in L2 writing studies has been scarce due to the intricate process of calculating holistic index scores (Lan, Liu, & Staples, 2019). The following table shows the distribution of measures applied in studies published from 1998 to 2018 in prestigious journals.

Table 1

The distribution of measures applied in studies published from 1998 to 2018

	Measure	Number of Studies
Length	Mean length of T-units	44
	Mean length of sentences	15
	Mean length of clauses	12
Subordination Ratio	Clauses per t-unit	20
	Dependent clauses per t-unit	5
	Dependent clauses per clause	4
	Complex T-units per T-unit	2
Coordination Ratio	T-units per sentence	7
	Coordinating phrases per clause	3
	Coordinating phrases per T-unit	3
Target Structure Ratios	Complex nominals per T-unit	3
	Verb phrases per T-unit	2
	Complex nominals per clause	1
Complexity Index	Complexity Index	8
	Complexity Formula	1
Coordination Index	Coordination Index	3

Note. Adapted from Lan, Liu, and Stables (2019).

According to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), a sentence is "the obvious unit" that starts with a capitalized letter and concludes with appropriate punctuation (p.147). A sentence expresses a complete thought and can include one or more clauses.

1- I often go to the gym.

2- The teacher finished the lesson, and we all left the class.

A clause comprises a subject and a predicate (Lu, 2011). It is the building unit of a sentence and may or may not convey a complete thought because it can behave like a noun, adjective, or adverb.

- 1- I often go to the gym.
- 2- The teacher finished the lesson, and we all left the class.
- 3- What you have told me is unbelievable.
- 4- We read the book that you recommended.
- 5- The witness saw the accident while he was walking down the street.

According to Hunt (1965), a T-unit refers to an independent clause that includes any dependent clauses that are either embedded within it or attached to it (p.4).

- 1- The teacher finished the lesson, and we all left the class.
- 2- All the students who participated in the workshop got an official certificate.

“The teacher finished the lesson” is the independent clause, and *“we all left the class”* is the dependent clause attached to the independent clause with *“and”* coordination. Therefore, this sentence constitutes two T-units. In the second example, *“who participated in the workshop”* is a subordinate adjective clause embedded in the independent clause *“All the students got an official certificate.”* This sentence is one T-unit because the independent clause is embedded in the main clause through subordination.

Since Hunt's (1965) introduction of mean length of clause, sentence, and T-units (i.e., words per clause, sentence, and T-unit), as well as the ratio of subordination (i.e., clauses per T-unit) and main clause coordination (i.e., T-units per sentence) as measures of

syntactic complexity, the T-unit has become a commonly used unit of measurement for syntactic complexity in literature (Lu, 2010; Lan, Liu, & Staples, 2019).

Although research reports a high correlation between MLS, MLC, and MLTU with proficiency level (Ortega, 2003; Cumming et al., 2005; Lu, 2010), length measures are not immune to criticism. A sentence can consist of one or more clauses. In cases where a sentence comprises multiple clauses, its length may increase due to various operations such as coordination, subordination, and using adjectives, adverbs, or prepositional phrases to provide additional elaboration. Length may indicate syntactic complexity since the longer the units, the more complex they are expected to be. However, longer clauses can indicate complexity only at the phrasal level, but complexity in long sentences, if any, can also be due to coordination or subordination. Therefore, length measures indicate complexity but not the nature of complexity (Kyle, 2016). Besides, a clause may not convey a complete thought because it can behave like a noun, adjective, or adverb. In this case, whether the length or subordination counts for complexity would cause a long debate among scholars. In addition, length may not sometimes guarantee the presence of complexity (Knoch, Rouhshad, & Storch, 2014) because the existence of run-on sentences will strongly influence length counts (Kyle, 2016). The example sentences below elucidate what has been mentioned thus far.

- 1- I often go to the gym, café, cinema, restaurant, and club with my friends every weekend.
- 2- I like chocolate, pasta, fish, and apples, but I don't like carrots, parsley, tea, and milk.
- 3- I deserved a nice meal after a very tiring day at work.
- 4- The witness saw the accident while he was walking down the street.

The first and second sentences are lengthy examples, with the first being a single-clause sentence and the second comprising two clauses (i.e., seventeen words per sentence). In contrast, the third and fourth examples contain fewer words, with each sentence consisting of thirteen words. However, they demonstrate a higher level of sophistication and quality achieved using the adjectives "nice" and "tiring" in combination with the modifier "very" in the former and through the incorporation of a time adverbial subordinate clause "while he was walking down the street" in the latter.

Clauses per T-unit (CPT) is the proportion of the total number of clauses to the total number of T-units and shows the subordination ratio. Among ratio-based measures, CPT has been the most frequent measure in studies over the last two decades (Lan, Liu, & Staples, 2019). However, research reports contradictory results (Kyle, 2016) for the correlation between CPT and writing proficiency ranging from solid and moderate (Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998) to poor (Cumming et al., 2005; Lu, 2011; Knoch, Rouhshad, & Storch, 2014).

T-units per sentence (TPS) is the proportion of the total number of T-units to the total number of sentences and shows the amount of main clause and coordination. According to Norris and Ortega (2009), TPS is a viable measure of syntactic advancement for individuals at lower proficiency levels since the amount of coordination tends to decrease compared to subordination at a higher level of proficiency.

Overall, syntactic complexity is a multi-dimensional construct, and its development follows unique patterns for second-language learners at different proficiency levels (Verspoor, Lowie, & van Dijk, 2008; Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010; Bulte' & Housen, 2014; Crossley & McNamara, 2014). Thus, no single complexity measure fits all purposes.

Therefore, measures to capture syntactic complexity should be selective depending on the context and purpose of research endeavors (Norris & Ortega, 2009; Ortega, 2015).

This study examines the effectiveness of sentence-combining tasks integrated with translation in improving students' ability to produce complex sentences with a particular emphasis on subordination. Moreover, it seeks to investigate the relationship between the density of subordination in students' writing and the quality judgments of raters. Therefore, the study employs the CPT measure as the primary indicator to assess absolute complexity at the subordination level. However, since the CPT measure cannot distinguish between types of subordination, the study also calculates the TPS and frequency-based measures of specific subordination structures to facilitate a more thorough analysis of the findings.

2.4. Merging Sentence-Combining with Translation

Sentence-combining exercises that combine two or more basic sentences into a single sentence aim to develop students' ability to generate more complex sentences (Graham & Perin, 2007). Learners can engage in a controlled format that provides prompts for coordinating or subordinating grammatical structures, facilitating the creation of more complex sentences from basic ones. Alternatively, exercises can be in a semi-controlled format without prompts. Furthermore, exercises can extend to the discourse level, where students combine isolated sentences into a coherent discourse using meaningful coordination or subordination.

Saddler (2012) explains that writers need complex sentences to compose longer texts, and developing syntactic control requires direct instruction. He recommends sentence combining as a mindful practice for young and older writers due to its effectiveness in increasing writers' awareness of syntactic alternatives. This awareness, in turn, can help

them develop more varied and sophisticated sentences. He adds that they generate fewer run-on sentences. In this way, they can convey ideas effectively and create texts with more quality. Previous studies conducted in the 70s and 80s provided evidence for the effectiveness of sentence combining, but interest in this type of sentence-based practice decreased after the 80s. Since then, limited research has focused on sentence combining practice, with only a few scholars like Saddler & Graham (2005) and Marlowe (2019). Saddler and Graham (2005) conducted a study to examine the effects of peer-assisted sentence-combining instruction on the writing performance of participants with different skill levels. The researchers paired high-skilled students with low-skilled students and had them work together to combine simple sentences into more complex ones. The results showed that all participants improved their written sentences' quality, complexity, and sophistication. These improvements were observed in both narrative and expository writing tasks. The findings suggest that peer-assisted sentence-combining instruction is a practical approach to enhancing writing skills. In more recent research, Marlowe (2019) conducted a doctoral dissertation at Temple University to examine the effects of sentence-based practice on the longitudinal development of syntactic complexity in second-language (L2) writing. He focused on sentence-combining, translation, and timed-writing practices. The results of the study indicated that sentence-combining and translation practice positively affected the development of syntactic complexity in L2 writing.

According to Cook (2010), translation can be defined as the process of conveying meaning from one language to another (p. 55). Unfortunately, second-language pedagogy and research have long avoided translation because “it is often linked to the outdated grammar-translation method and conflicts with the Direct Method and Communicative Approach” (Widdowson, 2003, p.160). However, scholars such as Cook (2010) and Kerr

(2014) have promoted the integration of translation into contemporary foreign language teaching methods by suggesting various practical activities, tasks, or techniques for a reason. First, using translation in foreign language teaching is a helpful way to practice form and meaning together. Second, translation can help learners better understand the meaning because they can draw on their previous knowledge of their first language (L1) as a learning resource (Kerr, 2014).

