HEDGES AND BOOSTERS IN L1 AND L2 ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING L2 ACADEMIC WRITING

THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

SEDEF ALGI

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

AUGUST, 2012

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

Prof. Dr. Wolf König
Head of Department

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

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Hüsnü Enginarlar (METU, FLE)

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu (METU, FLE)

Prof. Dr.Yasemin Bayyurt (BOUN, FLE)

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Sedef ALGI

Signature :

ABSTRACT

HEDGES AND BOOSTERS IN L1 AND L2 ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS:

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING L2 ACADEMIC WRITING

Sedef Algı

M.A., Department of English Language Teaching

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu

August 2012, 288 pages

This study investigates the types, frequencies and functions of hedges and boosters employed in L1 and L2 argumentative paragraphs written by Turkish learners of English with pre-intermediate level of proficiency. It aims to uncover whether or not Turkish learners of English writing in L1 and L2 display any transfer in their employment of hedges and boosters. The extent to which the academic writing teaching materials result in any measurable change in the employment of hedges and boosters is also pursued. To this end, the data that is comprised of 104 (52 Turkish and 52 English) argumentative paragraphs written as a response to a TOEFL essay prompt are collected. The analysis of the data is done manually and each paragraph is coded and formatted in CLAN CHILDES. Later, PASW is used to run the descriptive statistics and calculate the frequency and percentages of hedges and boosters.

The results show that the types, frequencies, and meanings of hedges and boosters are culture and language-specific and they are topic and genre dependent. Research findings also reveal that the participants in this study often express appropriate degree of certainty and pragmatic vagueness while writing in L1 and L2. However, there are some cases in which the evidence of rhetorical transfer are observed with respect to functions of certain hedges. The findings further indicate that there is a parallelism between the teaching materials used in academic writing classes and the types, frequencies and functions of hedges and boosters produced in L2 paragraphs.

Keywords: *academic writing, hedges and boosters, L1 and L2 rhetorical transfer, pragmatic vagueness, writing materials.*

ÖZ

BİRİNCİ VE İKİNCİ DİLDE YAZILMIŞ ELEŞTİREL PARAGRAFLARDA KAÇINMA SÖZCÜKLERİ (Hedges) VE VURGULAMA SÖZCÜKLERİNİN (Boosters) ROLÜ:

İKİNCİ DİLDE AKADEMİK YAZIM ÖĞRETİMİ İÇİN ÖNERİLER

Sedef Algı

Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu

Ağustos 2012, 288 sayfa

Bu çalışma, orta-düzey öncesi İngilizce bilen Türkler tarafından birinci (Türkçe) ve ikinci dilde (İngilizce) yazılmış tartışma paragraflarındaki kaçınma sözcükleri (hedges) ve vurgulama ifadelerinin (boosters) tip, sıklık ve fonksiyonlarını araştırmaktadır. İngilizce öğrenen Türkler'in birinci ve ikinci dilde yazarken, kaçınma sözcükleri ve vurgulama sözcükleri kullanımında sözbilimsel aktarım olup olmadığını bulmayı amaçlar. Ayrıca, akademik yazım öğretiminde kullanılan materyallerinin, kaçınma sözcükleri ve vurgulama sözcüklerinin tip, sıklık ve fonksiyonel kullanımları bakımından ne derecede ölçülebilir bir değişikliğe sebep olduğunu da araştırmaktadır. Bu tez, akademik yazım materyalleri hazırlanırken göz önünde bulundurulacak hususları sağlamayı da amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, TOEFL makalesi yönlendiricisine cevaben yazılmış 104 adet (52'si Türkçe ve 52'si İngilizce) tartışma paragrafından oluşan veri toplanmıştır. Veri analizi el ile kodlanarak yapılmıştır. CLAN CHILDES programı kullanılarak, paragraflarda kullanılan kaçınma sözcükleri ve vurgulama sözcüklerinin tip, sıklık ve bağlamsal fonksiyonları belirlenmiştir. Daha sonra, nicel analiz olarak PASW kullanılmış ve kaçınma sözcükleri ve vurgulama sözcüklerinin sıklık ve yüzdeleri hesaplanmıştır.

Araştırmanın sonucu, kaçınma ve vurgulama sözcüklerinin tip, sıklık ve anlamlarının dil, kültür, konu ve yazım türüne özgü değişiklik gösterebileceğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, bulgular, bu çalışmadaki İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türkler'in, birinci ve ikinci dilde yazarken, uygun derecede kesinlik ve bağlamsal belirsizlikten yararlandığı da sıklıkla gözlemlenmiştir. Ancak bazı durumlarda, kullanılan kaçınma sözcüklerinin kullanım fonksiyonlarında sözbilimsel aktarım örneklerine de rastlanmıştır. Ayrıca, bulgular, akademik yazım derslerinde kullanılan materyaller ve ikinci dilde yazılan paragraflarda kullanılan kaçınma sözcükleri ve vurgulama sözcükleri arasında paralellik olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: *akademik yazım, kaçınma sözcükleri ve vurgulama sözcükleri, birinci ve ikinci dil arası sözbilimsel aktarım, bağlamsal belirsizlik, yazım materyalleri.*

Öğretmenlerim ve Öğrencilerime,

Geçmiş, Şu An ve Gelecektekilere

To My Instructors and Students

Past, Present, and Future

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the people for their support and contributions to the realization of this thesis. Before anybody else, I would like to thank from the bottom of my heart my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Çiler Hatipoğlu, whose brilliant ideas, unconditional support and encouragement from the very early day to the final step enabled me to develop a better understanding of the subject and to embrace the challenges in every step of the thesis. I am greatly indebted for her invaluable contributions she has made, substantial feedback she has given me, and her great hugs that have always relieved any sort of despair and brought light and joy to my life. Thank you Çiler Hocam for bringing light to my life! Without you, this study would have been accomplished.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my committee members Prof. Dr. Hüsnü Enginarlar for his valuable, constructive feedback and support he has given me and Prof. Dr. Yasemin Bayyurt for her detailed comments and contributions and tremendously helpful suggestions.

I am grateful to Banu Köker Tuncay and my students for their support and valuable help they have provided me during the challenging task of collecting the data. Thank you Banu! If it had not been you, I do not think I would have had such a corpus to analyze.

I was also fortunate enough to have my friends Ayşe Esra İyidoğan, Tuba Okçu, and Sevgi Şahin, the best friends ever, by my side who have always supported me at the times when everything seemed hopeless and impossible. I would also like to thank them for their valuable contributions throughout the process of writing the thesis. I am indebted to my friend Ayşe Esra İyidoğan, who has helped me entering the data into

CLAN CHILDES program and her constant support. Thank you Esra for letting me use your dinner table and write the very first sentence of my thesis in your lovely peaceful living room. I am grateful to Sevgi Şahin and Tuba Okçu for accepting the very challenging task of being a rater. I am further grateful to Tuba Okçu, who has been there for me in every crisis moment I have had during the analysis of the data. She has listened to me nagging and has constantly reminded me of the great joy of success I will feel after I finish the thesis. Thank you Tuba for being such a great and caring friend.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to my wonderful friends Semirhan Gökçe and Tülay Acaray, who have supported and encouraged me all the way. Semirhan has spent hours on formatting the thesis and made great jokes to cheer me up whenever I feel down. Thank you Semirhan, you cannot imagine how much your being there for me at the very toughest times and your working on my thesis as if it was your own have meant to me.

Finally and most importantly, my heart-felt gratitude goes to my family, to my parents and brothers for their unconditional love, infinite patience and enormous emotional support and care throughout this process. My dear Dad, Ömer Algı, thank you for your endless confidence and trust in me. You have always been sure that I will do the best in every aspect of my life as your daughter. Thank you for encouraging me to be an academician from the very early times of my education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABIL	Ability Marker
CTA	Current-Traditional Approach
CU	Correct Use
DBE	Department of Basic English
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ENG	English
EPE	English Proficiency Exam
ESL	English as a Second Language
FUT	Future Tense
IC	Incorrect Use
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
L2 Ps	English Paragraphs
METU	Middle East Technical University
NEG	Negative
NNS	Non-native Speaker
NS	Native Speaker
OVER	Overuse

PASS	Passive Voice
PL	Plural
POSS	Possibility
PROG	Progressive Tense
SG	Singular
TR	Turkish
WHOUT	Writing Handout

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Presentation

In this chapter, background to the study is discussed by focusing on the developments in the field of teaching L2 academic writing. Following this section, the significance of the study is presented by focusing on how this study can help L2 writers express their ideas and position themselves appropriately by aligning with the values and norms of the target discourse community. Finally, research questions are stated and following them the definitions of terms are given.

1.1 Background to the Study

When Thomas L. Friedman, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and *New York Times* columnist, published his famous book *The World is Flat* in 2005, it attracted a lot of attention as it was so long ago that the statement was proven wrong and Galileo had to even sacrifice his life when he argued the opposite. On the cover of the book, it says that the book is "…an account of the great changes taking place in our time as lightning-swift advances in technology and communications put people all over the globe in touch as never before…" The world feels like a small village and those exotic places are no longer far away and, most importantly, those foreign people are no longer foreigners as they can speak English perfectly well and communicate with native speakers competently. The world has globalized fast and English has become a lingua franca. As a result, teaching it to non-natives has also become significant especially in settings like Turkey, where English is spoken and learned as a foreign language especially for instrumental purposes such as finding a well-paid job or going abroad for MA or Ph.D degrees. Mastery of any foreign language entails overcoming certain effects of L1 since features of L1 may transfer. From this perspective, the teaching of writing might be regarded as one of the most challenging aspects of ELT; thus, firstly the process of EFL writing and then the possible problems that might be encountered during the process need to be understood well.

In fact, the teaching of writing has become an important research area among the educational researchers, linguists, applied linguists, and teachers since the early 1970s (Long and Richards, 1990). Some researchers have attempted to define the field of study itself (e.g., Daiker and Morenberg 1990; McClelland and Donovan 1985; North 1987), some have produced guides to conduct research in the field (e.g., Lauer and Asher 1988; Myers 1985), and some have felt the need for bibliographical research guides (e.g., Lindemann 1987; Moran and Lunsford 1984, 1988; Tate 1987). Other researchers categorized L2 learners as skilled and unskilled (Jacobs 1982; Jones 1982; Raimes 1985; Zamel 1982, 1983) and compared the results of L2 studies (Raimes 1985, Zamel 1982, 1983) with those of native speakers (Emig 1977; Faigley and Witte 1981; Flower and Hayes 1980; Perl 1979; Pianko 1979; Rose 1980; Sommers 1980). The results of these comparative studies (i.e., studies on L1 and L2 writing processes) showed similarities rather than differences between L1 and L2 writers (Akyel 1994). All these persistent efforts in trying to understand and define teaching writing show that teaching writing to non-native speakers is one of the challenging aspects of teaching English.

Approaches and Trends in L2 Writing

Throughout the years, a combination of theory, research and practice has evolved into several models of what should be involved in foreign language composition writing. Tony Silva (cited in Long and Richards 1990:11) provides a historical sketch of approaches and orientations to L2 writing and he presents four approaches: Controlled Composition, Current-traditional Rhetoric, The Process Approach and English for Academic Purposes.

The first approach to second language composition writing was controlled composition. This approach mirrored the effects of audio-lingual method as the learners were expected to 'practice with previously learned discrete units of language to talk of original ideas, organization, and style, and its methodology involved the imitation and manipulation (substitutions, transformations, expansions, completions, etc.) of model passages carefully constructed and graded for vocabulary and sentence patterns.' (Silva 1990:12). Writing was regarded as a means of practicing language structures rather than an important skill to be developed, then. Also, as Silva (1990) emphasizes above, the sentences were out of context and thus the discourse and its conventions had no significance.

However, Kaplan's (1967) theory of contrastive rhetoric brought a shift from separate sentences to awareness with regard to what should be taught in ESL writing classes. As a result, Current-Traditional Approach/Rhetoric (CTA) emerged. In fact, as the name of the approach reads, after Kaplan (1967:15) defined rhetoric as 'the method of organizing syntactic units into larger patterns', controlled practice writing was seen inadequate as it neglected rhetoric. Thus, the CTA approach put an emphasis on not only the logical arrangements of ideas and discourse forms, but also on the elements of a paragraph such as the topic sentence, supporting ideas, concluding sentences and transitions, and some developmental strategies such as comparison/contrast, cause/effect analysis, definition, classification, and illustrations (Silva 1990:14). In addition, since the fact that writing was more than producing grammatically correct sentences gained popularity, the essay with its structural bodies such as introduction, the body and conclusion paragraphs, and narration, description, exposition and argumentation type of organizational patterns became the focus of teaching writing (Silva 1990:14). With all these improvements and attitude changes toward writing, a shift from controlled writing to free writing was established. However, as Silva (1990:15) asserts, this approach is still popular in some current ESL composition textbooks, classroom practices and writing materials although it lacks some important factors that should be involved in teaching writing such as writing drafts several times.

Then, the process approach has been introduced as a result of some dissatisfaction with the previous approach. That is, some were dissatisfied with CTA and its focus on the linear approach to writing. Process approach followers viewed the composition writing process as ‘a non-linear, explanatory, and generative process whereby writers discuss and reproduce their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning’ (Zamel 1983:165). They examined the first language writing process and argued that writers go through some certain cognitive stages before producing the final composition draft (Flower & Hayes 1981). Thus, in ESL writing classrooms, learners should be encouraged to plan their writing procedure by finding topics and generating ideas before writing the first draft which would be followed by multiple drafts and revisions and editing (Silva 1990:15). In this approach, the writer was the center of the attention, and it was the writer’s own responsibility to identify and appropriately address the topic and the target discourse community (Silva 1990:16), which was criticized by the supporters of the final approach, English for academic purposes as by the followers of this approach, writing was a communicative act and the reader was an essential party in this relation.

Accordingly, the fourth and the final approach English for academic purposes orientation perceives writing as a communicative act and a response to a task that belongs to a certain genre. Thus, the writer needs to be aware of the conventions of that genre and be oriented toward success in L2 composition by writing within the criteria and requirements set by the academic community as well as taking the reader into consideration as the reader is an important member of that academic community with clear perceptions of what is appropriate and inappropriate in that community (Silva 1990).

When looked at the developments in teaching writing, it can be observed that Kaplan's concept of rhetoric and his framework for cultural thought patterns in the organization of discourse is still significant and valid. Kaplan's framework may be regarded as the first step in helping L2 learners understand that some possible difficulties they may encounter in L2 writing classes are due to the differences in thought patterns and the organization of ideas in diferent cultures. Rather than Kaplan's linear approach to writing, some other factors need to be emphasized today in writing classes. While learning to write in L2, developing 'a schemata for academic discourse' (Silva 1990:15), metadiscoursal competence and sociopragmatic awareness in the communication with the reader who is from a different discourse community with a set of values and norms that might be totally different from L1 learners' may be perceived as underlying factors. Thus, today, in teaching Writing for Academic Purposes, learners' developing another identity as a member of an academic community has become significant as writing process involves not only the writer, but the reader, text, context and their interaction.

Contrastive Rhetoric and Its significance in Academic Writing

When Kaplan published his famous article "*Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Communication"* in 1966, he started research in contrastive rhetoric. Since that time, researchers in the field have been studying various cultures and thought patterns and how they are reflected in written discourse (Connor 1996; Connor and Kaplan 1987; Hirose 2003; Kamimura and Oi 1988; Kobayashi 1984; Mohan and Lo 1985; Silva 1993; Wu and Rubin 2000). These studies are significant in understanding what is going on in the minds of L2 learners while writing in L2. That is also important in teaching academic writing as 'cultural differences in the nature of the rhetoric supply the key to the differences in teaching approach.' (Kaplan 1966:11). According to Kaplan (1966:11), logic forms the basis of rhetoric and it is evolved out of culture; therefore, it shows variation from culture to culture and even within the same culture. English and its rhetoric or thought patterns, for example, are evolved out of the Anglo-European cultural patterns, so the native speakers of English sequence their ideas in a linear way in their compositions (Kaplan 1966; 1987). Thus, the speakers and readers of English language expect that logic to be followed in communication as an integral part of their communication (Kaplan 1966:13). He also adds that 'an English expository paragraph usually begins with a topic statement, and then, by a series of subdivisions of that topic statement, each supported by example and illustrations, proceeds to develop that central idea and relate that idea to all the other ideas in the whole essay' (Kaplan 1966:14-15).

Kaplan (1966:20) emphasizes the necessity of teaching contrastive rhetoric to non-native speakers of English and for that he suggests firstly understanding existing paragraph orders other than the ones common in English. Thus, he studied about 600 foreign student compositions and as a result of that study, Kaplan (1966) put forth the framework in Figure 1 that shows the differences in the organization of paragraphs in ESL students' compositions.

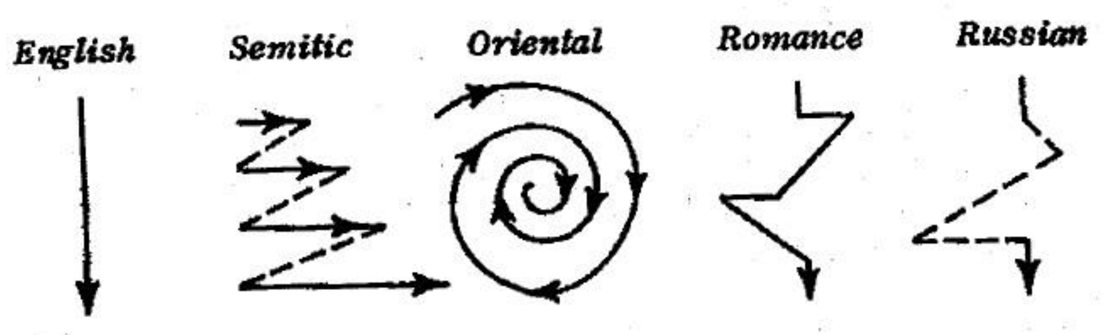

Figure 1. Cultural Thought Patterns in Inter-Cultural Education (Kaplan 1966:15)

According to Kaplan (1966:15), while English follows a linear idea development which requires direct and clear explanation and support of idea development, Semitic languages such as Arabic and Hebrew are based on a series of positive and negative parallel constructions, which would be regarded as 'archaic' or 'awkward' in English. When it comes to Oriental languages such as Korean, the students' writings are found to be indirect and are being developed 'in terms of what they are not rather than what they are' (Kaplan 1966:17), which might be marked awkward and unnecessarily indirect for an English reader. Romance languages such as French or Spanish, and as well as Russian, are found to 'show greater freedom to digress or to introduce extraneous material' (Kaplan 1966:18), which is again inappropriate for an English reader or writer.

The importance of cultural variation in thought patterns and its significance as an important factor in teaching academic writing has been analyzed and studied by many other researchers in various cultures. However, some researchers have disagreed with Kaplan's framework on cultural thought patterns based on their research results. Their results showed similarities both in L1 and L2 rather than differences.

Mohan and Lo (1985) studied Chinese rhetoric and, in contrast with Kaplan's argument, they proposed that Chinese was not an indirect language. Having examined teachers of native Chinese-speaking ESL students in Hong Kong and British Columbia, they concluded that the organizational patterns of Chinese and English were both classical.

Similarly, Eggington (1987) remarks that Korean expository writing resembles to 'the typical English introduction-body-conclusion pattern' (as cited in Leki 1991); however, Korean rhetoric differs from English in content and function of these sections (Leki 1991). Eggington (1987) also observes that a Korean writer may 'write either in a style similar to that of English or in a more Korean style depending on the Korean author of the text has been trained in an English-speaking country, as apparently many have.' (as cited in Leki). Likewise, Hinds (1987) found out that Japanese students employed both deductive and inductive patterns while they were writing in English. However, Japanese writers observed to organize their essays inductively while writing in their mother language (as cited in Can 2006).

Moreover, Bickner and Peyasantiwog (1988) studied paragraph developments in Thai and American essays and found that in both languages, writers started their essays with a topic sentence but concluded differently. That is, American essays had stronger conclusions than Thai essays.

This body of research is significant in that they indicate to the difficult aspects of uncovering the complexities of cultures as they are ‘more dynamic and protean, responding to the interaction between discourse communities and individual writers over time and in varied contexts’ (Leki 1991). Nevertheless, the translation of such contrastive rhetoric studies into L2 writing classes could be that ‘the idea of being yourself, or writing elegantly, or communicating clearly and convincingly has no reality outside a particular cultural and rhetorical context and that our discourse community is only one of many.’ (Leki 1991).

Thus, written discourse and its practices may show variation across cultures as “discourse practices are intrinsic to the world views of particular social groups and are tied to social values and norms” (Gee 1990). According to Swales (1990:24-27), the concept of discourse community might be somewhat vague but mostly entails certain notions such as ‘a set of common public goals’, ‘mechanisms of intercommunication among its members’ and ‘one or more genres of the communicative furtherance of its aims’. Thus, L2 learners need to be exposed to these different value systems and will need to learn to express themselves within the norms of value systems of their target community and should even internalize the expectations of different writing styles in various disciplines (Herrington 1985; McCarthy 1987), though such norms and value systems may even result in conflicts with their own.

Research on L2 writing learning process shows that NNSs may employ their L1 writing concepts and conventions while writing in the target language (Connor 1987a,b; Hinkel 1994; Kaplan 1988; Scarcella and Lee 1989). As Atkinson (1991:57) indicates perfectly well, Anglo-American discourse conventions are especially challenging for NNSs because NNSs do not have that shared knowledge of these conventions, and rhetorical directness is a part of it. Although they write in L2 and may produce accurate sentences, their reference in organizing and expressing their thought patterns and how they interpret the world is rooted in their own culture and values. What is going on in their minds and their perceptions are naturally manifested in their writings. Those ways are acceptable and may even be the norms at certain speech communities in L1 as there is a shared world view and common culture, but the manifestations of the same ideas in L2 writing by the use of L1 rhetoric is mostly inappropriate in L2 writing. As a result, they fail to perform within the conventions of the target community. Thus, it is significant to help learners gain metapragmatic awareness in L2 writing and improve their ability to 'construct a credible representation of themselves and their work, aligning themselves with the socially shaped identities' (Hyland 2002) in the target community. This could be rather challenging for both the writing instructors and the learners. For the former, designing classroom instruction to raise awareness in metadiscourse is essential and for the latter assuming identities that might be very different from the one in their L1 community may require time but will put these L2 learners at an advantageous position in communicating their propositions appropriately via their written work.

Contrastive Rhetoric in Turkish

In Turkish, some researchers have also examined how Turkish speakers organize text. Among those very few studies is Enginarlar's (1990) doctoral dissertation. He examined essays written both in Turkish and English by Turkish high school students. The findings of his study showed that the mean scores of Turkish and English essays were similar with respect to holistic ratings. Essays that followed a linear order were rated high, but the ones that were rated low did not. He also indicated that coordination was more common in the monolingual Turkish essays than the ones written by bilingual students. He also pointed out that this finding supported transfer of subordination which is in fact an L2 specific feature. Besides these, 70% of the monolingual students wrote long introductions. On the other hand, 25% of the bilingual students writing in Turkish wrote longer introductions and conclusions while only 10% of the bilingual students writing in English had longer introductions and conclusions.

Oktar (1991) also studied Turkish rhetoric and contributed to the field. She examined coordination and subordination in essays written by English major freshmen and some other freshmen students with different departments in a Turkish-medium university. Her findings were that while the essays written by non-English majors displayed coordination at both intersentential and sentential levels in Turkish, English major students exhibited subordination in English and coordination in Turkish at both intersentential and sentential levels. However, in essays written by bilingual students, transfer of subordination from English to Turkish at both levels –intersentential and sentential- was observed. These results are also parallel to Enginarlar's (1990) research findings as they suggest a possible L2 transfer of rhetoric to L1.

The last study was conducted by Erduyan (2004). She analyzed topical structure development in the essays written by monolingual Turkish students, bilingual Turkish students, and monolingual American students. Her findings revealed that with respect to topical structures, monolingual Turkish essays were highly different from English essays. On the other hand, there was not a significant difference between English essays written by bilingual Turkish students and monolingual essays written by American students in terms of topical structure. Moreover, she observed more sequential progression in topical structures of Turkish essays than the English ones. She related this finding with frequent paragraphing and bringing up more new topics in Turkish essays; thus, they were not observed as a feature of English essays in her study.

1.2 The Study

Acquiring the necessary skills to become a good writer is a complex process. That is why a lot of studies in the field of EFL have been devoted to the examining of this issue. The common finding in these is that the learners need to be exposed to the target language in L2 so that they are better able to express their ideas coherently, to exhibit their position in their paragraphs effectively and to organize the text in a way that abides by the conventions of academic writing. In other words becoming a good writer in L2 is a 'complex and on-going process' (Barbara Kroll, 1990:.1), which however can be made easier if the way the learners write in their first language is clearly understood first (Bayyurt 2010). This is the reason why in this thesis, the researcher not only scrutinises the paragraphs written by native speakers of Turkish in English but also closely examines the texts written by the same informants in their mother tongue. The thesis also tries to uncover whether or not any training in the target discourse results in any measurable change in the writing skills of the trainee writers. Therefore, it will be examined if there is a positive correlation between the information presented in the materials used in the writing classes and the number, types, and the (in)correct sociopragmatic use of hedges and boosters expected in the argumentative genre.

The present study aims at finding out first what types of hedges and boosters are used by the participants both in their native language, Turkish, and in their L2, English, writing to express certainty and position themselves appropriately in terms of 'the social interactions they appeal to and gain acceptance by warranting their claims in terms of reliability' (Hyland 2002). As Bayyurt (2010) puts forth, when students write in both L1 and L2, they employ certain metadiscoursal strategies so that their stance is made clear and they convince the reader as well. Hedges and boosters are regarded among these strategies used when the writers establish their points of views in their writings. Since the participants are at an academic setting and they will be tested over their abilities in using academic English appropriately while expressing their stance in their writings that will be written for a specific academic community at the end of their education at the DBE via the EPE, the study also aims at finding out whether the teaching of hedges and boosters in writing courses through the content and language of the materials exploited in those classes affect the number and type of such devices. This study also aims at contributing to the curriculum of writing courses at prep schools. That is, if L2 learners are trained well and are exposed to the necessary input to position themselves in an academic genre, they may become more successful and confident writers in L2. Accordingly, the research questions that this study is trying to answer are:

Research Questions:

1. What types of hegdes and boosters are employed by native speakers of Turkish in their Turkish (L1) and English (L2) academic writing practice?
2. What is the effect of teaching materials on the use of modals by the participants in their English (L2) academic writing?

   2.a. Is there a relationship between the content of the teaching materials and the number and type of modals in their L2 paragraphs? (*can, could, may, might, should, must, would and will*)

   2.b. When and how appropriately the students employ modals in their L2 argumentative paragraphs while making a proposition

According to Atkinson (1991), these conventions have become the norm especially in Anglo-American scientific writing. Our students are also exposed to American English and the textbooks and materials used in class are mostly produced in American English. Thus, in this study, I have chosen to study American English.

1.3 Significance of the Study

There are some studies on contrastive rhetoric in Turkish (as stated in Can 2006) but there are almost no empirical studies conducted to address L2 learners' needs in developing metapragmatic competence in L2 composition classes at prepatory classes of universities, where the medium of instruction is English. Although L2 learners encounter English for Academic Purposes and writing effectively for an academic community for the first time at prepatory classes, there are not any studies conducted to analyse whether such needs of L2 learners are met or not, or what could be some applications into classroom practice such as curriculum design, development of L2 writing instruction materials, and L2 writing classroom activities. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to filling the gap in the literature regarding the study of hedges and boosters because these devices and their appropriate use are 'central to the process of weighing fact and evaluation, which is at the heart of academic writing' (Milton and Hyland 1999:147). The study can also stimulate further research in the field and thus further contribute to filling the gap.

What is usually treated as a syntactic error in students' essays in L2 writing classes might be sociopragmatic violations in a specific discourse genre. While evaluating student compositions and giving feedback, teachers are mostly disappointed with the students' failure in organizing their ideas in a given discourse type like argumentation. Since the students may not be able to address to the propositional claims they are making appropriately due to a lack of metapragmatic awareness in the target community, their composition are graded as weak, or poor in terms of argument structures. Dokuzoğlu (2010) conducted research on L2 writing teachers' perceptions of mistakes in student writing and their preferences regarding feedback at a Turkish private university. Her results indicate that structural errors have the highest averages followed by the content related errors that comprise *no thesis statement, poor thesis statement, poor argument, irrelevant sentences, lack of clarity of ideas, repetition of ideas*, and *failure to balance parts.* One item that is categorised as structural or syntactic error might be in fact a sociopragmatic error. To illustrate, a Turkish student may misuse necessity modal *should* while expressing certainty in his/her paragraphs as in Turkish epistemic modality is expressed via the use of one suffix *–m(A)LI*. Since 'much of our sense of who we are originates in our home cultures' (Hyland 2002:1094) and the role of the writing instructor is to help L2 learners 'develop peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding and arguing that define the discourse of the community' (Bartholomae 1986, as cited in Hyland 2002).

A category for assessing L2 learners' appropriate use of hedges and boosters could be suggested as an item under content related errors in teacher feedback forms used in writing classes. That may also encourage teachers to stress the significance of hedges and boosters in author positioning in academic writing classes. The term 'positioning' is used to refer to the 'process by which identities are produced by socially available discourses' (Davies and Harre 1990; Fairclough 1995).

1.4 Definition of Terms

In this section, firstly various definitions of hedges and boosters as two important interpersonal metadiscourse devices will be presented and secondly the definitions of these concepts in this study will be explained.

1.4.1 Hedges and Boosters

As Doyuran (2009:86) states, Lakoff introduced the term 'hedge' in 1972. Since then, this linguistic concept has been interpreted by many researchers (Chafe 1985, 1986; Chafe & Danielewicz 1987; Hermeren 1978; Holmes 1984; Huebler 1983) and has been defined in various ways both in spoken and written discourse as they are not only complex but also many in number.

Although Lakoff (1972:462) defined hedges as 'words or phrases whose job is to make things fuzzy' (as cited in Doyuran 2009), in pragmatics, hedges are correlated with politeness, vagueness, hesitation and indirectness. Huebler (1983) finds hedges as effective and flexible in expressing ‘socially expected doubt, hesitation, indirectness and politeness’ (as cited in Hinkel 1997:373). Likewise, Brown and Levinson (1987) regarded hedges as indirectness strategies to minimize the threat to face based on their speech act theory. Thus, according to Brown and Levinson, hedges are means to ‘delimit and define the extent of claims, the truth value of a proposition, and the speaker’s/writer’s responsibility for the completeness of a proposition/claim’ and they can be engaged to ensure ‘cooperation, informativeness, truthfulness, relevance, and clarity which on many occasions need to be softened for reasons of face’ (1987:146). Parallel to Brown and Levinson, Myers (1989:13) perceives hedging as politeness and mitigating strategy as they are employed to show ‘an appropriate attitude for offering a claim to the community’ and thus can be explained by positive and negative politeness. As Doyuran (2009:87) asserts, academic writing requires the use of hedging as ‘an academic knowledge claim is a threat or Face Threatening Act for other researchers’. In this sense, as Hinkel (2005) states, in written discourse, hedges are usually defined as numerous lexical and syntactic features of text to moderate claims or propositions and to decrease the writer’s responsibility for the truth value of the statements by several other researchers (Hinkel 1997; Leech 1983; Levinson 1983; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik 1985).

In academic writing in English, writers are expected to display competence in ‘adopting a point of view in relation to both the issues discussed in the text and to others who hold points of view on those issues’ (Hyland 2005:175), and they can achieve this through the use of hedges and boosters. Thus, Hyland (2005) conceptualizes these concepts as stance markers. He defines *hedges* as words like *might*, *possible* and *perhaps* that imply propositions based on possible reasoning instead of certain knowledge, which allow writers to leave a discursive space for readers to express their interpretations. According to Hyland (2005), b*oosters,* however, are words such as *clearly, obviously and demonstrate* that enable writers communicate certainty in what they express and to signal their involvement with the topic and solidarity with the reader; therefore, their function is to ‘stress shared information, group membership, and engagement with readers’ (Hyland 1999). *Boosters* enable writers to write with assurance ‘while effecting interpersonal solidarity, setting the caution and self-effacement suggested by hedges against assertion and involvement.’ (Hyland 2005:179). Moreover, according to Hyland and Tse (2004:168), unlike *hedges*, *boosters* indicate certainty and emphasize the force of propositions.

Anglo-American written texts are characterized with the hedges and boosters as these devices are essential in writers’ acceptance for their work (Hinkel 1997:382). These devices enable writers balance their beliefs with caution and express their disciplinary persona that is both modest and assertive (Hyland 2000). Thus, the functions of hedges and boosters in academic prose are perceived mostly as communicative since they express reliability and strategic manipulation of the strength of commitment to claims to accomplish interpersonal aims (Hyland 2005).

Research shows that non-natives speakers (NNSs) mostly produce writings or essays which are marked as off-topic, unclear, and somehow vague unless they are written according to the rigid conventions of essay writing and textual organization (Carlson 1988; Clyne 1988; Connor 1987a). In fact, it is emphasized by the experts on the field that L2 writing should carry the characteristics of native speakers’ writing. Since academic writing requires vagueness and indirectness to a certain extent depending on the context and the purpose of the writing, native speakers of English (NS) employ a certain degree of indirectness or vagueness so as to avoid precision (Chanel, 1994). Thus, when the NNSs do not have the knowledge and skills of being indirect when appropriate and necessary in their essays or they use those indirectness strategies inappropriately, they perform poorly and their essays are marked accordingly. To be a competent and skilled L2 writer, one needs to understand and use practical and appropriate ways of being vague (Chanel 1994). Therefore, teaching of these devices in writing classes and helping L2 learners use them in composing their ideas and ‘acknowledging disciplinary norms of appropriate argument’ (Hyland 2005:180) is significant.

1.4.2 Hedges and Boosters in the Present Study

Since the aim of the present study is to uncover the types and forms of hedges and boosters employed by the participants both in L1 and L2, these devices and their conceptualizations are limited with the taxonomy used by Bayyurt (2010), which was adapted from Hinkel (1998) and Hyland (2005).

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Presentation

In this chapter, the motivation for teaching appropriate use of hedges and boosters in L2 academic writing is discussed with reference to the term 'metadiscourse'.

2.1 Metadiscourse

Thanks to the developments and a body of research in the theory of academic writing, it is now accepted that metadiscourse, which 'refers to the aspects of a text which explicitly organize the discourse, engage the audience and signal the writer's attitude' (Hyland 1998) is an important concept in persuasive writing. Its proper use or interpretation is interrelated with the rhetorical context. As Hyland and Tse (2004) states, the term refers to the ways writers communicate with their readers through a certain discourse in order to show their stance toward both the content and the audience of the text. They further define it as a 'self-reflective linguistic material referring to the evolving text and to the writer and imagined reader of that text' (Hyland and Tse 2004:156). Both the reader and the writer of the text are actively involved in the writing process as writing is considered as a 'social engagement' (Hyland and Tse 2004:156). Thus, it is conceptualized as a pragmatic device that constructs meanings and aids writers to influence readers' understanding of both text and attitude towards its content and audience (Hyland 198).

Some researchers have conceptualized metadiscourse as text organization devices (Bunton 1999; Mauranen 1993; Valero-Garces 1996), or explicit illocutionary predicates (Beauvais 1989 as cited in Hyland and Tse 2004), but metadiscourse is mostly regarded as authors' linguistic devices and rhetorical manifestations used to 'bracket the discourse organization and the expressive implications of what is being said' (Schiffrin 1980:231). In other words, the concept encompasses a variety of devices and features that are in effect to get the writer's message across in such a way that the audience of that text comprehends the writer's intent and stance towards the topic by organizing the ideas and interpreting them as the way the writer wishes and within the value systems and understandings of a particular discourse community.

Hyland and Tse (2004:167) propose a model of academic metadiscourse and they stress that in pragmatics, metadiscourse can be defined as 'the writer's reference to the text, the writer, or the reader that enables the analyst to see how the writer chooses to handle interpretive processes as opposed to statements relating to the world'. They offer a model of metadiscourse in academic writing by building on earlier models of metadiscourse proposed by Hyland (1998a) interactive resources and interactional resources . The first one encompasses the topic changes, signal sequences, connection of ideas, and preview materials to help organize the discourse. The second one, on the other hand, refers to the writers' responses to the text with the use of hedges, emphatics, attitude markers, and self-reflections (Hyland and Tse 2004).

A variety of metadiscourse taxonomies have been proposed by the researchers (Beauvais 1989; Crismore 1989; Mauren 1993; Vande Kopple 1985). However, as Hyland (1998) indicates, the most comprehensive taxonomy is the one devised by Crismore, Markkanen and Steffenson (1993) because they propose two subcategories: textual and interpersonal. Hyland's approach to metadiscourse follows that (as cited in Hyland 1998), but he further subcategorizes specific functions to accommodate meanings in academic texts. His taxonomy is illsutrated in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 Functions of metadiscourse in academic texts (Hyland 1998:442)

Categories	Functions	Examples
Textual metadiscourse		
Logical connectives	express semantic relation between main clasues	*in addition, but, therefore, thus, and,* etc.
Frame Markers	refer to discourse acts or text ay in an explicit	*finally, to repeat, our aim here, we try,* etc.
Endophoric Markers	refer to information in other parts of the text	*noted above, see Fig 1Table 2, below*, etc.
Evidentials	refer to source of information from other texts	*according to X/Y (1990), Z states*, etc.
Code glosses	help readers grasp meanings of ideational material	*namely, e.g., in other words, such as,* etc.
Interpersonal metadiscourse		
Hedges	withhold writers' full commitment to statements	*might, perhaps, it is possible, about,* etc.
Emphatics	emphasize force or writers' certainty in message	*in fact, definitely, it is clear, obvious,* etc.
Attitude Markers	express writers' attitude to propositional content	*surprisingly, I agree, X claims*, etc.
Relational Markers	refer to or build relationship with readers in an explicit way	*frankly, note that, you can see,* etc.
Person Markers	refer explicitly to authors	*I, we, my, mine, our*, etc.

As Table 2.1 shows, *textual metadiscourse* involves devices that express an argument and help understand the writer's preferred intentions. They aid organize the discourse in a way to anticipate the readers' knowledge and express what the writer thinks is appropriate to explicitly express and guide the reader accordingly (Hyland and Tse 2004). They have five basic functions:

Logical connectives are transitions, mostly conjunctions, which mark addition, contrast, and consequential steps different from the external world.

Frame markers signal changes in the discourse and text boundaries and or elements of schematic text structure. Devices used to sequence, label text stages, announce discourse goals, and indicate topic shifts fall in this category.

Endophoric markers are words that other parts of the text, and they are significant in making the additional information available to the readers.

Evidentials are similar to endophoric markers in that they show the source of the textual information that originates outside the text. Thus, they enable the readers interpret and establish intertextuality (Hyland 1998).

Code glosses refer to providing additional information to make sure that the reader comprehends the writer's intended message either by explaining, comparing or expanding what has been said.

Interpersonal Metadiscourse, on the other hand, guides readers to interpret author's perspective towards both the propositional information and the readers themselves, establishing a writer-reader relationship and anticipating possible objections to statements (Hyland 1998). Hyland and his colleague Tse define five major categories of interpersonal metadiscourse markers:

Hedges refer to items that point to writer's hesitation to present or evaluate propositional information categorically (Hyland 1998). These devices help present unproven claims and soften categorical assertions (Hyland 1994).

Emphatics, on the other hand, are items that signal certainty and emphasize the force of the proposition (Hyland 1998). Their balanced use together with hedges is essential in academic writing (Hyland 1998).

Attitude markers communicate the writer's affective attitude to textual information in a more varied way and express surprise, obligation, agreement, and importance (Hyland 1998).

Relational markers -also called engagement markers- explicitly address readers and involve them as participants of the text. Thus, they include second person pronouns, imperatives, and question forms (Hyland 1998 & Hyland and Tse 2004).

Person markers point to the importance of the degree of author presence in the text. This is judged by the frequency of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives to present both propositional and metadiscoursal information. (Hyland 1998). These are also called as self mentions (Hyland 2004; Hyland and Tse 2004).

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

3.0 Presentation

In this chapter, studies related to the employment of hedges and boosters are presented. Firstly, studies conducted on the employment of hedges and boosters to assess the truth value of propositions in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are briefly indicated. Following this section, hedges and boosters in EFL texts written by native speakers of Turkish are discussed in more detail.

3.1 Hedges and Boosters used in EAP

Studies conducted on the analysis of hedges and boosters in EAP reveal that their employment shows variation among native and non-native speakers of English. Many studies show that L2 learners resort to stronger claims and more authoritative tone than native speakers do.

Markkanen and Schroder (1992) studied German and Finnish learners of English and found out that these learners used stronger claims and more authoritative tone in their academic writings than native speakers of English. Intaraprawat and Steffenson (1995) also compared Finnish and American students' use of hedges in writing and they found that while Finnish students softened their claims and expressed their reactions in their texts immediately, American students employed emphatics and provided evidence rather than softening their claims.

Hyland and Milton (1997) express that Cantonese writers composed differently than British writers in that they employed a more limited range of hedges, emphatics, and other metadiscoursal features and had difficulty in conveying certainty. A more recent study conducted by Hinkel (2005) also supports Hyland and Milton's (1997) results. Hinkel (2005) studied types and frequencies of hedges and intensifiers used in native and non-native academic essays. Her results indicate that L2 writers employ a very limited variety of hedges, most of which signal conversational and casual spoken communication.

Hinkel (1997) also studied metadiscourse devices that characterize L1 and L2 writing. She compared employment of such devices in native and non-native speaker student essays, and focused on 21 *rhetorical, lexical, referential* and *syntactic* indirectness devices. She found that writings of Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Indonesian students were marked with greater frequencies of rhetorical questions and tags, disclaimers and denials, vagueness and ambiguity, repetition, several types of hedges, ambiguous pronouns and passive voice devices than native speakers did.

Hyland (2000) used a slightly different method used in the studies mentioned above to examine 14 Cantonese L1 undergarduates responses to hedges and boosters in academic writing. He conducted a small scale retrospective think aloud study and a follow-up interview. His results showed that while the participants generally attended to the boosters, hedges seemed to be invisible to the students.

In a more recent study, Blagojevic (2004) compared 15 research articles by native speakers of English and 15 by native speakers of Norwegian. She concluded that Norwegian writers seemed to hedge their statements more frequently than their English counterparts. English writers showed a tendency to use more emphatics and fewer hedges while expressing their persona in their compositions. Blagojevic (2004) further adds that despite some differences in the employment of metadiscoursal model by the two parties, Norwegian metadiscourse model is not totally different from the one used by English speakers. This somehow indicates that different cultures may sometimes show similar metadiscoursal patterns in academic writing.

Researchers also conducted studies on advanced second language writers and how they employed metadiscourse devices as interpersonal resources to represent themselves and their work. Wishnoff (2000) investigated the effects of instruction on academic writings produced by graduate students in an academic writing class for non-native speakers of English. She also studied whether this instruction would transfer to computer-mediated type of writing. Some students received treatment for proper use of hedging devices and their results were compared to the control group. Her results showed that treatment group showed statiscally significant increase in their employment of hedging devices in their research papers.

Similarly, Hyland (2004) examined 240 doctoral and masters dissertations by Hong Kong students in order to display rhetorical and social differences among disciplinary communities. The most frequent category in the corpus was hedges. It comprised 41% of all interactional uses (Hyland 2004). Moreover, hedges were particularly preferred by the students from soft fields such as Business Studies, Public Administration, and Applied Linguistics, which comprised over 60 % of the cases (Hyland 2004). He commnets that social sciences rely more on qualitative analysis or statistical probabilities in constructing knowledge, and thus, claims are made through reasonable tentativeness and careful exposition (Hyland 2004).

In Turkish context, Fidan (2002) studied Turkish scientific articles from different fields in Turkish academic journals and books. She used Hyland's (1998) taxonomy and concluded that more textual metadiscourse markers rather than interpersonal markers characterized these papers. Hedges and emphatics were more prevalent than other interpersonal metadiscourse devices. Likewise, Doyuran (2009) examined academic writings from engineering and linguistics fields. She focused on interpersonal metadiscourse devices. She found out several hedging devices in the form of epistemic verbs [e.g., *’iddia etmek*’ (claim); ‘*önermek*’ (suggest)], copulas [e.g., ‘*görünmek*’(seem)], epistemic modals [the combination of the ability suffix *‘-ebil’* (able or can) with the aorist ‘*-Ir*’ (simple present tense suffix)], inferential model [‘m*E*l+d*I*r’ (must)], adverbials [e.g., ‘*tamamen*’ (completely); ‘*büyük ölçüde*’ (to a great extent)], clauses relating to the probability of the subsequent proposition being true [e.g., ‘*muhtemeldir ki*’ (probably); ‘olas**ı**d**ı**r’ (possibly)], passive forms of epistemic verbs [e.g., ‘-il’ as in ‘*iddia ed*il*mektedir’* (it is claimed that)], and rhetorical devices [e.g., ‘*bu sismik veriler…gösteriyor’* (these seismic variables indicate)]. Her categorizations will be used in the present study while analyzing hedges and boosters in L1 argumentative paragraphs.

3.2 Hedges and Boosters in EFL Texts Written by Native Speakers of Turkish

There are very few studies conducted to compare Turkish L2 learners’ employment of hedges and boosters both in Turkish and English academic writing.

Can (2006) analyzed argumentative essays written in English by bilingual Turks, monolingual American students, and Turkish essays written by monolingual and bilingual Turks. He compared these essays with respect to their organizational patterns and metadiscoursal properties. The results indicated that all students used metadiscoursal features in their argumentative essays, but the types and frequencies showed variation. Monolingual Americans employed more emphatics to emphasize their stance regarding the issues in the essays. They used *‘I believe’*, ‘*obviously*’ and *‘of course’* more than other participants. On the other hand, bilingual Turkish students used more emphatics in their Turkish essays than they did in their essays in English. This study supports Hyland’s (2002) research results in that individualistic identity implied by the use of *I* may be problematic for L2 learners and thus essays written by these learners may show significant underuse of authorial reference while making arguments in L2.

Bayyurt's (2010) study is an extension of Can's (2006) study. She also studied metadiscoursal features in essays written in Turkish and English by bilingual Turkish university students. She compared the employment of hedges and intensifiers in argumentative essays written in English and Turkish. The results revealed that the students used more hedges than intensifiers while arranging their arguments. They 'preferred to hedge their statements to obscure their authorial identity while advancing their opinions' (Bayyurt 2010:179). Her findings were similar to those of some earlier studies conducted by Can (2006), Doyuran (2009), Fidan (2002), Hinkel (2005), Markkanen and Schröder (1992).

Bayyurt (2010) also stresses the significance of analyzing the use of hedges and intensifiers in Turkish more thoroughly so that L2 learners' awareness is raised towards communicating their arguments clearly in both Turkish and English.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD OF RESEARCH

4.0 Presentation

In this chapter, the Summer School program during which the data collected, and the participant profile are explained. Then, the data and data analysis procedures are presented.

4.1 Summer School Program at the DBE

The students who have a Yearly Achievement Grade between 49.50 and 64.49 and thus are unable to qualify to take the EPE in June, and those who have taken but failed this exam are entitled to attend the Summer School offered by DBE at METU. The Summer School starts after the English Proficiency Exam in June, on the date announced in the METU Academic Calendar. Summer School is not compulsory; however, only those students who have registered for and attended at least 90% of the classes can take the English Proficiency Exam after Summer School.

The students have a 120-hour intensive course which lasts four weeks. They take 6 hours of lesson every weekday and it lasts for 20 weekdays. From 8:40 till 11:30, they taket the reading and writing courses, and from 12:40 till 15:30, they take the language and listening courses. A summary of the grammar topics is done and then, the students do the revision exercises prepared only for the Summer School program. All the instructors have to follow the same program and thus outside materials are forbidden to be used in classes. The materials for the Summer School are prepared by the DBE instructors and they are revised and used every year. Course books and materials used in the Summer School is as follows: Compiled Reading Material for Summer School, Writing Tasks for Summer School prepared by Zuhal Sayman (APPENDIX B and APPENDIX C), and Language Use and Listening Practices for Summer School. They are all METU publications.

The courses are separated according to the skills to be developed. In the morning classes, the summer school attendants take a 3-hour reading and writing course, and in the afternoons, they take the language and listening course. The morning and afternoon instructors are assigned according to the skills that are going to be taught. For the first two weeks of the summer school program, they have two teachers, one is reading and writing instructor and the other is language and listening instructor. For the remaining two weeks, they have another two instructors so that they are exposed to a variety of teaching methods and benefit from them.

In the writing courses in the Summer School, since the students have already been given the instructions and opportunities to practice and produce conventions of academic writing, they polish the skills they need to improve in the light of the feedback they get from the writing instructor. Teacher prompted handouts or worksheets are not used as the Summer School writing course has a different format. The format of the Summer School writing course is as follows: The students follow the writing booklet which includes an introduction to the basics of academic writing. Here, they find a brief introduction about the parts of a condensed paragraph: introductory sentence, topic sentence, major and minor supporting ideas, and the concluding sentence. There are also several sample paragraphs written in the discourse types they have been trained during the academic year. There are also 10 writing tasks to be done throughout the Summer School. These tasks are in line with the EPE writing part. There are two parts in these tasks as it is in the EPE. In the first part, the students respond to a text related with the writing topic so that their background schemata are activated before writing. This part is graded over 5 points. After that, they write the condensed paragraph. In writing classes, it is all up to the students and the instructors whether to do the tasks in class or assign them as homework. The students may prefer to write the paragraph at home and get feedback from the instructor. Each writing instructor may follow a different classroom procedure in that sense. As long as they develop the skills the students need to, they are allowed to ask the students to do the tasks either in class by simulating the EPE writing atmosphere, or assign it as homework. The students may also write extra paragraphs about any topic and ask for feedback.

4.2 The Participants

The paragraphs were collected from 52 students, 34 of whom were female and 18 of whom were male. They were L1 speakers of Turkish and non-native speakers of English. The participants of this study had been trained in making use of their persona that was persuasive and communicatively competent in perceiving L2 writing as a social activity and responding to it accordingly during their education at the DBE. Thus, they are expected to be able to produce paragraphs within the suitable rhetorical dimensions of an academic discourse genre in order to achieve their communicative intent by appropriately negating any possible objections from the readers or audiences and impress and convince them about their proposal at the same time. Otherwise, as Hyland and Milton (1997) put forth, when they - the writers - fail to organize their ideas coherently by following the conventions of a discourse genre, the writer's communicative intent becomes unclear or accommodated by the readers' own perspectives.

When the data were being collected, the participants had already completed their first academic year at the DBE and were not either successful in the proficiency exam which was given at the end of the year, or not qualified to take the exam as they were unable to obtain the required points to be eligible to take the exam. Their ages rahged from 18-20.

The participants had been exposed to argumentative paragraph discourse for about a month through the end of the academic year. In fact, that is the last type of discourse they were taught besides advantage/disadvantage, cause/effect analysis, and descriptive paragraphs. The researcher has chosen argumentation type of discourse since in that type of paragraph the students are better able to voice their ideas and so she can analyze to what extent the students can use hedging strategies appropriately in expressing their argument and trying to convince the reader. The reason why the researcher has chosen collecting the data from the summer school students is that these students have already practiced the discourse.

Most of the students could not pass the first stage of the exam which is comprised of reading comprehension and language structure. The second stage comprises the writing component. Accordingly, the students are familiar with the structures that can be used in argumentative paragraphs. For example, what type of language they can use in the Topic Sentence, how they can state the counter argument and some methods they can use while refuting the counter argument. The students have been trained in argumentative paragraph writing by teacher prompted structures and several worksheets provided by the administration.

They were also given guidance in how to strongly agree or disagree with an issue. That is, they were taught to support their stance and justify it appropriately by strong minor supporting ideas using academic English.

For more information about the detailed student profile with respect to their educational background, parents' level of education, their perceptions of English language proficiency, etc, see APPENDIX D.

4.3 The Data

The corpus collected for this study comprised two sets: (1) detailed background information related to the informants (APPENDIX A) and (2) argumentative paragraphs produced by the students attending the summer school program at the Department of Basic English at METU. The students were given a writing prompt taken from http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/989563wt.pdf.

The background information related to the participants was collected using a questionnaire (APPENDIX A) in which the participants were asked to write down their age, gender, the name, place and type of high school they graduated from, place of registration, permanent residence, the level of education of their parents, the approximate annual income of the family, the languages they speak, and the level of proficiency in these languages (including English) and the foreign countries that they have visited, the reasons for visiting those countries, and for how long they stayed in those countries.

For the argumentative paragraph, six writing prompts from the web page of TOEFL were chosen. The TOEFL prompts were selected for this study as the TOEFL exam is an internationally recognized test of English for non-native speakers who learn English for academic purposes and the writing prompts that are given in EPE of METU(http://www.dbe.metu.edu.tr/prf/) are parallel to the ones in TOEFL

The selected writing prompts were:

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Boys and girls should attend separate schools. Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.

2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Technology has made the world a better place to live. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.
3. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Teachers should be paid according to how much their students learn. Give specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.
4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.
5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Telephones and E-mail have made communication between people less personal. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.
6. Some people believe that a college or university education should be available to all students. Others believe that higher education should be available only to good students. Which view do you agree with? Explain why. (Taken from http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/989563wt.pdf)

The topics were presented to the students and they were asked to choose the one that they felt most comfortable with and the one they thought they would be able to express their views in a more persuasive manner. The majority of the students chose '*Should children start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school?'*

When the students were asked why they had chosen this topic, they said that they thought they would be better able to express their ideas on this topic better in Turkish and English as they were attending Summer School since they failed to pass the EPE. And they considered starting learning English at a later age as one of the more important factors for their failure.

The total number of English (N=55) and Turkish (N=55) paragraphs was 110. This study follows the established tradition of sampling the participants' writings both in L1 and L2 to analyse metadiscoursal features of these writings and to discover how they use hedges and boosters to position themselves in their paragraphs. Accordingly, the students were asked to write the English paragraphs first, and one week later, they were asked to write the paragraphs in Turkish. This methodology was adopted since it was in line with the procedures followed in previous studies on the same topic (Bayyurt 2010; Can 2006); and it was hoped that it would be easier to compare the results of the current study with the findings of the studies conducted earlier.

The participants had already been trained in argumentative paragraph writing during the academic semester before the summer school program. Thus, the researcher wanted to see firstly to what extent the classroom input given via the writing hand-outs and teacher prompted language that help the students express their stance appropriately by avoiding any oppositions from the readers with the use of hedges and boosters is reflected in the paragraphs written in English. Then, the students' written rhetoric in English could be compared with that of their native language, Turkish.

4.4 Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analysed in three steps:

1. All of the English paragraphs were formatted and placed into CLAN CHILDES and the COMBO PROGRAM was used to identify the hedges and boosters in the paragraphs written by the students.

CLAN CHILDES is an abbreviation for Computerized Language Analysis Child Language Data Exchange System. COMBO is the most frequently used CLAN program in the current study. It is a user friendly, efficient, fast and accurate way of 'composing word strings to search them in groups of letters, words, and groups of words' (MacWhinney 2009). After transcribing the data into CLAN, researchers can define words or combination of words to be searched for in the transcribed data. This way, every occurrence of the defined word or group of words is easily located and highlighted by the program. Moreover, when done manually, the same procedure may run the risk of not yielding accurate results as some occurrences of the searched words or word strings may be skipped due to human related factors such as lack of attention or tiredness. Besides, in seconds, 500-word transcribed data can be searched at once, which may save more time to analyze the data. This study is the first one to use CLAN CHILDES in the analysis and categorization of the hedges and boosters in the corpora as earlier studies comparing L2 learners' positioning themselves in their writings in Turkish and English done manually.

Illustration 4.1 An example of COMBO search for modal verb "can"

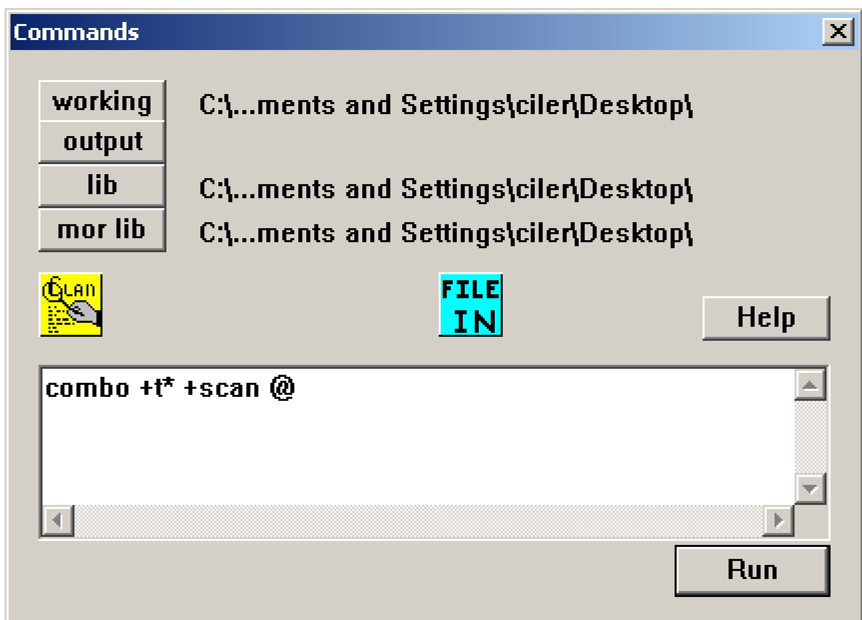

Illustration 4.2 An Example of COMBO Research Result

```
From file <e:\INTRO&METH\DATANEW\FEMALEENG-ALL\FemaleEn14TugbaYilmaz>
----------------------------------------
*** File "e:\INTRO&METH\DATANEW\FEMALEENG-ALL\FemaleEn14TugbaYilmaz": line 7.
*F14: Children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they
      start school for three main reasons . Firstly , learning a foreign
      language is easy at the early ages . According to the researchers an
      adult forgets 80 % of that she or he has lerned but a child forgets
      only 30 % of that during the laerning stage . Secondly , if a child
      learns a new language at the early ages , she or he (1)can improve the
      ability to learn English previosuly . Brain of a child (2)can memorize
      more words at the stage of development . Finally , children should
      begin learning a foreign language such as English as soon as they
      start school to learn easily another language in advance . For
      example , a child who knows a forein language (3)can learn another
      easily . To conclude , there are a lot of benefits that a child should
      begin learning a new language as soon as they start school .


   Strings matched 3 times
```

2. The quantitative data collected in the study were analysed using PASW.

Among the 722 hedges and boosters examined in the first stage of the analysis, modals unfolded as the most common hedging devices. In the second stage, a more detailed analysis of the use of modals was performed since the aim of the current study was to uncover some generalisations related to the use of modals by Turkish learners of English as a foreign language and to suggest some pedagogical procedures related to the use of modals.

Table 4.1 Detailed Analysis of Modals as a Subcategory for Hedges in the corpus with respect to 3 categories: Correct use, Overuse, and Incorrect Use.

Modal *Can*	**Correct Usage**	**Overuse**	**Incorrect use**
Definition	Appropriate use of the modal to show commitment to the proposition made by the writer.	The presence of a modal where it is not required.	The incorrect use of a modal to assess the certainty the writer attributes to the proposition.
Example			
Although many people believe that children should not start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school , this is not true thing. It CAN be explained two main reasons.	√		
However, some interest groups claim that children should not begin learning a language as soon as they start school .The opponents have a point but their argument is not strong enough The reason for this is that when old people want to learn languages they CANNOT do so easily as there are a lot of things to concentrate on.			√
However, the opponents of the issue claim that children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because it is very important that children CAN develop themselves		√	

The categorization of hedges and boosters in this study was done based on the taxonomy suggested in Bayyurt (2010:167), which is based on Hinkel (2005) and Hyland (1998).

Table 4.2 Categorization of Hedging Devices and Intensifiers [adapted from Bayyurt (2010)]

Categories	**Functions**	**Examples**
Hedging devices		
Epistemic hedges	clarify the writer's stance	adverbials (*e.g., clearly, mostly, relatively, actually,* etc.),epistemic modals (*e.g., ability markers*); epistemic verbs (*e.g., claim, suggest*)
Lexical hedges	soften the strength of statements	*kind of, may be,* etc.
Possibility hedges	express probability	*perhaps, possibly,* etc.
Downtoners	downplay the significance of propositions	*a bit, nearly, partly,* etc.
Assertive pronouns	highlight the significance of propositions	*any*- and *some*- words etc.
Adverbs of frequency	express prevalence of occurrence in statements	*often, frequently, usually,* etc.
Direct/indirect person markers	refer to the view point of the author directly or indirectly	*I, we, my, mine, our, people's,* etc.
Intensifiers		
Universal pronouns	refer to a general authorship/audience	*every*- and *no*- words, *etc.*
Amplifiers	increase the size or effect of statements	*extremely, completely, totally,* etc.
Emphatics	emphasize force or writers' certainty in message	*sure, for sure, no way,* etc.

However, different from Bayyurt (2010), the analysis of these devices was done with respect to further categories suggested by the researcher such as *correct use, incorrect* *use* and *overuse*. This type of analysis not only helped diagnose the problematic employment of these devices and but also provided guidance for classroom treatment.

Microsoft Excel was used for raw frequencies of hedges and boosters per word. The Turkish essays were 7.861 numbers of words in total, while the English ones amounted to a total of 10.257.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.0 Presentation

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis will be presented. Firstly, in sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, results concerning research question 1 will be answered. That is, the frequency, meanings and functions attributed to the *hedges* and *boosters* in the English paragraphs will be presented. The same procedure will be applied to the Turkish paragraphs. A comparison of the *hedges* and *boosters* in the two sets of corpora (ENG and TR) will be made to determine whether or not any transfer existed. Then, in section 5.4, research question 2 will be answered. The writing handout (APPENDIX C) used in the academic writing classes at the DBE and the English paragraphs will be compared and contrasted to see whether or not there is parallelism between the number, frequency and the meanings of *hedges* and *boosters* in the input (the writing handout) and the output (the paragraphs written in English).

5.1 Hedges and Boosters in the English Corpus

The analysis of the *hedges* and *boosters* in the corpus was made based on the taxonomy offered by Bayyurt (2010). The detailed analysis of the English paragraphs for *hedges* and *boosters* revealed five categories of lexical devices that are used to soften the propositions: *modals*, *epistemic verbs*, *adjectives*, and *nouns* as subcategories for *hedges* and *adverbs* as a subcategory for *boosters*. Firstly, the overall distribution of these devices will be presented. Secondly, a more detailed analysis of each category will be presented under related subcategories together with their number, frequency, meanings and functions attributed to them by the student writers.

5.1.1 Overall Distribution of Hedges and Boosters

When the results of this study were compared and contrasted with the results of the previous study, some interesting differences and similarities were identified.

Differences were the following:

Total number of words in 52 English paragraphs is 10.257, and the total number of *hedges* and *boosters* in the corpora is 722.

Table 5.1. Total Hedges and Boosters with respect to total number of words

Total hedges and boosters	722
Total number of words	10.257
Tokens per 100 words	7.0

Hedges and *boosters* employed by the Turkish students in this study are a little higher than those in the earlier studies on academic essays (Hyland and Milton 1997; Milton and Hyland 1999). Turkish non-native speakers (NNS) employed about 2.5 *hedges* and *boosters* in every 55 words while this number is reduced to 1 in the writings of Cantonese NNS (Hyland and Milton 1997) and that of Japanese NNS (Milton and Hyland 1999). When these findings were compared to those of native speakers' (NS) data analyzed by the same researchers (Hyland and Milton 1997; Milton and Hyland

1999), Turkish NNS in this study were found to have employed more *hedges* and *boosters* than both their Cantonese and Japanese counterparts. There might be several explanations for this disparity. One explanation could be that the subjects in these studies had different educational backgrounds. Turkish students in the present study had prior academic writing education, which resulted in a better performance at later stages. Moreover, the students in this study wrote the English paragraphs as part of their educational curriculum while attending the English prepatory school, where they had been continuously exposed to the academic writing genre through classroom input and teaching materials. The percentage of these devices in the teaching material (APPENDIX C) was also high (4.2%, for more detailed information on this topic see Section 5.4). However, both NS and NNS subjects in the studies by Hyland and Milton were school leavers in the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. One other explanation for the disparity could be that those earlier studies were done on published academic writing. In this study, however, the paragraphs which were written as a part of the foreign language learning process were scrutinized for the use of hedges and boosters. These paragraphs included many chunks parroting the materials used in the writing classes at the DBE (see APPENDIX H for chunks). Therefore, it could be claimed that the language learners with low levels of proficiency benefit more from the teaching materials selected to be used in the syllabus.

The results in this study are also different from a relatively recent study conducted by Hinkel (2005). She examined the types and frequencies of hedges and intensifiers used by NS and NNS (Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, Vietnamese and Arabic) in academic essays. She found out that NNS or "L2 writers employed a severely limited range of hedging devices, largely associated with conversational discourse and casual spoken interactions." (Hinkel 2005: 47). However, the Turkish NNS who participated in this study, employed *hedges* and *boosters in big* numbers (722/ 7.0 %) and associated with academic writing genre.

The similarities between the findings of the present study and the ones done previously were the following:

These results are consistent with those of Bayyurt (2010), Fidan (2002), Can (2006), and Doyuran (2009) on the use of metadiscourse markers by Turkish writers in numerous contexts. These results also depict a parallel picture to those of Bayyurt's study (2010), in which she compared the employment of metadiscourse markers by Turkish NNS writing both in Turkish (L1) and English (L2). The results are further similar in that the most commonly used devices in both studies were *hedges*. She reports that the overall per cent of *hedges* and *intensifiers* used by Turkish NNS in L2 paragraphs is 8.69, which is almost the same with the figure (7.0) in the present study (see table 5.1). The relatively small difference (1.66) between these two figures could be due to two different types of participant profiles: language learners and language users. The participants in the present study are still language learners at prepatory school while the subjects in Bayyurt's (2010) study are language users at their freshman years.

Table 5.2. Categorical Distribution of Hedges and Boosters

Category	**Item**	**No**	**%**
Hedges	Modals	317	43.96%
	Adjectives	139	19.28%
	Verbs	116	16.09%
	Nouns	28	3.88%
Boosters	Adverbs	122	16.92%
Total		**722**	**100.00%**

Parallel to some earlier studies (Bayyurt 2010; Crompton 1997; Doyuran 2009; Hyland and Milton 1997; Milton and Hyland 1999; Myers 1989), categories for *hedges* and *boosters* in the corpus for the present study were identified (see Table 5.2 for the categorical distribution of *hedges* and *boosters*). Of the 722 *hedges* and *boosters*, modals (e.g., *should, can, could, might, may, will,* and *would*) comprised almost half of the total hedging and boosting devices (43.96 %). *Adjectives*, *verbs*, *nouns* and *adverbs* comprised the remaining 56.17 %. It is interesting to note that combined employment of *adjectives*, *adverbs* and *nouns* was still lower (39.25 %) than that of the *modals*. This means the students felt more comfortable in conveying propositions with the pragmatic meanings of necessity, ability and possibility that the modals expressed.

5.1.2 Subcategories of Hedges

5.1.2.1 Modals

In English linguistics literature, modal verbs are usually categorized into two groups that communicate two broad meanings: epistemic and deontic (root) meanings. Epistemic modals express "the degree of speaker commitment to the truth of the proposition that forms the complement of the modal" (Papafragou 1998:370). Deontic modals, on the other hand, convey the meanings of necessity or possibility (Bybee and Fleischman 1995; Coates 1983; Kratzer 1981; Lyons 1977; Palmer 1986, 1990; Swetser 1990). The following utterances are given by Papafragou (1998:370) as examples of epistemic (Example 5.1) and deontic modalities (Example 5.2), respectively:

Example 5.1: (a) You *must* be John's wife.

(b) That *may* be the postman. (on hearing the doorbell)

(c) If you are interested in studying the mind, lectures in Linguistics *should* prove interesting.

Example 5.2: (a) I *must* go on a diet.

(b) You *may* leave the room only after having signed these papers.

(c) Full credit *should* be given to the city authorities for having done so much for the environment.

However, in the analysis of the data in this study, such categories were not adopted considering the fact that English modal verbs are polysemious (Coates 1983; Palmer 1990) and their meanings and functions can be determined within the context they are used. One other reason is that there seems to be various typologies offered by the researchers in the related literature for the same modal verbs based on grammatical, semantic or discoursal features of these modals (Bybee 1995; de Haan 1997; Palmer 1986, 2001; van der Auwera and Plungian 1998). As Papafragou (1998) indicates, even the categories such as root and epistemic are crude ones. Thus, modal verbs that occurred in the data were not labeled under any such categories per se. Instead, first, the meanings that were attributed to the hedging and boosting items were identified. Then, pragmatic interpretation of actual occurrences of use were determined, an approach which was adapted from Hyland and Milton (1997).

As stated above, of the 722 *hedges* and *boosters*, the total number of modals that occurred in the corpus is 317. This comprised 44 % of the total interpersonal metadiscourse devices examined in this study. Table 5.3 illustrates the modal verbs in rank order with their raw numbers and corresponding percentages.

Table 5.3. Modals in rank order

Rank	Item	Raw no.	%
1	Should	147	46.5
2	Can	91	28.7
3	Will	28	8.8
4	May	26	8.2
5	Must	11	3.4
6	Might	6	1.8
7	Could	6	1.8
8	Would	2	0.6
Total		317	100

As Table 5.3 shows, modality markers in the data reveal three main clusters:

1. *Should* (46.5%) and *Can* (28.7%): The two most frequently employed modals comprised 75 % of the total modals. This means that three thirds of the modality attributed claims were marked with necessity and possibility/ability meanings.
2. *Will* (8.8 %) and *May* (8.2 %): The second group of modals was not much prevalent in the data. They comprised only 17 % of the total modals, which was less than one third of the first bulk. The students avoided marking their statements using confident predictions that *will* conveys (Hyland and Milton 1999). Instead, they employed probabilities, which the academic genre required.
3. *Must* (3.4 %), *Might* (1.8 %), *Could* (1.8 %) and *Would* (0.6 %): The last cluster of modals in the study comprised only 7.6 % of the total modality markers. This is eleven times less than the first bulk.

One explanation for the third cluster modals' (*might*, *could* and *would*) being employed not as frequent might be due to the amount of exposure in the writing materials used in academic writing classes. This finding will be discussed in detail in section 5.4, where the writing material used in the writing classes at the DBE (see APPENDIX C) and the parallelism between the students' paragraphs were examined.

Modal verb *should*

Should carries various meanings and functions. It is categorized under both social interactional modals (root modals) and logical probability (epistemic) modals by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999). With the social interactional function, *should* is listed together with the modals such as *might, could, had better, must,* and *will* that convey the meanings of advice and indicate "the speaker's degree of authority and/or conviction, or the urgency of advice" (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999:85). The following examples are given according to the degree of authority and/or conviction, or the urgency of advice:

Example 5.3: (a) *You <u>might</u> see a doctor. (the least authoritative)*

(b) *You <u>could</u> see a doctor.*

(c) *You **<u>should</u>** see a doctor.*

(d) *You <u>had better</u> see a doctor.*

(e) *You <u>must</u> see a doctor.*

(f) *You <u>will</u> see a doctor*! *(the most authoritative)* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999:85)

Logical probability function of modal verb *should*, on the other hand, deals with inference or prediction meanings (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999:85). It also carries the meanings of epistemic modality that discloses knowledge and belief about certainty, probability and logical possibility (Bublitz 1992; Huebler 1983; Lyons 1977). It is listed among the modal verbs such as *could, might, may, must* and *will*. The following examples are given in order of increasing degree of certainty (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999:85):

Example 5.4: Someone's knocking.

(a) That could/might be Sydney (the least possible)

(b) That may be Sydney.

(c) *That* ***should*** *be Sydney*.

(d) *That must be Sydney*

(e) *That will be Sydney* (the most probable)

One other function of modal verb *should* is obligation and necessity (Coates 1983; Lyons 1977; Palmer 1986; Quirk et all. 1985) as in the example below:

Example 5.5: *Mary should attend the meeting*.

The primary function of the modal verb *should* in the data was found to mark necessity. The following are examples from the data:

Example 5.6

F7: I think they SHOULD start learning a foreign language when they start school for two main reasons.

Example 5.7

F12: The second reason is that learning a foreign language is of great importance today. In other words, they aware that they SHOULD improve language skills.

Different from ability and possibility modals, modals of obligation and necessity such as *should* and *must* are observed to be less prevalent in formal academic prose. Biber et al. (1999) reports that the number of obligation and necessity modals in academic writing is almost half of that ability and possibility modals as they convey such strong meanings as compulsion and a sense of duty. However, Meyer (1997) states that *should* and *must* could also be used to make the writer's claim stronger and to communicate a sense of objectivity. Moreover, Leech (2003) compared the modality trends and use in four spoken and written corpora of American and British English between the years 1961 and 1992, which is a 30-year span. He reports that there is a decline in the uses of *must* as obligation and necessity modal and there is a trend toward modal verbs *need to* and *should.* He states that this could be "associated with a tendency to suppress or avoid overt claims to power and authority by the speaker or writer" and refers to it a tendency which "may be called 'democratization' (pp. 237).

The students made a substantial use of the modal verb *should* to emphasize the importance of foreign language education at early ages and tried to maintain their objectivity as well. As a result, *should* occurred as the most frequently employed modal auxiliary in the English corpus (see Table 5.3).

One other explanation for the higher frequency of modal verb *should* could be that the argumentative genre elicited it since the students had been instructed and trained in the academic writing classes to employ *should* while writing within the conventions of argumentative genre. In the writing handout (APPENDIX C), *should* was the most frequently occurring modal verb, which accounted for almost half of the total modal use (47.9%). There was almost a full match between what the students were exposed to and what they produced. This finding also points to the significance of the amount of exposure in the materials in language classes as language learners are more likely to produce texts in the way they have been trained to.