The assumption that learners' knowledge of their first language can aid second language learning also aligns with translanguaging pedagogy. The concept of translanguaging gained attention during the 1980s when Cen Williams and colleagues conducted research in Bangor, North Wales. They explored strategies that allowed learners to use two languages, Welsh and English, simultaneously in the classroom. They referred to this practice as "trawsieithu," which involved reading or hearing input in one language and expressing it through writing or speaking in another. Colin Baker later translated this term into English as "translanguaging" (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012). Canagarajah (2011) defines translanguaging as the ability of multilingual individuals to fluidly switch between languages, treating their diverse language repertoire as an integrated system (p. 401). It means that the language resource of learners is an integrated repertoire that they strategically refer to while creating messages in the target language. However, official pedagogical guidelines in many contexts often mandate the use of a target-language-only policy in the classroom, resulting in a need for more research on translanguaging practices. Existing studies primarily adopt a descriptive approach rather than actively engaging in design-interventionist strategies to address this phenomenon (Lin, 2013). Canagarajah (2011) challenges the traditional view of language separation and advocates for a more dynamic and fluid approach to language use in academic contexts. The researcher argues

that multilingual writers possess a repertoire of linguistic resources that can be effectively employed to enhance their academic writing. Deliberate and strategic mixing of languages in writing may serve as a tool to achieve specific rhetorical and communicative goals. He identifies several teachable strategies of translanguaging that can help multilingual writers. These strategies include code-switching, code-mixing, borrowing, intertextuality, and relexification. The article provides examples and analyses of these strategies to illustrate how they can be used to convey meaning. Canagarajah supports translanguaging practices and suggests that educators can effectively empower students to navigate the complex linguistic landscape of academic writing.

Thus, integrating translanguaging practices into lessons can be a pedagogical strategy. In his article, Wei (2017) explores translanguaging as a theoretical framework for understanding language practices in multilingual contexts. Translanguaging challenges the traditional view of language as discrete and separate, emphasizing the fluidity and dynamic nature of language use. Wei argues that individuals use translanguaging when they draw on their full linguistic repertoires to communicate and make meaning. He discusses the implications of translanguaging for language education and highlights its potential to promote more inclusive and effective pedagogical practices. Wei suggests that embracing translanguaging as a practical theory of language can lead to a better understanding and appreciation of the complex ways in which individuals use language in multilingual settings. Lin (2015) argues that L1 can be a valuable resource for learning content and language. She discusses different perspectives on using L1 in the classrooms, including the arguments for and against it. Lin proposes a conceptual framework that considers the dynamic and context-dependent nature of L1 use, emphasizing the importance of pedagogical decisions and language policy in optimizing L1 integration. According to Lin

(2015), translanguaging strategies such as translation at explanation, exemplification, and practice stages can help university students scaffold their learning in teaching settings.

As aforementioned, the foreign language program of the institution, where this study took place, provides students with sentence-combining activities. Students can successfully combine sentences by using complex structures during grammar activities. However, they tend to utilize relatively simple sentences, resulting in a lack of complexity in their written productions. In contrast to the findings of Marlowe's research (2019), more than sentence-combining practice is necessary to enhance students' ability to create complex sentences. Considering the reported potential of sentence-combining, translation, and translanguaging pedagogy in language learning, this study suggests a hybrid approach that merges sentence-combining with translation to improve sentence complexity. The proposed sentence-based practice aims to encourage students to practice form and meaning simultaneously, which could lead to better results than sentence-combining practice alone. Using the first language as a resource can facilitate learning, and students can understand grammar rules and grasp the meaning more effectively. This hybrid approach could scaffold their learning and enhance their ability to create more complex sentences in their written productions.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The chapter starts with information regarding the participants in this quantitative study. Next, it introduces the treatment materials, data collection, and data evaluation instruments. The section proceeds with details relevant to the research context and the steps to divide the groups, to pilot and administer the treatment. Finally, the chapter describes the analyses conducted to answer the research questions.

3.1. Participants

The participants were 44 undergraduate students registered in the foreign language department of a private university in Turkey during the spring semester of the academic year 2021-2022. Following the successful completion of the intermediate level, two intact CEFR level B2 upper-intermediate classes were selected as the control and the experimental group. Each class comprised students aged between 17 and 20 years. All the participants in the study were native Turkish speakers with the same cultural background.

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. Data Collection Instruments

Participants were required to submit four writing performances during the Phase of Progress (POP) period (i.e., the term used at the institution for the designated length of instruction at each level). Two of these were 45-minute writing tasks as components of portfolio assessment officially administered by the department in the second and twelfth weeks of the POP Period. The other two constituted the 60-minute writing sections of the midterm and final exams (see Appendix C for the writing exams).

3.2.2. Writing Rubrics

The department employs an analytic writing rubric to evaluate independent writing tasks in exams objectively and provide constructive feedback. The rubric has three main criteria: care and accuracy, range of language, and task fulfillment. The care and accuracy criteria deal with syntactic accuracy and readability of the text. The range criterion deals with the richness of vocabulary used in the text. Finally, the task fulfillment criterion looks

at whether the text follows the expected format for the genre and has clear and organized content. For task fulfillment, to effectively convey the main idea of a piece of writing, students should begin with a topic sentence that encapsulates the central point. This should be followed by supporting details and evidence in the body paragraphs to strengthen and expand upon the main idea. Finally, the student should wrap up their writing with a concluding sentence that summarizes and reinforces the main point.

The institution's writing rubric and the IELTS writing rubric were taken as the basis for evaluating the quality of the written texts (see Appendix D for the institution's writing rubric, and Appendix E for the IELTS writing rubric).

3.3. Research Setting

3.3.1. Foreign Language Program

The English preparatory program spans 28 weeks, consisting of four distinct phases referred to as Phase of Progress (POP) periods, each lasting seven weeks with 24-hour teaching in a week. The successful completion of each level of the program is achieved within these POP periods. The Upper-intermediate levels, which commence during POP 1 and POP 3, extend to 14 weeks per semester. The program's primary objective is to equip students with the necessary skills to achieve a passing score in the University English Proficiency Exam (UEPE) to perform effectively in their undergraduate studies conducted in English.

The program consists of levels that align with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The initial level, Foundation, corresponds with level A1, while the subsequent Pre-Intermediate Level corresponds with level A2. The

Intermediate Level aligns with level B1, and the final level of the program, Upper-Intermediate, corresponds with level B2.

3.3.2. Instruction

During a POP period, two instructors share one class (i.e., named the main and the core teacher). The main teacher is responsible for teaching grammar and listening skills using the main course book. On the other hand, the core teacher is responsible for teaching academic reading and writing skills. To ensure consistency in instruction, the coordinator of each level provides instructors with a standardized weekly lesson plan. Partner instructors work collaboratively to cover the curriculum, adhering to the weekly schedule.

3.3.3. Assessment

The level system in the program includes regular assessments of students' progress, consisting of exams and portfolio tasks conducted within each level. A final score of 60 or higher in the POP determines a student's advancement to the next level. The Foreign language department of the institution prepares and administers the exams. Midterm, POP Exam, and UEPE assess students' listening, reading, grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills, and cover the topics from the main course and skill books. The writing section requires students to complete a task in a specified format. Portfolio assessment also evaluates students' progress. The portfolio includes writing tasks, a speaking exam, online practice, and class participation. Students complete two writing tasks and a speaking exam during a POP period. For Online Practice, students complete weekly tasks through an online system using codes in their course books. Additionally, instructors grade class participation. Table 2 below shows assessment components and weights in each POP at all levels.

Table 2.

Assessment components and weights in each POP at all levels.

Midterm	POP Exam	Portfolio
20%	60%	Writing Tasks 5%
		Speaking Exam 5%
		Online Practice 5%
		Participation 5%

Successful completion of the Upper-intermediate level is a requirement for taking UEPE. Students who pass UEPE with a minimum score of 60 can enroll in faculty programs.

3.3.4. Writing Context

At the Foundation and Pre-intermediate levels, students practice free writing tasks such as writing informal or formal letters to a friend, describing a picture, a place, or a person, or asking for information. These tasks help students become familiar with different writing styles and techniques. In the exams, these tasks inform the students about the format of the texts and provide a list of prompts to guide them on the content.

As students advance to the Intermediate level, they begin to write academic paragraphs on diverse topics. This stage helps them develop their ability to write coherent, well-organized, and grammatically correct paragraphs. The focus is on building the foundation for writing academic essays they undertake at the beginning of the Upper-intermediate level.

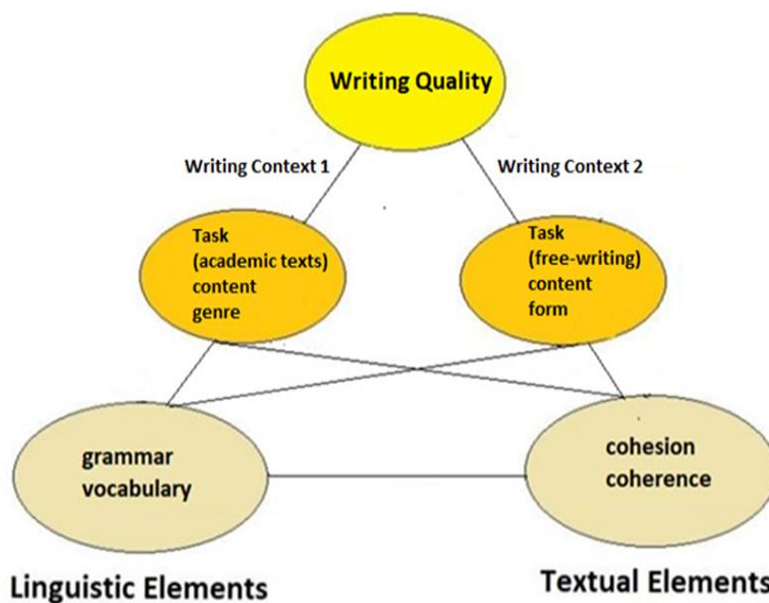
Beginning from the Upper-intermediate level, students start writing academic essays on various topics. This stage focuses on developing students' writing skills to a higher

level. Students refine their writing and improve their ability to communicate complex ideas effectively. The expected learning outcomes for upper-intermediate writing skills aligned with the CEFR.