Another explanation for the high frequency of *should* in the data could be that it occurs in the writing prompt *"Should children start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school?"*. This means that the meaning and the function of the modal auxiliary *should* in the writing prompt was both pragmatically and contextually clear to the students. Thus, if any target item is given in such a clear context as in the writing prompt, the students, especially at the initial stages of language acquisition, benefit from it and feel more confident while using it. Overall, the writing prompt was frequently repeated both in the topic sentence, and the concluding sentences of the paragraphs. Figure 5.1 below shows the distribution of modal verb *should* in the parts of the paragraphs:

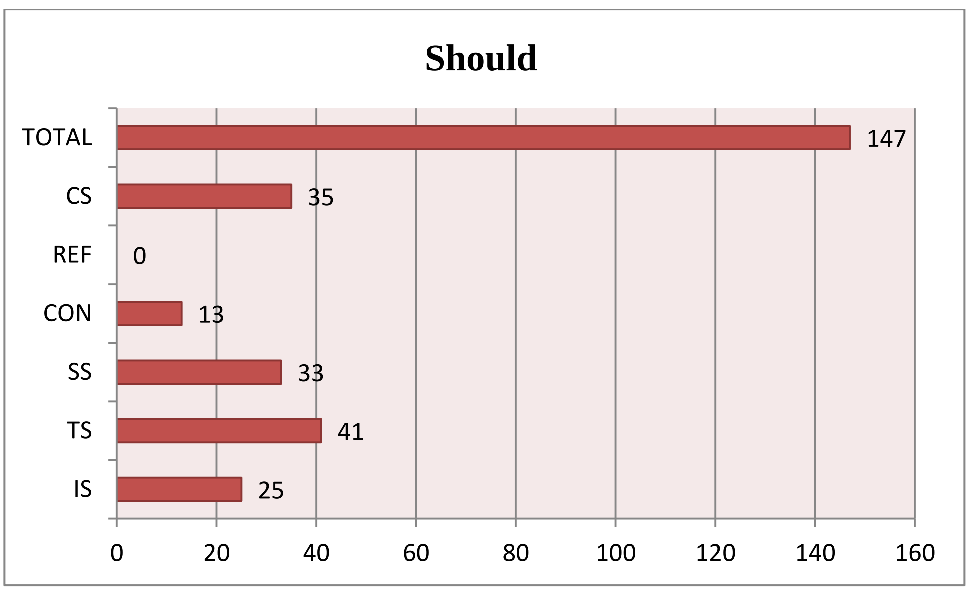

Figure 5.1: Distribution of should in the paragraphs

In Figure 5.1, CS stands for concluding sentence, REF for refutation, CON for counter argument, SS for supporting sentence, TS for topic sentence and ISfor introduction sentence.

As Table 5.3 shows, *should* in the writing prompt was substantially repeated both in the topic sentences (27.8 % Example 5.8) and the concluding sentences (23.8 % Example 5.9), which comprised half of the total *should* use. Below are some examples from the data:

<u>Example 5.8</u>

M17: Whether children SHOULD start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school is a controversial issue which has been discussed for a long time. Although the defenders of this idea believe that native language plays an important role in people's life to keep up with everything, I am in favor of the fact that ***children SHOULD NOT start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school due to two main reasons.*** (T.S)

Male student 17, employed *should* both in the introductory sentence and the topic sentence. He first introduced the issue/topic. By making a transition from the introductory sentence to the topic sentence, he made his stance clear. He made his proposition sound plausible and acceptable without being offensive or too abrupt by the use of other hedges such as the epistemic verb *believe*, and the author positioning phrase "*I am in favor of*..".

<u>Example 5.9</u>

F38: However, the opponents of the issue claim that children SHOULD NOT begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because it is very important that children can develop themselves. They have a point but this method is very difficult at the same time because *they require much money. To sum up, for the reasons stated above,* ***children SHOULD begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school.*** (CS)

Female 38 employed *should* two times. The examples above are the counter argument and the conclusion sentences. She was of the opinion that children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. After she stated the counter argument with *should*, she avoided completely refusing the counter argument and accepted that it was somehow true. However, while trying to refute the counter argument, she could not make use of substantial points and in fact she did not explain how much money was required for "the development of children". This extract shows that in the preparation of writing materials, it would not be enough to present discrete items like modal verb *should*, or some fixed phrases or chunks to be used in making arguments. Novice writers need to be exposed to the ways of doing arguments effectively in L2 so that they will be able to manipulate those single items like *should* to present persuasive and valid arguments. Then, they will probably avoid repeating the same phrases (as in the example 5.9)

Example 5.10

F8: Secondly, foreign language may provide good job opportunities in the future. For example, they might study at schools where the medium of instruction is English, they may go abroad for reasons of work in international business. As a result, learning foreign language is important and necessary. Therefore, ***its importance SHOULD BE GIVEN to children at young ages****.*

Female 8 used *should* to support the second major idea in her paragraph. She employed it appropriately to emphasize the necessity of providing children with an opportunity to learn a foreign language at early ages. Also, by using passive voice together with the modal verb *should*, she removed direct reference to the speaker or hearer and thus avoided any sort of imposition or a threat to the speaker's and/or hearer's face (Brown and Levinson 1987). Using passive voice as an indirectness strategy is often cited among typical markers of academic writing (Biber 1988; Myers 1989).

The uses of the modals were also examined within their contexts to identify the level of appropriateness of their use (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982:151; Milton and Hyland 1999). Table 5.4 shows those categories and their definitions. All target items were systematically analyzed by three raters working independently. The interrater reliability was .89 and every disagreement was discussed and the reasons were identified.

Table 5.4 illustrates descriptive statistics for the contextual analysis of the modal verb *should* with respect to the three categories (CU, IC and Over):

Table 5.4. Descriptive Statistics for should with respect to 3 categories: CU, IC, and OVER.

	CUShould	**ICShould**	**OverShould**	**Total Should**
N	147	0	0	147
Percentage	100 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	100.0%

As the statistical descriptions in Table 5.4 show, all occurrences of *should* in the English paragraphs were pragmatically appropriate as there were no occurrences of incorrect or overuse of the modal.

Table 5.5 depicts a more detailed descriptive analysis of correct use of *should*. As seen in the table below, 5.8 % of the students did not use *should* to mark their claims. On the other hand, 30.8 % of the student writers employed it three times in their paragraphs.

This could be interpreted that those students were confident in attributing the illocutionary force and the pragmatic meanings of necessity that *should* conveys.

Table 5.5. Descriptive statistics for correct use of Should

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	3	5.8	5.8	5.8
	1	8	15.4	15.4	21.2
	2	7	13.5	13.5	34.6
	3	16	30.8	30.8	65.4
	4	13	25.0	25.0	90.4
	5	5	9.6	9.6	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

The correct and appropriate use of modal verb *should* in this study is significantly different from those of earlier work on NNS use of modal verbs both in written and spoken discourse. NNS are usually reported to have problems in their employment and appropriate use of modals of obligation and necessity (Altman 1990; Bascham and Kwachka 1989; Hinkel 1995; Kasper 1979; Kwachka and Basham 1990). The employment of modals were reported to be not only offensive and inappropriate but also confusing about the pragmatics of obligation and necessity as the participants in those studies were not either aware of the modality as a pragmatic category (Kasper 1979), or misunderstood the sociocultural and pragmatic implications of modal verbs (Altman 1990; Bascham and Kwachka 1989; Kwachka and Basham 1990).

In another study, Milton and Hyland (1999), examined the use of doubt and certainty in two large corpora of NS and NNS student essays in order to identify the lexical items and formulaic expressions used to express academic claims and compare the linguistic strategies of NS and NNS students of similar age, educational level, and writing in comparable contexts. In their study, for example, the modal verb *should* was categorized and examined under the category of probability together with other lexical items such as *probably*, *believe*, *claim*, *likely*, etc. According to their findings, while 32% of the NS data included probability markers including *should*, only 18.4% of the NNS corpus comprised such devices, which is almost half of the NS'. This indicates that NS have a tendency to use *should* more often to mark their claims. The results of the present study with respect to the use of *should* is parallel to the NS' hedging item preferences in Milton and Hyland's study (1999).

The higher frequency of modal verb *should* as a marker of obligation/necessity is also observed in some earlier studies. In previous studies on the writings of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean speakers, the uses of obligation and necessity modals were found to be culture and topic dependent (Hinkel 1995; Kwachka and Basham 1990) and thus certain topics elicited higher frequencies of these modals. Hinkel (1995), for example, reports that the topics of family, academics and traditions elicit considerably higher numbers of such modals. Similarly, in the writings of Turkish speakers' in the present study, the topic, children's learning a foreign language when they start school, was related with education and thus it might have elicited a high frequency of *should.*

Modal verb *can*

In written discourse, modal verb *can* carries the meanings of ability and possibility (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999; Coates 1983; Palmer 1990; Quirk et all. 1985; von Wright 1951). Together with other linguistic devices, modal verbs of ability and possibility often serve to mark evidentiality, possibility and likelihood, strategic vagueness, and politeness (Chafe 1986; Channell 1994; Markkanen and Schroeder 1997; Perkins 1983).

Can was the second most frequently employed modal verb in the data and it denoted meanings of ability and possibility. Of the 91 *can* occurrences, 50 were employed as ability markers, and 41 were employed as possibility markers.

Out of 52 students, 10 (19.2 % of the student writers) did not employ *can* at all. Thus, the contextual analysis of the modal verb *can* was done over the remaining 42 students' paragraphs (80.8 % of the student writers). Contextual analysis of *can* in 42 paragraphs revealed the following results shown in Table 5.6 :

Table 5.6. Descriptive Statistics for Contextual Analysis of Can with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUCan	ICCan	OverCan	Total Can
N	86	1	4	91
Percentage	94.5%	1.1%	4.4%	100.0%

As Table 5.6 shows, of the total *can* employment, 93.8 % was pragmatically appropriate. The students were mostly successful in expressing probabilities and abilities that *can* conveys. The following are examples from the data in which *can* expresses possibility (1) and ability (2):

<u>Example 5.11</u>

F12: Although many people believe that children should not start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school , this is not true thing. It (1)CAN be explained two main reasons . The first reason is that brain activity. That is to say, due to young ages, they (2)CAN learn more easily than old ages and their brain does not fill up with another things.

A good number of *can* with the ability function (N:50/54.94 %) occurred in the data. One plausible explanation for this could be the topic. Since the topic was about children's learning a foreign language, the student writers frequently compared children with adults and claimed that children were better language learners as in the excerpt (F12) above. Thus, *can* was employed more often as an ability modal.

With its possibility function, *can* is the most frequently employed modal with a frequency of 41. It was followed by *may* (26). In his article on subjective modality, Seibel (1980: 16) reports that *can* might be used more freely than *may* as "the speaker using *can* is not necessarily committing himself to even a weak conjecture about the realization of the proposition". However, he asserts that *may* communicates a weak guess or a prediction or "at least an assertion that the speaker, although he does not know if a proposition is true or not, has no compelling reason to believe that it is (or was or will be) false in the actual world" (Seibel 1980:16). These could explain why there were slightly higher occurrences of *can* than *may* in the students' paragraphs.

However, on the use of modals in academic writing, Biber et al. (2002:179) indicates that "*could*, *may* and *might* are used almost exclusively to mark logical possibility...and *can* is often ambiguous with a logical possibility meaning" beside its ability meaning. Since modals are polypragmatic and convey different meanings, their employment might be complex for novice L2 writers (Hyland and Milton 1997). *Can*, in this sense, was successfully employed by the student writers in this study as they interpreted its pragmatic meanings as ability and possibility appropriately and assigned meanings as such while indicating a precise degree of certainty and while conveying the extent of their convictions. In their Turkish paragraphs, they also used a good many of *–AbIl* (*can* in English) and it occurred as the top most frequent item marking ability and possibility (see section 5.2.1.1)

Only one instance of *can* in the data was employed incorrectly (see Table 5.6) by one of the student writers, which comprised only 1.1 % of the total *can* employment. Below is the example for the incorrect use of *can* from the data:

Example 5.12

F24: However, some interest groups claim that children should not begin learning a language as soon as they start school .The opponents have a point but their argument is not strong enough The reason for this is that when old people want to learn languages they CANNOT do so easily as there are a lot of things to concentrate on .

F24 employed *can* incorrectly. She transferred the negative ability meanings of *–AbIl* form L1 and used the negative form of the ability/possibility marker *can* in English. The use of can in the negated form made the claim too strong. The assessment of the illocutionary force of the claim as an impossibility was pragmatically inappropriate. Thus, the manipulation of the modal *can* was problematic as the truth of the statement was misinterpreted.

There were four instances of overuse of *can* in the data (see Table 5.6). Below are examples from the data:

Example 5.13

F5: First of all, students learn and understand more easily at young ages because their brains work more effectively than an aging person's. Secondly, children CANNOT(2) forget information easily and their information that they learn at the school become more useful. That is, they can use efficiently information already learned and they have a good foreign language.

Can is redundant in the sentence because the functioning of the human brain is not usually regarded as an ability or possibility. It is a general truth. F5 in a way implied that as people get older their brain starts functioning less efficiently and thus young people are advantageous in that sense. However, this was presented just as a claim and it was not based on any scientific research. Thus, F5 used *can* most probably with the ability function. The claim was made even stronger with the use of negative form of *can*. Myers (1989:30) indicates that direct negative claims are "almost inadmissible" in Anglo-American academic writing. Thus, the claim in excerpt above was inappropriately marked.

Example 5.14

F38: However, the opponents of the issue claim that children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because it is very important that children CAN develop themselves.

F38 used subjunctive adjective *important* to emphasize the necessity of providing children with an opportunity to learn a foreign language and improve their language abilities. However, *can* was not required in the evaluation of her statement. In fact, the use of *can* weakened the necessity meaning and the force of the claim. Therefore, it was also inappropriate in terms of pragmatic and rhetorical aspects of the argumentative genre.

It is interesting to note that *can* was the only modal that had the highest overuse percentage (4.4% see Table 5.6) in the data. This could be due to the interference of the corresponding ability marker –AbIl in Turkish. The morpheme –AbIl was the most prevalent modality marker in the TR data (see Figure 5.6 in 5.2.2.1). This will be discussed in detail in section 5.2.2.1.

Based on the analysis in four spoken and written corpora of American and British English during a period of 30 years, Leech (2003) reports that the frequency of *can* has remained relatively stable in both dialects while there has been a dramatic decline in the frequencies of *may* and *must*.

10 students (19.2%), who did not use *can*, preferred to express certainty rather than possibility by making use of other lexical and syntactical devices (Example 5.15).

Example 5.15

M16: Nowadays, people think about whether or not children ought to begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. In my opinion, they'd better begin to learn a foreign language when they start school. Which brings about some advantages. First of all, the earlier they start learning, the more time they have. In other words, foreign language is a very long, complicated and uneasy process. Therefore, if student starting school begin to learn a foreign language, they have much more time than the others.(1) Secondly, life is easy at early school years. For example, you have a lot more responsibilities and hard lessons if you are in high schools and university. So, starting to learn as soon as starting school is easy without burden of academic life. On the other hand some people claim that student starting school ought not learn a foreign language as this is too hard and unnecessary for them. I do not recognize this claim because they do not know that (2)children's brain works more effectively and quickly. Therefore, learning a foreign language is almost as easy as learning own language if you are child. To sum up, learning a foreign language as soon as children start school should be encouraged by government and their parents.

M16 did not use any possibility markers and thus his tone is quite authoritative and certain. In the underlined sentences above in the excerpt, M16 was very assertive. For example, in sentence (1), he strengthened the truth value of his statement by using verb *to be*. Also, in sentence (2), he used if conditional type zero, which is used to talk about general truth (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999). Conditional sentences might be used in academic written discourse when the writer expresses a statement that s/he considers to be risky and thus s/he tries to avoid any denial or refusal on the part of his or her reader (Myers 1989). However, the conditional sentence in the excerpt above was used to mark a precise degree of certainty. Thus, its pragmatic implications and the illocutionary force would be inappropriately assertive and too direct for the reader. The lack of skillful employment of hedges in the excerpt resulted in a lack of sensitivity to the views of academic audience. That could also be due to the fact that inexperienced writers often lack a sufficient knowledge of audience (Connor 1987). One other reason could be that L2 learners are not trained in the employment of sufficient expressions as categorical assertion (Hyland and Milton 1997).

Modal verb *will*

Linguists state that in many languages, future tense markers also function as modals that convey meanings of volition, supposition, and intention (Lyons 1977; Ultan 1972). Binnick (1971, 1972) argues for quasi-modal features of *will* and *be going to*. Lakoff (1970) classifies *will* among the English modals and she considers *will* to be a modal that marks the highest degree of certainty. Similarly, in their hierarchy of logical probability modals, Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) put *will* as the number one modal expressing the highest degree of certainty and they give the examples below: (the degree of certainty is given in an ascending order)

Example 5.16: (a) It could/might rain tomorrow.

(b) It may rain tomorrow.

(c) It should rain tomorrow.

(d) It will rain tomorrow. (100 % certainty)

Certainly and *certain* are often used to paraphrase the logical use of modal verb *will* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999). Ultan (1972) reports that the element of uncertainty in future events and the use of modals make them modalized utterances of presumption. Thus, in the present study, *will* was regarded as a marker of modality as "futurity is more of a modal than a temporal concept" (Yavaş 1980: 139).

The students used *will* to mark confident predictions and it comprised 8.8 % of the total hedges and boosters in the data. Table 5.7 shows a detailed statistical analysis for the use of *will* in the data:

Table 5.7. Descriptive Statistics for Contextual Analysis of Will with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUWill	ICWill	OverWill	TotalWill
N	28	0	0	28
Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

A more detailed statistical analysis for the correct use of *will* is shown in the Table 5.8 below:

Table 5.8. Descriptive Statistics for CU of Will

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	33	63.5	63.5	63.5
	1	13	25.0	25.0	88.5
	2	3	5.8	5.8	94.2
	3	3	5.8	5.8	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

As Table 5.8 shows, 33 students (63.5 % of the students) did not use *will* at all. They avoided presenting strong probabilities that *will* expresses and they relied on various lexical and syntactic devices to evaluate their commitments to the truth value of their statements while arguing about the topic (Example 5.17).

Example 5.17

F33: In the few years, English has become the most common language. English should be taught early ages for two main reasons. The first main reason is pronunciation. It is known that people who go abroad are recognized by the other people who live there. That is why their pronunciation is wrong due to they learn English at old ages. Pronunciation of people who learn English early ages are better than the others who learn it old ages. As a result, people should start to speak English at primary school. The second main reason for speaking English early ages is that learning is faster and easier. Children's brains are more inclined to learn foreign language. Moreover, people who want learn English do not have adequate time to learn it since they work or they must fulfill their responsibilities. If people learn English at school, they do not have to pay money for English courses. Also people who apply for a job should speak English. For these reasons, English should be taught to people at early ages. To *sum up, because of better pronunciation and faster and easier learning, people should learn English early ages, at the primary school.*

F33 used a good number of modals such as *should, must and don't have to.* She also relied heavily on adjectives especially on comparative ones to emphasize the advantages of learning a foreign language at younger ages. Besides, she employed passive voice for "theme-fronting meanings" (Hoshi 1993) and as an indirectness strategy.

Example 5.18

M13: Whether children should be started learning a foreign language as soon as then start school is a controversial topic. Although some people claim that children shouldn't be started learning the foreign language as soon as they start school, I strongly believe that vice versa for three main reasons. Firstly, children who start school learn easily and rapidly. They can learn the foreign language faster and easier than adults because children have a high capacity of learning. Secondly, children who start school can enjoy when they are learning the foreign language. If teacher teach them the foreign language with images or games, children can enjoy these lessons. As a result, they want to learn the foreign language. Finally, the foreign language which learn at the age of from 6 to 8 aren't forgotten because the information which learn at these ages become permanent. For example, if children learn the foreign language at the age of 7, they don't forget easily. Those who are against this proposal would claim that children shouldn't be started learning the foreign language as soon as they start school. They point out that they learn the foreign language as a lesson. This is obviously not true. Contrary to their belief, it create a pressure, such as exam, over them so they can hate the foreign language. To sum up, in the light of this information, children should be started learning the foreign language as soon as then start school.

In this 244-word paragraph, M13 employed a variety of hedges and boosters in order to make his argument persuasive and effective. However, he had problems in using passive voice in the sentences "*children should be started learning a foreign language*" probably as a result of L1 transfer and overgeneralization of the passive voice rule. Another plausible explanation for his incorrect use of passive voice might be that he tried to put the emphasis on children by putting *children* in the subject position. He, however, failed to use it accurately. In fact, using passive voice appropriately in academic writing might be complex for L2 learners due to its contextual, lexical and semantic constrains (Hinkel 1997). Pragmatically, though, he conveyed his message and hedged his claim appropriately. Thus, a writing teacher should encourage such uses of appropriate register rather than marking the whole sentence as grammatically inaccurate, which will probably motivate the learner write more enthusiastically and confidently in L2.

Below are some further examples from the data for the correct use of *will*:

Example 5.19

F18: Secondly, some students may not have enough time for practice in high school or university because they may concentrate on other lessons. On the other hand, IF students begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school, they WILL have a background so they know more vocabulary and grammar structures.

Example 5.20

M14: To begin with, IF children start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school, they can understand easily differences among societies which use different language. In other words, with this way, communication to societies WILL increase.

Out of 28 *will* employment, 14 co-occurred with *if clauses* as in the above examples, which made up for the half of the total *will* use. In all those co-occurences, *will* was used in affirmative sentences and conveyed strong predictions as far as the student writers concerned. The use of conditionals in academic writing implies “hypothetical assumptions that are often associated with indirectness, ambiguity, and politeness when the speaker hedges the illocutionary force and presents propositions and claims as if they would be denied or refused” (Hinkel 1997: 381). In fact, whether w*ill* conveys prediction or certainty is among the crucial matters on which linguistics disagree. That is, according to Coates (1983), *epistemic will* expresses strong prediction about present, timeless or future events based on previous experience; however, Palmer (1990) states that futurity always involves some uncertainty, and Lyons (1977), on the other hand, discusses that any kind of modality introduction into a sentence makes it factuality dependent on the writer’s, probably limited, knowledge. The present study adopts the view offered by some researchers (Hyland and Milton 1997:195; Leech and Starvik 1994; Quirk et al. 1972) that *will* appears to express “an assessment that the accompanying proposition is valid as far as the writer can be sure”. Therefore, the occurrences of *will* in the data were marked as certainty devices that disclose writer conviction.

The results of the present study regarding the employment of *will* to convey certainty revealed that Turkish student writers avoided asserting stronger claims since they did not resort to *will* very often and it only comprised 8.8 % of the total modal use. These results are different from those of some earlier studies. In Hyland and Milton’s (1997) study, for example, Cantonese speakers were found to have employed *will* as the primary marker of certainty with a frequency of 2731 out of 9.154 total devices (see table 5.12). In Cantonese NNS, *will* use accounted for 30 % of the total devices while in the present study, it comprised only 3.88 % of the total hedges and boosters. This means that unlike their Cantonese counterparts, the TR students in the study were aware of the confident assurances that *will* conveys and avoided those.

Modal verb *may*

May is the fourth most frequently employed modal (see table 5.3) in the data with 8.2 %. As a hedging device, *may*, along with other modal verbs such as *will* and *would*, has been listed among the modals expressing doubt and certainty (Holmes 1988; Hyland and Milton 1997). Biber et al. (2002) states that *may*, just like *could* and *might*, is used almost exclusively to express logical possibility. In the data, *may* is the second most frequently preferred modal used to mark logical possibility by the student writers with a frequency of 26.

Table 5.9. Descriptive Statistics for Contextual analysis of May with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUMay	ICMay	OverMay	TotalMay
N	26	0	0	26
Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

As Table 5.9 shows, the students who employed *may* used it appropriately. There were no instances of incorrect or overuse of *may*. A further analysis for the CU of *may* is shown in Table 5.10 below:

Table 5.10. Descriptive Statistics for CU of May

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	36	69.2	69.2	69.2
	1	8	15.4	15.4	84.6
	2	7	13.5	13.5	98.1
	3	1	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

As seen in the Table 5.10, only 30.8% of the students used *may* while 69.2% of the students did not use it at all. They preferred other possibility devices to *may*. C*an* was frequently used in the paragraphs to mark possibility. In fact, c*an* as a possibility marker accounted for 16% of the total modals while *may* comprised only half of it (8.22%).

The students used *may* mainly in the body part of their paragraphs. Figure 5.2 shows a detailed picture of the distribution of *may.* The majority of modal verb *may* (46.15%) was used in the supporting sentences. The remaining 14 items (53.85%) were used in the counter argument and refutation (34.6% and 19.2% respectively).

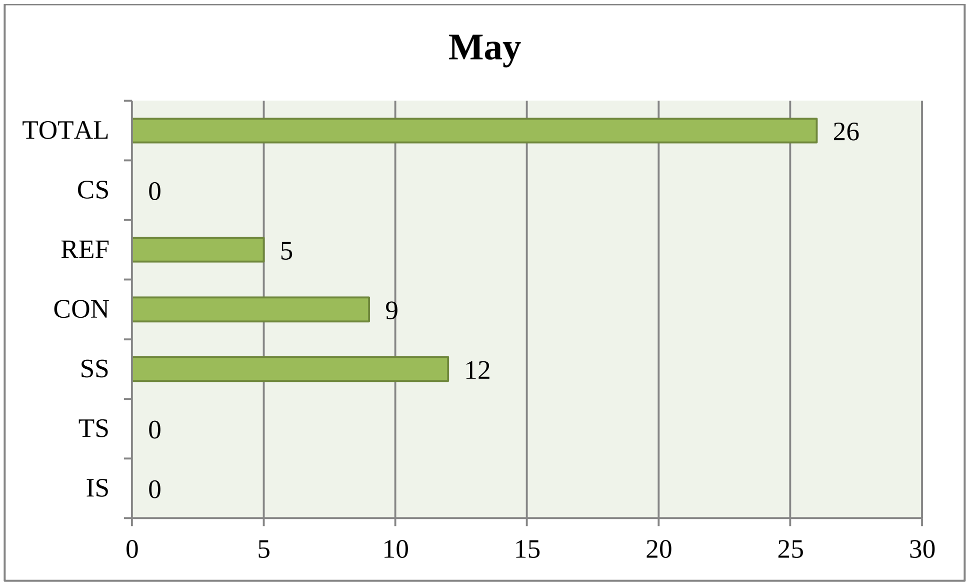

Figure 5.2. Distribution of May in the students' paragraphs

(CS: concluding sentence, REF: refutation, CON: counter argument, SS: supporting sentence, TS: topic sentence, IS: introduction sentence)

The following are examples from the data:

Example 5.21

F12: The second reason is that learning a foreign language is of great importance today. In other words, they aware that they should improve language skills. To illustrate, children MAY watch films, read books and listen to music to develop language ability. (Supporting Sentence)

Example 5.22

F13: However, the opponents of this issue claim that children should not start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because they think it MAY affect native language badly when the young student learning a foreign language. (Counter argument)

Example 5.23

F21: Those who do not favor this proposal might argue that if the age of learning is more early, children will be more successful. Although it MAY be true to a certain extent, this argument is not valid any longer because this situation is not same for every children. (Refutation).

In their study on qualification and certainty in L1 and L2 students' writing, Hyland and Milton (1997) found out that *may* was predominantly employed as the preferred marker of possibility in L2 essays written by L1 speakers of Cantonese and non-native speakers of English. Similarly, various studies of spoken and written English demonstrate that *may* is primarily employed as a marker of logical possibility, which is an important feature of academic texts (Biber et al. 2002).

In NNS corpus studies, there seems to be a slightly different picture in terms of the prevalence of *can* over *may* as a marker of possibility due to cultural variations and norms that modal verbs are attached to. Congruent with the results of the present study, for example, Hinkel (2009) reports that in the essays of Japanese and Korean speakers on Parents and Majors, ability and possibility modals such as *can* and *could* were found to have higher median rates while *may* and *might* were employed slightly more frequently in the NS data on the same topic. Izutsu (1998:221) comments that markers of possibility in Japanese language, which are usually translated into English as *to be* *able to*, *can*, *possibly* and *perhaps*, have the goal of qualifying "the weakness of personal judgment" and "delimitedness" of their judgments.

The results of the present study is a little different in that Turkish NNS employed *may* as the second marker of possibility and used *can* as the primary modal to express possibility. Leech (2003) reports that *may* is among the modals that have undergone a socio-linguistic change. He mentions a decline in the use of *may* in favor of *can* both in American and British corpora as a result of a tendency to avoid strong claims and a tendency towards democratization. That could also explain the students' preference for *can* to mark possibility. Another explanation could be due to different cultural and social meanings that are attributed to the concept of modality in Turkish language (For more information see Section 5.2.2.1) or the disproportionate attention given to these devices in writing classes and inadequate exposure to different pragmatic meanings and functions of modal verb *may*.

Table 5.11 below shows the differences regarding the employment of modal verb *may* between NS and Turkish and Cantonese NNS in Hyland and Milton's study (1997):

Table 5.11 Most frequent items expressing epistemic modality in rank order

Native Speakers			**Cantonese Speakers**			**Turkish Speakers**		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**
1	*would*	1,355	1	*will*	2.731	1	*will*	28
2	*will*	1,344	2	***may***	1.215	2	***may***	26
3	***may***	645	3	*think*	634	3	*think*	19
4	*often*	596	4	*would*	625	4	*know*	19
5	*perhaps*	439	5	*always*	520	5	*actually*	2
6	*always*	326	6	*usually*	281	6	*probably*	2
7	*believe*	297	7	*know*	227	7	*would*	2
8	*seem*	232	8	*in fact*	225	8	*usually*	1
9	*indeed*	206	9	*actually*	201	9	*always*	0
10	*certainly*	189	10	*probably*	195	10	*in fact*	0

Adapted from Hyland, K. & Milton, J. (1997). Qualification and certainty in L1 and L2 students' writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. 6(2), 183-205.

It is interesting to note that both in Cantonese and Turkish NNS data, *may* follows *will* in expressing epistemic modality. Although *would* is the top most frequently occurring item in the NS data, it comes later both in Cantonese and Turkish NNS data. Both Cantonese and Turkish NNS are a little divergent from the NS data either because of inadequate exposure to the native speakers' preference for markers of certainty or because their concepts of certainty and doubt in L1 were transferred to L2. The former has to do with the classroom instruction and academic writing training while the latter is related with the effects of culture and L1 on L2 acquisition. If the latter is the case, it would not be wrong to infer that somehow Turkish and Cantonese attribute similar degrees of certainty to modal verb *may*.

Modal Verb *Must*

In English, modal verb *must* often expresses obligation and necessity (Coates 1983; Collins 1991; Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Starvik 1985) in its root meanings as in the following example (Hinkel 1995):

Example 5.24: John *must* see the dean this week.

Must is also used as an epistemic modal, which has to do with knowledge and belief about certainty, probability, and logical possibility (Bublitz 1992; Huebler 1983; Lyons 1977) as in the following example (Hinkel 1995):

Example 5.25: John is not here today. He *must* be sick.

In the present study, *must* comprised 3.4 % of the total hedges, which is almost 14 times less than that of *should* (46.5 %). *Must* was analyzed as a modal of obligation and necessity just like *should*. No instances of epistemic *must* occurred in the data most probably as a result of the argumentative genre, in which the aim is to persuade the reader and logical deduction would not be relevant.

Must connotes meanings of obligation, necessity and requirement imposed by a source of authority (Palmer 1986; Lyons 1977). This is probably the reason for the disparity between the percentages of *should* and *must* in the data (46.5% and 3.5 % respectively) as modals of obligation and necessity. The students avoided *must* due to the stronger obligation meanings it conveys. These results are consistent with those of the research done by Leech (2003). He states that there is a decline in the use of *must* and a shift towards *need to* and *should* in both British and American corpus he examined during a period of 30 years.

There were only 11 occurences of *must* in the data. Table 5.13 shows detailed statistics for the overall employment of the modal:

Table 5.12 Descriptive Statistics for Contextual analysis of Must with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUMust	ICMust	OverMust	TotalMust
N	10	0	1	11
Percentage	90.9%	0.0%	9.1%	100.0%

As Table 5.12 illustrates, 10 occurrences of *must* (90.9 %) were appropriately employed to express necessity regarding children's learning a foreign language at early ages. Only one instance of the modal was overused (9.1 %). A more detailed analysis for the total use of *must* is shown in table 5.13.

Table 5.13. Descriptive Statistics for Total Use of Must

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	42	80.8	80.8	80.8
	1	9	17.3	17.3	98.1
	2	1	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

80.8 % (42 students) of the participants did not use *must* at all. The remaining 19.2 % used *must*, but 17.3 % of them used it properly as one student overused *must.* There were no instances of incorrect use of *must*. This means that although the frequency of the modal was few, the success rate was relatively high (17.3 % out of 19 %). The following are examples for the appropriate use of *must* in the data:

Example 5.26:

M2: To sum up, I think that children MUST start learning English language owing to the fact that they can learn easier than elderly and they have more time.

Example 5.27:

M17: The second one is that in today's world, from now on, a foreign language is valid everywhere. For example, when you go to university, they will want the second language, or when you apply to a job, they will ask if you know at least a second language, or when you go to a meeting, everyone will speak English, natural language, with each other. Therefore, if you put yourself forward outside, you MUST *learn a foreign language*.

In both examples, *must* attached the notion of necessity to the expressions they were used within. The employment of *must* was closely related to that of *should* as they displayed the same function in the argumentative paragraphs written by Turkish students. However, different from *should, must* was neither many in term of number nor was employed as successfully as *should.*

Example 5.28 below shows how one student overused *must* while trying to manipulate it as a marker of obligation:

Example 5.28:

M10: Nowadays, there is a discussion about whether children should begin learning a foreing language as soon as they start school. Children ought to learn a foreign language for two important reason. To begin with, a person who learnt a foreign language when he started to primary school can be well-learned and it effects ones bussiness life positively. Recent days companies try to chose a employee knowing a foreign language. For example, an international company MUST chose a bi-lingual employee for communicate with their customers easily.

M10 explains the importance and necessity of learning a foreign language at an early age by giving two reasons. He states that one important reason for learning a foreign language during childhood is that it will put the child at an advantageous position in the future especially in business life. He probably assumes that being employed by an international company means a bright future and a well-paid job. Therefore, he mentions that to be employed by such a company means knowing another language as such companies prefer bilingual employees. However, although that is a general truth, not an obligation or necessity, he changed the illocutionary force of the statement by overusing *must.* As a result, the message given by the statement became ambiguous and vague.

These figure showed that there was a big discrepancy between the employments of *must* and *should* as modals of necessity in the data. While only 10 (20 %) students used *must*, 49 (96.07 %) of them used *should* correctly. This means the success rate of the modal *should* was almost five times more than that of *must*.

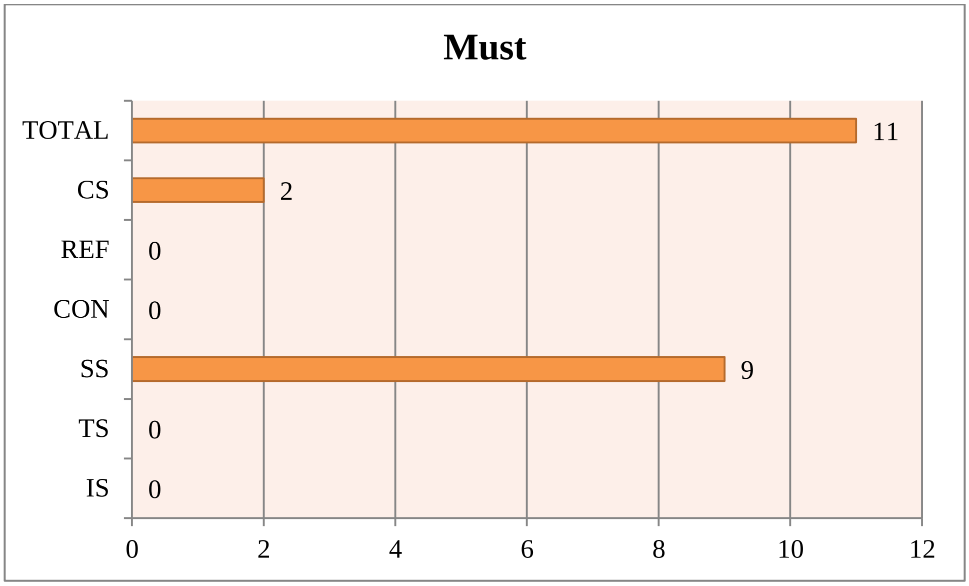

Figure 5.3 Distribution of Must in the students' paragraphs

(CS: concluding sentence, REF: refutation, CON: counter argument, SS: supporting sentence, TS: topic sentence, IS: introduction sentence)

As seen in Figure 5.3, the students employed *must* excessively (81.8 %) in the body parts of their paragraphs while supporting their claims. The remaining 18.2 % were identified in the concluding sentences. The students relied mostly on *should* in the topic and concluding sentences (see figure 5.1 in Section 5.1.2.1). This means that the students at this stage of proficiency in L2 correctly differentiated the uses of *must* and *should*.

Modal verb *could*

Cook (1978) indicates that *could* carries two meanings when it is used to talk about present and future events or actions: hypothetical *could* of possibility and hypothetical *could* of ability.

When it is used to express the present possibility of a future event, *could* implies “if circumstances permit” and is translated as “is possible...will” (Cook 1978: 12). If it is used as a root modal, however, *could* is often used to express the present ability to perform a future action and it entails the condition “if I decide to” and is translated as “would be able to” (Cook, 1978: 12). The following are examples for these meanings:

Example 5.29: (a) It *could* happen again.
It *is possible* that it will happen.

(b) I *could* fail that examination.
It *is possible* that I will fail that examination.

As seen in Table 5.14 below, only six occurrences of *could* were identified, three of which implied hypothetical *could* of ability and, three of which implied hypothetical *could* of possibility. Of these five occurrences, only three (60 %) was appropriately used. When these figures were compared to those of *can* and *may*, it appeared that the employment of *could* was problematic as the success rate was low (60 % *could*; *can* 100 %, *may* 100 %).