The quality requirements for written products in the context of the study are comprised of elements of task fulfillment (including task, content, and genre), as well as linguistic and textual elements (such as appropriate use of a variety of structures, vocabulary, and cohesive devices). These factors collectively shape the institution's writing quality standards, as depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Conceptualization of Writing Quality at the Institution



3.4. Procedures

3.4.1. Pilot Investigation

A pilot investigation was conducted during the prior POP period to enhance the quality of the present study. This investigation concentrated on three main areas. First, the treatment materials developed by the researcher were tested to gather feedback to refine them. Final refinements included modifications of unclear and ambiguous items and replacing lexical items that proved challenging for the students. Second, students' written productions in their first language were examined to determine how they typically create texts without the foreign language barrier. The pilot analyses indicated that students tended to produce texts in their first language with a high frequency of subordination structures. Third, written productions in the target language were analyzed regarding linguistic and textual features. This analysis provided feedback to verify the assumptions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the students enrolled in the department. The results of the pilot study corroborated the assumption that students at the institution often express themselves with relatively simple and frequently repetitive sentences lacking complexity, particularly at the subordination level. Conversely, the same students demonstrated proficiency in linguistic structures of subordination during grammar lessons and achieved satisfactory results in their grammar tests.

3.4.2. The Control and the Experimental Groups

After completing their seven-week Intermediate-level program, the foreign language department assigned students to Upper-Intermediate classes. Two of the six Upper-Intermediate classes (i.e., B2 on the CEFR), were randomly chosen as the control and experimental groups for this quasi-experimental study.

3.4.3. Treatment Procedures

Participants continued their regular mainstream education following the standard syllabus mandated by the administration. The participants received 24 hours of instruction per week, with 16 hours for basic English and 8 hours for reading and writing skills.

The first week was allocated to reviewing and consolidating the structures for subordination that they had previously learned through classroom materials designed by the researcher (see Appendix A for review handouts). This allowed students to refresh their knowledge before starting the new POP period. Table 3 shows the target syntactic structures for subordination included in the review handouts.

Table 3.

Syntactic structures included in the intervention.

Linguistic Feature	Example
Adverbial time clauses	We should do more physical exercise when we feel stressed.
Subordinate connectors	Breakfast is the most important meal because it regulates our blood sugar. Most people prefer coffee for breakfast although it is not healthy.
Conditional clauses	We can reach more people if we use popular social media platforms. We cannot advertise a product effectively unless we use social media.
Relative clauses	Viruses affect people who have a poor immune system more severely Covid-19 is a dangerous virus which (that) spread very quickly.
Noun clauses	People must accept that we need to protect nature for our future Customers always check if the quality of the product is good or not. We don't know what the future will bring us.

The treatment period started in the third week of the course. The official weekly schedule includes two hours designated as flexible hours. The treatment was delivered during these flexible hours each week.

Throughout the experiment, the intervention was delivered using sentence-combining worksheets prepared by the researcher. The control group performed traditional sentence-combining exercises, whereas the experimental group engaged in sentence-combining exercises merged with translation. The worksheets for the control and the experimental groups contained identical items. The sole difference was that those for the control group were in English. In contrast, those for the experimental group were Turkish versions of the same items (see Appendix B for sample intervention worksheets). The sequencing of these materials was aligned with the department curriculum as closely as possible throughout the treatment period. The control group performed sentence-combining activities with prompts in the target language as a placebo treatment to practice the target structures. That is, there is only one correct option for the students to produce. Conversely, participants in the experimental group combined sentences in their L1 and translated them into English, resulting in multiple acceptable answers as long as the sentences were meaningful and included subordination. Participants were required to keep portfolios to ensure the effectiveness of the treatment. These portfolios comprised handouts and worksheets from the review sessions and intervention activities. In addition, 25% of the class participation grade (i.e., an official component of the portfolio assessment at the department) was allocated to portfolios to motivate participants to prepare their portfolios throughout the course of the treatment. Figure 2 displays the treatment scheme of the study.

Figure 3*Treatment Scheme*

week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 6	week 7
revision & consolidation	pretest	treatment	treatment	treatment	treatment	treatment
week 8	week 9	week 10	week 11	week 12	week 13	week 14
mid-test	treatment	treatment	treatment	treatment	treatment	posttest

3.5. Data Collection

The study collected data from five distinct sources. The initial source was Writing Task 1, which was administered in week two before the commencement of the treatment. The second data source was the midterm exam administered midway through the treatment period. The final data source was the final exam conducted at the end of the POP. The written texts of the participants were transformed into Microsoft Word documents for analysis. CPT, TPS calculations, and frequency counts were recorded using Excel. After the grading process, the testing office approved the official writing scores. In addition, two volunteer members of the testing office graded the papers using the IELTS writing rubric. The scores assigned using the institution's writing rubric and the IELTS writing rubric constituted the study's fourth and fifth data sources.

3.6. Data Analysis

Quantitative data was collected from the control and experimental groups on three occasions throughout the study for a better understanding of the effect of the intervention

on the student's writing performance. Therefore, Repeated Measures ANOVA was utilized to investigate the impact of sentence-combining tasks merged with translation on students' ability to write complex sentences using subordination.

The written texts of the participants were first segmented into individual sentences, then into T-Units, and finally into individual clauses to analyze the complexity ratios. The process was applied to all data extracted from the pretest, mid-test, and post-test. Table 4 displays sample segmentations of sentences, T-units, and clauses.

Table 4.

Segmentation of text into sentences, T-units, and clauses.

1 sentence	There are some ways	clause
1 T-unit	to make a product popular.	subordinate clause / infinitive
1 sentence	The first one is	clause
1 T-Unit	advertising with a famous person.	subordinate clause/gerund
1 sentence	A famous person advertises your product well	clause
1 T-unit	because that person knows a lot of people.	subordinate clause connector / because
1 sentence	People who love that famous person	subordinate relative clause
1 T-unit	will start	clause
	to buy your product.	subordinate clause / infinitive
1 sentence	The second way is	clause
1 T-unit	advertising a product on social media.	subordinate clause/gerund
1 sentence	People see your product	clause
1 T-unit	and will start	subordinate clause / coreferential subject
	to call you.	subordinate clause/ infinitive
1 sentence	if they like your product	subordinate conditional clause
1 T-unit	when you advertise it on social media,	subordinate adverbial time clause

	they will buy it.	clause
1 sentence	You can sell a lot of products in this way	clause
2 T-units	and you can earn a lot of money.	clause/coordination
1 sentence	In conclusion, this is	clause
1 T-unit	how you can make a product popular.	subordinate noun clause
10 T-units		21 Clauses
9 Sentences		

Following the segmentation process, the complexity ratio was calculated using the CPT metric. The extracted subordination density scores were compared using the Repeated Measure ANOVA.

The potential relationship between the amount of subordination in the written texts of participants and the quality judgments provided by raters was analyzed using the Spearman Correlation. The pretest and posttest scores, as approved by the Testing Office, and the subordination ratios were subjected to Spearman Correlation to investigate the relationship between the subordination ratio and the quality ratings assigned by the raters. While doing so, both the writing rubric of the institution and the IELTS writing rubric were taken as the basis, with the correlation analysis being applied to both sets of data obtained through these rubrics. The purpose of this was to include relatively more standard data in the analysis of data in the study.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the analyses, addressing the two main research questions of the study. The first research question examined the effectiveness of sentence-combining tasks merged with translation in improving students' ability to produce complex sentences through subordination in their academic writing tasks. The second research question explored the correlation between the subordination density in students' academic written products and the scores assigned by raters using analytic writing rubrics. The findings are organized into three sections. The chapter starts with the analysis of the data that address the first research question. The analysis included comparing the mean differences in subordination density scores between and within the control and experimental groups before, during, and after the fourteen-week treatment period. Next, the chapter focuses on the analysis addressing the second research question. To answer the question, the analysis followed two steps. In the first step, the test performances between the treatment and control groups were compared to see if the treatment had any effect on the performance of participants. In the second step, the total quality scores, as evaluated using both the institution's writing rubric and the IELTS rubric, were correlated with the subordination density of the participants' written products in the pretest and posttest assessments. Finally, the chapter reports subsequent analyses that were necessary based on the findings of the initial analysis. Incorporating this additional analysis would yield a more comprehensive elucidation of the results.

4.1. The Results of Comparisons of Subordination Density

The subordination density in the participants' compositions was calculated using the CPT metric. Obtained scores were compared through repeated measure ANOVA to test the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the control and experimental

groups after the treatment period of fourteen weeks. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for subordination density.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Subordination Density

Group	<u>Pretest</u>		<u>Midtest</u>		<u>Posttest</u>	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Treatment	1,3	0,22	1,63	0,43	2,18	0,39
Control	1,31	0,16	1,5	0,25	1,67	0,31

The means of subordination density of the experimental and control group were close in the pretest, as expected before the treatment. At the end of the seventh week of the treatment, the means of both the experimental and treatment groups increased although the treatment group mean was slightly higher than that of the control group. At the end of the treatment after 14 weeks, the mean of both groups increased, yet the increase in the mean of the control group was significantly higher than that of the control group.

4.1.1 Within Subjects Effects

One of the variables influencing writing quality was the extent of subordination density in writing samples. To see whether it increased over the period of instruction, repeated measure ANOVA was performed on the scores of the participants on several writing tasks.

Mauchly's test of Sphericity indicated no violation of assumption ($\chi^2(2) = 2,25, p = .324$). The results of the analysis revealed significant within-subject effects. There were statistically significant changes in subordination density over time, $F(2, 84) = 55,169, p <$

.05, partial $\eta^2 = .56$, increasing from pretest ($M = 1,30$, $SD = 0.22$) to midtest ($M = 1,63$, $SD = 0.43$), and to posttest ($M = 2,18$, $SD = 0.39$) for the treatment group. Similarly, the subordination density of the control group followed an increasing trend from the pretest ($M = 1,31$, $SD = 0.16$) to the midtest ($M = 1,50$, $SD = 0.25$), and to the posttest ($M = 1,67$, $SD = 0.31$). This indicates that the subordination density increased as participants received instruction over time irrespective of treatment condition. Table 6 shows the mean, standard deviation, and repeated measures analysis of variance for subordination density.

Table 6

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Subordination Density.

	pretest		midtest		posttest		F(2,84)	η^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Subordination Density	1,30	0,22	1,63	0,43	2,18	0,39	55,169*	.56

* $p < .05$

4.1.2 Between Subjects Effects

Levine's Test of Equality of Error Variances indicates the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not violated, $p > .05$. Tests of between-subjects effects revealed statistically significant differences between the treatment and the control group, $F(1, 42) = 9,875$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .19$, indicating a significant difference between the experimental and control group on the average of subordination density because of the treatment. Table 7 shows repeated measures analysis of variance for subordination density between the groups.

Table 7

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Subordination Density Between Groups.

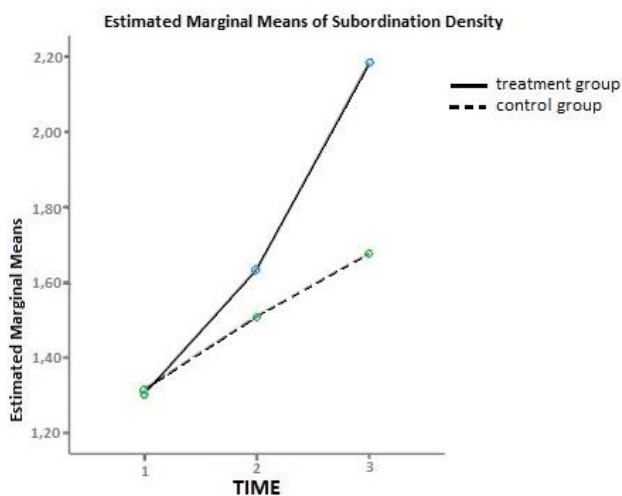
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Partial η^2
Intercept	339,52	1	339,52	2385,8	.000	0,98
Class	1,405	1	1,405	9,875	.003	0,19
Error	5,97	42	0,142			

Note: $p < .05$

4.1.3 Pairwise Comparisons

Follow-up pairwise comparisons with Bonferroni adjustment indicated that there was not a significant difference between the treatment group and control group on the pretest and the midtest, $p > .05$. However, there was a significant difference between the group means on the posttest scores, $t(42) = 4.66$, $p < .05$. This suggests that the intervention led to a statistically significant difference between the groups at the end of the fourteen-week treatment period.

Figure 4 shows the profile plot of estimated marginal means illustrating the relative behavior of the means for subordination density measures over time at two levels.

Figure 4*Changes in Average Subordination Density Between the Treatment and Control Groups over Time*

Note. TIME 1, 2, and 3 represents pretest, midtest and posttests respectively.

The means of the experimental and the control groups were close to each other for time 1 as expected at pretests. For time 2 (i.e., the midtest in the seventh week), there was an increase in both levels with little difference between them. However, a more significant increase was observed in the experimental group ($M = 2,18$, $SD = 0.39$) than that of the control group ($M = 1,67$, $SD = 0.31$) for time 3 (i.e., posttest in the 14th week). Thus, the results indicated that sentence-combining merged with translation promoted students' ability to write complex sentences with increased subordination.

4.2. The Results of Comparisons of Total Quality Scores

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the total quality scores for the experimental and control group to see if the treatment group performed differently from the control group. Table 8 shows the descriptive statistics for total quality scores.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Total Quality Scores

Group	Pretest				Posttest			
	Rubric A		Rubric B		Rubric A		Rubric B	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Treatment	12,59	1,65	3,93	,95	14,13	2,84	5,13	,67
Control	13,31	1,39	4,18	,95	11,9	1,72	4,4	,57

Note. $N=22$ *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation respectively.

Rubric A represents the institution's rubric. *Rubric B* represents the IELTS rubric.

Equal variances not assumed, $p > ,05$, there were no significant differences between total quality scores evaluated following the analytic writing rubric used at the institution ($t(42) = 1,578$, $p = 0.122$) and scores evaluated following the IELTS Writing rubric ($t(42) = 0.867$, $p = 0.391$) for the pretest. These findings suggest that, before the intervention, there

were no significant differences in the total quality scores between the experimental and control groups, whether assessed using the analytic writing rubric or the IELTS Writing rubric. This result indicates that the groups' writing abilities were comparable at the beginning of the study.

However, there was a significant difference ($t(42) = 3,14, p < .05$) in the total quality posttest scores graded following the analytic writing rubric used at the institution. The mean score for the experimental group ($M = 14,13, SD = 2,84$) was higher than that of the control group ($M = 11,9, SD = 1,72$). Likewise, the analysis yielded a significant difference ($t(42) = 3.60, p < .05$) in the total quality posttest scores graded following the IELTS Writing rubric with the higher mean score for the experimental group ($M = 5,13, SD = 0.67$) than the control group ($M = 4.45, SD = 0.57$). These findings indicate a significant difference in the test performances between the treatment and control groups in the posttest, regardless of the rubric. Table 9 shows t-test results of overall quality scores comparisons following the institution's and IELTS writing rubric for the pretest and posttest.

Table 9

T-test results of overall quality scores following the institution's and IELTS writing rubric for the pretest and posttest.

	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pretest with the institution's rubric	-1,578	42	.122
Pretest with the IELTS rubric	-0,867	42	.391
Posttest with the institution's rubric	3,144	42	.003
Posttest with the IELTS rubric	3,603	42	.001

Note: $p < .05$

4.3. Correlation Between Subordination Density and the Total Quality Scores

Spearman correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the total quality scores, assessed using both the institution's rubric and the IELTS rubric, and the subordination density of the participants' written products in both the pretest and posttest assessments. Table 10 shows the results of Spearman correlations.

Table 10

Results of Spearman Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Subordination density pretest						
2 Total quality score pretest	.06					
3 IELTS score pretest	.23	.75**				
4 Subordination density posttest	.04	-.06	-.05			
5 Total quality score posttest	-.07	.04	.23	.25		
6 IELTS score posttest	.07	-.02	.16	.34*	.76**	

**Spearman Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Spearman Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman correlation analysis revealed significant correlations between the total quality scores of the participants' overall writing scores.

Specifically, a positive correlation was observed between the subordination density of the compositions and their quality scores when graded using the IELTS rubric ($r = 0.34$, $n = 44$, $p = .026$). However, no significant correlations were found between subordination density and the total quality scores assigned using the institution's rubric in the posttest assessment ($r = 0.25$, $n = 44$, $p = .109$). The analysis indicated that as the subordination density increased, the quality of the written products, as assessed by the IELTS rubric, also improved. This result implied that the relationship between subordination density and writing quality might vary depending on the evaluation criteria.

4.4. The Subsequent Analysis.

Since the overall subordination density in the compositions of the treatment group was significantly higher than that of the control group, further investigation was required to elucidate the specific patterns and types of subordination employed. This approach was adopted to facilitate a more comprehensive analysis, which aimed to capture any variations in the development pattern of complexity between the control and experimental groups. Furthermore, examining the types of subordination was crucial in the detailed analysis of the results as the CPT metric could not differentiate between various types of subordination. Therefore, in addition to the data obtained through the CPT metric, TPS was calculated to determine the density of coordination connectors. Besides, the frequency of diverse types of subordination in participants' compositions was examined. This additional analysis shed light on how participants utilized various forms of subordination in their writing.

With this objective in mind, the density of subordination structures in the posttest was calculated separately. First, the occurrence of each subordination type was counted. Then their density was calculated by dividing the number of occurrences by the total number of t-units in the participants' papers multiplied by 100. Next, the means of subordination density for each specific type of subordination were compared between the experimental and control groups with a t-test. Table 11 and Table 12 show descriptive statistics and t-test results for the density of coordination connectors and target subordinate structures.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for the Density of Coordination Connectors and Target Structures

Structure	Treatment Group		Control Group	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Coordination Pretest	1,2	0,2	1,17	0,14
Coordination Posttest	1,16	0,12	1,2	0,15
Adverbial Time Clause	9,88	9,9	6,3	6,6
Conditional "If" Clause	9,57	9,9	9,9	6,9
Noun Clause	11,48	11,86	7,9	5,7
Relative Clause	15,27	10,8	0,5	1,6
Discourse Device "because"	11,82	9,2	3,1	6,4
Discourse Device "although"	0,8	2,1	0,6	1,67

Note: *N* = 22. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation respectively.