Table 5. 14. Contextual Analysis of Could with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUCould	ICCould	OverCould	TotalCould
N	3	3	0	6
Percentage	50 %	50 %	0.0%	100.0%

That could also be the reason why *could* was not favored neither as a marker of ability nor possibility by the students. Only one student used *could* appropriately that resulted in 1.9 % success rate. (see table 5.15)

Table 5.15 Descriptive Statistics for CU of Could

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	51	98.1	98.1	98.1
	3	1	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

These results further indicate that when certain items are polypragmatic, and if the learners have not quite mastered those different functions, they may avoid using such items. "The link between comprehension and production is not as straightforward as it might seem." (Papafragou 1998a:377) and thus, like children at the early stages of language acquisition, L2 learners may "avoid using parts of a linguistic system of which they already have a grasp until they feel quite confident in the system they have constructed" (Papafragou 1998:377). Even the students who felt confident in attributing relevant pragmatic meanings to *could* did not display 100% success In the 344-word paragraph in example 5.30 below, student F10 employed *could* 5 times, which means *could* was employed almost in every 68 words. However, of the five occurrences of *could* in the text, only three were identified as correct and the remaining two were incorrect.

Example 5.30:

F10: Today at a new world, everything has also been developing rapidly. People change their minds, habits, lifes and they try to keep up with innovations and developments . Communication and information have been gaining importance actually. At this point , learning and knowing a foreign langauge especially at an early age for children is very important . There are several reasons for learning a foreign language for children as soon as they start school. To start with, children have brilliant and more active brain than old people. If they take a lesson at an early age , they (1)COULD achieve more easily and quickly that language than middle age or old people. This learning improves brain activity such growing brain curls and growing up their abilities at learning languages. Secondly, they might be good at communicating with other people with ease in their social and job life; that is, they (2) COULD also use foreign language in holiday in order to meet a beautiful girl or a nice boy or have a different friend. In addition, they can use that saying their needs in foreign country if they were here. Moreover, it is not only useful in social life, but also in job life for agreements with companies especially foreign and international companies and sure for investigators which want to earn money. Thirdly, if they learn a foreign language at an early age , this strengthens their ability and they (3) COULD choose to learn more new languages and there are more intellectual people who live in a society and educational level will be high. At an early age, learning foreign language has many beneficial sides contrary to some beliefs for it's confusing for children's minds and they (4) COULDN'T (incorrect) learn best their native language, but it is not logical and it doesn't prove by scientists. If we were give high quality education in every branches at school, our children I am sure (5) COULD (incorrect) do best and learn much than two languages.

The fourth and the fifth occurrences of *could* in the text were identified as incorrect. The negated form of *(4)could* expresses 100 % logical probability (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999: 87). However, F10 seems to have employed it to express ability. Thus, *couldn't* was identified as incorrect since not *couldn't*, but *can't* expresses ability in negated form (Coates 1983; Cook 1978; Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999). The fifth *could* was identified as incorrect due to the context, the grammar and the surrounding lexical devices. In fact, the meaning that *could (5)* expresses in the concluding sentence is rather vague. The phrase "I am sure" clearly conveys a strong conviction on the part of the writer. However, the use of *could* here weakens the strength of the conviction conveyed. It leaves the reader with confusion in that sense. She also used *conditional type* probably to indicate hypothetical possibility, still the inaccurate use of passive voice in the *if conditional* part makes the meaning further ambiguous.

Example 5.31:

M1: They have a point, but this claim is not strong enough because if they don't learn a foreign language, they COULD NOT learn it in little time. To sum up, children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because of its easiness and performance.

Similar to F10, M1 also employed *could not* inappropriately to mark negative ability while trying to refute the counter argument. This might mean that appropriate use of modals could be particularly difficult for L2 learners especially when one single item conveys various pragmatic meanings like *could* as in the example texts above. They might be further confusing for L2 learners if a single modal conveys a totally different meaning when negated as is the case in the example texts. Another explanation might be L1 interference. There is only one form in Turkish to convey positive and negative ability/possibility: suffix *–AbIl* (Aksu-Koç 1988; Kerslake 1996; Kornfilt 2001; Özsoy

1999; Yavaş 1980). The students might have had difficulties in distinguishing the English equivalent of ability/possibility modals as, unlike Turkish, there are different items conveying such meanings in English.

Modal Verb *Might*

Just as *could*, *might* accounted for only 1.8 % of the total modals with a frequency of 6. It was employed as a hedging device to show vagueness and possibility. Table 5.16 shows descriptive statistics for contextual analysis of *might*:

Table 5.16 Descriptive Statistics for Contextual Analysis of Might with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUMight	ICMight	OverMight	TotalMight
N	6	0	0	6
Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

These figures indicate that all *might* occurrences were employed appropriately to mark vagueness and possibility. It is interesting to note that while *can* and *could* were somehow problematic for the students, *may* and *might* were employed 100 % appropriately probably because unlike *can* and *could*, *may* and *might* were not polypragmatic and they conveyed only possibility meanings in the contexts they were used. Table 5.17 illustrates detailed statistics for the correct use of *might*:

Table 5.17 Descriptive Statistics for the CU of Might

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	47	90.4	90.4	90.4
	1	4	7.7	7.7	98.1
	2	1	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

As seen in Table 5.17, 90.4 % of the students did not use *might* at all. However, the remaining 9.6 % of the students used *might* successfully *to* indicate vagueness and possibility. When these figures were compared to those of *could* use, there occurred remarkable differences. Only 3.8 % of the students used *could* and 1.9 of that was successful. In other words, the success rate of modal *might* was almost 9 times higher than that of could (1.9 %). That could be interpreted as such that when one form conveyed various pragmatic functions as in the case of *can* and *could*, the students had problems in distinguishing these items and their functions. When a single form had one function as in the case of *may* and *might*, the students in this study were successful in conveying relevant pragmatic force to their statements.

Figure 5. 4 depicts the distribution of *might* in L2 texts. Different from *may*, *might* had relatively even distribution in the student paragraphs. It was employed mainly in the counter argument and supporting sentences with exactly the same frequencies.

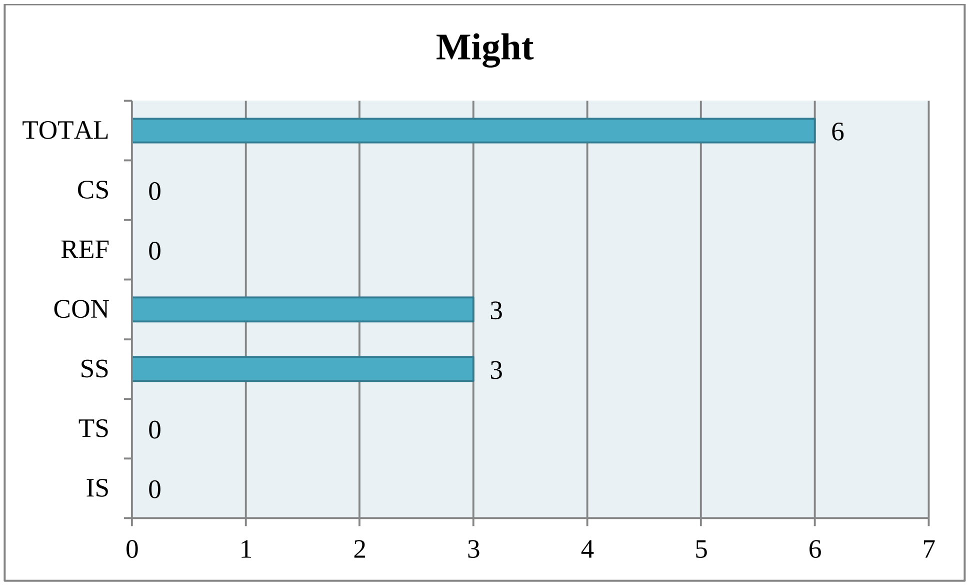

Figure 5.4 Distribution of Might in the Students' Paragraphs

(CS: concluding sentence, REF: refutation, CON: counter argument, SS: supporting sentence, TS: topic sentence, IS: introduction sentence)

The following are examples from the data:

<u>Example 5.31:</u>

F5: The opponents of this proposal MIGHT say that learning is unnecessary for children who have just started but this is completely wrong. (CON)

<u>Example 5.32:</u>

F8: Secondly, foreign language may provide good job opportunities in the future. For example, they MIGHT study at schools where the medium of instruction is English, they may go abroad for reasons of work in international business. (SS)

In both examples above, *might* conveyed appropriate degree of certainty. The students were successful in choosing the correct modal to convey an acceptable degree of pragmatic vagueness.

Modal Verb *Would*

Research on the discourse functions of syntactic constructions (Birner and Ward 1988; Prince 1986; Ward 1988) has emphasized the necessity of a contextually salient open proposition to avoid confusion and epistemic *would* is among these constructions (Birner, Kaplan and Ward 2001). According to Birner, Kaplan and Ward (2001), previous work on modality has failed to accurately characterize the epistemic effect of *would*. Palmer (1990) and Perkins (1983) regard epistemic *would* as tentative while Swetser (1982) calls it a conditional with a general, and suppressed *if-clause,* and Coates (1983) states that it marks the predictability of some past actions or states. However, Birner et al. (2001) claim that would is also used in assertions where there is clearly no tentativeness and no conditionality, and the assertion is not about the past. They provide the following examples:

Example:

1. *B: Are you the Meredith that was listed in the Graduate Student News?*

   *M: **Yeah, that would be me***. (in class)

2. *(A is holding a plastic bag with a fish in it.)*

A: I don't know. Maybe it's in shock.

B: Looks dead to me.

*C: **That would be one dead fish**.*

It appears that *would* is clearly different from other epistemic modals in that open propositions play a crucial role in its interpretation. Thus, when those propositions are not clear to L2 learners, or their proficiency level lags behind their production; that is, they lack the necessary linguistic and pragmatic knowledge to appropriately utilize such devices as *would* in their writings, they may avoid employing them.

The results of the present study concerning the employment of would supported the researchers' claim above. *Would* in the present study occurred as the frequently employed modal in the data. It comprised only 0.6 % of the total modals with a frequency of 2. A detailed descriptive statistics of *would* is given in Table 5.18 below:

Table 5.18 Descriptive Statistics for CU of Would

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	50	96.2	96.2	96.2
	1	2	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

As seen in the Table 5.18, just as in the case of modal *could*, a great many of the students (96.2 %) did not use it at all. Only 3.8 % of the students employed *would* with the function of possibility and they used it properly. Contextual analysis of the modal revealed that there were no occurrences of incorrect use or overuse as shown in Table 5.19 below:

Table 5.19 Descriptive Statistics for Contextual analysis of Would with respect to CU, IC and OVER

	CUWould	ICWould	OverWould	TotalWould
N	2	0	0	2
Percentage	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

The following are examples from the data:

Example 5.33:

M13: Those who are against this proposal WOULD claim that children shouldn't be started learning the foreign language as soon as they start school. They point out that they learn the foreign language as a lesson. This is obviously not true.

Example 5.34:

F25: In spite of these strong arguments in favor of this issue, those who are against application claim that without learning or writing, children WOULD NOT learn new language. The opponents of the issue have a point, but children can learn speaking in foreign language firstly and then they can learn reading or writing in it.

In both of the excerpts above, *would* was used in the counter argument. In fact, these two students copied the exact chunk from the writing material (APPENDIX C):

Useful Language

Table 5.20 Patterns to introduce the con argument

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">The opponents of</td><td rowspan="2">this proposal</td><td rowspan="2">(might)
(would)</td><td rowspan="2">argue
maintain
assert
declare
claim
point out
say
state</td><td rowspan="2">that . . .</td></tr>
<tr><td>Those who</td><td>disagree with
are against
do not favor</td></tr>
</table>

From the writing handout used at the DBE (see APPENDIX C, pp.8)

In Table 5.20, m*ight* and *would* were both given as modals to introduce the counter argument. This layout or how *would* was presented in the writing material to the students could also explain why modal *would* was not frequently used compared to other modals in the data. That is, *might* and *would* were given in parenthesis to be used in the introduction of the counter argument. Although both were put in parenthesis, *might* preceded *would*. Figure 5.7 below depicts how *might* and *would* were distributed in the students' paragraphs:

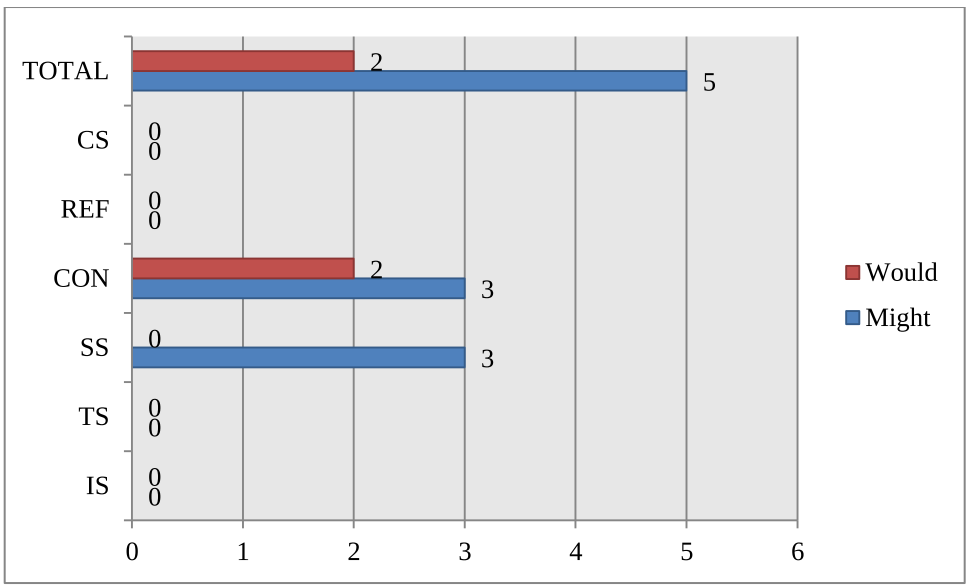

Figure 5.5 Distribution of Would and Might in L2 Ps

(CS: concluding sentence, REF: refutation, CON: counter argument, SS: supporting sentence, TS: topic sentence, IS: introduction sentence)

As seen from Figure 5.5, while *might* was employed three times in the introduction of the counter arguments in the paragraphs, *would* was employed only twice. M*ight* had a slightly higher frequency than *would* as it was also employed in SS.

There was a big discrepancy between the TR NNS and NS use of *would* in the present. Table 5.21 presents those differences:

Table 5.21 *Most frequent items expressing epistemic modality, in rank order-Native Speakers* (*total number or words is 500.000 and total devices for NS data is 9.115 while total number of words is 10.257 and total devices is 722 in TR data)*

Native Speakers			**Turkish Speakers**		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**
1	***would***	1.355	1	*will*	28
2	*will*	1.344	2	*may*	26
3	*may*	645	3	*believe*	14
4	*often*	596	4	***would***	2
5	*perhaps*	439	5	*seem*	1
6	*always*	326	6	*certainly*	1
7	*believe*	297	7	*always*	0
8	*seem*	232	8	*often*	0
9	*indeed*	206	9	*indeed*	0
10	*certainly*	189	10	*perhaps*	0

Adapted from Hyland, K. & Milton, J. (1997). Qualification and certainty in L1 and L2students' writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. 6(2), 183-205.

As Table 5.21 shows, although *would* and *will* rank higher in both NS and Turkish data, they reveal remarkable differences in the overall frequencies. Turkish students preferred confident predictions while native speakers were more tentative in expressing their arguments. Thus, *will* occurred 14 times more often than *would* in the Turkish data.

These results are congruent with that of Cantonese NNS (Total devices in Cantonese NNS data is 9.154 while it is 721 in Turkish data) Table 5.22 shows the detailed figures concerning NNS and TR NNS :

Table 5.22.Most frequent items expressing epistemic modality, in rank order- Non-Native Speakers (in NS data, total number or words is 500.000 and total devices is 9.115 while total number of words is 10.257 and total devices is 722 in TR data)

Non-Native Speakers			Turkish Speakers		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**
1	***will***	2731	1	***will***	28
2	*may*	1215	2	*may*	26
3	*think*	634	3	*believe*	14
4	***would***	625	4	***would***	2
5	*always*	520	5	*seem*	1
6	*usually*	281	6	*certainly*	1
7	*know*	227	7	*always*	0
8	*in fact*	225	8	*often*	0
9	*actually*	201	9	*indeed*	0
10	*probably*	195	10	*perhaps*	0

Adapted from Hyland, K. & Milton, J. (1997). Qualification and certainty in L1 and L2 students' writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. 6(2), 183-205.

As seen in Table 5.22, top two items in both sets of data were *will* and *may*. It seems that both Cantonese and Turkish NNS were somewhat more confident in expressing claims than NS were. In fact, *will* as a certainty marker occurs in published academic writing. Holmes (1988) reports that *will* along with *would*, *seem*, and *may* occur most frequently in academic writing. Hyland and Milton (1997) also report that *will* is the only certainty marker in the top ten most frequent epistemic items in published academic writing.

Hinkel (2009) notes that in the essays written by speakers of Chinese, Japanese and Korean, the number and frequency of obligation and necessity modals were higher than those of ability and possibility modals. In the present study, however, the number and frequency of modals of obligation/necessity and ability/possibility are exactly the same as shown in table 5.23 below:

Table 5.23 Modals with respect to their functions

Function of modals	Item	Number	TOTAL
Obligation and Necessity	Should	147	158
	Must	11	
Ability and Possibility	Can	91	159
	Will	28	
	May	26	
	Might	6	
	Could	6	
	Would	2	

The pragmatic functions and the meanings of modal verbs have been studied extensively while the meanings and their use in L1 and L2 writing have received relatively less attention in the related literature (Hinkel 2009). The researchers who have been interested in modal use in L1 and L2 writing focused on modals as hedges, qualifiers and (un)certainty markers (Hyland 1996; Hyland and Milton 1997; Milton and Hyland 1999). Their results indicate that L2 learners usually have problems in employing English modal verbs and attaining appropriate pragmatic goals in written discourse. However, the results of the present study with respect to modal use indicate the opposite since L2 learners in the present study employed them appropriately. These results also indicate to the importance of teaching of English modals in appropriate contexts where L2 learners have the opportunity to interpret the pragmatic meanings entailed in these modals and will eventually enable them to use these modals when they are necessary, relevant and appropriate.

5.1.2.2 Adjectives

Adjectives are among hedging devices as they are also "the product of mental attitude which looks for prototypical linguistic forms." (Salager-Meyer 1994). Salager-Meyer (1994), for example, uses *approximaters* to refer to *adjectives* together with *adverbs* as hedges. Myers (1989), on the other hand, refers to adjectives as adjectivals. In the examination of adjectives in this study, the term *adjectives* was adopted both as a functional form and a formal categorization.

Adjectives constituted 19.28 % of the total *hedges* and *boosters* in the overall data (see Figure 5.2). They were the second most frequently employed hedging devices with a frequency of 139. Table 5.24 lists the most frequent adjectives in L2 Ps, in rank order:

Table 5.24 Most Frequently Occurring Adjectives in Rank Order

	Adjectives		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*important*	35	25.2%
2	*easier*	16	11.5%
3	*necessary*	14	10.1%
4	*strong*	14	10.1%
5	*(to be) against*	13	9.4%
6	*easy*	8	5.8%
7	*essential*	5	3.6%
8	*possible*	4	2.9%
9	*significant*	4	2.9%
10	*advantage*	3	2.2%
11	*contrary*	3	2.2%
12	*crucial*	3	2.2%
13	*valid*	3	2.2%
14	*bad*	2	1.4%
15	*certain*	2	1.4%
16	*obligatory*	2	1.4%
17	*sure*	2	1.4%
18	*wrong*	2	1.4%
19	*for*	1	0.7%
20	*unacceptable*	1	0.7%
21	*undeniable*	1	0.7%
22	*vital*	1	0.7%
Total		**139**	**100.0%**

Top 5 most favored adjectives were *important*, *easier*, *necessary*, *strong*, and *against.* The least frequent adjectives were *unacceptable*, *undeniable* and *vital*.

In the paragraphs, adjectives were commonly used as *subjunctive adjectives* to emphasize the necessity of children's learning a foreign language when they start school. As table 5.24 shows, *important* (35) and *necessary* (14) rank among the top three most frequent adjectives in the overall data. They constituted 35.2% of the total adjectives in the data. High frequency of these adjectives could be due to the input given in the writing handout (see APPENDIX C, pp.6). In the useful language section of the handout, adjectives to be used in the topic sentence were highlighted:

Table 5.25 Useful language: Possible patterns to make a proposal in the topic sentence

	essential	
	important	
	crucial	
It is	**urgent**	
	necessary	that something **be done** / that somebody do something
	imperative	
	vital	
	recommended	
	advisable	

As Table 5.25 illustrates, *important* and *necessary* were also the top two adjectives presented in the useful language chart in the writing handout. There was almost a full match between the input regarding the use of subjunctive adjectives and the students' employment of *essential* and *important* while expressing their beliefs regarding the topic.

Below are some examples from the data:

Example 5.35:

F3: It is IMPORTANT that children should be taught foreign language due to their high comprehension capacity and that time is very IMPORTANT in early ages.

F3 expressed her desire by using the subjunctive adjective *important* and *that* clause to explain the statement. Although the bare form of the verb is required as highlighted in the useful language chart in the handout, she used *should* as well. She used *important* again in the following sentence. By repeating the adjective, she, in a way, emphasized her message. Repetition is usually discouraged in Anglo-American academic writing because it is associated with redundancy (Tarone and Yule 1987). However, Brown and Levinson (1987) view it as a politeness strategy which establishes and maintains agreement, solidarity and group belonging. M. McCarthy and Carter (1994) also note that repetition could be employed as a persuasion strategy. F3 seems to have repeated the adjective to persuade the reader.

Example 5.36:

M9: The opponents of this proposal may claim that it is not NECESSARY because a foreign language may learn future. However, contrary to their belief this is too NECESSARY. To sum *up, learning in mind the advantages, children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school.*

M9 used the adjective *necessary* twice. He used the first one while introducing the counter argument and he used active voice though passive voice was required. He employed the second one while trying to refute the counter argument. However, he misused the negative adverb *too.* He probably meant to emphasize the degree of necessity but failed to choose the correct modifier most probably due to his inefficiency in L2. That is also apparent in that he could not refute the argument and skipped to the concluding sentence.

Some students used *important* and *necessary* together in their paragraphs. Below is an example:

Example 5.38:

F8: Secondly, foreign language may provide good job opportunities in the future. For example, they might study at schools where the medium of instruction is English, they may go abroad for reasons of work in international business. As a result, learning foreign language is IMPORTANT and NECESSARY. Therefore, its importance should be given to children at young ages.

F8 made her stance clear by using double subjunctive adjectives. She further emphasized her proposal by using the noun form of adjective *important* in the last sentence.

It is also interesting to note that certain adjectives such as *imperative, recommended, advisable* and *urgent* were not used by the students at all. There could be some plausible explanations for this. One might be that these adjectives convey stronger messages and do not leave much space for the evaluation of the claim by the reader. Thus, they might have been regarded as impolite and too direct by the students and thus avoided.

One other explanation might be related with the presentation and the frequency of these adjectives. That is, these adjective were at the very end of the list in the table (see *Table 5.25)* contrary to *necessary* and *important*, which were listed at the top of the list and were quite commonly employed by the students. In fact, the frequency of these less frequently used adjectives in the writing handout was also rather low: each occurred only twice. This means that of the 3.880 words in the writing handout, these adjectives comprised only 0.2 %. From this respect, there was again parallelism between the input and the output, in this case the students' paragraphs. The results also indicate once again the importance of providing L2 learners with materials that include higher frequencies of items that have either multiple meanings or are subject-related.

One other possible reason for the students' not employing certain words could be regarding the vocabulary tiers. Hutton (2008) states that there are three tiers of vocabulary:

Tier 1: Basic vocabulary

Tier 2: High Frequency/Multiple Meaning

Tier 3: Subject Related

Tier 1 consists of most basic words such as *book*, *girl, dog* and *orange*. They usually do not require direct instruction (Hutton 2008). Tier 2 consists of higher frequency words that are usually associated with mature langauge situations such as adult conversations and literature, thus have an important influence on reading and speaking (Hutton 2008).

Some examples for tier 2 are *benevolent*, *masterpiece* or *industrious* (Hutton 2008). The last group, tier 3, consists of low-frequency words that commonly occur in certain subjects in school, occupations, technology, weather, etc. (Hutton 2008). Some examples are *economics*, *war*, and *isotope* (Hutton 2008).

While developing materials for academic writing classes, these aspect of vocabulary learning should also be taken into consideration as these will probably help focus on certain words more often than others and will eventually be included more often within clear contexts rather than lists of discrete items among which the students will probably chose the ones they are already familiar with because they would prefer to be on the safe side rather than risk using the ones that may belong to tier 2 or 3.

5.1.2.3 Epistemic Verbs

Verbs constitute 16.09 % of the total *hedges* and *boosters* in the data (see Figure 5.2) with a frequency of 116. Their number was slightly fewer than that of *adverbs* which occurred as a subcategory for *boosters*. Hyland and Milton (1997) note that lexical verbs convey a more overt and precise commitment to a proposition than adverbs. In their study on Cantonese writers' employment of certainty devices, they found out that *adverbs* were more commonly used than *verbs* (Hyland and Milton 1997) though *lexical verbs* occur more often in published academic writing (Holmes 1983; Hyland 1996).

Table 5.26 shows the most frequent verbs in the data:

Table 5.26 Most frequent verbs in rank order

	Epistemic verbs		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*think*	19	16.4%
2	*know*	19	16.4%
3	*claim*	18	15.5%
4	*want*	18	15.5%
5	*believe*	14	12.1%
6	*say*	11	9.5%
7	*argue*	6	5.2%
8	*favor*	4	3.4%
9	*point out*	2	1.7%
10	*propose*	2	1.7%
11	*recognize*	1	0.9%
12	*recommend*	1	0.9%
13	*seem*	1	0.9%
Total		**116**	

As Table 5.26 below illustrates, top 5 most frequent verbs are *think*, *know*, *claim*, *want*, and *believe*, which constituted 75.8 % of the total epistemic verbs. The least common verbs, on the other hand, were *recognize*, *recommend* and *seem*.

In addition to expressing the strength of a claim, *verbs* also convey “a judgmental warrant and degree of conjecture involved” (Hyland and Milton 1997: 191). Below are some examples from the data:

Example 5.39:

F7: Whether children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school or not is a controversial issue. I THINK they should start learning a foreign language when they start school for two main reasons.

F7 used the verb *think* together with the first person pronoun to signal the relative degree of assurance she attributed to the claim and expressed doubt rather than certainty in a polite way.

Example 5.40:

F24: Although some interest groups are against this view, I BELIEVE that children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school.

The verb *believe* carries a judgmental warrant and writer's own personal doubt in the example above. F24 not only related the claim to her judgments and but also left room for any possible objections on the part of the reader by using the phrase "I think".

Verbs may also be employed to indicate the reliability of the source (Hyland and Milton 1997) as in the examples below:

Example 5.41

M1: Despite these strong arguments, the opponents of this proposal CLAIM that learning a foreign language as soon as children start school prevents their freedom.

<u>Example 5.42:</u>

M17: Although the defenders of this idea BELIEVE that native language plays an important role in people's life to keep up with everything, I am in favor of the fact that children should not start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school due to two main reasons.

The ability to employ epistemic *verbs* appropriately is also related with the "complex issue of academic tenor" (Hyland and Milton 1997) which involves not only the correct choice of verb but also the tense to express stance with appropriate degree of distance (Swales 1990). L2 learners may not feel confident enough to choose among critical lexical, tense and voice which are significant in expressing rhetorical effects and thus may avoid using *verbs* and rely more on *adverbs* due to these structural and lexical complications.

The results of the present study are congruent with those of Hyland and Milton's (1997). In both studies, NNS were found to have employed relatively fewer *verbs* and used more *adverbs*. NS were also reported to favor *adverbs* over *verbs* in the same study.

5.1.2.4 Nouns

Nouns occurred as the least frequent category of the hedges in the data. They comprised only 3.88 % of the total hedges and boosters (see Figure 5.2) with a frequency of 28. Table 5.27 illustrates the most frequent nouns in the data in rank order:

Table 5.27 Most frequent nouns in rank order

Epistemic Nouns			
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*fact*	8	
2	*importance*	7	
3	*claim*	5	
4	*necessity*	3	
5	*ease*	3	
6	*belief*	2	
Total		**28**	

The most frequent *noun* in the data was *fact*, which was followed by *importance* (see table 5.27). *Fact* and *importance* ranked as the top two most frequent *nouns* with 53.5 %, which was half of the total *nouns* in the data. Every instance of the noun *fact* occurred with the word *that* in the paragraphs. Below are some examples:

Example 5.43:

F35: They seem to ignore THE FACT THAT people can speak two languages together directly if people learn directly and teach directly.

Example 5.44:

F12: To conclude, it is undeniable FACT THAT children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school.

The students seem to have overgeneralized *the fact that* as they employed it to state opinions rather than facts (as in examples 5.43 and 5.44 above). They probably tried to sound more academic by using such phrases, but they did not pay much attention to the pragmatic implications these structures convey.

Importance, *ease* and *necessity* were employed by the students to indicate their writer's stance and to mark the significance of foreign language education at early ages (Examples 5.45-46-47). *Claim* and *belief*, on the other hand, were used to mark the opponents' position (Examples 5.48-49).

Example 5.45:

M9: In these days, with the increasing IMPORTANCE of learning a second language, whether children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school has become a controversial issue.

Example 5.46:

F10: Secondly, they might be good at communicating with other people with EASE in their social and job life; that is, they could also use foreign language in holiday in order to meet a beautiful girl or a nice boy or have a different friend.

Example 5.47:

M17: Those who are against this idea point out that children should not start learning a foreign language when they start school. Although it may be true to a certain extent, it is not strong enough because children are clever enough to understand that it is NECESSITY to their old age and their life. To sum up, it is advisable that children learn a foreign language in terms of NECESSITY and valid.

Example 5.48:

F8: However, the opponents of the issue CLAIM that children should not start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because they say that learning a foreign language might affect native language badly. They have a point, but this CLAIM is not true or logical because the child who is 6 or 7 years old has brain like sponge so children learn a lot of languages easily and their native language are not affected badly.

Example 5.49:

M9: However, contrary to their BELIEF this is too necessary. To sum up, learning in mind the advantages, children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school.

5.1.3 Boosters in the English Corpus

5.1.3.1 Adverbs as a Subcategory for Boosters

Adverbs are reported to be more prevalent to boost claims in L2 learners' writings than in NS' since they might be easier to manipulate for novice writers with confidence (Hyland and Milton 1997). They are also more common in speech than writing

(Holmes 1983), and more mobile in clause structure (Quirk et al. 1972). Therefore, L2 writers may feel more confident while expressing their commitment using *adverbs* in academic discourse rather than *verbs* which may run the risk of "error inherent in appropriate verb selection" (Hyland and Milton 1997: 191).

Adverbs are basically categorized into three groups: manner adverbs, degree adverbs and sentence adverbs (Radford 1997):

1. Manner Adverbs show how the action is done (e.g., slowly, quickly, unexpectedly etc.)

2. *Degree Adverbs* tell us to what degree something is done, as in "very loudly". Other degree adverbs are *quite, too, highly, extremely, more, less, rather,* etc.

3. *Sentence Adverbs* modify sentences. They appear in a range of sentence positions and often express an attitude or evaluation (e.g., *frankly, actually, perhaps, unfortunately*). A sentence *adverb* is often differentiated in writing by a comma and in speech by a particular intonation pattern.

Example 5.50: *Frankly*, she is the best student in class.

Jim is not at home, *unfortunately***.**

Adverbs were the third most common devices that occurred in the data. They accounted for the 16.92 % of the total *hedges* and *boosters* (see Figure 5.2) with a frequency of 122. Table 5.28 shows the most frequent adverbs in the data in rank order:

Table 5.28 Most frequent adverbs in rank order

Boosters			
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*easily*	50	41.0%
2	*very*	29	23.8%
3	*every*	6	4.9%
4	*effectively*	6	4.9%
5	*immediately*	5	4.1%
6	*badly*	4	3.3%
7	*completely*	4	3.3%
8	*efficiently*	3	2.5%
9	*actually*	2	1.6%
10	*obviously*	2	1.6%
11	*of course*	2	1.6%
12	*probably*	2	1.6%
13	*absolutely*	1	0.8%
14	*almost*	1	0.8%
15	*certainly*	1	0.8%
16	*generally*	1	0.8%
17	*strongly*	1	0.8%
18	*unfortunately*	1	0.8%
19	*unlikely*	1	0.8%
Total		**122**	

Manner adverb e*asily* was the most frequent *adverb* that occurred in the data and it accounted for the 40.9 % of the total *boosters*. The topic may have elicited such a high percentage. Also out of the 52 students, 49 stated that children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school since children learn foreign languages *easily* as in the following examples:

Example 5.51:

F12: The first reason is that brain activity. That is to say, due to young ages, they can learn more EASILY than old ages and their brain does not fill up with another things.

Example 5.52:

F13: First of all, children can learn more effectively because of their fresh capacity to get the information EASILY. That is, children can remember and learn information and language EASILY than the other people who start learning English at high school or university.

Very as a degree adverb occurred as the second most common *booster* in the data. The category of words that can occur after *very* is either an *adjective* or an *adverb* (Radford 1997) as can in the examples below:

Example 5.53:	(a) He is *very* slow	(*very* + **adjective**)
	(b) He walks *very* slowly	(*very* + **adverb**)

Degree adverb *very* ranked as the second most frequent *booster* in the data. The students used *very* to modify both adjectives (Example 5.54) and adverbs (Example 5.55).

Example 5.54:

F3: Secondly, time is VERY important to learn foreign language. (very + adjective)

Example 5.55:

F20: As a result, children walk to the future surely and develop themselves VERY well . However, people who are against that children learn a foreign language at early age assert that children may forget their language oral and they do not learn their language VERY well. (very + adverb)

The students mostly used the degree adverb *very* either with the adjective *important* or the adverb *well* as in the excerpts above. That is probably because of their limited lexicon in L2 and they could not use a variety of words. In fact, *very* is among the adverbs that are overused by L2 learners (Philip 2007). In Italian persuasive writing, for example, *very* was identified as problematic and overused by English language learners while other corresponding lexical adverbs such as *highly*, *closely* and *deeply* are virtually unused (Philip 2007).

There were also some instances of adverb +verb combinations in the data (Examples 5.56-57).

Example 5.56:

F18: If students begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school, they can learn it more EFFICIENTLY.

Example 5.57:

F8: However, the opponents of the issue claim that children should not start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school because they say that learning a foreign language might affect native language BADLY. They have a point, but this claim is not true or logical because the child who is 6 or 7 years old has brain like sponge so children learn a lot of languages EASILY and their native language are not affected BADLY.

Badly was used inappropriately to express the meanings that the manner adverb *negatively* conveys in English. The student most probably transferred the adjective *badly* from L1 in the excerpt above.

These results are similar to those of Philip's (2007). He reports that basic adverbs of degree are more prevalent in Italian L2 learners' writings and there is a clear preference over simple adverbs such as *very* and *really* in L2 as learners rarely employ them incorrectly while they avoid using risky combinations such as adverb + verb collocations.

Absolutely, *obviously*, *completely* and *certainly* convey a greater certainty than *easily* and *effectively*. That is probably the reason why they were not favored by the students and did not occur as often. Modal adverbs *probably* and *certainly* (Corblin and de Swart 2004) were not frequent as the students preferred the corresponding modal verbs. Also, *certainly* is rather an assertive adverb and was not preferred by the students.

5.1.3.2 Quantifier *Every* as a Subcategory for Boosters

Hinkel (1997; 2005) categorizes *every* as a common intensifier and she puts it under a further category: universals and negative pronouns. She indicates that markers such as *every*- and *no*-words express exaggeration. Thus, they are rarely encountered in academic writing in English (Biber 1988; Halliday and Hasan 1976). Leech (1983:148) also notes that exaggeratives might be inappropriate in formal text as their use “brings about a distortion of the truth”.

That is probably the reason why the students rarely employed *every*-words. The total number of *every*-words in the data is rather few. They comprised only 4.9 % of the total boosters with a frequency of 6 (see table 5.32). Below are some examples from the data:

Example 5.58:

M6: Secondly , the world is changing and now , people easily change location .EVERY year , our country's student is going to abroad for education . If it will happen, a foreign language skills must begin starting school

Example 5.59:

F12: That is to say, due to young ages, they can learn more easily than old ages and their brain does not fill up with another things. For example, private schools have taught foreign language early ages for years, this should be EVERY school.

These results are different from those of some earlier studies. For example, Matalene (1985) reports that exaggeratives were routinely used in Chinese students' writings. Similarly, Hinds (1984) and Tsujimura (1987) note that their Japanese students employed exaggeratives in written discourse. Yum (1987) states that since the writer in traditional Korean discourse has the authority to convince the reader, Korean learners rely on various overstatements. Hinkel (1997) presents that NNS in her study, namely, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Indonesian used more universals than NS did.

5.2 Hedges and Boosters in the Turkish Corpus

Types of hedges and boosters in the study were identified based on an eclectic taxonomy offered by Bayyurt (2010), Doyuran (2009) and Yarar (2001). The detailed analysis of the Turkish paragraphs for *hedges* and *boosters* revealed five categories of lexical devices that are used to soften the propositions: *modals*, *epistemic verbs*, *adjectives,* and *nouns* as subcategories for *hedges*, and *adverbs* as a subcategory for *boosters*. Firstly, the overall distribution of these devices will be presented. Secondly, a more detailed analysis of each category in the Turkish data and their comparisons with their English counterparts will be presented under related subcategories together with their number, frequency, meanings and functions attributed to them by the student writers. Thirdly, a general comparison of the hedges and boosters in the Turkish and English corpora will be presented.