Table 12

T-Test Results for the Density of Coordination Connectors and Target Subordinate Structures

Structure	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig.(2-tailed)
Coordination Pretest	0,637	42	0,52
Coordination Posttest	-0,953	42	0,34
Adverbial Time Clause	1,4	42	0,16
Conditional "If" Clause	-1,55	42	0,87
Noun Clause	1,24	42	0,21
Relative Clause	6,31	42	0,0*
Discourse Device "because"	3,6	42	0,0*
Discourse Device "although"	0,28	42	0,78

Note: *N* = 22. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation respectively.

**p* < .05

The t-test analysis revealed that the density of coordinating connectors in the pretest and the posttest was not different between the groups. Similarly, there was no difference between the density of adverbial time clauses, conditional "if" clauses, noun clauses, and

discourse device “although” in the posttest compositions of the participants in both groups. On the other hand, a significant difference ($p < .05$) was observed between the frequency of relative clause and discourse device “because” in the compositions of the treatment and control groups. The use of relative clause structure was particularly higher in the treatment group ($M=11.48$, $SD=10.8$) vs the control group ($M=0.5$, $SD=1.6$).

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide evidence that subordination density increased as participants received instruction over time, regardless of the treatment condition. In addition, a significant result emerged in the posttest scores, indicating that the intervention had a statistically significant impact on the groups' subordination density. Besides, the analysis revealed a significant difference in the overall quality of the written products in the posttest between the groups when assessed using the analytic writing rubric of the institution and the IELTS Writing rubric. This implied that increased subordination density correlates with a higher quality of the written products. This finding was also supported by the correlation analysis revealing a positive relationship between the subordination density and writing quality when the IELTS writing rubric was employed as the evaluation criteria. The following discussion chapter presents a comprehensive examination of the research findings, providing a detailed analysis and interpretation of the results.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The study addressed the challenges students face in their mastery of complex sentence structures, particularly at the level of subordination. To this end, the study aimed to explore the effectiveness of integrating translation with sentence combining as a practice to enhance students' ability to write complex sentences using subordination. It also examined the relationship between subordination density and writing quality. The chapter starts

presenting the findings with the first research question and discusses the issues in the order they appeared. While following this order, the findings of the subsequent analysis were included in the discussion to enhance the understanding of the observed difference.

5.1. The First Research Question

The findings of the analysis addressing the first research question demonstrated a notable increase in subordination density over time for both the treatment and control groups. This upward trend indicates that as the participants' proficiency levels improved, there was a corresponding increase in the use of subordination in their compositions. This outcome was expected due to the continuous instruction received by both groups through the mainstream curriculum during the 14-week treatment period, which facilitated their ongoing language development. Additionally, it is important to note that while the experimental group engaged in sentence-combining tasks merged with translation, the control group participated in traditional sentence-combining activities as a placebo treatment. This additional activity supplemented the standard curriculum since sentence-combining activities were already incorporated into their course materials. The coordination density in the compositions of the participants also showed no significant difference before the treatment period

Over 14 weeks, as the participants' proficiency levels improved, a noticeable upward trend in subordination density within their compositions was observed. In contrast, the density of coordination remained relatively stable.

These findings align with the theoretical framework proposed by Norris and Ortega (2009) regarding the developmental trajectory of syntactic complexity in writing. As per their widely accepted assumption, the acquisition of complex writing skills follows a

pattern. Learners initially focus on developing coordination structures at lower proficiency levels. At intermediate proficiency levels, they progress to mastery of subordination structures. Finally, learners develop clausal and phrasal-level complexification at advanced levels. In the present study, the observed increase in subordination density among the participants' compositions suggests their advancement towards intermediate levels of syntactic complexity.,

On the other hand, the results also showed that exercise intervention created a statistically significant difference between the groups at the end of the fourteen-week treatment period. Therefore, the study satisfactorily answered its first research question and concluded that integrating sentence-combining tasks with translation promoted students' ability to write complex sentences with increased subordination.

In the posttest assessment, it was observed that participants in the treatment group exhibited a higher usage of adverbial time clauses and noun clauses in their compositions compared to the control group. However, the difference between the groups regarding these subordination types was not statistically significant. On the other hand, the density of subordinate discourse devices "because" and "relative clause" structures were found to be significantly higher in the treatment group's compositions ($t(42) = 3.6, p < .05$ (two-tailed) and $t(42) = 6.3, p < .05$ (two-tailed), respectively). Specifically, the density of relative clause structures in the treatment group ($M = 15.27, SD = 10.8$) highly exceeded that of the control group ($M = 0.5, SD = 1.6$). Notably, only two instances of relative clause use were observed in the compositions of the control group participants. These findings indicate that the treatment group exhibited a more pronounced utilization of relative clauses among other subordinate structures.

Bulté and Housen (2014) reported comparable results in their study focusing on conceptualizing and measuring short-term changes in second language (L2) writing complexity. Their study aimed to contribute to understanding L2 writing development by investigating how different dimensions of complexity can be measured and how they change over a short period. Their analysis showed that different complexity measures capture distinct aspects of complexity and may exhibit different patterns of change over time. For example, while the sentence length and coordination ratio remained relatively stable, the subordination ratio increased significantly from the beginning to the middle of the course. However, it did not show further changes by the end of the course.

Additionally, Mazgutova and Kormos (2015) investigated learners' syntactic and lexical development in an intensive English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program. The researchers aimed to shed light on the impact of the program on students' writing skills. Consistent with the present study's findings, they observed a significant ascending pattern in using conditional and relative clauses among the participants as they progressed from lower to higher proficiency levels.

Interestingly, in the midtest performance, the density of the discourse device "because" was found to be significantly higher in the control group ($M = 11.6$, $SD = 10.6$) compared to the treatment group ($M = 5.6$, $SD = 7$), as evidenced by the significant t-test result ($t(42) = -2.18$, $p < .05$, two-tailed). However, it is worth noting that in the posttest assessment, the participants in the control group appeared to have reduced their usage of the discourse device "because" in their compositions. This observed shift in behavior could be attributed to a modification in the participants' writing strategies or a change in their preferences regarding using the discourse device "because." One possible explanation for this shift is the negative feedback that the participants frequently received from their instructors. It is

noteworthy that students at the institution have a Turkish L1 background. In Turkish, the equivalent of the discourse device "because" is "çünkü," which can be used both as a subordinate and a sentence connector as in the following examples.

- Ofisten ayrılamıyorum çünkü projeyi bitiremedim.

I can't leave the office / because / I couldn't finish the project.

- Ofisten ayrılamıyorum. Çünkü projeyi bitiremedim.

I can't leave the office / because / I couldn't finish the project.

Students at the institution often use "because" as a sentence connector, mirroring its frequent usage in their L1. Consequently, they often receive negative feedback for such usage. This linguistic transfer and subsequent feedback might have influenced the participants' reduced employment of "because" as a subordination device in their compositions in the posttest. Indeed, it is plausible that the observed decrease in the use of the discourse device "because" in the posttest can be attributed to the participants' inclination to avoid grammar errors and prioritize accuracy in their compositions, as the posttest served as their final exam. To ensure linguistic correctness, students may have been more cautious in employing certain subordination types that could lead to mistakes or ambiguity. This heightened awareness of grammatical accuracy could have influenced their decision to limit the use of "because" as a subordination device. However, further investigation is necessary to explore this hypothesis and ascertain the underlying factors contributing to the observed shift in the participants' writing behavior.

The posttest comparison between the treatment and control groups revealed a significant difference in test performances, irrespective of the rubric used for evaluation. This implies that the intervention, regardless of the specific evaluation criteria, had a

noticeable impact on the participants' writing abilities. Overall, the results suggest that sentence-combining merged with translation activities effectively promoted the participants' ability to produce higher-quality compositions with more complex sentence structures.

The interpretation of this finding can be examined from two directions (i.e., cognitive factor and feedback factor). From a cognitive direction, it is possible that students engaged in different cognitive processes during the two types of activities. In the traditional sentence combining activity, participants were required to merge two sentences in a meaningful way. The aim was to produce a single accurate sentence that incorporated the target subordinate structures as prompted and the items in these exercise worksheets typically had only one correct answer. This may have directed participants' attention towards form and accuracy.

On the other hand, the sentence combining activity merged with translation provided participants with two sentences in their native language (i.e., Turkish). They were given two sentences in their L1. They combined these sentences into meaningful sentences and subsequently translated them into the target language. In this case, no prompts were given, allowing students the freedom to utilize various meaningful and appropriate subordination structures when combining the sentences. Consequently, the items in this activity had more than one correct answer.

The diverse range of responses from the participants in the treatment group indicates that they may have paid attention to both meaning and form during the execution of the activity. This is evident in the following examples, which demonstrate the varied approaches taken by the participants in their responses to the same item.

Extract from the control group:

- Some children have siblings. These children are usually more sociable. **(who)**
- (Some) children who have siblings are usually more sociable.

Extract from the treatment group:

- Bazı çocukların kardeşleri vardır. Bu çocuklar genellikle daha sosyaldır.

Some children have siblings. / These children are usually more sociable.

- Kardeşleri olan (bazı) çocuklar genellikle daha sosyaldır.

(Some) children who have siblings are usually more sociable.

- Bazı çocuklar kardeşleri olduğu için daha sosyaldır.

Some children are more sociable because they have siblings.

- Çocukların kardeşleri varsa daha sosyal olurlar.

If children have siblings, they are more sociable.

Based on the available evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that both the cognitive processes and the focus of attention may have exhibited notable differences between the two groups, which subsequently influenced their performance.

Comparable to this interpretation, Marlowe (2019) conducted a study investigating the effectiveness of different sentence-based activities in promoting sentence complexity in second-language writing. The results indicated that sentence-combining and translation had a significant positive impact on sentence complexity, whereas timed-writing practice did not yield similar results. Notably, among the three types of practice, sentence combining

proved to be the most effective. Marlowe attributed these findings to cognitive factors, suggesting that translated texts encompassed a wide range of structures, from simple to complex, and participants in the translation group primarily focused on conveying the meaning of the whole texts without placing significant emphasis on complex structures. Conversely, participants in the sentence-combining group exhibited a greater tendency to attend to language use, prioritizing the linguistic aspects of writing.

Unlike the sentence-combining activity design employed in the current study, the sentence-combining exercises in Marlowe's study did not incorporate any constraints or prompts. As a result, the design of the sentence-combining tasks allowed participants in Marlowe's study to have greater flexibility in considering various syntactic operations when combining sentences. Consequently, the participants had the opportunity to focus on both meaning and form, as exploring different options likely prompted them to consider the intended meaning.

It is important to highlight that, in contrast to Marlowe's study, the sentence-combining practice employed in this study did not yield significant results. However, this disparity in effectiveness can be attributed to the different designs of the sentence-combining tasks. Unlike Marlowe's study, the tasks in this study did not allow participants to choose from a variety of syntactic structures, potentially leading their focus of attention to be primarily on the form. In contrast, the sentence combining tasks merged with translation in this study provided participants with the opportunity to consider both form and meaning. Therefore, the crucial factor at play here may not be the specific type of task but rather the incorporation of attention to both form and meaning. Interestingly, this interpretation may align with Marlowe's arguments.

From feedback direction, the differences in the two activities could also influence the type of feedback received by the participants. In the traditional sentence combining activity, the focus of feedback was on the accuracy of the combined sentences, given the predetermined correct answer. However, in the sentence combining activity merged with translation, the feedback might be more centered on the overall meaning and accuracy of the combined and translated sentence, given the possibility of multiple correct answers. The feedback that focused on both form and meaning may be characterized by its richness in content and its relevance to the purpose of effectively conveying meaning with accurate and appropriate language forms. It is possible that this comprehensive feedback provided greater benefits to participants in the treatment group compared to those in the control group.

5.2. The Second Research Question

Notably, the correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between subordination density and writing quality when assessed using the IELTS rubric, but not when evaluated using the institution's rubric. These findings pertaining to the second research question suggest that the association between subordination density and writing quality may be contingent upon the specific evaluation criteria employed. These contrasting results imply that the influence of subordination density on the writing quality is context-dependent, and the specific criteria utilized for assessment play a crucial role in determining the observed relationship.

The observed inconsistency in the relationship between subordination density and writing quality may be attributed to the differences in how the IELTS rubric and the institution's rubric describe and assigns weight to the criteria. A closer examination of the rubrics reveals notable variations in the level of specificity and emphasis placed on the

evaluation of syntactic quality. For example, the IELTS writing rubric explicitly describes different bands, indicating the expected syntactic complexity and variety using phrases such as "limited range of structures with rare use of subordinate clauses". In contrast, the institution's rubric lacks specificity and detailed breakdown, describing grammatical range more generally with phrases such as "appropriate use of a wide variety of structures suitable to the level." Additionally, the relatively low weight assigned to the grammatical range in the institution's rubric suggests that other aspects of writing may carry more weight in the evaluation. These differences in explicitness and weighting may have influenced the observed inconsistency in the relationship between subordination density and writing quality.

Cumming and his colleagues (2005) examined the essays written by high and low-proficient writers and showed that the qualities identified in the essays of highly proficient writers were consistent with the scoring rubrics developed for independent and integrated writing tasks in the TOEFL. This finding provided evidence of the rubric's ability to effectively differentiate written discourse across various score levels. This suggests that the validity of a rubric relies on the extent to which the criteria included in the rubric align with the qualities observed in proficient writers' essays. Consequently, the assumptions in this study fit in with their findings because it is plausible to consider that the reverse scenario is also possible. The criteria outlined in a rubric may influence raters to evaluate an essay as high quality. The divergent outcomes observed in this study may be attributed to differences in the criteria utilized in the rubrics employed during the evaluation process.

In conclusion, this study tackled the challenges encountered by students in acquiring proficiency in complex sentence structures, specifically subordination. The primary objective was to investigate the efficacy of incorporating translation into sentence-

combining exercises as a tool to enhance students' capacity to construct complex sentences using subordination. Additionally, the study examined the correlation between subordination density and writing quality. The findings were presented in a structured manner, addressing the research questions sequentially, which facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the observed differences. Overall, the study tried to shed light on the potential benefits of integrating translation with sentence combining, providing valuable insights for language instructors and researchers alike. The implications of these findings aimed to extend to instructional approaches, assessment methods, and the development of effective writing strategies in second language acquisition. Finally, further research suggestion was provided with the hope that future studies in this area could explore additional linguistic, textual, and contextual factors and instructional variations to expand our understanding of second language writing abilities.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

The chapter begins with a concise summary of the main findings and contributions of the research. Then, it highlights the critical aspects investigated, the methods employed, and the outcomes obtained. This summary serves as a refresher of the research journey, setting the stage for a deeper exploration of its implications and practical relevance.

Following the summary, the chapter delves into the implications and applications of the study's findings. It elucidates how the research outcomes can inform and guide educational practices, curriculum design, and instructional approaches. By understanding the implications, educators can optimize their teaching methods, incorporate effective strategies, and foster improved student learning outcomes. Additionally, the chapter explores the broader applications of the study's results in the wider context of the field,

highlighting their significance for educational institutions, policymakers, and curriculum developers.

Finally, the chapter examines the future research directions from the current study. It acknowledges the limitations and potential areas for further investigation that have emerged during the research process. By presenting suggestions for future research, the chapter aims to inspire scholars to continue building upon the study's foundation, exploring new avenues of inquiry, and addressing unanswered questions. These suggestions provide valuable guidance for researchers seeking to expand the existing knowledge base, deepen our understanding of the subject matter, and contribute to advancing the field.

6.1 Summary

Developing proficient writing skills in the target language is crucial to success in undergraduate programs. Consequently, English-medium universities in Turkey include writing courses in their preparatory school curriculums to enhance students' ability to write academic essays in the target language. Drawing on their accumulated knowledge, experiences, and assumptions, instructors diligently work towards achieving this challenging mission, aligning with curricular policies.

Proficient writing composition necessitates learners to possess linguistic, textual, contextual, and content knowledge. Among these dimensions, linguistic factors are important as they are essential tools for creating meaning in the target language. In addition, extensive literature reports a positive correlation between syntactic complexity in written texts and writing quality. Therefore, developing syntactic complexity affects learners' success in producing proficient compositions.

The acquisition of syntactic complexity requires learners to possess the ability to manipulate sentence types, lengths, and structures. As language proficiency advances, learners progress from simple and typical constructions to more intricate and less frequent ones, enhancing their language through phrasal enrichment and subordination.

However, the pilot investigation revealed that students at the institution need help with their command of intricate sentence structures, specifically at the subordination level, which hampers their proficiency in effectively expressing ideas in academic writing. This identified problem has motivated the current research endeavor, proposing the integration of translation into sentence combining as an explicit practice to aid students in enhancing their ability to write using more complex sentences through subordination.

A quantitative method was employed to address the first research question regarding the effectiveness of integrating sentence-combining tasks with translation in increasing students' ability to write complex sentences using subordination. Two CEFR B2 level classrooms were selected, with the control group engaging in traditional sentence-combining exercises as a placebo, and the treatment group participating in sentence-combining exercises merged with translation as the treatment over fourteen weeks. The subordination density in the participants' compositions was compared between the control and treatment groups using repeated measure ANOVA, revealing increased subordination density over time for both groups. This suggests that as participants receive instruction, their subordination density improves, regardless of the treatment condition.

The second research question asked whether the subordination index scores of students' academic written products correlate with the scores assigned by raters using analytic writing rubrics. This question holds importance as the ultimate objective of this research was to identify effective practice methods to enhance students' writing

proficiency. A t-test was conducted to compare the overall quality scores of the control and treatment groups, indicating that the treatment group produced compositions of higher quality. Subsequently, the subordination density and overall quality scores were correlated using Spearman correlation. The results revealed a positive relationship between subordination density and writing quality when assessed using the IELTS writing rubric, but not when assessed using the institution's rubric.

The findings of this study contribute to language instruction and research in second-language writing in several ways. Firstly, the study highlights the potential of integrating translation with sentence-combining tasks to promote syntactic complexity and sophistication in student writing. Additionally, it underscores the importance of incorporating syntactic complexity as a criterion in writing assessment frameworks. Lastly, it emphasizes the need for careful consideration of rubric design, alignment with task objectives, and the utilization of multiple evaluation criteria.