5.2.1 Overall Distribution of Hedges and Boosters

The total number of words in the 52 Turkish paragraphs is 7861, and the total number of *hedges* and *boosters* in the corpus is 533 (see Table 5.29)

Table 5.29 Total Hedges and Boosters with respect to total number of words

Total hedges and boosters	533
Total number of words	7861
Tokens per 100 words	6.7

Compared to the L2 paragraphs, the students used slightly smaller numbers of hedges and boosters in their L1 paragraphs (7.0 and 6.7 respectively). This means that in their mother tongue, the students were a little more assertive. One reason for the slight difference in the use of hedges and boosters in L1 and L2 paragraphs could be that the students were trained to soften their claims in L2 academic writing classes, and thus they hedged their claims accordingly. This claim will be discussed in detail in section 5.3, where L1 and L2 paragraphs were compared.

Table 5.30. Categorical Distribution of Hedges and Boosters in the Turkish Corpus

Category		**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Hedges	Modals	279	52.3%
	Adjectives	72	13.5%
	Verbs	39	7.3%
	Nouns	28	5.3%
Boosters	Adverbs	115	21.6%
Total		533	100.0%

As Table 5.30 illustrates, *modals*, as a subcategory for hedges, accounted for more than half of the total devices with a frequency of 279 (52.3%). The remaining 47.7% of the data comprised of *adjectives* (13.5%), *verbs* (7.3%), *nouns* (5.3%), and *adverbs* (21.6%). Similarly, in L2 paragraphs, modals were the most frequently used hedges. They were used almost twice as more as the adverbs and four times more than the adjectives. *Verbs* and *nouns* were the least frequently employed devices in the corpus.

5.2.2 Subcategories for Hedges in the Data

5.2.2.1 Modals

Modality is expressed through various morphogical, lexical and syntactic devices in Turkish (Göksel 2005; Kerimoğlu 2010). Morphemes that carry ability/possibility and necessity/obligation meanings and their percentages are summarized in the table 5.31:

Table 5.31 Modality markers in TR

Possibility Markers	Frequency	**%**
-*AbIl-Ir*	124	44.4%
-*EcEk*	35	12.5%
-*Ecek-DIr*	24	8.6%
Necessity Markers		
-*mElI-DIr*	49	17.5%
-*mElI*	47	16.8%
Total	279	100.0%

As seen in table 5.31, the students in this study used possibility/ability modals more often (i.e., *–AbIl* and *–EcEk* 60% of the total modality markers) than the stronger modality markers (e.g., *–EcEk-DIr*, *-mElI* and *-mElI-DIr*), which comprised the remaining 40% of the data.

–*AbIl-Ir* as Modality Marker

The most commonly used modality marker in the Turkish paragraphs was the combination of the-*AbIl-Ir* suffix with the aorist *–Ir* (-*AbIl-Ir* e.g., *Çocuklar daha fazla kelime öğren-ebil-ir-ler*). This suffix marks possibility (Erguvanlı Taylan and Özsoy 1993; Özsoy 1999) and ability (Aksu-Koç 1988; Kerslake 1996; Kornfilt 2001; Özsoy 1999; Yavaş 1980). The students employed this suffix to make their judgments more certain (Example 5.60) and their claims stronger (Example 5.61). In example 5.60, F15, used the suffix *–AbIl-Ir* her opinion related to the topic. However, F17, in example 5.61, went a step further and made her claim extra strong by using the degree adverbs *çok* (much) and *daha* (more) in front of the verb carrying the *–AbIl-Ir* combinations of suffixes.

<u>Example 5.60:</u>

F15: Çocuklar daha fazla kelime ***öğren-ebil-ir-ler*** *ve seviyelerini arttırmak için birçok şansları ve zamanları olur.*

(Children ***learn-ABIL-AORIST-3PL*** *more words and they have more time and greater chances to improve their (English) level.)*

<u>Example 5.61:</u>

F17: İkinci olarak dili erken yaşta öğrenmeye başlarlarsa kendilerini bu dilde çok daha fazla ***geliştir-ebil-ir-ler.***

(Secondly, if they start learning the language at early ages, they ***improve-ABIL-AORIST-3PL*** *themselves more.)*

The negative form of the suffix -*(y)AbIl (i.e.,-(y)AbIl-(y)AmA)* also frequently occurred in the data. This form of -*(y)AbIl* is utilized "in statements of objective possibility" and "the choice of tense/aspect/modality marking (following -*(y)Abil/-(y)AmA*) determines whether possibility or impossibility is understood as **actualized** (taking effect) or not." (Göksel and Kerslake 2005:201). The students in the current study used -*(y)Abil/-(y)AmA* to mark both possibility (see Example 5.62) and impossibility (see Example 5.63) in their paragraphs.

<u>Example 5.62:</u>

F15: Çünkü bazı yetişkinler İngilizcenin gerekliliğinin farkında olmasına rağmen öğrenmek ***isteme-yebil-ir-ler****.* ***(Possibility)***

(Because some adults ***want-NEG-ABIL-AORIST-3PL*** *to learn although they are aware of the necessity of English)*

<u>Example 5.63:</u>

F8: Bazı insanlara göre erken yaşta bu eğitimi vermek çocukların ana dilini kötü yönde etkilemeye neden olabilirmiş. Belki bu önemli bir nokta olabilir fakat tamamen doğru ya da mantıklı olduğunu ***söyle-ye-meyiz (say-PSB-NEG-AORIST-1PL)*** *çünkü 6-7 yaşlarındaki bir çocuğun beyni sünger gibidir ve verilen her bilgiyi, diğer bilgilere zarar vermeden içine çeker.****(impossibility)***

(For some people, teaching a foreign language at an early age may affect the native language negatively. That might be an important point but ***we can't say*** *that this is completely true or logical because the brain of a 6 or 7-year-old is like a sponge and absorbs every kind of information without inhibiting other knowledge)* ***(impossibility)***

When the Turkish data are compared with the English data it can be seen that there were interesting differences between the two corpora. In the English data, the most frequently used modal was *should* (i.e., necessity) and it was followed by *can* (i.e., when used as an ability/possibility marker). However, in the Turkish data, the suffix –*AbIl-Ir* (which can be translated as CAN/COULD/MAY/MIGHT into English) was the most frequently employed modal suffix in L1 paragraphs. In Turkish, students marked various meanings such as possibility, ability and impossibility with –*AbIl-Ir*. That could also explain why the students preferred *can* in L2 paragraphs to mark ability, possibility and impossibility. Since one form carries multiple pragmatic functions in

Turkish, they somehow transferred this L1 feature to L2 rather than using *may*, *might*, *could*, which are the other modals of possibility in English in their L2 paragraphs (see Table 5.3).

-mElI and *–mElI-DIr* as Modality Markers

The second most common modality suffix in the Turkish data was *-mElI*. Göksel and Kerslake (2005) note that this suffix marks speaker generated obligation. "A sentence marked with *–mAlI* that has the 1st person subject expresses an action which the speaker feels obliged to perform." (Göksel and Kerslake 2005:306). However, when the suffix has a 3rd person singular subject, it expresses a more impersonal meaning (Göksel and Kerslake 2005). On the other hand, Emeksiz (2008) comments that *–mElI* seems to be the least preferred marker of obligation/necessity in written texts in Turkish and that it is often used in passive sentences with generalized meanings. The data coming from this study revealed results congruent with both Göksel and Kerslake's and Emeksiz's (2008) comments on *–mAlI* usage in Turkish. In this study, there were no instances of *–mElI* with the 1st person subject. It was frequently used in passive voice sentences which aimed to give impersonal opinions related to the discussed topic (Example 5.64).

Example 5.64:

F30:.Eğer insanlar bir dili tam anlamıyla öğrenmek ve bu öğrenimi hayatta etkili bir şekilde kullanmak istiyorsa erken yaşlarda bir eğitime ***başla-n-malı*** *ve teşvik* ***ed-il-meli.***

(If people want to learn a foreign language fully and use that effectively in life, education ***should*** *be* ***start-PASS-mElI*** *and* ***encourage-PASS-mElI****.)*

In L1 paragraphs, the obligation/necessity suffix *-mElI* occurred in two forms: *-mElI* by itself and in a combination with the aorist *–DIr (-mElI-DIr).* The total per cent of *-mElI* (16.8%) and *–mElI-DIr* (17.5%) is 34.3% in the data, which was a figure lower than the one in the English paragraphs (49.8%).

In Turkish, *-mElI* is attached to the verb stem to mark obligation and necessity (Kornfilt 1997; Özsoy 1999) and when *–DIr* follows *–mElI*, "the force of the obligation/necessity" (Kocaman 1996:106) is emphasized. That is, the presence of *–DIr* gives an additional strength to the proposition (Example 5.66). Sansa Tura (1986), who investigated the meaning of *-DIr* in modern Turkish argues that when *–DIr* follows *–mElI*, the necessity marker, the utterances with these combined suffixes will still have their necessiative readings without the aorist *–DIr* (Example5.65). The writers use *–mElI–DIr*, according to Sansa Tura (1986), when the proposition needs an additional strength (Example 5.66).

Example 5.65:

M10: İkinci sebep ise çocuklar üniversiteye geldiklerinde o üniversite çocuğun okula başladığı dili öğretiyorsa bu çocuk için büyük bir avantaj olacaktır . Özet geçmek gerekirse çocuklar okula başlamalarının akabinin de yabancı dil ***gör-meli-ler***

(The second reason is that when children enter university and the university gives education in the foreign language the child knows, this will be a great advantage for the child. In summary, children ***should start*** *learning English as soon as they start school)*

Example 5.66:

F25: Okulla beraber İngilizce eğitimi ***başla-malı-dır.*** *Çocuk ne kadar erken öğrenirse o kadar avantajlıdır.*

(Together with the school, English education ***must start-mElI-AORIST.*** *The sooner the child learns the language the more advantageous it will be for him/her.)*

F25 presented a strong necessiative meaning with *–mElI-DIr* and she also used nominal *–DIr* and supported her claim with a further factuality meaning that *–DIr* added to her statement.

In an earlier study, Doyuran (2009) examined the use of hedges in Turkish scientific articles. She reports that *–mElI-DIr* is "a common form of hedging especially for engineering discourse" and that it is used to mark "inferential reasoning or calculation rather than speculation" (Doyuran 2009:95). The findings in the present study were both similar to and different from those of Doyuran's (2009) in two respects: (1) With respect to writers' background, there was a similarity. Similarly, 60% of the student writers who used *–mElI-DIr* were from the Science and Engineering departments. (2) In terms of the discourse register, however, these two studies were different. In scientific discourse, the writers are expected to infer conclusions based on their data and hypotheses. However, the students in the present study presented their beliefs on a topic that does not require scientific deductions much. Therefore, it can be argued that the genre and the aims of the writing, and the topic played a crucial role in the elicitation of certain hedges (Hinkel 2009).

–EcEk as Modality Marker

The third most common modality marker (Uzun 2004; Yavaş 1980) in the data was *–EcEk*. It formed 21.1% of the modality data in this study. In Turkish, *-EcEk* marks "purpose, will, and volition along with the tense" and it can be translated as"..will probably.." (Kerimoğlu 2010:445) into English.

Similar to *–mElI, -EcEk* occurred in two forms in the Turkish data: (1) *-EcEk* (13.1%) by itself and (2) with the aorist –DIr (*–EcEk-DIr*) (8%).When *–DIr* follows *–EcEk*, the combination expresses epistemic modality (Kerimoğlu 2010). What is more, according to Sansa Tura (1986), when *–DIr* follows *–EcEk*, the sentences are assigned strong possibility readings (Example 5.69), and without *–DIr*, depending on the context, utterances may lose assertive implications or decisiveness (Example 5.70). Maybe, this is the reason why in the current data which consist of argumentative paragraphs on a topic which does not require strong opinions and decisiveness, -*EcEk* (13.1%) was used 1.6 times more than *–EcEk-DIr* (8%) combination.

Example 5.69:

F20: Günümüzde yabancı dil öğrenimi gitgide arttığı için her insan bu eğitimi ***al-acak-tır****. Bu yüzden küçük yaşta öğrenmeleri küçük çocuklar için daha kolay olur ve ileride sorun yaşamazlar.*

(Today, as foreign language learning has become more common, every individual ***get-FUT-AORIST*** *this education. Learning that language at early ages is easier and they will not have problems in the future.)*

F20 made a strong claim and expressed her certainty with her use of - *EcEk-DIr*. She increased the strength of her claim by using universal marker *every*, which added general truth reading to the claim.

Example 5.70:

F22: Örneğin, üniversiteye geldiği zaman dil sıkıntısı ***yaşa-ma-yacak****. İş hayatında da bircok avantajları* ***ol-acak*** *. Diğer bir neden de büyüdüğü zaman birçok kişi İngilizce öğrenmeye çalışırken o başka bir dil öğrenmeye* ***çalış-acak.***

(For example, at university, the child ***have-NEG-FUT.*** *In business life, s/he* ***have-FUT*** *many advantages. Another reason is that when s/he grows up, s/he* ***try-FUT*** *other languages while many people are trying to learn English)*

Compared to F20, F22 sounds less certain despite the repetitive use of *–EcEk* suffix. Her repetitive use of the suffix is in fact an indication of her desire to sound more decisive. However, the statements without *–DIr* sound more like predictions rather than assertive implications (Sansa Tura 1986).

In academic writing in Turkish, the use of *–DIr* is, in fact, limited to nominal sentences (Göksel and Kerslake 2005). However, it is also affixed to finite verbal forms such as *-(y)AcAk* and *–mAlI* (Göksel and Kerslake 2005). In this sense, the students seem to have used the aorist in the verbal sentences to sound more academic and objective. That is probably why their Turkish paragraphs were a little more assertive than the ones in L2 (6.7 in TUR and 7.0/100 in ENG, respectively).

5.2.2.2 Adjectives

Adjectives constituted 12.3% of the devices in the Turkish data. They were the third most commonly employed hedges following *adverbs.*

In Turkish, *adjectives* can be divided into two main groups: (1) those that contain "a **productive** derivational suffix" (Göksel and Kerslake 2005:171) and (2) those that do not. For example adjectives such as *düşmanca* (hostile), *başarılı* (successful) and *bilimsel* (scientific) are derived by means of a productive suffixes *–CA, -lI* or *–sAl* and "they have a predictable semantic relationship with an item from another word class (in this case the *nouns* düşman 'enemy', başarı 'success', and bilim 'science')." (Göksel and Kerslake 2005:171).

In the Turkish data, the most commonly occurring *adjectives* were those formed with a derivational suffix such as *önemli (important), etkili (effective), gerekli (necessary)*, and *avantajlı (advantageous)* as shown in the Table 5.30 below:

Table 5.32 Adjectives in TR data in rank order

Adjectives			
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*önemli* *(important)*	35	48.6
2	*Doğru* *(right/true)*	14	19.4
3	*Etkili* *(effective)*	8	11.1
4	*Gerekli* *(necessary)*	7	9.7
5	*Gereksiz* *(not/unnecessary)*	3	4.1
6	*Yanlış* *(Wrong)*	3	4.1
7	*Avantajlı* *(Advantageous)*	2	2.7
Total		**72**	**100**

Just like in the L2 paragraphs (see Table in 5.24), *önemli* 'important' was the most popular adjective in the Turkish paragraphs. However, *important* comprised almost 48.6% of the total adjectives in L1 paragraphs while it comprised exactly half of it (25.17 %) in L2 paragraphs. It seems that the students attributed a higher degree of significance to their propositions in L1(Example 5.71).

<u>Example 5.71:</u>

F18: İkinci olarak ise, küçük yaşta ikinci bir dil bilmek çocuğun psikolojik gelişimi açısından son derece ***önemli-dir. (important-AORIST).***

(Secondly, learning a foreign language at an early age is highly ***important*** *for the child's psychological development.)*

In Example 5.71, the adjective *önemli* was followed by the aorist *–DIr*. Usually, non-verbal sentences marked by the aorist *-DIr* in Turkish convey "generic facts, universal truth, permanent generalizations or assertions" (Sansa Tura 1986: 146). F18 attached –DIr to the adjective *önemli* to express some sort of factuality and used s*on derece* (highly) to enhance the degree of the adjective.

Önemli 'important' is followed by *doğru,* which occurred 14 times in the data . It might be translated into English as 'true', 'right', 'correct', 'fair' and 'appropriate' as it was employed to convey such meanings in L1 paragraphs (Example 5.72-73):

<u>Example 5.72:</u>

M4: Uzun sözün kısası, yabancı dil öğrenmek iyi, hoş da bu kadar maliyetli olması ***doğru*** *mu?*

(*It is fine to learn a foreign language, but is it* ***fair*** *that it is so costly?)*

<u>Example 5.73:</u>

F14: Ama bu eğitim ***doğru*** *zamanda verilmeli.*

(However, this education should/must be given at the ***right*** *time.)*

Etkili (effective) was used to assign positive evaluations to the propositions regarding the topic in L1 paragraphs (Example 5.74-75)

Example 5.74:

*F18: Yani, İngilizce'yi öğrenmeye küçük yaşta başlayıp uzun sürede öğrenmek daha **etkili** bir yoldur.*

*(Starting to learn English at an early age and learning it in the long run is a more **effective** way.)*

Example 5.75:

*M3: Fakat yabancı dil öğrenimi önemli bir sorundur. Bu sorunu çözmenin en **etkili** yolu dil öğrenimini çocukluktan itibaren başlatmaktır.*

*(However, learning a foreign language is a serious problem. The most **effective** way to solve this problem is starting to learn it in childhood.)*

Gerekli (necessary) occurred as the fourth most common adjective in the Turkish data. There was almost a match between the percentages of its English equivalent *necessary* in L2 paragraphs and *gerekli* in the L1 paragraphs (10.07% and 9.7% respectively). Just as *necessary*, g*erekli* also marks necessity (Emeksiz 2008). It is derived from the modal auxiliary *gerek* (Kerimoğlı 2010), which is categorized under periphrastic or analytic modals (Johanson 2009). The students employed it to indicate the necessity of learning a foreign language at early ages (Example 5.76).

<u>Example 5.76:</u>

F31: *Dil öğrenimi her zaman her yaşta bütün insanlar için **gerekli** bir faaliyettir*.

(*Learning a language is **necessary** for everyone at all ages.)*

Gereksiz (unnecessary), which is the negative form of *gerekli(necessary),* and *yanlış (wrong)* were employed in L1 paragraphs to express and evaluate the opponents' ideas (Examples 5.77-78).

<u>Example 5.77:</u>

*F6: Bu gerçeklere rağmen birçok cahil insan dil öğreniminin erken yaşlarda başlamasının **gereksiz** olduğunu savunur*.

(D*espite the facts, many ignorant people support the view that learning a language at early ages is **unnecessary***)

<u>Example 5.78:</u>

*F26: Bazı insanlar erken yaşta dil öğrenmeyi doğru bulmuyorlar. Çünkü çocukların kendi dillerini iyi öğrenemeyeceğini ve zamanla unutacaklarını düşünüyorlar. Aslında bu yaklaşım **yanlış.***

*(Some people consider that learning a foreign language at earl ages is not right. They think that children will not be able to learn their mother tongue well and forget it. In fact, this attitude is **wrong**.)*

Overall, the students employed *adjectives* to express qualities they attributed to their writers' evaluations.

5.2.2.3 Verbs

Verbs, just as *nouns*, were not common in L1 paragraphs (see Table 5.30). They constituted a very small percentage of the total devices in the corpora (5.8%). As explained in the section regarding the *verbs* in the English paragraphs (see section 5.1.2.3), the manipulation of *verbs* might be more complicated than other lexical and syntactic devices. Compared to the percentage of the *verbs* in L2 paragraphs (16.09 %), the students employed almost half of these items in L1 paragraphs (5.8 %). This result is interesting as one might expect a more frequent occurrence in L1 paragraphs as the native speakers are expected to be more comfortable in using epistemic verbs. One plausible explanation for this disparity could be the formal training in L2 argumentative genre. In the writing handout (see APPENDIX C, pp.7-8), the students were explicitly taught to employ epistemic verbs so that they could convey their judgments and evaluations appropriately. Thus, the input correlated with the students' paragraphs in L2. However, in L1, they relied more on *modals* and *adverbs* (see Table 5.30).

One other explanation for the fewer occurrences of verbs in L1 paragraphs is that the students mostly wrote non-verbal sentences with the aorist *–DIr* and its inflectional counterpart *–Ir*. When –DIr is attached to non-verbal sentences, it conveys factual meanings (Sansa Tura 1986). The students in this study used the aorist –DIr and its inflectional counterpart *–Ir* to mark non-verbal factual propositions. In fact, excluding the occurrences of *–Ir*, the frequency of *–DIr* in non-verbal sentences was 133 while *verbs* occurred with a frequency of 39 (see Table 5.30). This means that *–DIr* was employed almost four times more frequently than *verbs*.

Table 5.33 Verbs in TR data in rank order

	Verbs		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*Düşünmek* *(think)*	18	46.1
2	*Savunmak* *(support)*	10	25.6
3	*Önem vermek* *(give importance)*	4	10.2
4	*Belirtmek* *(indicate)*	3	7.6
5	*Önem taşımak* *(be important)*	2	5.1
6	*Fikrindeyim* *(I am of the opinion)*	1	2.5
7	*İnanıyorum* *(I believe)*	1	2.5
Total		**39**	**100**

As seen in Table 5.33, d*üşünmek (think)* and *savunmak (support/advocate)* occurred as the top most commonly used *verbs* in the paragraphs. They constituted almost 75 % of the total *verbs*. Similarly in the English data, *think* occurred as the top most commonly used *verb* (see Table 5.26)

By using the epistemic verb, *think*,, the students signaled to the readers that what they expressed tentatively should be interpreted as one of the many alternative opinions, rather than the only one (Example 5.79)

<u>Example 5.79:</u>

F29: Bu yüzden ilkokulda çocuklara İngilizce eğitim vermenin yararlı olmayacağını ***düşün-üyor-um. (think-PROG-1SG)***

(Therefore, ***I think*** *that it will not be beneficial to educate children in English at primary school.)*

Indicate (show/state), *önem vermek* (give importance) and *önem taşımak* (to be important) were used less frequently and the least common verbs were *fikrindeyim* (I am of the opinion that..) and *inanıyorum* (I belive..)(see Table 5.33). Except for these two *verbs*, the students avoided using *I*, the first person pronoun, to be objective and to sound more academic.

5.2.2.4 Nouns

Just as in the English corpus, *nouns* in the Turkish corpus were the least common hedging devices. They comprised only 5.8 % of the total devices (see Table 5.30).

Düşünce (belief) occurred as the most common *noun* in the Turkish data (see Table 5.34) and it comprised 33.3 % of the total *nouns*. It can be translated into English as *belief* since the students used it to signal the opponents' beliefs about the topic.

Table 5.34 Nouns in TR data in rank order

	Nouns		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*Düşünce* *(belief)*	6	33.3
2	*Tartışma* *(discussion)*	5	27.7
3	*Zorunluluk* *(obligation)*	4	22.2
4	*İddia* *(claim)*	2	11.1
5	*İhtimal* *(possibility)*	1	5.5
Total		**18**	**100**

Düşünce (idea/belief) was used to mark the opponents' ideas (Example 5. 80). It was followed by the noun *tartışma* (debate/controversy). The students employed *tartışma* (debate/controversy) to indicate that there were opposing beliefs about the issue (Example 5.81). Z*orunluluk* (obligation) was the third most common *noun* in the data. It marked modality meanings of obligation. The students used it to emphasize how learning a foreign language, in this case English, has become obligatory in today's globalized societies (Example 5.82). *İddia* (claim) and *ihtimal* (possibility) were not very common.

Example 5.80:

M13: Ancak bazı insanlar yabancı dilin lise çağında öğretilmesinden yana. Onlara göre eğer çocuk yabancı dili ders olarak görürse çalışmak zorunda kalacak ve sonunda öğrenecek .

*Ancak bu **düşünce** kesinlikle yanlış çünkü bu zorlama çocuğun üstünde baskı yapabilir ve çocuk bu dilden nefret edebilir .*

*(Some people support the idea that a foreign language should be taught at high school. They think that if students at high school take English course as a must course, they will have to study and learn it eventually. However, this **idea/belief** is certainly wrong because it will be a pressure on child and s/he may hate the language.)*

M13 disagreed with the opponents and he made his stance clear by using the noun düşünce and made it further clear by using the adverb *kesinlikle* (certainly) to increase the strength of his proposition.

Example 5.81:

*M13: Bu günlerde çocukların ne zaman yabancı dil öğreneceği bir **tartışma** konusu olmuştur.*

(*When children should start learning a foreign language has become a topic of **debate***)

Example 5.82:

*M4: Günümüzde artık dil öğrenimi bir hobiden çok bir **zorunluluk** haline geldi.*

*(Learning a foreign language has become an **obligation** rather than a hobby).*

Overall in L1 paragraphs, the students expressed their arguments about the topic using *adjectives* and *adverbs* more often. The *nouns* were used less frequently to make the writer's stance clear (Example 5.80) or to convey modality meanings (Example 5.82).

5.2.3 *Adverbs* as a Subcategory for Boosters

Both in Turkish and in the English data, *adverbs* occurred frequently (19.7 % and 16.92 % respectively). In the Turkish data, *adverbs* occurred as the second most commonly employed devices (see Table 5.30).

Adverbs in the Turkish data revealed four categories. The categorization was done based on Yarar's (2000) taxonomy for adverbials in Turkish academic writing, namely, approximaters such as *çok (very)*, *pek (many/very often)*, *birçok (many/a lot of)*, frequency adverbs such as *neredeyse (almost)*, *oldukça (somewhat)*, *yaklaşık* (more or less), manner adverb *kolayca (easily)*, and modal adverbs such as *kesinlikle (definitely), tabiki (of course)* and *belki (perhaps)* (Göksel and Kerslake 2005). Table 5.35 lists the *adverbs* in L1 paragraphs, in rank order:

Table 5.35 Adverbs in the TR data in rank order

	Boosters		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	*Daha (more)*	124	51.8%
2	*Çok (very)*	61	25.5%
3	*Birçok (many/ a lot of)*	19	8.1%
4	*Pek (many/very often)*	7	2.9%
5	*Kesinlikle (absolutely)*	5	2.0%
6	*Kolayca (easily)*	5	2.0%
7	*Belki (perhaps)*	4	1.6%
8	*Tabiki (of course)*	3	1.2%
9	*Neredeyse (almost)*	2	0.8%
10	*Oldukça (somewhat)*	2	0.8%
11	*Tamamıyle (wholely)*	2	0.8%
12	*Tamamen (entirely)*	2	0.8%
13	*Yaklaşık (more or less)*	2	0.8%
14	*Kısmen (partly)*	1	0.4%
Total		**239**	**100.0%**

Daha (more), which was the most common *adverb* in the data (see Table 5.35), has several functions. Göksel and Kerslake (2005) note that *daha* may function both as a comparative adverb (Example 5.83) and time adverbial (Example 5.84). In the Turkish paragraphs, out of 122 *daha* adverbs 118 (96.72%) were employed primarily as comparative adverb and the remaining 4 (3.28%) were used as time adverbial to convey the meanings of *more* and *yet* in English, respectively:

Example 5.83:

*M12: Çocuklar okul ile beraber dil eğitimine de başlamalılar. Çünkü okul çağlarında olan çocukların zihinleri hem (**1)daha** açık olur hem de öğrenmeye **(2)daha** istekli olurlar. (**comparative adverb**)*

*(Children should start language education when they start school. Children's brains are **more open** and they are **more eager to learn.**)*

Example 5.84:

*M11: Bence o yaş ingilizce için çok erken çocuk **daha** Türkçe'nin dil yapısını öğrenmeden ingilizce öğretmek zor olur. **(time adverbial)***

*(I think learning English at such an early age is too early; it will be difficult for the child as s/he has not mastered Turkish grammar **yet**)*

Çok (very), birçok (many/a lot of) and *pek (a lot of/many)* constituted 36.04 % of the total boosters in the data. They were employed as approximaters to express vagueness with respect to quality (Example 5.85) and number (Example 5.86).

<u>Example 5.85:</u>

*M3: Günümüzde yabancı dil kişilerin kariyerinde **çok** önemli bir yer teşkil etmektedir.*

*(Today, a foreign language has a **very** important role in people's career.)*

<u>Example 5.86:</u>

*M9: Okula başlar başlamaz dil öğrenmenin **birçok** faydası vardır.*

*(Starting to learn a foreign language with the school has **a lot of** benefits.)*

<u>Example 5.87:</u>

*F6: **Pek çok** insan şu günlerde yabancı dil öğrenimine önem veriyor.*

*(**A lot of** people give importance to learning a foreign language).*

Adverbs also attribute the meanings of fuzziness to the sentences (Zhang 1998) (Example 5.88):

<u>Example 5.88:</u>

*M16: Örneğin ilk okulda ingilizce öğrenmeye başlayan bir kişi yirmili yaşlarında yeni öğrenmeye çalışanlara göre **yaklaşık** on beş yıl önde olacaktır*

*(For example, at 20 years old, a person who started to learn English at primary school will be **more or less** 15 years ahead of the people who have just started to learn English)*

The meaning of adverb *yaklaşık (about)* in Example 5.83 is fuzzy as the exact time is not definite. Thus, such statements have "referential opacity" (Zhang 1998:21) and their interpretation is closely linked with the speaker or writer (Zhang 1998). Since vagueness and fuzziness is an important feature of academic writing (Brown and Levinson 1987; Channel 1994), M16 seems to use the adverb appropriately.

When *adverbs* in L1 paragraphs were compared to those in the L2 paragraphs, it appeared that *adverbs* in L1 paragraphs conveyed a more tentative tone than the ones in the English paragraphs. In L2 paragraphs, for example, the most common *adverb* was *easily*. It was employed to communicate a more assertive tone in the evaluation of the statements regarding children's learning a foreign language. However, *easily* (*kolayca*) ranked much lower in the Turkish data and it comprised only 2.5 % of the total boosters with a frequency of 6. *Easily* in the English data, on the other hand, constituted 39.3 % of the boosters with a frequency of 50, which was almost 15 times more than those in the Turkish data.

5.3 Comparison of Turkish and English Paragraphs with respect to Hedges and Boosters

A detailed statistical comparison for the two sets of data (L1 and L2 paragraphs) was done to check whether any transfer could be observed. Table 5.36 summarizes the overall devices with respect to the total number of words.

Table 5.36 Total devices with respect to the total number of words

	TR	ENG
Total hedges and boosters	533	722
Total number of words	7861	10.257
Tokens per 100 words	6.7	7.0

There were considerable similarities between the two student corpora in the overall frequencies and employment of hedges and boosters. Both in the Turkish and English paragraphs, the students employed almost 6 devices in every 100 words, which is a figure closer to conversational use (Holmes 1988) and a figure twice as many as the amount found in published academic writing (Adams-Smith 1984; Skelton 1988).

The total number of hedges and boosters were counted to check whether any different patterns could be noticed in the use of these devices (see Table 5.37).

Table 5.37 A Comparison of Total Devices

	English Paragraphs		**Turkish Paragraphs**	
	Frequency	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**
Hedges	600	5.9	418	5.3
Boosters	122	1.1	115	1.4
Total	722	7.0	533	6.7

As seen in Table 5.37, the students used hedges more often than boosters in both sets of data. However, a comparison of hedges and boosters in the English paragraphs showed greater differences than the ones in the Turkish data. The number of hedges in the English paragraphs were almost six times more than that of the boosters (600 and 122 respectively), while the number of hedges in the Turkish paragraphs was just four times more (418 and 115 respectively). These results are consistent with those of Bayyurt (2010), Can (2006), Doyuran (2009) and Fidan (2002) on the use of metadiscourse markers by Turkish writers.

Figure 5.6 below details the categorical distribution of hedges and boosters in both sets of data.

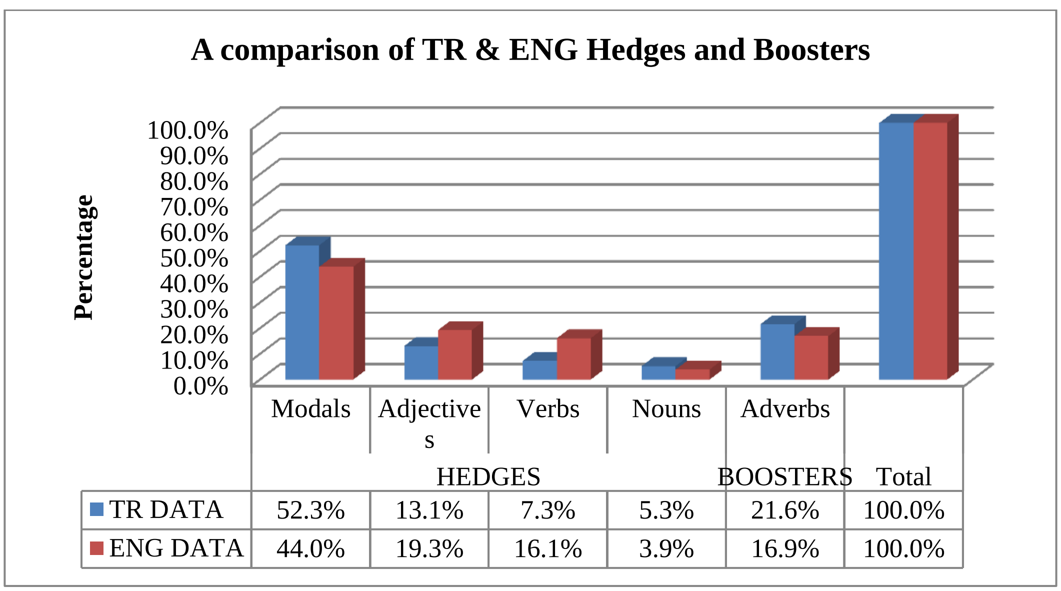

Figure 5.6 A comparison of hedges and boosters in TR and ENG paragraphs

As seen in Figure 5.6, in both sets of data, the most commonly employed devices in the English and Turkish paragraphs were *modals*. However, their frequency was different. In the Turkish data, modals comprised slightly more than half of the total hedging and boosting devices (52.3%). In the English data, on the other hand, *modals* accounted for a little less than half of the total devices (44.0%). 8.3% disparity between the frequencies of the modals in two sets of corpus might be due to several reasons: (1) Although both Turkish and English have various modality markers, those in L1 were much clear to the students as it was their mother tongue. Thus, they were able to express the appropriate pragmatic meanings in L1. (2) The participants' profile as English *langauge learners* rather than *language users* could be the other reason. The students were at the initial stages of the L2 acquisition process. Therefore, they relied on a limited number of modals in English (mostly *should* and *can* see Table 5.3) and avoided the polysemious ones such as *might*, *could* and *would* as they did not feel confident enough to use these modals (see Table 5.3).

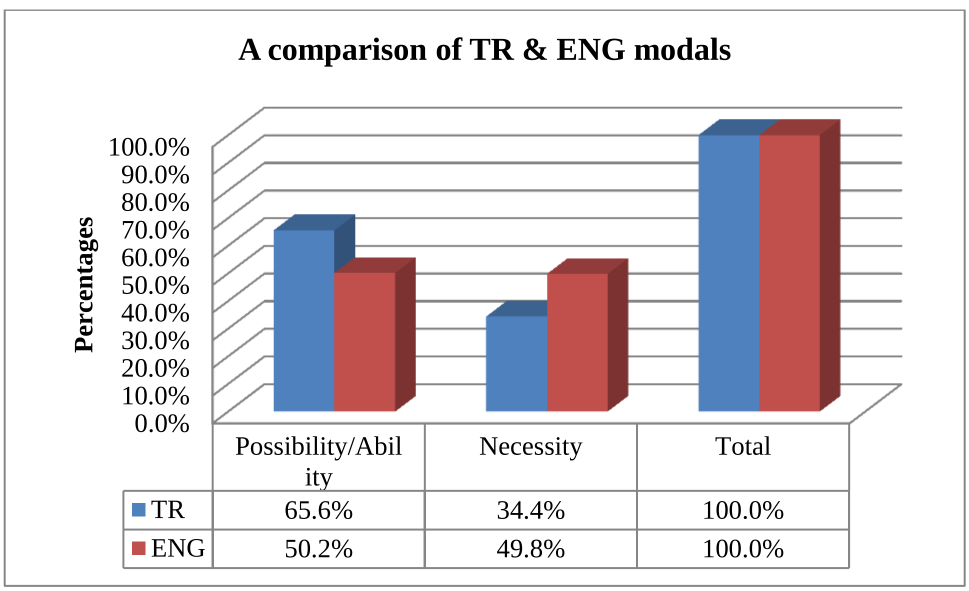

Figure 5.7. A Comparison of TR and ENG Modals of Possibility and Necessity

As seen in Figure 5.7, some differences were also observed regarding the categorical distribution of the modals in both sets of corpora. In the English paragraphs, possibility/ability modals and necessity modals were equal in terms of percentages (50.2% and 49.8% respectively) while in the Turkish paragraphs, possibility modals were two times more than the necessity modals (65.6 % and 34.4.% respectively). This means that in their native language, the students were more tentative in expressing certainty than they were in L2. Another explanation is that the teaching material (APPENDIX C) emphasized the use of necessity markers (e.g., *should*) rather than the possibility modals in argumentative genre (For more information see section 5.4 Table 5.40). Thus, the input presented in the teaching material (i.e., the writing handout) correlated with the L2 paragraphs.

The results represented in Figure 5.7 are different from those of the study conducted by Hinkel (2009). She reports that Chinese, Korean and Japanese writers use necessity/obligation modals more often in the L1 writings on the topics regarding academics, family and traditions. However, the case was the opposite in the present study. The topic was related with academics. However, unlike the L2 writers in Hinkel's study (2009), the students in the present study employed fewer obligation and necessity markers when writing about children's foreign langauge education in their L1 paragraphs. This means that in different languages, the same writing topic may elicit different types of modality markers as modality carries cultural norms and values attributed to this concept within a certain community (Hyland 1996; Hyland and Milton 1997).

The second most commonly used hedging device in the English paragraphs was *adjectives* while it was *adverbs* (boosters) in the Turkish paragraphs (see Figure 5.6). In L1 paragraphs, the students relied more on *adverbs* to express the degree of certainty they attributed to their claims. However, they chose *adjectives* (see Table 5.24) in the English paragraphs to express the same meanings and to stress the necessity and importance of children's learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. Apart from their rank order, the frequencies of *adverbs* in both sets of data were similar.

(TR:21.6%, ENG:16.9%). The functions of the most commonly used adverbs in both sets of data was also similar. Comparative adverb *daha* was the most frequently employed adverb in L1 paragraphs (see Table 5.35) while it was manner adverb *easily* in L2 paragraphs (see Table 5.28). Out of 122 *daha* adverbs, 118 (96.72%) were used in contexts where children were regarded as more successful language learners than adults (Example 5.83). Similarly, in the English data, *easily* was the most commonly employed *adverb*. It was used to make comparisons between children and adults as language learners (Example 5.83). Thus, the function of the manner adverb *easily* in the English data and the comparative adverb *daha* in the Turkish data was exactly the same.

Adjectives were more commonly used in the English paragraphs than the Turkish paragraphs (19.3% and 12.3% respectively). The types of the adjectives were also quite similar. In both sets of data, *important* (ENG) and *önemli* (TR) ranked as the most frequent item. Likewise, some strong adjectives such as *vital, unacceptable, undeniable, and unnecessary* in the English paragraphs and *gereksiz* (unnecessary) and *yanlış* (wrong) in the Turkish paragraphs were the least commonly employed ones. Nouns were also the least common category of hedges in L1 and L2 paragraphs.

The students relied more on verbs devices in their L2 paragraphs than they did in their L1 paragraphs (see Figure 5.6). There are some plausible explanations for this disparity. One reason was that as mentioned earlier (see section 5.2.2.1) non-verbal sentences were more common than verbal sentences in L1 paragraphs. One other explanation could be that the students were taught the functions and meanings of *epistemic verbs* in academic writing classes in English and used the language rubrics regarding the *verb* usage presented in the writing handout (see APPENDIX C).

5.4 A Comparison of the Writing Handout with the L2 Paragraphs

A detailed statistical comparison for the two sets of data, namely, the writing handout (WHOUT) and L2 paragraphs (L2 Ps) was done to check whether any parallelism could be observed. Table 5.38 summarizes the overall devices with respect to the total number of words.

Table 5.38. Total Devices with respect to The Total Number of Words

	WHOUT	L2 Ps
Total hedges and boosters	164	722
Total number of words	3.880	10.257
Tokens per 100 words	4.2	7.0

As seen in Table 5.38, there were remarkable differences in terms of the total hedges and boosters in the two sets of data. L2 paragraphs contained almost six times more hedges and boosters than the WHOUT. Considering the total number of words and the total devices, L2 paragraphs included almost two times more hedges and boosters. Table 5.39 illustrates a more detailed comparison of the devices in the WHOUT and L2 Ps.

Table 5.39. A Comparison of Total Devices

	Whout		**L2 Ps**	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Hedges	157	4.0%	600	5.9%
Boosters	7	0.2%	122	1.1%
Total	164	4.2%	722	7.0%

In both sets of the data, hedges were employed more frequently than boosters. In the writing handout (whout), however, the disparity between the percentages of hedges and boosters was big. Almost 23 times more hedges than boosters were used in the writing handout (157 hedges, 7 boosters). However, in L2 paragraphs, the number of hedges was about 5 times more than that of the boosters (600 and 122 respectively). That could also be due the fact that L2 paragraphs were somehow loaded with repetition. Due to the proficiency level of the students, and a lack of knowledge about how to develop arguments effectively, the paragraphs displayed a limited development of ideas, using a limited and repetitive choice of words or word forms (see Figure 5.3 and Examples 5.8 and 5.9).

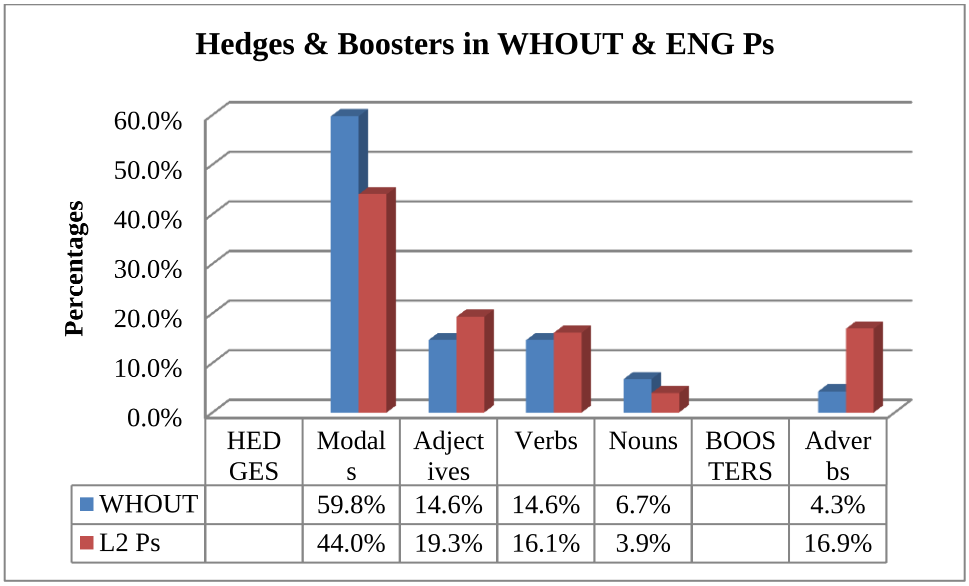

Figure 5.8 Categorical Distribution of Hedges and Boosters in WHOUT and L2 paragraphs

As seen in Figure 5.8, there was almost a full match with respect to the modal preferences between the WHOUT and L2 Ps. Modals occurred as the most commonly used hedging devices both in the WHOUT and L2 Ps. However, regarding their percentages, the WHOUT included a slightly higher number of these devices. Because it was the teaching material, a slightly higher number of modals were purposefully included in the material so that their appropriate use would be clear to the students. In the process of material preparation, material developers probably aimed at achieving a positive correlation between the amount of input they included in the materials and the output produced by the students. Therefore, the higher the input, the more likely the students use it. As the results of the present study indicate the objective in that sense was achieved since the students benefitted from the input and produced accordingly. As Krashen (1982:21) notes, in language acquisition, the input should be a little beyond the learners comprehension because providing learners with input "a bit beyond (their) current level of competence (i+1)" which can be understood "with the help of the context or extra-linguistic knowledge" facilitates the acquisition of the underlying structures.

The types of modals in two sets of corpora is illustrated in Figure 5.9.

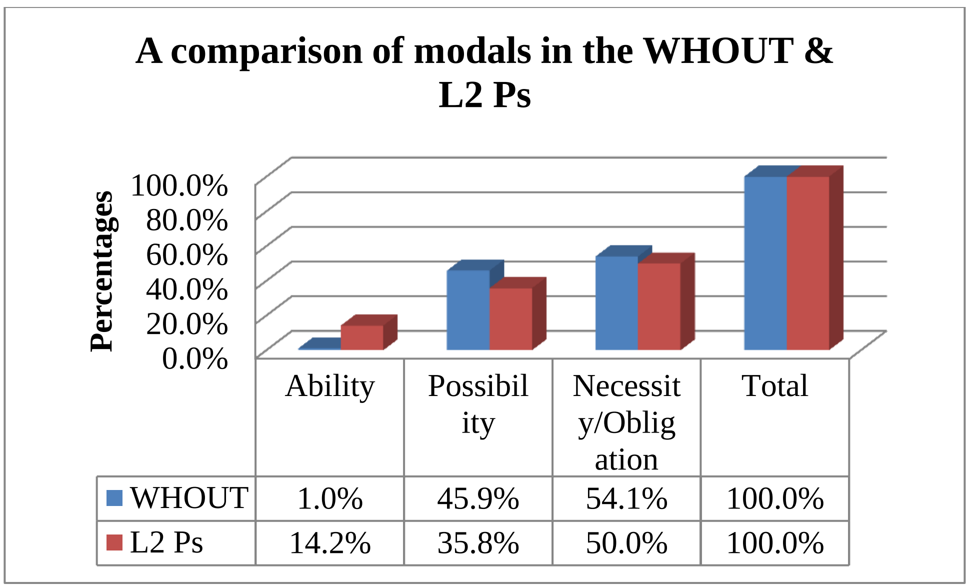

Figure 5.9 A Comparison of Modals in the Writing Handout (WHOUT) and L2 Paragraphs (L2 Ps)

As Figure 5.9 illustrates, there was a full match in the employment of possibility and necessity modals. In the WHOUT and L2 Ps, necessity/obligation modals were a little more prevalent than possibility modals (54.1% and 50.0% respectively). The percentages of possibility modals were also quite similar in both sets of data. As for the ability modals, however, there was a disparity. In the WHOUT, there were almost no instances of ability modals; however, L2 Ps included a good number of them (1 and 45 respectively). The topic in L2 Ps probably elicited that number of ability modals as the students mostly claimed that children were better language learners than adults (Examples 5.77-83). Overall, it seems that the students successfully utilized the teaching material and the input given regarding the modal use in the argumentative discourse and marked their register in line with what they were exposed to.

The Table 5.40 shows a detailed comparison of modals in both sets of data.

Table 5.40 Modals in WHOUT and L2 Ps, in rank order

WHOUT				**L2 Ps**			
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**
1	should	47	47.9	1	should	147	46.5
2	can	11	11.22	2	can	91	28.7
3	may	11	11.22	3	may	26	8.22
4	**would**	9	9.18	4	will	28	8.8
5	will	9	9.18	5	must	11	3.4
6	must	6	6.12	6	could	5	1.5
7	could	3	3.06	7	might	6	1.8
8	might	2	2.04	8	**would**	2	0.6
Total		98		Total		316	

As seen in Table 5.40, the rank order of modals in the WHOUT and L2 Ps were quite the same except for the modal verb *would*. In the WHOUT, it ranks as the fourth modal with the meanings of possibility. However, in the L2 paragraphs, it ranked as the last modal with the least frequency. The use of modal verb *would* was previously explained in section 5.1.2.1. As mentioned earlier, *would* is among the modals that could be confusing for L2 learners unless it is presented with a contextually salient open proposition (Birner and Ward 1988; Prince 1986; Ward 1988; Birner, Kaplan and Ward 2001). The presentation of *would* in the writing handout (APPENDIX C: pp. 9) was also contextually not very clear (see Table 5.41)

Table 5.41 Useful Language: Patterns to introduce the con argument

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">The opponents of</td><td rowspan="2">this proposal</td><td rowspan="2">(might)
(would)</td><td rowspan="2">argue
maintain
assert
declare
claim
point out
say
state</td><td rowspan="2">that . . .</td></tr>
<tr><td>Those who</td><td>disagree with
are against
do not favor</td></tr>
</table>

Would was given as an alternative to *might* under the section where the language for the introduction of counter argument was introduced. It seems unlikely for the students to infer the appropriate uses of *would* as another possibility modal by just looking at this table. The contexts where it was used and how it was used need to be introduced and should be clear to the students so that they could go beyond comprehension and actively use it. Due to these complications and lack of enough exposure, the students preferred to use *will* instead.

The percentages of *adjectives* and *adverbs* were also quite similar in the WHOUT and L2 paragraphs (see Figure 5.8). The students relied a little more on *adjectives* and *adverbs* in their L2 paragraphs to make sure that their arguments sounded persuasive enough in conveying their stance toward the topic.

Epistemic verbs in L2 Ps were almost five times more frequently employed than in the WHOUT (see Table 5.42).

Table 5.42 Verbs in L2 Ps and Whout, in rank order

	L2 Ps			Whout			
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**
1	think	19	16.3	1	claim	8	33.3
2	know	19	16.3	2	favor	4	16.6
3	claim	18	15.5	3	show	4	16.6
4	want	18	15.5	4	believe	2	8.3
5	believe	14	12	5	state	2	8.3
6	say	11	9.4	6	assert	1	4.1
7	argue	6	5.1	7	say	1	4.1
8	favor	4	3.4	8	think	1	4.1
9	point out	2	1.7	9	want	1	4.1
10	propose	2	1.7				
11	recognize	1	0.8				
12	recommend	1	0.8				
13	seem	1	0.8				
Total		116		Total		24	100

Table 5.43 Adjectives in L2 Ps and Whout, in rank order

L2 Ps				WHOUT			
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	important	35	25.2%	1	important	6	25.0%
2	easier	16	11.5%	2	crucial	4	16.7%
3	necessary	14	10.1%	3	necessary	3	12.5%
4	strong	14	10.1%	4	advisable	2	8.3%
5	against	13	9.4%	5	essential	2	8.3%
6	easy	8	5.8%	6	imperative	2	8.3%
7	essential	5	3.6%	7	recommended	2	8.3%
8	possible	4	2.9%	8	urgent	2	8.3%
9	significant	4	2.9%	9	vital	1	4.2%
10	advantage	3	2.2%				
11	contrary	3	2.2%				
12	crucial	3	2.2%				
13	valid	3	2.2%				
14	bad	2	1.4%				
15	certain	2	1.4%				
16	obligatory	2	1.4%				
17	sure	2	1.4%				
18	wrong	2	1.4%				
19	for	1	0.7%				
20	unacceptable	1	0.7%				
21	undeniable	1	0.7%				
22	vital	1	0.7%				
Total		**139**	**100.00%**	**Total**		**24**	**100.00%**

In both sets of data, *nouns* were the least frequently used hedges. L2 paragraphs included two times more *epistemic nouns* than the WHOUT (6.7% and 3.9%, respectively). The types of the *nouns* were exactly the same in two sets of data (see Table 5.44).

Table 5.44 A Comparison of Nouns in L2 Ps and WHOUT

	L2 Ps				**WHOUT**		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**
1	fact	8	28.6	1	claim	5	45.5
2	importance	7	25.0	2	fact	3	27.3
3	claim	5	17.8	3	importance	2	18.2
4	ease	3	10.7	4	necessity	1	9.1
5	necessity	3	10.7	5	belief	0	0.0
6	belief	2	7.1	6	ease	0	0.0
Total		28	100	Total		11	100

Manner Adverbs, occurred as boosting devices both in L2 paragraphs and in the WHOUT. However the frequencies of these devices in two sets of data were different (Table 5.45).

Table 5.45 Most Common Adverbs, in rank order

	L2 Ps				**Whout**		
Rank	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Rank**	**Item**	**Frequency**	**%**
1	easily	50	40.0	1	really	2	28.5
2	very	29	23.7	2	actually	1	14.2
3	every	6	4.9	3	immediately	1	14.2
4	effectively	6	4.9	4	obviously	1	14.2
5	immediately	5	4.9	5	strongly	1	14.2
6	badly	4	3.2	6	unlikely	1	14.2
7	completely	4	3.2				
8	efficiently	3	2				
9	actually	2	1.6				
10	obviously	2	1.6				
11	of course	2	1.6				
12	probably	2	1.6				
13	absolutely	1	0.8				
14	almost	1	0.8				
15	certainly	1	0.8				
16	generally	1	0.8				
17	strongly	1	0.8				
18	unfortunately	1	0.8				
19	unlikely	1	0.8				
Total		122	100	Total	7	100	

As seen in Table 5.45, L2 paragraphs included four times more *adverbs* than the WHOUT (see Figure 5.8.). That could mean that the student writers felt quite confident in "expressing conviction and marking their involvement and solidarity with an audience” (Hyland 200: 179) while expressing arguments in English. With the help of the *adverbs*, the students made sure that they conveyed their persona with an appropriate degree of assertiveness in L2 Ps (see Examples 5.51-52). *Adverbs* also enabled them to maintain their persuasive tone that the argumentative genre requires while expressing propositional information (see Examples 5.53-54).

These results, the students’ using a good number of boosters in both L1 and L2 paragraphs as expressions of doubt and certainty, are different from a study conducted by Hyland (2000). He examined whether or not 14 Cantonese L1 undergraduates would respond to hedges and boosters in academic texts. He reports that the students frequently ignored the target hedges and boosters and focused on the propositional information. However, in the present study, the students were quite aware of the illocutionary force that the boosters, *adverbs* in this case, added to their propositions, which was explicitly reflected in their texts.

These findings show that when L2 students who study in academic environments and need the language for academic purposes are exposed to the right amount of exposure and appropriate contextual presentation of the target items, they employ them.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

6.0 Presentation

In this chapter, first a brief summary of the study is presented. Then, the results of the study and its pedagogical implications are discussed. Lastly, the limitations of the study together with suggestions for further research are presented.

6.1 Summary of the Study

This study examined the types, frequencies and functions of hedges and boosters employed in 104 argumentative paragraphs written by native speakers of Turkish both in L1 (Turkish, N=52) and L2 (English=52) to express doubt and certainty, and to position themselves against the issue that they wrote about. The aim of the research is twofold: (1) to uncover the types of hedges and boosters used in L1 and L2 argumentative texts (2) to find out whether or not any training in the target discourse results in any measurable change in the writing skills of the participants. The thesis also aimed to examine if there is any sort of positive correlation between the input and the L2 Ps regarding the repetitions, cohesion and cohesiveness of the ideas.

In order to elicit hedges and boosters used in the argumentative genre both in Turkish and Turkish, the data were collected from 52 Turkish students, who had already completed their first academic year at the DBE, but failed to pass the proficiency exam. Therefore, they were studying at the summer school program at the DBE, which was 120-hour face-to-face instruction and lasted for four weeks when the data was being collected.

The students were presented 6 essay prompts and were asked to vote for one of them. The prompts were taken from the TOEFL webpage as they were used in previous studies on Turkish undergraduate students' use of hedges and boosters in L2 writing (Bayyurt 2010, Can 2006). Their results allowed valid elicitation of these devices.

The participants chose the prompt "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Children should start learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position." and wrote their paragraphs as a response to it, first, in English, and after a week in their native language, Turkish.

The hedges and boosters in the collected paragraphs were classified and analyzed using the taxonomy for hedges and boosters offered by Bayyurt (2010). For qualitative analysis, the uses of the modals were examined with respect to such categories as *correct use*, *incorrect use*, and *overuse*. These categories were adapted from Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) and Milton and Hyland (1999)

6.2 Summary of the Results

The analysis of the data revealed the following results:

1. The results regarding the research question 1 were that Turkish students writing in Turkish and English utilized a variety of hedges and boosters both in their L1

and L2 argumentative paragraphs. This was significant in that in both languages the types and functions of these devices revealed interesting similarities though they showed variation with respect to the frequencies and percentages in certain categories due to cultural and rhetorical differences between the two languages. That is, the number of hedges and boosters in L2 paragraphs were slightly higher than that of L1 paragraphs. This means that the participants were a little more certain in their mother tongue, Turkish, than they were in L2 as they had been trained to soften their claims while writing in L2. The frequent combination of the certainty marker *–DIr* in Turkish paragraphs with the modality markers (i.e., *-EcEk*, and *–mElI*) revealed these results. However, due to the requirements of the genre, argumentation in this case, the participants balanced their use of certainty markers with that of possibility markers and expressed their stance accordingly in L1 Ps.

2. Though not many, evidence of rhetorical and pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2 was observed in the manipulation of certain hedges. Overall, the participants in this study softened their arguments by attaching an appropriate degree of certainty and pragmatic vagueness both in L1 and L2.
3. Concerning the research question 2, the results further indicated that there were remarkable similarities between the types, frequencies and functions of hedges and boosters in the input presented in the academic writing classes (i.e., teaching materials) and L2 paragraphs the participants wrote.

6.3 Implications and Suggestions for ELT

The findings of the research have some significant implications for second/foreign language teaching. First of all, based on the results in respect to the use of hedges and boosters, it is observed that the employment of hedges and boosters show variation in L1 and L2 since these devices are culture and langauge specific. Sociocultural and pragmatic rules to employ such devices also vary among languages as it does in

Turkish and English. In this respect, as certain modals such as *can, could, must* and *would* might pose problems for the Turkish learners of English, they should be explained and taught comparing their meanings and functions both in Turkish and English. Especially the uses and functions of *would* should be presented in clear and open contexts and its presentation to the language learners should not be delayed and it should also be introduced together with the possibility modals (i.e., *could, might*) as *would* is the most commonly preferred possibility modal by the native speakers. As a result, langauge learners will be aware of the pragmatic knowledge and conventions regarding the use of such hedging devices in the target langauge and they will be able to maintain an appropriate degree of certainty while presenting arguments and enhance communication with the audience in potentially face threatening contexts. Otherwise, miscommunications are inevitable and the writings of NNS are regarded as too abrupt and/or direct, rude and lack sensitivity toward the target discourse community.

In order to teach effective ways of doing arguments in L2, the effects of writing materials on production needs to be taken into consideration. Based on the results in this study, it is seen that the language learners mostly rely on the langauge rubrics presented in these materials. Therefore, materials in academic writing classes need to be carefully tailored to train novice writers in making effective arguments by employing an appropriate degree of certainty and indirectness. For that, the material developers could follow the latest corpus studies to check if there are new trends or changes regarding the expressions of certainty and possibility in NS discourse register.

Moreover, the input needs to be presented parallel to the objectives of academic discourse and register as at the initial stages of foreign language acquisition. Learners usually parrot from the chunks and formulaic expressions presented in the writing materials. Thus, presentation of discrete items in the forms of tables and formulaic expressions should be cautioned. Certain types of hedges might pose problems for language learners as they are polysemious and their pragmatic implications in their mother tongue might be different. Thus, the corresponding devices and their cultural and pragmatic references within the target discourse community should be contextualized with sufficient amount of authentic examples so that learners could utilize these devices when and where necessary. The frequencies, pragmatic meanings and functions of certain types of hedges (i.e., *modals)* should be cross checked with native speaker trends and recent corpus studies could be used for this purpose. Then, the writing materials should be updated in line with any changes that occur in the frequency and employment of these devices (i.e., corpus studies showing a dramatic decline in the use of *must* and *need to,* and an inclination toward *should*.)

In order to focus on the use of hedging and boosting devices in academic writing classes, a section regarding the pragmatic and rhetorical appropriateness of the text could be added to the writing feedback forms used in academic classes so that language learners' awareness is raised and the degree of discoursal vagueness that the argumentative genre requires might be clear to the student writers. Current writing evaluation criterion usually comprise three sections: content, organization and language. Another section which is labeled as *register* or *rhetoric* could be added. That section of the evaluation criterion should comprise important features of academic register and metadiscourse such as *appropriate degree of vagueness, indirectness, politeness* and *acknowledgement of the audience* and expression of the claims in line with *the requirements of the genre.*

6.4 Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Study

This study has several limitations with respect to several aspects of the research:

The first limitation is that the data in the present study was collected from lower level intermediate students. They were at the initial stages of the language acquisition process. Thus, their English proficiency level might have elicited certain types of hedges and boosters. Further research studies in the Turkish context can be conducted from beginner, intermediate and advanced proficiency level language learners to see whether or not there is a hierarchy of hedging and boosting devices employment at different English proficiency levels. The comparison of such study results might present a better picture regarding the tendency toward hedging and boosting device usage among Turkish learners of English as a foreign language as well.

The second limitation is related with the number of the participants. Only 52 students participated in the study and the distribution of male and female participants was not even, which makes it hard to generalize the research results though the total number of participants was not very small. Therefore, a larger sample of participants needs to used so as to arrive at valid conclusions among the examined communities.

Another limitation is in respect to the writing prompt. The higher frequency of modal verb *should* in the L2 paragraphs in the study could be due the fact that the TOEFL writing prompt included the necessity marker *should.* Further research can make use of writing prompts with no reference to modality markers. Another possible way to conduct further research might be that the same writing prompt is reworded removing the modal so that any impositions on the part of the modal use is avoided. Then, the results may be compared and contrasted to see whether any differences could be observed with respect to the elicitation of any modal usage.

Yet another limitation is regarding the content and the nature of the writing materials. The materials that were evaluated in the present study were written by the instructors who are non-native speakers of English. Thus, the content of the materials might be somewhat artificial and purposefully overloaded with certain items (i.e., *should*) while certain items (i.e., *would*) were intentionally delayed and not elaborated on. Thus, authentic materials could be used in writing classes and their results or effects could be evaluated to check if any parallelism or divergence could be observed regarding the students' preferences.

REFERENCES

Adams-Smith, D. (1984). Medical discourse: Aspects of author's comments. *English for Specific Purposes,* 3, 25-36.

Aksu-Koç, A. (1988). The acquisition of aspect and modality: The case of past reference in Turkish. *Cambridge Studies in Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Akyel, A. (1994). First language use in EFL writing: planning Turkish vs. Planning in English. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics,* 3 (2), 169-184.

Altman, R. (1990). Giving and taking advice without offence. In R. Scarcella, E. Anderson, and S. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language*, 95-106. New York: Newbury House.

Atabey, N., Kutluk, İ., and Özel, S. (1983). *Sözcük Türleri*. Ankara: Olgaç Basımevi.

Atkinson, D. (1991). Discourse analysis and written discourse conventions. *Annual review of Applied Linguistics*, 11, 57-76.

Basham, C., and Kwachka, P.(1989). Variation in modal use by Alaskan Eskimo student writers. In S. Gass, C. Madden, D. Preston, and and L. Selinker (Eds.), Variation in second language acquistion, vol.1: *Discourse pragmatics* pp.129-143. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Bayyurt, Y. (2010). Author positioning in academic writing. In Zyngier, S. & Viana, V. (Eds), *Avaliaçoes e perspectivas: mapeando os estudos empiricos na area deHumanas* (Appraisals and perspectives: mapping empirical studies in the Humanities)(pp. 163-184). Rio de Janeiro: The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

Beauvais, P. (1989). A speech-act theory of metadiscourse. *Written Communication*, 61, 11-30.

Biber, D. (1988). *Variation across speech and writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Condrad, S., Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Harlow, Essex: Pearson.

Birner, Betty J., and G., Ward. (1998). *Information Status and Noncanonical Word Order in English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Birner, Betty J.; Jefrey P. Kaplan; and Gregory Ward. (2001). *Open propositions and epistemic would*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Washington, DC.

Binnick, R. I. (1971). Will and be going to. *CLS*, 7. Pp 40-52.

Binnick, R. I. (1972). Will and be going to II. *CLS*, 8. Pp. 3-9.

Blagojevic, S. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic prose: A contrastive study of academic articles written in English by English and Norwegian native speakers. *Kalbu Studijos (Studies about Languages),* 5, from http://www.kalbos.It/txt/5/08/htm.

Brown, P. & S. Levinson (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bublitz, W. (1992). Transferred negation and modality. *Journal of Pragmatics*, (18), 551-577.

Bunton, D. (1999). The use of higher level metatext in PhD theses. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18, 41-46.

Bybee, J. (1995). The semantic development of past tense modals in English. In J. Benjamins and J. Bybee (Eds.), *Modality in Grammar and Discourse*, 503-518. Amsterdam-Philadelphia

Bybee, J. and Fleischman, S. (1995). Modality in Grammar and Discourse: An Introductory Essay. In J. Bybee and S. Fleischman (Eds.).*Modality in Grammar and Discourse*, 1-14. Amsterdam: Benjamins

Can, H. (2006). An Analysis of Freshman Year University Students' Argumentative Essays, MA Thesis. Boğaziçi University, Turkey.

Carlson, S. (1988). Cultural differences in writing and reasoning skills. In Purves, A. (Ed.). *Writing Across Languages and Cultures: Issues in contrastive rhetoric*, 109-137. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Celce-Murcia, M., and Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book* (2nd ed.). Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Chafe, W. (1985). Linguistic differences produced by differences between speaking and writing. In D. R. Olson, N. Torrance, & A. Hilyard (Eds.), *Literature, language, and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing* (pp.105-123). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chafe, W. (1986). Evidentiality in English conversation and academic writing. In W. Chafe & J. Nichols (Eds.), *Evidentiality: The linguistic coding of epistemology* (pp.261-272). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Chafe, W. & Danielwicz, J. (1987). Properties of spoken and written language. In R. Horowitz & F. Samuels (Eds.), *Comprehending oral and written language* (pp.83-114). New York: Academic Press.

Channell, J. (1994). *Vague Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Clyne, M. (1988). Contrastive studies in English and German. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 3, 38-49.

Coates, J. (1983). *The sematics of the modal auxilaries*. Beckenham: Croom Helm.

Collins, P. (1991). The modals of obligation and necessity in Australian English. In K. Aijmer and B. Altenberg (Eds.), *English Corpus Linguistics*, pp. 145-165. New York: Longman.

Connor, U. (1987). Argumentative patterns in student essays: Cross-cultural differences. In Connor, U., & Kaplan, R. (Eds.) (1987). *Writing across* l*anguages. Analysis of L2 text* (pp.9-21). Reading, M.A.: Addison-Wesley.

Connor, U. (1996). *Contrastive rhetoric: Cross-cultural aspects of second language writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Connor, U., & Kaplan, R. (Eds.) (1987). *Writing across* l*anguages. Analysis of L2 text* (pp.9-21). Reading, M.A.: Addison-Wesley.

Cook, W. (1978). Semantic structure of the English modals. *TESOL Quarterly*, 12(1), pp.5-15.

Corblin, F. and de Swart, H. (2004). *Handbook of French Semantics*. CSLI Publications

Crismore, A. (1989). *Talking with readers: metadiscourse as rhetorical act*. New York: Lang.

Crismore, A., Markenen, R., Steffenson, M. (1993). Metadiscourse in persuausive writing: a study of texts written by American and Finnish university students. *Written Communication*, 10 (1), 39-71.

Crompton, P. (1997). Hedging in academic writing: some theorethical problems. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(4), pp.271-287.

Daiker, D. A., & Morenberg, M. (Eds.) (1990). *The writing research as teacher: Essays in theory and practice of class-based research*. Portsmouth, N. H.: Boynton/Cook Heinemann.

Davies, B. & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: the discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, 20, 43-63.

De Haan, F. (1997). *The Interaction of Modality and Negation: A typological study*. New York: Garland.

Dokuzoğlu, F. S. (2010). *L2 writing teachers' perceptions of mistakes in student writing and their preferences regarding feedback: The case of a private university*. Unpublished MA Thesis. Middle East Technical University.

Doyuran, Z. (2009). Conciliation of knowledge through Hedging in Turkish Scientific Articles. *Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi/Journal of Faculty of Letters*, 26(1), 85-99.

Dulay, H., Burt, M. and Krashen, S. (1982). *Language Two*. New York: Oxford.

Emeksiz, E.Z. (2008). Türkçe'de kiplik anlamının belirsizliği ve anlamsal roller. *Dil Dergisi*, 141, 55-66.

Emeksiz, E. Z. (2008). Deontic modality in Turkish: Pragmatic and semantic constraints. *MIT Working Papers*, 58.

Emig, J. (1977). Writing as a mode of learning. *College Composition and Communication*, 28(2), 122-128.

Enginarlar, H. (1990). A contrastive analysis of writing in Turkish and English of Turkish high schoolstudents. Doctoral dissertation, Hacettepe University, Turkey.

Erduyan, I. (2004). Development of topical structure in college level students' essays: The case of monolingual Turks, monolingual Americans, and bilingual Turks. M.A. Thesis, Boğaziçi University, Turkey.

Erguvanlı, E. E. (1984). *The Function of Word Order in Turkish Grammar*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Erguvanlı T., and Özsoy, A.S. (1993). Türkçe'deki bazı kiplik biçimlerinin öğretimi üzerine. *VII. Dilbilim Kurultayı Bildirileri*, 1-9.

Faigley, L. & Witte, S. (1981). Analysing revision. *College Composition and Communication*, 32(4), 400-414.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Longman, Harlow.

Fidan, Ö. (2002). Türkçe bilimsel metinlerde üstsöylem belirleyicileri. MA Dissertation in Turkish Langauage Education and Linguistics, Ankara University, Turkey.

Flower, L. Y., & Hayes, J. R. (1980). The cognition of discovery: Defining a rhetorical problem. *College Composition and Communication,* 31(1), 21-32.

Flower, L. Y., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process of writing. *College Composition and Communication,* 3(4), 365-387.

Gee, P. (1990). *Social Linguistics and Literacies*. Bristol, PA: Falmer.

Halliday, M. A. K. and Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.

Hermeren, L. (1978). *On modality in English: A study on the semantics of the modals*. Lund: CWK Gleerup.

Herrington, A. (1985). Writing in academic settings. *Reserach in the Teaching of English*, 19(4), 331-359.

Hinds, J. (1984). Retention of information using a Japanese style of presentation. *Studies in Language*, 8(1), 45-69.

Hinkel, E. (1994). Native and non-native speakers'pragmatic interpretations of English texts. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(2), 353-376.

Hinkel, E. (1995). The use of modal verbs as a reflection of cultural values. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(2), 325-343.

Hinkel, E. (1997). Indirectness in L1 and L2 academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 27, 361-386.

Hinkel, E. (2005). Hedging, inflating, and persuading in L2 academic writing. *Applied Language Learning*, 15 (1), 29-53.

Hirose, K. (2003). Comparing L1 and L2 organizational patterns in the argumentative writing of Japanese EFL students. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12(2), 181-209.

Holmes, J. (1983). Speaking English with appropriate degree of conviction. In C. Brumfit (Ed.), *Learning and Teaching Langauges for Communication: Applied Linguistics perspectives*, pp.100-121. London: British Association of Applied Linguistics.

Holmes, J. (1984). Hedging your bets and sitting on the fence: Some evidence for hedges as support structures. *Te Reo*, 27 (1), 47-62.

Holmes, J. (1988). Doubt and certainty in ESL textbooks. Applied Linguistics, 8, pp. 345-365.

Hoshi, H. (1993). The role of Pro in Ni passive in Japanese. In P. Calncy (Ed.), *Japanese and Korean Linguistics*, pp.355-374. Standford, CA: Stanford Univeristy Press.

Huebler, A. (1983). *Understatements and hedges in English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Hutton, L. T. (2008) *Super Duper Handy Handouts*, Number 182. http://www.superduperinc.com.

Hyland, K. (1994). Hedging in academic writing and EAP textbooks. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13(3), 239-256.

Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.

Hyland, K. & Milton, J. (1997). Qualification and certainity in L1 and L2students' writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. 6(2), 183-205.

Hyland, K. (1998). Persuasion and context: the pragmatics of academic metadiscourse. *Discourse Studies*, 7(2), 173-192.

Hyland, K. (1998a). Persuasion and context: The pragmatics of academic metadiscourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 30, 437-455.

Hyland, K. (1999). Disciplinary discourses: writer stance in research articles. In C. Candlin & K. Hyland (Eds.), *Writing: Texts: Processes and Practices* (pp. 99-121). London: Longman.

Hyland, K. (2000). Hedges, boosters and lexical visibility: noticing modifiers in academic texts. *Language Awareness*, 9(4), 179-197.

Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and invisibility: authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34, 1091-1112.

Hyland, K. (2003). *Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary intercations: metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13, 133-151.

Hyland, K., & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25(2), 156-157.

Hyland, K. (2005). Stance and engagement: a model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*. Sage: London.

Intarapawat, P. & Steffensen, M. (1995). The use of metadiscourse in good and poor ESL essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 4(3), 253-272.

Izutsu, K. (1998). The correspondence between the form and meaning of predicative grammatical categories in classical Japanese. In Akatsuka, N., Hoji, H., Iwasaki, S., Sohn, S.-

Johanson, L. (2009). Modals in Turkic. In Hansen, B. And de Haan, F (Eds.), *Modals in the languages of Europe*, 487-510. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter

O., Strauss, S. (Eds.), *Japanese/Korean Linguistics*, pp. 211-277. Stanford, CA: Center for the Study of Language and Information.

Jacobs, S. E. (1982). *Composing and coherence: The writing of eleven premedical students*. Washington, DC.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Jones, C. S. (1982). *Composing in a second language: A process study*. Paper presented at the 16th annual TESOL convention, Honolulu.

Kamimura, T., & Oi, K. (1988). Argumentative strategies in American and Japanese English. *World Englishes*, 17(3), 307-323.

Kaplan, R. (1966). Cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. *Language Learning*, 16(1): 1-20.

Kaplan, R. (1967). Contrastive rhetoric and the teaching of composition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 1, 10-16.

Kaplan, R. (1987). Cultural thought patterns revisited. In Connor, U. & Kaplan, R. (Eds.). *Writing across Languages. Analysis of L2 text* (pp.9-21). Reading, M.A.: Addison-Wesley.

Kaplan, R. (1988). Contrastive rhetoric and second language learning: Notes toward a theory of contrastive rhetoric. In Purves, A., (Ed.), *Writing Across Languages and Cultures: Issues in contrastive rhetoric* (pp. 275-304). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Kasper, G.(1979). Communication strategies: Modality reduction. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 4, 266-283.