Overall, this research offers valuable insights for thesis researchers in various areas, including instructional design, assessment practices, and examining contextual factors influencing second language writing abilities. In addition, the implications and applications of this study contribute to the ongoing advancement of knowledge in the field, facilitating the development of practical instructional approaches and comprehensive assessment frameworks.

6.2. Implications and Applications

The findings of this study have important implications for teaching second-language writing. Firstly, the observed increase in subordination density among participants regardless of the specific treatment condition suggests that explicit instruction and practice

focusing on subordination can effectively enhance learners' ability to use complex syntactic structures in their writing. This highlights the importance of incorporating targeted instruction on subordination within language teaching curricula, particularly for learners at intermediate proficiency levels. Furthermore, educators can develop instructional materials and activities that specifically target the development of complex sentence structures, enabling learners to enhance the overall quality of their written compositions.

Furthermore, the results aligned with the theoretical framework that Norris and Ortega (2009) proposed, supporting the notion of a developmental trajectory in acquiring syntactic complexity in writing. This suggests that language instructors and curriculum designers should consider integrating a systematic progression of syntactic complexity within instructional sequences. Educators can facilitate learners' progression along the developmental trajectory by gradually introducing learners to more sophisticated sentence structures, starting with coordination and gradually progressing to subordination and higher levels of complexity.

Integrating sentence-combining tasks with translation proved a practical instructional approach in enhancing students' ability to write complex sentences with increased subordination. This suggests that incorporating translation exercises within sentence-combining tasks can allow learners to transfer their grammar knowledge and apply complex sentence structures in their writing. This finding opens avenues for reconsidering the use of translation as a pedagogical tool in second-language writing instruction since the universities in Turkey strongly support the orthodoxy of the target language-only policies.

It also highlights the importance of developing innovative task designs tailored to meet students' unique needs and investigating the impact of these designs. Action research

projects can guide instructors in creating tasks for writing instruction that effectively addresses the specific requirements and challenges faced by students with diverse learning needs. Such efforts can contribute to advancing pedagogical practices and providing targeted support for learners, promoting inclusivity and maximizing their academic potential.

Although there were no significant differences in the usage of adverbial time clauses and noun clauses in compositions between the groups, the density of subordinate discourse devices such as "because" and "relative clause" structures was notably higher in the compositions of the treatment group. This implies that focused instruction and practice may have different impacts on incorporating diverse types of structures into student writing. Such differential patterns of change highlight the need for tailored instructional approaches.

Another notable finding was the reduction in the frequency of the discourse device "because" in the compositions of the control group participants from the midtest to the posttest. The observed shift in the posttest assessment highlights an important implication for language instruction and feedback strategies. They were using "because" as a sentence connector in Turkish which frequently leads to its improper usage in English. Consequently, participants received continuous negative feedback from the instructors. This negative feedback might have led the participants in the control group to withdraw from using the discourse device "because" in their sentences. Therefore, instructors should be aware of the potential influence of linguistic transfer from the students' L1 on their second language writing. Feedback strategies should consider the students' L1 background and address common transfer issues. Instead of solely focusing on pointing out errors, instructors can provide constructive feedback that creates awareness of differences

between their L1 and the target language. By acknowledging and addressing these transfer issues through targeted instruction and feedback, educators can support students in achieving greater accuracy and variety in their writing.

The positive relationship between subordination density and writing quality has important implications for assessment practices and instruction. Firstly, the findings suggest that subordination density, as a measure of syntactic complexity, can be a valuable indicator of writing quality and should be incorporated as a criterion in assessment frameworks. Secondly, writing instruction should emphasize the development of complex sentence structures, including the appropriate use of subordination.

However, the observed inconsistency in the relationship between subordination density and writing quality when assessed using the IELTS rubric and the institution's rubric, suggests that the choice of rubric or evaluation criteria can significantly influence the assessment of writing quality. Different assessment instruments can result in contrasting interpretations and judgments of the same written work. It highlights the need to pay attention to the intended focus and purpose of the evaluation and to ensure that the assessment aligns with the targeted learning outcomes.

6.3. Further Research Suggestions

A potential avenue for future research would be to investigate the long-term effects of integrating sentence-combining tasks with translation on students' writing abilities. While this study focused on the short-term impact of the intervention, understanding how these effects manifest and endure over an extended period would provide valuable insights. For example, longitudinal studies could track students' progress over long periods, examining their sustained improvement in writing complexity and subordination density.

Additionally, exploring the transferability of these skills to other writing contexts would be beneficial. This line of research would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness and durability of the proposed sentence-based practice, informing pedagogy to foster long-term growth in students' writing abilities.

This study contributed to the body of knowledge on second language writing and the relationship between subordination density and writing quality. The findings provided empirical evidence of the positive correlation between subordination density and writing quality, as assessed by the IELTS rubric. This reinforces the importance of considering syntactic features, specifically subordination when evaluating the quality of written compositions.

There are potential future research directions that can build upon this finding. First, future research can focus on exploring the effectiveness of different instructional approaches or interventions to improve syntactic features in writing. Comparing the outcomes of different interventions, such as sentence-combining tasks with translation or other innovative task designs, can illuminate the most effective strategies for enhancing syntactic complexity and overall writing quality. In addition, investigating the transferability of syntactic skills across different writing contexts and genres would be valuable. Finally, examining how learners apply their knowledge of subordination and other syntactic features in diverse writing tasks can provide insights into the generalizability of these skills and their impact on writing quality across various domains.

Furthermore, researchers can explore the relationship between other elements of writing quality such as textual features and task fulfillment. Investigating how these elements interact and contribute to overall writing quality can provide a deeper understanding of the complex nature of writing. Besides, corpus studies can be conducted to examine the

relationship between various elements of writing and quality, not only in isolation but also in combinations. By analyzing an extensive collection of written texts, researchers can identify patterns and associations between linguistic, textual, and contextual features and their impact on writing quality. This can help develop more comprehensive models or frameworks for assessing writing proficiency.

Throughout the research project, 176 compositions were examined on multiple occasions to assess subordination density, coordination ratio, and the frequency of specific target grammatical structures. Additionally, 88 compositions underwent four rounds of evaluation based on the institution's rubric and IELTS rubric. Although these numbers may be relatively small, the analysis and evaluations required extensive effort and dedication. It is worth noting that manual analysis becomes increasingly challenging as the volume of data surpasses certain thresholds. Therefore, future research endeavors should employ computerized tools such as Coh-Metrix, which can facilitate more comprehensive analyses of large datasets, allowing for enhanced precision and efficiency in data processing and evaluation.

As previously mentioned, research investigating the relationship between linguistic, textual, and contextual factors and text quality can yield inconsistent findings. Similarly, while this study confirms a correlation between subordination density and text quality, it also presents conflicting results. Notably, no significant association between subordination density and writing quality was observed when the participants' compositions were evaluated using the institutional rubric. This suggests that even within the same context, slight variations can significantly impact the dynamics among the elements related to quality. Consequently, the divergent outcomes reported in the literature may not necessarily contradict each other but rather indicate that the intricate interplay between the

components of writing quality is susceptible to even minor contextual differences. Therefore, future studies, regardless of their focus and design, should emphasize the importance of considering the specific context in which the research is conducted, to ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing writing quality.

Future research endeavors can benefit from conducting qualitative investigations to gain a deeper understanding of the findings obtained in this quantitative study. Specifically, researchers can focus on exploring the cognitive processes involved in performing sentence-based practices, such as sentence-combining merged with translation. By employing qualitative procedures, researchers can delve into the underlying mechanisms through which the proposed activity significantly improves writing skills. This can involve analyzing learners' thought processes, decision-making strategies, and metacognitive awareness during the execution of the practice. Additionally, incorporating learners' and instructors' perceptions and attitudes toward the proposed practice type can provide valuable insights into their experiences, preferences, and motivations. Such qualitative research can offer a richer understanding of the learning processes and shed light on the factors that contribute to the observed gains. Furthermore, investigating the impact of the proposed practice on other aspects, such as learners' self-efficacy, motivation, and engagement, can further enhance the understanding of its potential benefits.

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APPENDIX A

Review Handouts

CLAUSE I

A CLAUSE looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence.

A clause is part of a sentence with different meanings. A sentence with a clause looks like two sentences, but it is one sentence. Sentences with clauses are long and more complex sentences than simple sentences.

There are different types of clauses.

Adverbial time clauses
Subordinate clause connectors
Conditional clauses
Relative clauses
Noun clauses

Adverbial time clauses

They express time in a sentence. You turn a sentence into a time unit using **“WHEN-AFTER-BEFORE-AS SOON AS- WHILE- UNTIL”**.

We should do more physical exercise when we feel tired and stressed.

S V O TIME

People have to keep away from other people after they are infected with coronavirus.

We must get injections before we catch coronavirus.

Graduate students want to start working as soon as they finish university.

Students feel the comfort of their homes while they are having online lessons.

You cannot enter public places until you have a negative virus test result.

If you use sentences with adverbial time clauses in your writing, they become more complex, become rich in meaning, express more information, and have better quality.

CLAUSE II

A CLAUSE looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence.

A clause is a part of a sentence with different meanings. **A sentence with a subordinate clause looks like two sentences, but it is one sentence.** Sentences with clauses are long and more complex sentences than simple sentences.

There are different types of subordinate clauses.

Adverbial time clauses

Subordinate clause connectors

Conditional clauses

Relative clauses

Noun clauses

Subordinate clause connectors

They express reason and contrast in a sentence. You turn a sentence into a part of speech expressing reasons or contrast units using **“because(since) or although (even though)”**.

Be careful! There is **one** sentence, **not two**.

Today, there is a need for online lessons **because Covid-19 has changed our old educational system.**

Nowadays, online learning platforms are providing free services **since there is a high demand for online education.**

Students want to have face-to-face education **although online learning saves time and money.**

Even though online education has various advantages, it requires a lot of devices which are quite expensive.

If you make sentences with subordinate clause connectors in your writing, they become more complex, become rich in meaning, express more information and have better quality.

CLAUSE III

A CLAUSE looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence.

A clause is a part of a sentence with different meanings. **A sentence with a subordinate clause looks like two sentences, but it is one sentence.** Sentences with clauses are long and more complex sentences than simple sentences.

There are different types of subordinate clauses.

Adverbial time clauses

Subordinate clause connectors

Conditional clauses

Relative clauses

Noun clauses

Conditional clauses

They express conditions in a sentence. You turn a sentence into a part of speech expressing condition or contrast unit using **“if or unless.”**

Be careful! There is **one** sentence, **not two**.

We can reach more people **if we make a video and upload it to social media platforms.**

Today, we cannot advertise a product effectively **unless we use popular social media platforms, such as Instagram or Tik Tok.**

If you make sentences with conditional clauses connectors in your writing, they become more complex, become rich in meaning, express more information and have better quality.

CLAUSE IV

A CLAUSE looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence.

A clause is a part of a sentence with different meanings. **A sentence with a subordinate clause looks like two sentences, but it is one sentence.** Sentences with clauses are long and more complex sentences than simple sentences.

There are different types of subordinate clauses.

Adverbial time clauses
Subordinate clause connectors
Conditional clauses
Relative clauses
Noun clauses

Relative clauses

It looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence. A relative clause is a long adjective in the form of a sentence. You turn a sentence into an adjective and you modify a noun in a sentence using relative pronouns **“which (that), who (that), where, when, or whose”**.

Viruses affect people who have a poor immune system more severely.

S V

Covid-19 is a dangerous virus which spread very quickly.

S V

Zoom has become a popular platform where students and teachers meet for online lessons.

S V

2019 was the year when Covid -19 started to spread across the world from China.

S V

Students whose participation grades are lower than the average can do extra projects.

S

V

If you make sentences with relative clauses in your writing, they become more complex, become rich in meaning, express more information, and have better quality.

CLAUSE V

A CLAUSE looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence.

A clause is part of a sentence with different meanings. **A sentence with a subordinate clause looks like two sentences, but it is one sentence.** Sentences with clauses are long and more complex sentences than simple sentences.

There are different types of subordinate clauses.

Adverbial time clauses

Subordinate clause connectors

Conditional clauses

Relative clauses

Noun clauses

Noun clauses

It looks like a sentence, but it is not a sentence. A noun clause is a long noun in the form of a sentence. You turn a sentence into a noun using **“that”**. You can turn a yes/no question into a noun using **“if or not, whether or not”**. You can turn a question into a noun using question words such as **“what, when, how.... etc.”**

You can turn **a sentence** into a noun.

People	must accept	that we need to protect nature for our future
S	V	O

You can turn **a yes/no question** into a noun.

Customers	always check	if the quality of the product is good or not.
We	don't know	whether or not we will continue online education next year.
S	V	O

You can turn **a question** into a noun.

We	don't know	what the future will bring us.
We	don't know	when the epidemic will stop.
People	should know	how they can protect themselves from the virus.
S	V	O

If you make sentences with relative clauses in your writing, they become more complex, become rich in meaning, express more information, and have better quality.

APPENDIX B

Sample Intervention Worksheets

There are two sentences in each question. Read the following sentences carefully and combine them meaningfully. You need to have one meaningful sentence including a relative clause structure using the prompts provided.

- We eat food for breakfast. This food gives us energy all day. **(which)**
- People prefer online shopping. The number of these people is increasing. **(who)**
- A recent survey has shown some interesting statistics. These statistics prove that women have stronger immune systems. **(which)**
- Some children have brothers or sisters. These children are usually more sociable. **(who)**
- Deborah Handler is a famous publisher. She writes articles about modern manners. **(who)**
- People don't want to help other people. These people are very selfish. **(who)**
- There are billions of people in the world. These people suffer from poverty and hunger. **(who)**

Read the following sentences carefully and combine them meaningfully. There are two sentences in each question. You have to write one meaningful sentence out of these two sentences in your mother language. Then translate this sentence into English.

- Sabah kahvaltıda yiyecekler yeriz. Bu yiyecekler bize bütün gün enerji verir.

-

-

- İnsanlar online alışverişi tercih ediyor. Bu insanların sayısı artıyor.

-

-

- Yakın tarihli bir anket bazı ilginç istatistikler gösterdi. Bu istatistikler kadınların bağışıklık sistemlerinin daha güçlü olduğunu kanıtlamaktadır.

-

-

- Bazı çocukların erkek ya da kız kardeşleri vardır. Bu çocuklar genellikle daha sosyaldir.

-

-

- Deborah Handler ünlü bir yayıncıdır. Modern davranışlar hakkında makaleler yazar.

-

-

- İnsanlar başkalarına yardım etmek istemiyor. Bu insanlar çok bencil.

-

-

- Dünyada milyarlarca insan var. Bu insanlar yoksulluk ve açlıktan acı çekiyorlar

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APPENDIX C

Writing Exams

Writing Task 1

Student's Name and Surname:

Student Number:

Class: UPINT 5

Student's Signature:

Task: Write a paragraph and discuss the ways for making a product popular (100-150 words).

[illegible]

Midterm Exam

Section 3: Writing – 20 points

Choose **ONE** of the topics below and write a well-developed essay. **(200-300 words)**

- Personality is more important than appearance. Do you agree/disagree?
- People should lead a healthy lifestyle to live a great life. Do you agree/disagree?

Final Exam

Section 3: Writing – 20 points

Choose **ONE** of the topics below and write a well-developed essay. **(200-300 words)**

- Studying in groups is better than studying alone. Do you agree/disagree?
- Capital punishment is a good method to stop crime. Do you agree/disagree?

APPENDIX D

Institution's Writing Rubric

	6-5 points (100-83%)	4-3 points (67-50%)	2-1 points (33-17%)
CARE/ACCURACY	Text is easy to follow and errors do not interfere with understanding; there is little to no strain on the reader.	Some errors interfere with understanding, though meaning is still on the whole clear; there is some strain on the reader.	Errors make the text very difficult to follow; there is excessive strain on the reader.
RANGE OF LANGUAGE	Appropriate use of a wide variety of structures/ vocabulary suitable to the level and the task.	An adequate variety of appropriate structures/ vocabulary suitable to the level and the task.	The level of the structures and vocabulary used is far below what would be expected for the level.
	8-6 points (100-83%)	5-3 points (67-50%)	2-1 points (33-17%)
TASK FULFILMENT	The text is in the expected format for the genre and content is clearly organised within it. Ideas expressed are clearly focused on the task set. Ideas expressed are well developed. Originality and creativity are suitable for the level and the task.	There are some issues with the format of the text or the organisation of ideas within the format. Ideas are clear but may in places lack some focus and/ or development. Originality and creativity exist in the text but still needs to be developed.	The text does not meet the expected organisation for the genre and ideas are not clearly organised. Ideas are unclear and/ or are off-topic/ not developed. Originality and creativity are far below what would be expected for the level.

APPENDIX E

IELTS Writing Rubric

IELTS TASK 2 Writing band descriptors (public version)

Band	Task Response	Coherence and Cohesion	Lexical Resource	Grammatical Range and Accuracy
9	- fully addresses all parts of the task - presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas	- uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention - skilfully manages paragraphing	uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'	uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	- sufficiently addresses all parts of the task - presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas	- sequences information and ideas logically - manages all aspects of cohesion well - uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately	- uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings - skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation - produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation	- uses a wide range of structures - the majority of sentences are error-free - makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	- addresses all parts of the task - presents a clear position throughout the response - presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to overgeneralise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus	- logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout - uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use - presents a clear central topic within each paragraph	- uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision - uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation - may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation	- uses a variety of complex structures - produces frequent error-free sentences - has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	- addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others - presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive - presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear	- arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression - uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical - may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately - uses paragraphing, but not always logically	- uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task - attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy - makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication	- uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms - makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5	- addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places - expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn - presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail	- presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression - makes inadequate, inaccurate or over use of cohesive devices - may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution - may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate	- uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task - may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader	- uses only a limited range of structures - attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences - may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4	- responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate - presents a position but this is unclear - presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported	- presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response - uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive - may not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing	- uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task - has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader	- uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses - some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3	- does not adequately address any part of the task - does not express a clear position - presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant	- does not organise ideas logically - may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas	- uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling - errors may severely distort the message	attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2	- barely responds to the task - does not express a position - may attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development	has very little control of organisational features	uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling	cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
1	answer is completely unrelated to the task	fails to communicate any message	can only use a few isolated words	cannot use sentence forms at all
0	- does not attend - does not attempt the task in any way - writes a totally memorised response			