Kerimoğlu, C. (2010). On the epistemic modality markers in Turkey Turkish: Uncertainty. *International Periodicals for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, 5(4),434-478.

Kerslake, C. (1996). The semantics of possibility in Turkish. *Current Issues in Turkish linguistics Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Turkish Linguistics*, 84-104. Hitit Yayınevi.

Kobayashi, H. (1984). Rhetorical patterns in English and Japanese. *TESOL Quarterly*, 1(4), 737-738.

Kocaman, A. (1996). The necessiative mood in Turkish. *Current Issues in Turkish linguistics Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Turkish Linguistics*, 104-110. Hitit Yayınevi.

Kornfilt, J. (2001). *Turkish*. London: Routledge.

Krashen, S. (1982). Principles and practice in second language learning and acquisition. Oxford: Pergamon.

Kratzer, A. (1981). The notional category of modality. In H.-J. Eikmeyer and H. Reiser (Eds.), *Words, Worlds and Contexts*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Kwachka, P., and Basham, C. (1990). Literacy acts and cultural artifacts. *Journal of pragmatics*, 14, 413-429.

Lakoff, G. (1970).Tense and its relation to participants. *Language* 46(4), pp.838-849.

Lakoff, G. (1972). Analysis of a native speaker cloze test. *Language Testing*, 3, 130-146.

Lauer, J. M., & Asher, J. W. (1998). *Composition research: Empirical designs*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. London: Longman.

Leech, G. (2003). Modality on the move: the English modal auxilaries 1961-1992. In Facchinetti, R., Krug, M., Palmer, F. (Eds.), *Modality in Contemporary English*, pp.223-240. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Leech, G. (2005). Meaning and the English Verb, 3rd edition. Harlow, UK: Longman.

Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindemann, E. (Ed.) (1987). *Longman bibliography of composition and rhetoric: 1984-1985*. New York: Longman.

Lyons, J.(1977). *Semantics*. CaCambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MacWhinney, B. (2009). *Tools for Analyzing Talk: The CLAN Programs* (Electronic Edition).

Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.

Markkanen, R., and Schroder, H. (1992). Hedging and its linguistic realization in English, German and Finnish philosophical texts: a case study. In Norman, M. (Ed.), *Fachsprachliche Miniaturen*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 171-175.

Markkanen, R., and Schroder, H. (1997). Hedging: a challenge for pragmatics and discourse analysis. In Markkanen, R., Schroder, H. (Eds.) *Hedging and discourse: approaches to the analysis of a pragmatic phenomenon in academic texts*, pp. 3-20. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Matelene, C. (1985). Contrastive rhetoric: An American writing teacher in China. *College English*, 47, 789-807.

Mauranen, A. (1993). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Finnish-English Economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 12, 3-22.

McCarthy, L. (1987). A stranger in strange lands: A college student writing across the curriculum. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 21(3), 233-265.

Meyer, P. (1997). Hedging strategies in written academic discourse: Strengthening the argument by weakening the claim. In Markkanen, R., Schroder, H. (Eds.), *Hedging and Discourse: Approaches to the Analysis of a Pragmatic Phenomenon in Academic Texts*, pp.21-41. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Milton, John and Ken Hyland. (1999) Assertions in students' academic essays: A comparison of L1 and L2 writers. In R. Berry, B. Asker, K. Hyland, and M.Lam (eds). *Language Analysis, Description and Pedagogy*. Hong Kong: HKUST, 147–161.

Mohan, B., & Au-Yeung Lo, W. (1985). Academic wiriting and Chinese students: Transfer and Developmental Factors. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(3), 515-532.

Myers, G. (1989). The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied Linguistics, 10, 1-35.*

Leki, I. (1991). Twenty-Five Years of Contrastive Rhetoric: Text Analysis and Writing Pedagogies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(1), 123-143.

Long, Michael H., & Richards, Jack C. (Eds.) (1990). *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom*. USA: Cambridge University Press:

McClelland, B.W., & Donovan, T. R. (Eds.) (1985). *Perspectives on research and scholarship in composition*. New York: Modern Language Association.

Moran, M., & Lunsford, R. (Eds.) (1984). *Research in composition and rhetoric*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Myers, M. (1985). *The teacher-researcher: How to study writing in the classroom*. Urbana, III.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills and National Council of Teachers of English.

Myers, G. (1989). The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied Linguistics*, 10, pp.1-35.

North, S. M. (1987). *The making of knowledge in composition: Portrait of an emerging field*. Upper Montclair, N.J.: Boynton/Cook.

Oktar, L. (1991). A contrastive analysis of rhetorical relations in English and Turkish expository paragraph writing. Doctoral dissertation, Ege University, Turkey.

Özsoy, S. (1999). Turkish Türkçe. İstanbul: Boğaziçi Univeristy Press.

Palmer, F. (1986). *Mood and Modality*. Cambridge University Press.

Palmer, F. (1990). *Modality and the English modals (2nd Ed.).* London: Longman.

Palmer, F. (2001). Mood and Modality. *Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (2nd edition).* Cambridge: CUP.

Papafragou, A. (1998). The acquisition of modality: implications for theories of semantic representation. *Mind and Language,* 13 (3), 370–399.

Perkins, M.R. (1983). *Modal Expressions in English*. London: Pinter.

Perl, S.(1979). The composition process of unskilled college writers. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 13(4), 317-336.

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. and Svartvik, J. (1972). *A grammar of contemporary English*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. and Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language.* New York: Longman.

Philip, G. (2007). Decomposition and delexicalisation in learners' collocational (mis)behaviour. In *Online Proceedings of Corpus Linguistics 2007*. Available online at http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/publications/CL2007/paper/170_Paper.pdf.

Pianko, S. (1979). A description of the composing process of college freshmen writers. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 13(1), 5-22.

Radford, A. (1997). *Syntax: A minimalist introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Raimes, A. (1985). What unskilled ESL students do as they write: A classroom study of composing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19(2), 229-258.

Rose, M. (1980). Rigid rules, inflexible plans and the stiffling of language: A cognitivist analysis of the writer's block. *College Composition and Communication*, 31(4), 389-401.

Salager-Meyer, F. (1994). Hedges and textual communicative function in medical English written discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13 (2), pp149-170.

Sansa Tura, S. (1986) -*Dır* in Modern Turkish. In Ayhan Aksu Koç and Eser *Modern Studies in Turkish Linguistics: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Turkish linguistics* (eds. E. Erguvanlı Taylan) İstanbul: Boğaziçi University Press: 145-158.

Scarcella, R., & Lee, C. (1989). Different paths to writing profieciny in a second language? A preliminary investigation of ESL writers of short-term and long-term residence in the United States. In Eisenstein, M. (Ed.) *The Dynamic Interlanguage* (pp. 137-153). New York: Plenum Press.

Schiffrin, D. (1980). Metatalk: Organizational and evaluative brackets in discourse. *Sociological Inquiry: Language and Social Interaction*, 50, 199-236.

Seibel, C. (1980). Subjective Modality. *Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics, 5*. pp.15-20.

Silva, T. (1990). Second language composition instruction: developments, issues, and directions in ESL. *In Long & Richards (Eds.), Second langugae writing: Research insights for the classroom*, (pp.11-23). USA: Cambridge University Press.

Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL reserach and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(4), 657-677.

Skelton, J. (1988). Comments in academic articles. In P. Grunwell (Ed.), *Applied Linguistics in Society*, 98-108. London: CILT/British Association of Applied Linguistics.

Sommers, N. (1980). Revision strategies of student writers and experienced adult writers. *College Composition and Communication*, 31(4), 378-388.

Swales, J. (1990). *Genre Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swetser, E. (1982). Root and epistemic modals: casuality in two modals. In M. Macaculay et al (Ed.), *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Lingusitics Society*, pp.484-507.

Swetser, E. (1990). *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and cultural Aspects of Semantics Structure*. Cambridge University Press.

Tate, G. (Ed.) (1987). *Teaching composition: Twelve bibliographical essays*. Forth Worth: Texas Christian University Press.

Tsujimura, A. (1987). Some characteristics of the Japanese way of communication. In D. L. Kincaid (Ed.), *Communication Theory: Eastern and western perspectives*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Ultan, R. (1972). The nature of future tenses. *Working Papers on Language Universals*, Stanford Univeristy No.8.

Uzun, N. E. (2004). Dilbilgisinin temel kavramları. *Türk Dilleri Araştırmaları Dizisi 39*. İstanbul.

Valero-Garces, C. (1996). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: Metatext in Spanish-English Economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes*, 15(4), 279-294.

Vande Kopple, W. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, 36, 82-93.

Van der Auwera, J. and Plungian, V. (1998). Modality's semantic map. *Linguistics Typology* (2), 79-124.

Von Wright, G. H. (1951). *An Essay in Modal Logic*. Amsterdam: North Holland.

Yarar, E. (2001). Akademik söylemde belirteçlerin olasılık ve belirsizlik işlevleri. *Dilbilim ve Uygulamarı*, 1, 125-136.

Yavaş, F. (1980). The Turkish Furture Marker. *Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics*, 5(1). Pp. 139-149.

Yum, J. (1987). Korean philosophy and communication. In D. L. Kincaid (Ed.), *Communication theory: Eastern and western perspectives*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Wards, G. (1998). *The Semantics and Pragmatics of Proposing*. New York: Garland.

Wu, S., & Rubin, D. (2000). Evaluating the impact of collectivism and individualism on argumentative writing by Chinese and North American college students. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 35, 148-178.

Zamel, V. (1982). Writing: The process of discovering meaning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16(2), 195-209.

Zamel, V. (1983). The composing process of advanced ESL students: Six case studies, *TESOL Qurterly*, 17(2), 165-187.

Zhang, Q. (1998). Fuzziness-Vagueness-Generality-Ambiguity. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 29, 13-31.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ANKET

<u>Açıklama</u>**: Bu anket üniversite seviyesinde alınan YAZMA dersleri ile bu dersleri alan öğrencilerin yabancı dil seviyeleri/becerileri arasındaki bağlantıyı araştıran çalışmanın bir parçasıdır. Soruları dikkatlice okuyup gerçekçi cevaplar verirseniz hem üniversitemizdeki yazma derslerinin geliştirilmesinde hem de bu bölümde yetişen öğrencilerin daha iyi yetişmesine katkıda bulunacaksınız. **Katkılarınızdan dolayı şimdiden teşekkürler!!!:)))

1. İsim :					
2. Yaş:	**3. Cinsiyet:**	**Bayan**	**Erkek**		
3. Mezun olduğunuz lise:					
4a. Okuduğunuz/Mezun olduğunuz Üniversite:	**4b. Sınıf:**	**1.**	**2.**	**3.**	**4.**
5. Mezun iseniz şu anda çalıştığınız kurum:					
6. Nüfusa kayıtlığı olduğunuz yer:	**7. Şu anda ailenizin ikamet ettiği yer:**				
8. Babanızın eğitim düzeyi:	**YOK**	**İLKOKUL**	**ORTA**	**LİSE**	**ÜNİVERSİTE**
9. Annenizin eğitim düzeyi:	**YOK**	**İLKOKUL**	**ORTA**	**LİSE**	**ÜNİVERSİTE**

10. Kaç yıldır İngilizce öğreniyorsunuz?		
11. Türkçe'nin yanında bildiğiniz diller ve düzeyleri: (*Not: Düzeyinizi aşağıdaki derecelendirmeye göre yapınız ve ilk önce **İngilizce bilginizi** değerlendiriniz)		
Çok iyi =Yabancılarla yazılı ve sözlü olarak **çok mükemmel** bir şekilde anlaşabilmekteyim; İyi =Yabancılarla yazılı ve sözlü olarak **rahat** bir şekilde anlaşabilmekteyim; Orta =Yabancılarla yazılı ve sözlü olarak anlaşmakta **zaman zaman** zorlanmaktayım; Zayıf =Yabancılarla yazılı ve sözlü olarak anlaşmakta **çok zorlanmaktayım.**		

DİL	**DÜZEY**

12. Varsa, bulunduğunuz yabancı ülkenin/ülkelerin ismi/isimleri:		
ÜLKE	**Kaldığınız süre (gün, ay, yıl)**	**Ziyaret amacınız (eğlence, eğitim, iş vb.)**
a.		
b.		
c.		
d.		

APPENDIX B

SFL/METU
May 2011

Dept. of B. E.

Intermediate Group

Writing Handout V

INSTRUCTOR'S COPY

ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS

An argument is a discussion of an issue in which there is disagreement between two or more parties. Each party has a different opinion regarding the issue in question and reasons for supporting it.

Evidently, not all issues can be the topic of an argumentative paragraph. For example, a fact such as "the moon is a satellite of the earth" cannot be the topic of an argumentative paragraph. However, "whether or not to build a space station on the moon" can be the topic of an argumentative paragraph because people may have different opinions about such a project. Some may support the idea while others may not. Therefore, **facts, beliefs, and preferences are not the type of topics one can effectively and logically argue for or against in a formal argumentative paragraph; that is, they are not debatable.** The kind of issue that can be argued for or against logically and effectively is one based on an *opinion* which is debatable and can be supported by evidence.

Since the issue in an argumentative paragraph has to be an opinion, argumentative issues have at least two sides;

- the **proponents** (those in favor of the opinion)
- the **opponents** (those against the opinion)

The purpose of an argumentative paragraph may be to persuade the reader to:

1. consider an idea,
2. take action – demand or request that your audience do something,
3. accept a point of view.

To persuade the reader, the writer provides evidence to support his/her viewpoint. Then, s/he anticipates the best argument that the opponent(s) may come up with and tries to refute that argument by showing why it is wrong, weak, or of lesser importance by including his/her reasons.

In brief, to write a well-developed argumentative paragraph, you should introduce the issue, state your argument, i.e., your opinion regarding the issue in the topic sentence, and develop the claim by providing evidence that supports this claim. Then, you should introduce the counter argument, refute it, and finally, re-assert your argument in the conclusion.

An argumentative paragraph usually follows this pattern:

Title
(Introduction of issue - optional)
Topic Sentence (writer's claim/proposal & supporting evidence)
PRO 1: Point of Support #1 (Major 1) Minor 1a Evidence (facts, examples, statistics) Minor 1b **PRO 2: Point of Support #2** (Major 2) Minor 2a Evidence (facts, examples, statistics) Minor 2b **CON: Opponent's Argument** **Refutation of Opponent's Argument**
Concluding Sentence (restatement of the proposal / statement of a solution / call for action)

I. ANALYZING ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS

TASK 1. Read the following paragraph and complete the task that follows.

OF PAIN AND PROGRESS

The experiments that lab animals are subjected to have long been a controversial issue. Although the defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals, these experiments should be limited for two main reasons. To begin with, experiments performed on animals are clearly inhumane. To exploit, torture or kill another creature deliberately is an abuse of power. According to official US Department of Agriculture figures, approximately 140,000 dogs and 42,000 cats die in labs in the US every year. Experiments performed on these animals include injection of poisons, spraying of chemicals on the body and face, and all kinds of live operations that result in suffering and death. Secondly, the cruel methods used in laboratories are against the rights of animals. According to the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights, experimentation on animals that involves physical and psychological suffering for medical, scientific, educational or commercial purposes is against their rights. Despite those strong arguments against the issue, those who are in favor of using animals in experiments claim that without animals, medical research would not continue. The proponents of the issue have a point, but human beings should avoid abusing their power over animals. The greater the suffering an experiment causes, the harder it is to justify it, especially in cases where the experiment is not done for life-saving purposes. It should be the duty of all scientists to support the restriction of experiments on animals by developing alternative methods. To conclude, it is crucial that animal experimentation be reduced to a minimum immediately due to its inhumanity and the fact that it conflicts with the rights of animals.

Analysis

Introductory sentence(s): The experiments that lab animals are subjected to have long been a controversial issue.

Topic sentence: Although the defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals, these experiments should be limited for two main reasons.

(A) PRO 1: inhumane methods—an abuse of power

USDA: 140,000 dogs and 42,000 cats die in labs

e.g.: injection of poisons, spraying of chemicals, live operations that cause suffering and death

(B) PRO 2: against the rights of animals

UDAR: experimentation (physical and psychological suffering) is against animal rights

(C) CON: Opponent's Argument: medical research would stop without animals

Refutation: humans should not abuse their power over animals

the greater the suffering, the harder to justify (especially when they are not for life-saving purposes)

scientists should support restriction of experiments, and develop alternative methods

Concluding sentence: To conclude, it is crucial that animal experimentation be reduced to a minimum immediately due to its inhumanity and the fact that it conflicts with the rights of animals.

II. WRITING ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS

There are certain steps to follow when writing an argumentative paragraph:

1. Deciding whether the issue or the topic is debatable

2. Looking at both sides of the issue / considering the arguments for and against the issue and deciding which side to take

3. Organizing ideas and writing the paragraph

1. DECIDING WHETHER THE ISSUE/THE TOPIC IS DEBATABLE

Before writing an argumentative paragraph, it is important that you decide whether or not your proposal can be a topic for argumentation and that you avoid obvious proposals such as "There are biological differences between males and females," as it is obvious that such differences exist.

TASK 2. Which of the following statements are debatable and which are non-debatable? If the statement is debatable, put a tick next to the word 'debatable'. If the statement is non-debatable, put a tick next to the word 'non-debatable' and discuss why it is not so.

1. Citizens should be allowed to carry guns by law.

   (√) debatable

   ( ) non-debatable

2. Drunk driving is one of the causes of traffic accidents.

   ( ) debatable

   (√) non-debatable *(fact)*

3. Smoking should be made illegal.

   (√) debatable

   ( ) non-debatable

4. Rock music is better than rap music.

   ( ) debatable

   (√) non-debatable *(preference)*

5. The best way to reduce crime is to take deterrent measures.

   (√) debatable

   ( ) non-debatable

2. CONSIDERING THE PRO AND CON ARGUMENTS OF THE ISSUE

Once you have agreed that the topic is appropriate for argumentation, it is important that you know the major points of argument on both sides of the issue and decide which side you are going to take. After listing as many points as you can think of, choose the side you wish to argue for. Then, decide which points you will use in your paragraph to support your topic.

e.g.

For Animal Experimentation	*Against* Animal Experimentation
Helpful in the study of certain diseases and thus saves millions of lives Advances in science	Inhumane methods Against the rights of animals Unnecessary: what works on an animal won't work on a human

TASK 3. Write as many points as you can under each issue.

1.

Smoking should be made illegal.	Smoking should remain legal.

2.

The language of education in Turkish universities should be English.	The language of education in Turkish universities should be Turkish.

TASK 4: Refer to Task 3, decide which side you are going to take and write 2 pros and 1 con for each. (<u>Be careful that the pro and con arguments depend on the side you take</u>)

1. Proposal :

____.

PRO 1 :

____.

PRO 2 :

____.

CON :

____.

2. Proposal :

____.

PRO 1 :

____.

PRO 2 :

____.

CON :

____.

3. ORGANIZING IDEAS AND WRITING THE PARAGRAPH

INTRODUCING THE TOPIC (optional)

A. The Introductory Sentence

Writers often include an introductory sentence to explain what the particular issue is and why it is controversial to explain why the author finds it worth debating, or why the reader should take an interest in the debate.

B. The Topic Sentence

The writer takes a side of the issue s/he is arguing (discussing) and states his/her point of view in the topic sentence. In other words, the writer makes his/her position clear in the topic sentence.

The topic sentence can be written without explicitly stating the pro arguments (reasons for the writer's proposal). In that case, it is a closed topic sentence. Sometimes, however, in addition to the issue and the writer's clear position (proposal), the topic sentence includes the pro arguments that support the writer's opinion or stand-point. In that case, it is an open topic sentence.

e.g. **Topic Sentence :** Animal experimentation should be limited for two main reasons. (closed topic sentence)

Issue : whether animal experimentation should be limited or not

Proposal : Animal experimentation *should* be limited

e.g. **Topic Sentence :** Animal experimentation should be limited because it is inhumane and it is against the rights of animals. (open topic sentence)

Issue : whether animal experimentation should be limited or not

Proposal : Animal experimentation *should* be limited

Pro arguments : It is inhumane

It is against the rights of animals

To better prepare the reader for the content of the paragraph the topic sentence may also include the opponent's argument (con argument). However the writer may choose to introduce the con-argument following the development of the pro-arguments.

e.g. **Topic Sentence :** Although defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals, these experiments should be limited because they are inhumane and they are against the rights of animals. (open topic sentence)

Issue : whether animal experimentation should be limited or not

Proposal : Animal experimentation *should* be limited

Pro arguments : The experiments are inhumane

The experiments are against the rights of animals

Con argument : medical research would stop without animals

In the topic sentence of an argumentative paragraph "*should*" or "*must*" are generally used when indicating the writer's proposal. However, writers may prefer to use language patterns other than *should*, for example "the subjunctive," when introducing their topic sentence, and/or in the concluding sentence, when restating the proposal.

Note that writers often present their proposal in an affirmative sentence when possible; that is, a claim like "should not be permitted" is often expressed as "should be prevented". Other similar examples are:

"should not be continued" → "should be discontinued/ stopped"
"should not be allowed" → "should be banned/ prohibited"

"should not be encouraged" → "should be discouraged"

<u>Useful Language</u>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Animal experimentation</td><td>should / must</td><td>be stopped</td><td>(because ...)</td></tr>
<tr><td>It is</td><td>essential
important
crucial
urgent
necessary
imperative
vital
recommended
advisable</td><td colspan="3">that something be done / that somebody do something</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">It is recommended that animal experimentation be stopped.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5"><u>Although defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals</u>, it is important that these experiments be limited because <u>they are inhumane and they are against the rights of animals.</u></td></tr>
</table>

Possible patterns to make a proposal in the topic sentence

TASK 5. Analyze the following topic sentences and identify the issue, writer's proposal, and the pro and con arguments.

1. Although nuclear power plants are said to be an economical way to produce energy, their construction should be prevented as they are extremely dangerous and very expensive to maintain.

   The issue: <u>whether to construct nuclear power plants or not</u>

Proposal: The construction of nuclear power plants should be prevented (the writer is 'against' the construction of nuclear power plants)

Pro arguments: They are extremely dangerous.
They are very expensive to maintain.

Con argument: Nuclear power plants are said to be an economical way to produce energy

2. More money should be allotted to genetic engineering for two major reasons.

The issue: whether to allot more money to genetic engineering or not

Proposal: More money should be allotted to genetic engineering. (the writer is 'for' the allotment of more money on genetic engineering)

Pro arguments: ----

Con argument: ----

3. Compulsory military service should be abolished because young men are deprived of some of the formative years of their lives and they are bullied in the name of discipline.

The issue: whether to abolish compulsory military service or not

Proposal: Compulsory military service should be abolished. (the writer is 'against' compulsory military service)

Pro arguments: Young men are deprived of some of the most formative years of their lives.
They are bullied under the name of discipline.

Con argument: ----

TASK 6: Refer to Task 4 and write an introductory sentence and a topic sentence for each of your proposals.

1. ____
_

____
.

2. ____
_

____
.

SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT

Although there are different patterns for organizing the argumentative paragraph, there is a basic approach that is commonly used.

A. Organization

Having written (the introductory and) the topic sentence, you – the writer – have to develop the proposal by offering reasons and supporting them with evidence or proof, such as facts, statistics, or examples. Then, you must introduce the opponent's main reason against the proposal (the con argument) and refute this argument. Since there are two sides to the issue, and since you want to convince the reader that you are right, it is necessary that you first prove your own case, and then prove that the opponent is wrong, or at least that your points are more valid or significant.

If an opponent has a valid point, acknowledge that point. Try not to ignore any valid points the other side may have. You can accept them and then go on to show that your points are more important anyway.

B. Providing Evidence

When writing an argumentative paragraph, you – the writer – should convince the reader that your points are correct and acceptable. In order to do that, you may use a variety of support techniques. The types of evidence that can be used are:

(1) Referring to an authority

(2) Stating facts

(3) Giving statistical evidence or other information based on research

(4) Providing examples

- Information based on observations or experience

- Information that compares similar things

Regardless of type or source, evidence must always be

* accurate

* up-to-date

* typical (that is, it is found in a variety of circumstances, not just in one case)

<u>Useful Language</u>

Pattern to cite source or statistics

According to **Based on**	information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, ... the results of a 2003 research study done by METU's Department of Environmental Engineering, ...

The findings of a 2003 study conducted by METU's Department of Environmental Engineering	**reveal** **show** **indicate**	that…..

C. Introducing the Con

Apart from supporting your own proposal, you should also try to identify and understand your opponent's point of view. This strengthens the credibility of your argument. If you do not understand your opponent's reasons and you just argue your own, you are not likely to convince your reader at all because your paragraph in this case will be one-sided propaganda.

e.g. Despite these strong arguments against the issue, those who are in favor of using animals in experiments claim that without animals, medical research would not continue.

When introducing a con, it is possible to use one of the structures below.

<u>Useful Language</u>

Patterns to introduce the con argument

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">The opponents of</td><td rowspan="2">this proposal</td><td rowspan="2">(might)

(would)</td><td rowspan="2">argue

maintain

assert

declare

claim

point out

say</td><td rowspan="2">that . . .</td></tr>
<tr><td>Those who</td><td>disagree with

are against

do not favor</td></tr>
</table>

				state	

D. Refutation

Now that you have dealt with your proposal, considering the reasons for (pro arguments) and the main reason(s) against (con argument), you must refute the opponent's main reason(s) against the proposal.

e.g. The proponents of the issue have a point, but human beings should avoid abusing their power over animals.

There are three basic methods of attacking and refuting your opponent's main reason against the proposal.

Method 1: Demonstrate that your opponent's reason is wrong, because it is based on incorrect or misleading information. (reject)

Method 2: Show that your opponent's reason is weak because it is based on insufficient information, or ignores significant information. (deny the relevancy)

Method 3: Agree that your opponent's reason is valid, but show that your points of support are more significant. (compromise)

Useful Language

To signal refutation, one of the following transitions can be used. The choice depends on how strongly the writer disagrees.

However, this is unlikely to be the case. This is obviously not true. This is not acceptable. These views are open to doubt. They would seem to be mistaken. They appear to ignore the fact that …

Although (it may be) true to a certain extent, The opponents have a point, but	this argument is not valid any longer. this claim is not strong enough because.... this stand has no significance today ...

TASK 7: Study the following refutations. Which methods do they use?

1. **Proposal:** Workers should be allowed to continue work after the age of 65.

   Con argument and refutation:

   Those who disagree with this proposal and argue that retirement should be compulsory point out that, as people grow older, their bodies begin to slow down, and it is risky for them to continue working. Actually, this is true in only one respect—the body really does slow down. However, accident rates for those over sixty-five are lower than those for people under sixty-five. How can this be explained? Simply, workers over sixty-five have far more experience in their jobs than younger workers, and they are far more aware of their own limitations.

   Method: __2**__**

2. **Proposal:** Abortion should be legal.

   Con argument and refutation:

   The opponents of this proposal argue that abortion is the killing of a potential human being. This is undeniably true. However, as has been pointed out, if abortion is not legalized, there will be a dramatic increase in unwanted, neglected and abused children. Moreover, the number of women who die getting illegal, unhygienic abortions will increase greatly, and women will lose what they have fought so hard for—the basic right to control their own bodies. These three points outweigh the argument of the pro-lifers.

   Method: __3**__**

TASK 8: Refer to Task 4 and write a con argument for each of the proposals and refute them.

1. ____

____.

2.

____
__

____.

THE SUMMARY/CONCLUDING SENTENCE

The summary sentence in an argumentative paragraph should restate the proposal, stressing the necessity and importance of accepting it. The concluding sentence makes a call for action.

e.g. To sum up, it is crucial that animal experimentation be reduced to a minimum due to its inhumanity and the fact that it conflicts with the rights of animals. (restatement)

In conclusion, in the light of this information, it is important that action be taken against animal experimentation. (call for action)

Useful Language

It is	essential important crucial imperative urgent necessary recommended advisable	**that something be done.** **that someone do something.**

TASK 9: Write a summary or conclusion for each of the proposals in Task 4.

1. ____

____.

2.

____
__

____.

TASK 10. Write two argumentative paragraphs using the information given in the boxes.

a. Proposal: More nuclear power stations should be built to meet the world's growing energy requirement

PRO	CON & REFUTATION
* Pro 1: nuclear energy: economical - small amounts of nuclear fuel → large amounts of nuclear energy e.g. 20 tonnes of nuclear fuel → 3 weeks' electricity for city with population 1,000,000 120,000 tonnes of coal / 85,000 tonnes of oil necessary to generate same amount of electricity * Pro 2: technology to produce nuclear energy already exist - no need to invest money in development of new technology at present: ~1,000 nuclear power stations functioning efficiently in many countries (U.S., France, Russia, India, etc.)	* Con: nuclear energy extremely dangerous - risk of nuclear accident → radiation kill people and destroy environment * Refutation: strict measures can be taken to eliminate risk of contamination e.g. 1979 / accident at Three Mile Island nuclear power station (U.S.): effective protective measures → no serious release of radioactivity → no harm done to people or surrounding countryside

b. Proposal: More money should be allotted to research on genetic engineering.

PRO	CON / REFUTATION
* Pro 1: genetic engineering make significant contributions to conventional medicine - help diagnose genetic defects before birth - enable some childless couples have children of their own - provide ways of fighting cancer * Pro 2: genetic engineering have potential to create new sources of nutrition - use of cloning → production of new / improved species of farm animals and food crops with desired genetic traits	* Con: developments in genetic engineering → serious ethical consequences - commercial exploitation of genetically engineered products → only wealthy people benefit from products - possibility of human cloning→ too much interference with nature * Refutation: Research on genetic engineering can continue without becoming a threat to balance of nature / establish guidelines scientists follow guidelines

TASK 11. Choose one of the following – e-mail / face-to-face – and write a paragraph of 150-180 words arguing that it is the best way of communicating with others.

<u>Question Analysis:</u>

Topic: the best way of communicating with others is

Aspect: discuss whether

Suggestions:

e-mail	It enables one to: • have a message delivered within seconds to anyone in the world who has an Internet account • communicate asynchronously • attach photos, music, videos, or any other kind of file • be involved in or host electronic discussion groups
face-to-face	• it is natural • there is body language and gestures • feelings can be communicated easily • misunderstandings can be corrected immediately

TASK 12. Read the following text and do the tasks that follow.
<u>Argue for or against</u> the following:

"Doctors should inform a patient when he or she has a short time to live."

Choose a stance and write a paragraph of 150-180 words to defend your viewpoint.

<u>Question Analysis:</u>

Topic: inform a patient when he or she has a short time to live

Aspect: argue whether or not (to inform to withhold such information)

Suggestions:

PRO	CON
• The patient might want to do certain things before dying, such as spending more time with loved ones • The patient might want to seek alternative ways of treatment	• Doctors play god • It might be demoralizing for not only the patient but also the family • The doctor might be mistaken

TASK 13. Read the following text and do the tasks that follow.

MUSIC PIRACY

Music piracy, which refers to the illegal duplication and distribution of sound recordings, has recently become a major topic of dispute. As we move to a world where all entertainment is delivered digitally, the battle over copyright protection is turning into a war. Legitimate digital media services are exploding, but each additional option brings a new battle, new restrictions, and even new dangers for users. Copy protection included in Sony BAAS audio CDs, for example, has allowed virus writers to use the system and sneak onto users' PCs. Satellite and HD Radio, which promise higher-quality audio and more content, may become difficult for listeners to record if the music industry manages to outlaw piracy.

Why should we care about CD piracy? The answers to this question are compelling. For those who are against piracy, every dollar spent on a pirate CD is a dollar lost for legitimate goods or services. This means that there is a loss of tax revenue, or income, that could be used for teachers' salaries, school supplies, the police force, the fire services, and other emergency services. They further claim that CD pirates make hundreds of millions of dollars in profits from illegal CD sales. They often use these profits to fund other criminal enterprises. Narcotics investigators say that CD piracy operates like the illegal drug trade—but is more profitable. Organized crime organizations run the production and distribution networks. The profits made from CD piracy fund other criminal activities too, and this generates violence.

Should music piracy really be considered illegal? The sharing of music is not theft. If it were, then so would be compilation cassette tapes shared between friends, taping stuff off the radio for personal use, or even borrowing another's music collection. If a friend brings music to another person's party and plays it for the dozen or so people at the party, that could be construed as a public performance of the material, and the music industry could try to make that illegal too.

Ruining the lives of individuals for petty non-commercial copyright infringement is vastly worse than the immorality of piracy. However legal it might be, it is simply wrong. Copyright laws related to music are extremely severe. I am no expert, but as I understand it, even quoting a few words or a phrase from the lyrics of a copyrighted song is illegal without permission, unlike prose, where legal use can run to hundreds of words.

The music business lobby has successfully brought lawmakers on its side. The fight is ultimately about money and power and control—over what you will be able to see and read and watch and listen to, and how it will be delivered, and who will make money from it. It is about the protection of pressure groups, not just the protection of artists' intellectual property. Copyright legislation is rooted in monopolism and censorship, and has been expanded in scope far beyond its original intent.

PART A. **What is the writer's attitude towards the fight against music piracy? Explain in 2-3 sentences.**

The writer has a negative attitude towards the fight against music piracy. He thinks copyright laws related to music are extremely severe and it is wrong to ruin the lives of individuals for petty non-commercial copyright infringement.

PART B. Write a paragraph of 180-200 words **discussing whether downloading films from the Internet should be legal or not.**

Suggestions:

PRO	CON
• One can watch the latest films for free • In some parts of the world, it takes ages for films to reach the market • In some countries, there is censorship	• The film industry is an important business and studios say piracy is costing them billions • It risks the livelihood of thousands of employees in the film business

APPENDIX C

SFL/METU
May 2011

Dept. of B. E.

Intermediate Group

Writing Handout V

ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS

An argument is a discussion of an issue in which there is disagreement between two or more parties. Each party has a different opinion regarding the issue in question and reasons for supporting it.

Evidently, not all issues can be the topic of an argumentative paragraph. For example, a fact such as “the moon is a satellite of the earth” cannot be the topic of an argumentative paragraph. However, “whether or not to build a space station on the moon” can be the topic of an argumentative paragraph because people may have different opinions about such a project. Some may support the idea while others may not. Therefore, **facts, beliefs, and preferences are not the type of topics one can effectively and logically argue for or against in a formal argumentative paragraph; that is, they are not debatable.** The kind of issue that can be argued for or against logically and effectively is one based on an *opinion* which is debatable and can be supported by evidence.

Since the issue in an argumentative paragraph has to be an opinion, argumentative issues have at least two sides;

- the **proponents** (those in favor of the opinion)
- the **opponents** (those against the opinion)

The purpose of an argumentative paragraph may be to persuade the reader to:

4. consider an idea,
5. take action – demand or request that your audience do something,
6. accept a point of view.

To persuade the reader, the writer provides evidence to support his/her viewpoint. Then, s/he anticipates the best argument that the opponent(s) may come up with and tries to refute that argument by showing why it is wrong, weak, or of lesser importance by including his/her reasons.

In brief, to write a well-developed argumentative paragraph, you should introduce the issue, state your argument, i.e., your opinion regarding the issue in the topic sentence, and develop the claim by providing evidence that supports this claim. Then, you should introduce the counter argument, refute it, and finally, re-assert your argument in the conclusion.

An argumentative paragraph usually follows this pattern:

Title
(Introduction of issue – optional)
Topic Sentence (writer's claim/proposal & supporting evidence)
PRO 1: Point of Support #1 (Major 1) Minor 1a — Evidence (facts, examples, statistics) Minor 1b **PRO 2: Point of Support #2** (Major 2) Minor 2a — Evidence (facts, examples, statistics) Minor 2b **CON: Opponent's Argument** **Refutation of Opponent's Argument**
Concluding Sentence (restatement of the proposal / statement of a solution / call for action)

I. ANALYZING ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS

TASK 1. Read the following paragraph and complete the task that follows.

OF PAIN AND PROGRESS

The experiments that lab animals are subjected to have long been a controversial issue. Although the defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals, these experiments should be limited for two main reasons. To begin with, experiments performed on animals are clearly inhumane. To exploit, torture or kill another creature deliberately is an abuse of power. According to official US Department of Agriculture figures, approximately 140,000 dogs and 42,000 cats die in labs in the US every year. Experiments performed on these animals include injection of poisons, spraying of chemicals on the body and face, and all kinds of live operations that result in suffering and death. Secondly, the cruel methods used in laboratories are against the rights of animals. According to the Universal Declaration of Animal Rights, experimentation on animals that involves physical and psychological suffering for medical, scientific, educational or commercial purposes is against their rights. Despite those strong arguments against the issue, those who are in favor of using animals in experiments claim that without animals, medical research would not continue. The proponents of the issue have a point, but human beings should avoid abusing their power over animals. The greater the suffering an experiment causes, the harder it is to justify it, especially in cases where the experiment is not done for life-saving purposes. It should be the duty of all scientists to support the restriction of experiments on animals by developing alternative methods. To conclude, it is crucial that animal experimentation be reduced to a minimum immediately due to its inhumanity and the fact that it conflicts with the rights of animals.

Analysis

Introductory sentence(s):

Topic sentence:

(A) PRO 1:

(B) PRO 2:

(C) CON: Opponent's Argument:

Refutation:

Concluding sentence:

II. WRITING ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS

There are certain steps to follow when writing an argumentative paragraph:

1. Deciding whether the issue or the topic is debatable

2. Looking at both sides of the issue / considering the arguments for and against the issue and deciding which side to take

3. Organizing ideas and writing the paragraph

1. DECIDING WHETHER THE ISSUE/THE TOPIC IS DEBATABLE

Before writing an argumentative paragraph, it is important that you decide whether or not your proposal can be a topic for argumentation and that you avoid obvious proposals such as "There are biological differences between males and females," as it is obvious that such differences exist.

TASK 2. Which of the following statements are debatable and which are non-debatable? If the statement is debatable, put a tick next to the word 'debatable'. If the statement is non-debatable, put a tick next to the word 'non-debatable' and discuss why it is not so.

1. Citizens should be allowed to carry guns by law.

( ) debatable

( ) non-debatable

2. Drunk driving is one of the causes of traffic accidents.

( ) debatable

( ) non-debatable

3. Smoking should be made illegal.

( ) debatable

( ) non-debatable

4.Rock music is better than rap music.

( ) debatable

( ) non-debatable

5. The best way to reduce crime is to take deterrent measures.

   ( ) debatable

   ( ) non-debatable

2. CONSIDERING THE PRO AND CON ARGUMENTS OF THE ISSUE

Once you have agreed that the topic is appropriate for argumentation, it is important that you know the major points of argument on both sides of the issue and decide which side you are going to take. After listing as many points as you can think of, choose the side you wish to argue for. Then, decide which points you will use in your paragraph to support your topic.

e.g.

For Animal Experimentation	*Against* Animal Experimentation
Helpful in the study of certain diseases and thus saves millions of lives Advances in science	Inhumane methods Against the rights of animals Unnecessary: what works on an animal won't work on a human

TASK 3. Write as many points as you can under each issue.

1.

Smoking should be made illegal.	Smoking should remain legal.

2.

The language of education in Turkish universities should be English.	The language of education in Turkish universities should be Turkish.

TASK 4: Refer to Task 3, decide which side you are going to take and write 2 pros and 1 con for each. (<u>Be careful that the pro and con arguments depend on the side you take</u>)

1. Proposal :

____.

PRO 1 :

____.

PRO 2 :

____.

CON :

____.

2. Proposal :

____.

PRO 1 :

____.

PRO 2 :

____.

CON :

____.

3. ORGANIZING IDEAS AND WRITING THE PARAGRAPH

INTRODUCING THE TOPIC (optional)

A. The Introductory Sentence

Writers often include an introductory sentence to explain what the particular issue is and why it is controversial to explain why the author finds it worth debating, or why the reader should take an interest in the debate.

B. The Topic Sentence

The writer takes a side of the issue s/he is arguing (discussing) and states his/her point of view in the topic sentence. In other words, the writer makes his/her position clear in the topic sentence.

The topic sentence can be written without explicitly stating the pro arguments (reasons for the writer's proposal). In that case, it is a closed topic sentence. Sometimes, however, in addition to the issue and the writer's clear position (proposal), the topic sentence includes the pro arguments that support the writer's opinion or stand-point. In that case, it is an open topic sentence.

e.g. **Topic Sentence :** Animal experimentation should be limited for two main reasons. (closed topic sentence)

Issue : whether animal experimentation should be limited or not

Proposal : Animal experimentation *should* be limited

e.g. **Topic Sentence :** Animal experimentation should be limited because it is inhumane and it is against the rights of animals. (open topic sentence)

Issue : whether animal experimentation should be limited or not

Proposal : Animal experimentation *should* be limited

Pro arguments : It is inhumane

It is against the rights of animals

To better prepare the reader for the content of the paragraph the topic sentence may also include the opponent's argument (con argument). However the writer may choose to introduce the con-argument following the development of the pro-arguments.

e.g. **Topic Sentence :** Although defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals, these experiments should be limited because they are inhumane and they are against the rights of animals. (open topic sentence)

Issue : whether animal experimentation should be limited or not

Proposal : Animal experimentation *should* be limited

Pro arguments : The experiments are inhumane

The experiments are against the rights of animals

Con argument : medical research would stop without animals

In the topic sentence of an argumentative paragraph "*should*" or "*must*" are generally used when indicating the writer's proposal. However, writers may prefer to use language patterns other than *should*, for example "the subjunctive," when introducing their topic sentence, and/or in the concluding sentence, when restating the proposal.

Note that writers often present their proposal in an affirmative sentence when possible; that is, a claim like "should not be permitted" is often expressed as "should be prevented". Other similar examples are:

"should not be continued" ⟶ "should be discontinued/ stopped"
"should not be allowed" ⟶ "should be banned/ prohibited"

"should not be encouraged" ⟶ "should be discouraged"

Useful Language

Possible patterns to make a proposal in the topic sentence

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Animal experimentation</td><td>should / must</td><td>be stopped</td><td>(because ...)</td></tr>
<tr><td>It is</td><td>essential
important
crucial
urgent
necessary
imperative
vital
recommended
advisable</td><td colspan="3">that something be done / that somebody do something</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">It is recommended that animal experimentation be stopped.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Although defenders of animal experimentation believe that medical research would stop without animals, it is important that these experiments be limited because they are inhumane and they are against the rights of animals.</td></tr>
</table>

TASK 5. **Analyze the following topic sentences and identify the issue, writer's proposal, and the pro and con arguments.**

1. Although nuclear power plants are said to be an economical way to produce energy, their construction should be prevented as they are extremely dangerous and very expensive to maintain.

The issue:____

Proposal:____

Pro arguments:____

Con argument:____

2. More money should be allotted to genetic engineering for two major reasons.

The issue:____

Proposal:____

Pro arguments:____

Con argument:____

3. Compulsory military service should be abolished because young men are deprived of some of the formative years of their lives and they are bullied in the name of discipline.

The issue:____

Proposal:____

Pro arguments:____

Con argument:____

TASK 6: Refer to Task 4 and write an introductory sentence and a topic sentence for each of your proposals.

1.____

____

_.

2.____

____

_.

SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT

Although there are different patterns for organizing the argumentative paragraph, there is a basic approach that is commonly used.

A. Organization

Having written (the introductory and) the topic sentence, you – the writer – have to develop the proposal by offering reasons and supporting them with evidence or proof, such as facts, statistics, or examples. Then, you must introduce the opponent's main reason against the proposal (the con argument) and refute this argument. Since there are two sides to the issue, and since you want to convince the reader that you are right, it is necessary that you first prove your own case, and then prove that the opponent is wrong, or at least that your points are more valid or significant.

If an opponent has a valid point, acknowledge that point. Try not to ignore any valid points the other side may have. You can accept them and then go on to show that your points are more important anyway.

B. Providing Evidence

When writing an argumentative paragraph, you – the writer – should convince the reader that your points are correct and acceptable. In order to do that, you may use a variety of support techniques. The types of evidence that can be used are:

(1) Referring to an authority

(2) Stating facts

(3) Giving statistical evidence or other information based on research

(4) Providing examples

- Information based on observations or experience
- Information that compares similar things

Regardless of type or source, evidence must always be

* accurate
* up-to-date
* typical (that is, it is found in a variety of circumstances, not just in one case)

<u>Useful Language</u>

Pattern to cite source or statistics

According to **Based on**	information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, ... the results of a 2003 research study done by METU's Department of Environmental Engineering, ...

The findings of a 2003 study conducted by METU's Department of Environmental Engineering	**reveal** **show** **indicate**	that…..

C. Introducing the Con

Apart from supporting your own proposal, you should also try to identify and understand your opponent's point of view. This strengthens the credibility of your argument. If you do not understand your opponent's reasons and you just argue your own, you are not likely to convince your reader at all because your paragraph in this case will be one-sided propaganda.

e.g. Despite these strong arguments against the issue, those who are in favor of using animals in experiments claim that without animals, medical research would not continue.

When introducing a con, it is possible to use one of the structures below.

<u>Useful Language</u>

Patterns to introduce the con argument

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">The opponents of</td><td rowspan="2">this proposal</td><td rowspan="2">(might)
(would)</td><td rowspan="2">argue
maintain
assert
declare
claim
point out
say
state</td><td rowspan="2">that . . .</td></tr>
<tr><td>Those who</td><td>disagree with
are against
do not favor</td></tr>
</table>

D. Refutation

Now that you have dealt with your proposal, considering the reasons for (pro arguments) and the main reason(s) against (con argument), you must refute the opponent's main reason(s) against the proposal.

e.g. The proponents of the issue have a point, but human beings should avoid abusing their power over animals.

There are three basic methods of attacking and refuting your opponent's main reason against the proposal.

<u>Method 1:</u> Demonstrate that your opponent's reason is wrong, because it is based on incorrect or misleading information. (reject)

<u>Method 2:</u> Show that your opponent's reason is weak because it is based on insufficient information, or ignores significant information. (deny the relevancy)

<u>Method 3:</u> Agree that your opponent's reason is valid, but show that your points of support are more significant. (compromise)

Useful Language

To signal refutation, one of the following transitions can be used. The choice depends on how strongly the writer disagrees.

However, this is unlikely to be the case. This is obviously not true. This is not acceptable. These views are open to doubt. They would seem to be mistaken. They appear to ignore the fact that …

Although (it may be) true to a certain extent, The opponents have a point, but	this argument is not valid any longer. this claim is not strong enough because.... this stand has no significance today ...

TASK 7: Study the following refutations. Which methods do they use?

1. **Proposal:** Workers should be allowed to continue work after the age of 65.

   Con argument and refutation:

   Those who disagree with this proposal and argue that retirement should be compulsory point out that, as people grow older, their bodies begin to slow down, and it is risky for them to continue working. Actually, this is true in only one respect—the body really does slow down. However, accident rates for those over sixty-five are lower than those for people under sixty-five. How can this be explained? Simply, workers over sixty-five have far more experience in their jobs than younger workers, and they are far more aware of their own limitations.

   Method: ____

2. **Proposal:** Abortion should be legal.

   Con argument and refutation:

   The opponents of this proposal argue that abortion is the killing of a potential human being. This is undeniably true. However, as has been pointed out, if abortion is not legalized, there will be a dramatic increase in unwanted, neglected and abused children. Moreover, the number of women who die getting illegal, unhygienic abortions will increase greatly, and women will lose what they have fought so hard for-the basic right to control their own bodies. These three points outweigh the argument of the pro-lifers.

Method: ____

TASK 8: Refer to Task 4 and write a con argument for each of the proposals and refute them.

1.____

____

_.

2.____

____

_.

THE SUMMARY/CONCLUDING SENTENCE

The summary sentence in an argumentative paragraph should restate the proposal, stressing the necessity and importance of accepting it. The concluding sentence makes a call for action.

e.g. To sum up, it is crucial that animal experimentation be reduced to a minimum due to its inhumanity and the fact that it conflicts with the rights of animals. (restatement)

In conclusion, in the light of this information, it is important that action be taken against animal experimentation. (call for action)

<u>Useful Language</u>

It is	essential important crucial imperative urgent necessary recommended advisable	**that something be done.** **that someone do something.**

TASK 9: Write a summary or conclusion for each of the proposals in Task 4.

1.____
____
_.

2.____
____
_.

TASK 10. Write two argumentative paragraphs using the information given in the boxes.

a. Proposal: More nuclear power stations should be built to meet the world's growing energy requirement

PRO	CON & REFUTATION
* Pro 1: nuclear energy: economical - small amounts of nuclear fuel → large amounts of nuclear energy e.g. 20 tonnes of nuclear fuel → 3 weeks' electricity for city with population 1,000,000 120,000 tonnes of coal / 85,000 tonnes of oil necessary to generate same amount of electricity * Pro 2: technology to produce nuclear energy already exist - no need to invest money in development of new technology at present: ~1,000 nuclear power stations functioning efficiently in many countries (U.S., France, Russia, India, etc.)	* Con: nuclear energy extremely dangerous - risk of nuclear accident → radiation kill people and destroy environment * Refutation: strict measures can be taken to eliminate risk of contamination e.g. 1979 / accident at Three Mile Island nuclear power station (U.S.): effective protective measures → no serious release of radioactivity → no harm done to people or surrounding countryside

b. Proposal: More money should be allotted to research on genetic engineering.

PRO	**CON / REFUTATION**
* Pro 1: genetic engineering make significant contributions to conventional medicine - help diagnose genetic defects before birth - enable some childless couples have children of their own - provide ways of fighting cancer * Pro 2: genetic engineering have potential to create new sources of nutrition - use of cloning → production of new / improved species of farm animals and food crops with desired genetic traits	* Con: developments in genetic engineering → serious ethical consequences - commercial exploitation of genetically engineered products → only wealthy people benefit from products - possibility of human cloning→ too much interference with nature * Refutation: Research on genetic engineering can continue without becoming a threat to balance of nature / establish guidelines scientists follow guidelines

Task 11. Choose one of the following – e-mail / face-to-face – and write a paragraph of 150-180 words arguing that it is the best way of communicating with others.

Task 12. <u>Argue for or against</u> the following:

“Doctors should inform a patient when he or she has a short time to live.”

Choose a stance and write a paragraph of 150-180 words to defend your viewpoint.

Task 13. Read the following text and do the tasks that follow.

MUSIC PIRACY

Music piracy, which refers to the illegal duplication and distribution of sound recordings, has recently become a major topic of dispute. As we move to a world where all entertainment is delivered digitally, the battle over copyright protection is turning into a war. Legitimate digital media services are exploding, but each additional option brings a new battle, new restrictions, and even new dangers for users. Copy protection included in Sony BAAS audio CDs, for example, has allowed virus writers to use the system and sneak onto users' PCs. Satellite and HD Radio, which promise higher-quality audio and more content, may become difficult for listeners to record if the music industry manages to outlaw piracy.

Why should we care about CD piracy? The answers to this question are compelling. For those who are against piracy, every dollar spent on a pirate CD is a dollar lost for legitimate goods or services. This means that there is a loss of tax revenue, or income, that could be used for teachers' salaries, school supplies, the police force, the fire services, and other emergency services. They further claim that CD pirates make hundreds of millions of dollars in profits from illegal CD sales. They often use these profits to fund other criminal enterprises. Narcotics investigators say that CD piracy operates like the illegal drug trade—but is more profitable. Organized crime organizations run the production and distribution networks. The profits made from CD piracy fund other criminal activities too, and this generates violence.

Should music piracy really be considered illegal? The sharing of music is not theft. If it were, then so would be compilation cassette tapes shared between friends, taping stuff off the radio for personal use, or even borrowing another's music collection. If a friend brings music to another person's party and plays it for the dozen or so people at the party, that could be construed as a public performance of the material, and the music industry could try to make that illegal too.

Ruining the lives of individuals for petty non-commercial copyright infringement is vastly worse than the immorality of piracy. However legal it might be, it is simply wrong. Copyright laws related to music are extremely severe. I am no expert, but as I understand it, even quoting a few words or a phrase from the lyrics of a copyrighted song is illegal without permission, unlike prose, where legal use can run to hundreds of words.

The music business lobby has successfully brought lawmakers on its side. The fight is ultimately about money and power and control-over what you will be able to see and read and watch and listen to, and how it will be delivered, and who will make money from it. It is about the protection of pressure groups, not just the protection of artists' intellectual property. Copyright legislation is rooted in monopolism and censorship, and has been expanded in scope far beyond its original intent.

PART A. **What is the writer's attitude towards the fight against music piracy? Explain in 2-3 sentences.**

____

____

_.

PART B. **Write a paragraph of 180-200 words discussing whether downloading films from the Internet should be legal or not.**

APPENDIX D

STUDENT PROFILE INFORMATION

Types of High Schools the participants graduated from

Types of Schools	**N**	**%**
Anatolian High School	22	
Private Anatolian High School	2	
‘Regular’ High School	11	
Science High School	1	
Teacher Training High School	6	
Missing	10	
TOTAL	**52**	

Parents’ level of education

	Father		**Mother**	
Categories	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
1. None	1	1.9	1	1.9
2. Primary	4	7.6	12	23
3. Secondary	2	3.8	2	3.8
4. High School	17	32.6	22	42.3
5. University	28	53.8	15	28.8
TOTAL	**52**	**100**	**52**	**100**

The Participants' Level of Proficiency in Another Language

POOR = 1	I always experience serious difficulty while speaking or writing in foreign language
AVERAGE = 2	Sometimes, I always experience serious difficulty while speaking or writing in foreign language
GOOD = 3	I speak or produce written works in the foreign language freely
VERY GOOD = 4	I have native like written and oral proficiency in the foreign language

How would you classify your level of English using the criteria given above?

Categories	**N**	**%**
1. Poor	6	11.1
2. Average	34	65.3
3. Good	12	22.2
4. Very Good	0	0.0
TOTAL	52	100.0

Do you speak a second foreign language and how would you evaluate your level of proficiency in this language?

Second Foreign Language	**The Number of Students**	**Level of Proficiency**	**Number of Students According to Level of Proficiency**			
			4	**3**	**2**	**1**
German	10	2, 1	0	0	2	8
French	6	3, 2, 1	0	1	3	2
Bulgarian	1	1	0	0	0	1
Japanese	1	2	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	**18**					

APPENDIX E

WRITING TASKS FOR THE SUMMER SCHOOL

Prepared by Zuhal Sayman

METU/SFL

Department of Basic English

APPENDIX F

INTRODUCTION

This booklet contains ten writing tasks which aim to prepare you for the writing component of the English Proficiency Exam (EPE). Before you start working on the actual writing task of the EPE, you will be required to read a passage and write a response to the question following it in Part A. The purpose of this task is to assess and evaluate your reading comprehension, as well as your proficiency in expressing your ideas.

This passage in Part A is thematically related to the writing task in Part B, as is the text of the Listening & Note-Taking Component of the exam. The text for the writing task in Part B of the EPE will not lend itself to the borrowing of ideas. You will have to use your world knowledge and choose the relevant pieces of information from your 'information bank'. Before starting to write, you must organize your ideas carefully and while writing, you should pay attention to the conventions (rules) of academic writing.

Let's remember the points that you should pay attention to while doing the writing task of the EPE by analyzing the following paragraph.

Introduction

The purpose of this particular piece of writing is to present the conventions necessary for academic purposes.

Body

First of all, a paragraph written for an academic purpose displays certain features in terms of organization and content. It develops and supports a single main idea. It presents credible supporting ideas, explanations and examples in a logical order so that it appeals to the reader. As the audience of the paragraph is members of the academic world, it has a formal style. It tries to be as impersonal as possible and refrains from the use of simple, everyday words used in oral communication. It makes use of a variety of carefully chosen vocabulary items appropriate to the topic. Secondly, a paragraph written for academic purposes presents ideas in such a way that its readers can easily follow and understand them. It repeats the key words, makes use of references and synonyms to avoid unnecessary repetition and ensures a smooth transition from one idea to another with the help of connectors. Also, in order not to cause confusion for the reader, it has consistency. It does not shift from one tense to another unnecessarily, or from one body of subject(s) to another. For example, a paragraph which dwells on "how people are affected by being unemployed", mainly uses the present tenses, and the subjects of its sentences can be 'people who are unemployed / unemployed people/people without jobs / such people/ they' or 'a person who doesn't have a job/ a person who is unemployed / such a person / (s)he'. Lastly, a paragraph which is written for an academic purpose is composed of grammatically correct sentences. As well as the correct use of the tense and verb forms, such a paragraph observes subject-verb agreement and parallelism. In addition, it does not contain sentence fragments or run-on sentences. Also, it is correctly punctuated.

Conclusion

To sum up, from its organization to its punctuation, the paragraph is written with great care so that it conveys the message to the reader clearly and accurately.

The paragraph above starts with an introduction in the form of a topic sentence. Then, there is the body, which is composed of three major supporting ideas, each of which is marked by a signal word (First of all, Secondly, Lastly). There are minor supporting ideas following each major support. Thus, the paragraph does not merely list the features, but elaborates on each one to ensure that the reader is satisfied with the information given. The paragraph ends with a conclusion, which gives a very brief summary of the points mentioned. It is marked by the signal ‘To sum up’.

To be successful in the writing component of the EPE, you must fulfill the requirements of academic writing at paragraph level. The paragraph that we have analyzed provides guidelines for these requirements; therefore, it may be a good idea to refer to it while you are doing the writing tasks in this booklet and editing your paragraphs. Keep in mind that the paragraph you will write in the EPE will be graded according to its **content, organization** and **grammar** by at least two different instructors. To convey your message clearly and accurately to these readers, you need to pay attention to all the elements mentioned in the above paragraph.

SAMPLE TASK

FIGHT FOR FATHERS’ RIGHTS

A militant new movement is sweeping Britain, generating headlines and sparking protests. The actors of this movement are the ‘Angry Dads’. British fathers are increasingly fed up with a system that they see as favoring mothers during custody battles. In 80 percent of cases, children end up living with their mothers after divorce as British law isn’t fond of shared parenting, citing the confusion that dual residences can cause a child. And while most cases are settled out of court —allowing parents to arrange their own solutions — British courts have little inclination to penalize parents who do try to prevent visits in quarrelsome cases. The reason is that a judge's only course of action in such circumstances is to fine a mother or throw her in jail — which is rarely, if ever, in the child's interest. “There is much wrong with our system,” said one judge after presiding over a case in which a tearful father abandoned his battle to see his daughter after his wife prevented visits for five years. Too many dads find themselves locked in seemingly hopeless legal struggles as they try to exercise their court-ordered visitation rights. “We just want to see our kids,” says Matthew O'Connor, founder of Fathers4Justice, a new lobbying group that boasts 10,000 members.

The authorities are starting to listen. Last week the British government issued a paper recommending several reforms, from more extensive government-sponsored professional help to save marriages before divorces hit the courts, to speeding up the process once they do. It also proposes penalties for parents who ignore court decisions. The punishments — ranging from community service to compensation payments — would be less damaging to the child and would allow judges to be more objective (some say less sexist) in their decisions.

Will that satisfy the Angry Dads? Not likely. The government proposal makes no concrete move toward shared parenting. Nor does it address the growing problem of mothers who move with their kids far from a father and his job. When his ex-wife and son moved to Spain, London-based writer Griffin Stone decided that the expensive flights and hotels were too much, so he gave up writing and moved to Barcelona. “I see my son every other weekend now,” he says.

Still, change is in the air. There is a growing understanding in Britain that child care is not gender-specific, and that both mothers and fathers have equal roles to play within a family. Legal experts believe this more-progressive thinking may eventually have an effect on the law and result in a move towards joint parenting in Britain.

Adapted from: Newsweek, August 2, 2004

A. Answer the following question by referring to the text.

Regarding custody rights, whom does the writer take side with, the mother or the father? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

A quick skimming of the text might give the impression that the writer takes side with the father. However, a closer look brings out the fact that she believes fathers as well as mothers should be given the custody of their children. This can clearly be seen especially in the concluding paragraph. Therefore, the question can be answered as follows:

The writer takes side neither with the father nor the mother. She sympathizes with fathers who are fighting for their custody rights as they are the suffering ones in this case. However, on the whole, she believes in joint/shared parenting. In other words, she thinks both the mother and the father should be given the right to take care of their children.

B. As stated in the introduction, one purpose of the text given is to activate your world knowledge and help you generate ideas.

A quick brainstorming may bring out the following ideas:

the advantages of being married (emotional security +social acceptance)

the disadvantages of being married (increased responsibilities + limited freedom)

MARRIAGE

the properties of an ideal marriage (love, respect + communication)

the points to consider when choosing a spouse (personality, interests + social status)

possible reasons for

divorce

(personality clashes,
betrayal + financial
problems)

effects on children

(children's
psychological state,
social+ academic life)

DIVORCE

effects on spouses

(social, psychological+
financial)

custody rights

(should they be given to
the mother or father?)

The writing task which is related to the passage you have read may be built on one of the ideas above. Here are a few examples of how the task may be set:

1. **Describe an ideal marriage, elaborating on the factors that make it so.**

2. **Explain the effects of divorce on children.**

3. **Discuss the advantages of being married, explaining how it contributes to/eases one's life.**

4. **Which is preferable, being single or being married? Support your view by taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages that marriage brings into one's life.**

5. **In cases of divorce, who do you think the custody of children should be given to, to the father or the mother? Support your view by providing reasons.**

Whatever the task is, the first step you should follow is to analyze it well and comprehend it accurately so that you can fulfill its requirements. Let's take **the first task**. A paragraph written in response to this task is expected to be a general **description** of the properties of an ideal marriage. Let's see how the paragraph below deals with the task.

An ideal marriage has three important elements. The first element is love. In an ideal marriage, the spouses never stop loving each other. The nature of the love they feel may change, but the love itself does not disappear. The love in an ideal marriage is filled with empathy. In such a marriage, the parties are never deprived of the emotional support they need. Another element found in an ideal marriage is respect. The partners feel and show respect for each other's needs, interests and priorities. They leave each other some personal space and allow one another to be independent to a certain extent. As a result, they don't feel suffocated by the ties and responsibilities of married life. In addition to love and respect, there is continuous communication between the partners, which makes their relationship an ideal one. They talk about their problems with each other and if necessary, fight over them until they find a solution. Thus, contrary to common belief, there may often be arguments in an ideal marriage. Yet, these arguments serve a purpose. They ensure the maintenance of the relationship as they do not allow the problems between the partners to build up. In brief, love, respect and communication between the partners are the essential elements of an ideal marriage.

Topic	:	properties of an ideal marriage
Topic Sentence	:	"An ideal marriage has three elements."
Major Support 1	:	love
minor supports:		- nature of love may change, but love does not disappear - not selfish, contains empathy; couples always find the emotional support they need
Major Support 2	:	respect
minor supports:		- partners feel & show respect for one another's needs, interests & priorities - they leave each other personal space & allow one another to be independent to some extent → ties and responsibilities of married life do not suffocate them
Major Support 3	:	communication
minor supports:		- partners talk about their problems & if necessary, fight to find solutions, so frequent arguments may exist - problems do not build up, relationship is maintained
Concluding Sentence	:	"In brief, love, respect and communication between the partners are the essential elements of an ideal marriage."

2) Explain the effects of divorce on children.

Divorce has some negative effects on children. First of all, these children may develop psychological problems after the divorce of their parents. These problems are mostly related to feelings of insecurity. As children have to live with one of the parents, they may feel that they have been abandoned by the other. Also, divorce may lead to financial difficulties since parents have to run two different homes instead of one, and these difficulties might cause children to feel insecure. In addition, some children may blame themselves for the divorce of their parents. This may cause them to develop feelings of guilt, which may create more serious problems, such as the children harming themselves for punishment. Secondly, the children of broken homes may experience difficulties in their school life. Because of their psychological problems, they may find it difficult to concentrate during lessons. When they do not understand the course subjects well, they are likely to perform badly on exams. As a result, their grades may fall. This may have a detrimental effect on their future academic life as well. To conclude, the divorce of parents may affect children seriously; therefore, parents should get professional advice to help their children if separation is inevitable.

3) Discuss the advantages of being married, explaining how it eases one's life.

Getting married means beginning a new life and requires an adaptation period, but once people get used to this new way of life, they start to enjoy its advantages. To begin with, couples gain social recognition by getting officially married. The law identifies them as one unit and so does society. Having fulfilled one of their social responsibilities, the couple also earns the respect of others. Another advantage that makes a married person's life easier is the emotional security that being married offers. It is comforting to have an ally against all the hardships of life and a companion to share all its pleasures. When they are shared with a loved one, difficulties get easier to handle, and the pleasures derived become greater. The last way in which being married eases one's life is that there is the advantage of combined financial assets against the ever-rising cost of living. It is more economical to run one home with two salaries when monthly expenditures such as rent and electricity and phone bills are taken into consideration. In brief, marriage brings social, emotional and financial conveniences into one's life, so it is an advantage to be married

4) Which is preferable, being single or being married? Support your view by taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages that marriage brings into one's life.

To decide whether being single or married is preferable, the disadvantages and advantages need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, marriage limits people's freedom to a certain extent. Married couples cannot just do anything they want whenever they feel like doing it. Single people, on the other hand, are free to schedule their time according to their own needs and wishes. Therefore, a spontaneous social arrangement, such as going out for dinner with friends after work, is possible for a single person, whereas it may create problems for a married one. Furthermore, married people have to take on the responsibilities of a shared life while single adults are usually responsible to and for only themselves. Besides these disadvantages, there are also advantages of a married life over a single one. For instance, marriage provides emotional security as the partners are also good friends who share the difficulties and pleasures of life. Single people may not be as lucky in this respect. Moreover, married couples, with their joint income, are usually better off than single people. For the latter, the rent of a flat and monthly bills may be a heavier burden. To conclude, it is not easy to say which life style is better, so the decision whether to lead a married or a single life should be taken after careful consideration of what one expects from life.

Now, *you* write a paragraph in response to task 5. Your paragraph should contain 180-220 words. When you complete your paragraph, read it in terms of its content, organization and grammar to correct your mistakes. Also, count the number of words and write it at the end of your paragraph.

TASK 1

TREATS ARE A TRAP

In the U.S., from late November to mid-January, the average American gains 2-3 kg because of the end-of-the-year parade of holiday pies, cakes, cookies and other treats. This is a problem for all Westerners — especially for children, who are increasingly at risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes.

Candy and other sweets marketed to kids are double health risks. Not only are they packed with calories that tend to get stored as extra kilos, but their high sugar content can also cause blood-glucose levels to increase dramatically, which is a particular concern for diabetics.

Yet the holidays are a minefield we can navigate, doctors and dietitians insist. By enforcing a few simple rules, you and your kids may be able to eat your cake and enjoy it too.

The trick is to manage the intake of sweets. According to experts at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston, even children with diabetes can eat candy so long as they make allowances for the extra sugar. For example, if a child packs away a small candy bar, which typically contains about 15 grams of sugar, then she should eat 15 fewer grams of carbohydrate at the next meal — say, two fewer spoons of mashed potatoes.

A more proactive strategy is to make sweets less available, Try replacing candy in holiday goody bags with toys or CDs. At family gatherings, serve healthier treats, such as apples and oranges, or dried fruits, such as banana chips or raisins.

Rationing sugary snacks and desserts can work too, but the key is to work out a quota before the party and stick with it. You can make a deal with your children, for example, that they can take a piece of pie or some ice cream from the dessert table, but not both.

Timing sugar intake is also important. Blood-sugar levels tend to drop in the late afternoon, so an after-school treat won't cause glucose levels to spike as sharply as one eaten before bedtime, and the calories it contains are more likely to be burned off right away.

The best way to keep weight off, of course, is to use the calories as they come in. Organize after-meal games or hikes for both you and your kids. After all, they're not the only ones who tend to overindulge at holiday time.

Adapted from: Time, December 20, 2004

A. How does the writer feel about the weight gain among Americans towards the end of the year? Does she regard it as an insoluble problem? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, describe the requirements of a healthy life.

TASK 2

AGING NATURALLY

I recently turned 60. To help celebrate the occasion, friends organized a surprise party: after the festivities, there came a time to reflect, and I came to an uncomfortable conclusion: I am closer to that period in life when my energy and powers will diminish, and I will lose my independence. At age 60, the organs of the body gradually begin to fail, and the first hints of age-related disease begin to appear.

I hardly notice my aging on a day-to-day basis. When I look in the mirror each morning, my face and white beard seem the same as the day before. Yet, in photographs from the 1970s, my beard is completely black. On closer inspection, I notice other changes in my body: more aches and pains, less resilience, less vigor. What is more, my memory may not be quite what it used to be. At the same time, despite the evidence, some part of me feels unchanged. In fact, I feel the same as when I was 6.

Some years ago, I went to my 46th high school reunion. I had not seen most of my classmates since our graduation in 1959. A few were just as I remembered them, hardly changed at all. Others looked so aged that I could barely find points of coincidence with the pictures of them I had in my head. Why the difference? Why are some individuals so outwardly altered by time and others not? Or, in other words, why is there often a discrepancy between chronological age and biological age?

I believe the answer has to do with complex interactions of genetics and environment. I also believe, on the basis of evidence I have reviewed, that we actually have control over some of those factors.

I do not subscribe to the view that aging suddenly overtakes us at some point in life, whether at 60 or some other milestone. I meet researchers, physicians and others, who believe that we are born, grow rapidly to maturity and then coast along on a more or less comfortable plateau until we begin to decline. They call the period of decline *senescence* and consider it distinct and apart from what came before.

I find it more useful to think of aging as a continuous and necessary process of change that begins at birth. Wherever you are on the continuum, it is important to learn how to live in appropriate ways in order to maximize health and happiness. That should be an essential goal for all of us. What is appropriate when you are in your twenties is likely not going to be appropriate in your fifties.

We can mask the outward signs of the process, or try to keep up old routines in spite of it, but we cannot change the fact that we are all moving toward physical change. The best we can do — and it is a lot — is to accept the inevitability of aging and try to adapt to it, to be in the best health we can at any age. To my mind, the denial of aging and the attempt to fight it are counterproductive, a failure to understand and accept an important aspect of our existence. Such attitudes are major obstacles to aging gracefully.

To age gracefully means to let nature take its course while doing everything in our power to delay the onset of age-related disease. Or, in other words, to live as long and as well as possible, then have a rapid decline at the end of life.

Adapted from: Time, October 17, 2005

A. **What is the writer's attitude towards ageing? What does he recommend that people do to cope with it? Explain in 2-3 sentences.**

____

____

____

____

____

B. As far as ageing is concerned, public opinion concentrates on its negative aspects, regarding it as something to be feared. However, careful consideration may bring out its positive sides as well.

In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain your view on whether aging is really something to be feared or not, providing reasons that support your view.

TASK 3

NUCLEAR POWER

Forget Chernobyl. From India to Finland, nuclear energy is making a comeback. But old fears die hard.

In winter, when the temperature regularly falls to -4ºF (-20ºC), the Finnish island of Olkiluoto feels like the edge of the world. Today, the snow is falling so hard that visibility is down to a few meters, and the air is so cold that it's impossible to write with a pen because the ink freezes. But despite these harsh conditions, there is a blizzard of activity on this remote isle, where the French firm Areva and the German giant Siemens have teamed up to build the first new nuclear power plant in western Europe since 1986. Some 1,200 workers are putting the finishing touches to a 203-ft.-high (62-m) concrete cylinder designed to protect the reactor core from the force of a collision with a commercial aircraft. The giant cylinder has another purpose that is equally terrifying to think of: in case of a meltdown, it's intended to shield the outside world from the nuclear danger within.

Atomic energy is the most powerful and potentially destructive force man has discovered, so it's not surprising that a new reactor would be built in a place as remote as Olkiluoto. Over the past 20 years, terrifying images of meltdowns and explosions have led much of the world to call for the phasing out of nuclear plants. After growing by 750% in the '70s, and 140% in the '80s, nuclear generating capacity increased by only 8% in the '90s. But new fears of sky-rocketing oil prices, global warming and an overdependence on unpredictable but energy-rich countries, such as Russia and Iran, have led to reconsideration. Nuclear energy is back from the dead, and Olkiluoto is at the forefront of its rebirth.

A decade ago, Finland, with its cold climate, long distances between cities and energy-intensive industry, began looking for a way to meet its energy needs while trying to reduce greenhouse gases. Coal was cheap but crammed with polluting carbon. Thermal plants fueled by Russian gas seemed unreliable due to Finland's uneasy relationship with its neighbor. Renewable-energy sources like hydropower and wind, though promising, could not meet demand on their own. The debate kept circling back to the only other carbon-free option - nuclear. As Mikko Elo, a former MP who helped secure Finland's 2002 decision to build the new Olkiluoto reactor, recently put it: "If you worry about climate change, there is no other economically or environmentally stable alternative to nuclear power."

That sentiment has quickly gained traction elsewhere in Europe, even in regions that have been strictly antinuclear since the partial meltdown at the Chernobyl nuclear power station in Ukraine 22 years ago. On January 10, the British Secretary of State for Business declared that nuclear power is "safe and secure" and that it's central to the country's goals for cutting greenhouse emissions. In Sweden, which decided even before Chernobyl to phase out nuclear power, an opinion poll released on January 21 showed that almost half of voters now favor the technology. And even in Germany, where atomic fears helped the spread of the nation's green movement, many high-profile politicians, are calling for the country's official opposition to nuclear energy to be overturned.

Outside Europe, the news is even brighter for the nuclear industry: globally, 34 nuclear plants are now being built in places as far as India and Argentina.

In the meantime, back in Olkiluoto, workers are focusing on the challenges of finishing their long-awaited reactor. Nearby, engineers are beginning an assessment of the feasibility of yet another reactor on the island. Amid all the activity, it's still not clear whether this historic project — and the nuclear future it indicates - should be a source of fear or hope.

Adapted from: Time, February 25, 2008

A. **How does the writer feel about the comeback of nuclear power? Does he have a firm stance on the issue? Explain in 3-4 sentences.**

____

__

____

__

____

__

____

__

____

__

B. It is becoming more and more difficult to meet the energy needs of the growing world population, and it wouldn't be wrong to say that the globe is on the verge of an energy crisis.

In a paragraph of about 200 words, suggest 2-3 solutions that can be applied on a personal level, by ordinary people, to the problem of the over-use of non-renewable energy sources.

TASK 4

WHY TAI CHI IS THE PERFECT EXERCISE

It's easy to tell people to make exercise part of their daily routine. It's not so easy to tell them what to do. Some folks like to run marathons or climb mountains. But if you would rather care for your body without risking life or limb or increasingly creaky joints, you might consider Tai Chi Chuan, the ancient martial art that looks like a cross between shadow boxing and slow-motion ballet. Tai Chi combines intense mental focus with deliberate, graceful movements that improve strength, agility and — particularly important for the elderly — balance.

Practitioners praise Tai Chi's spiritual and psychological benefits, but what has attracted the attention of Western scientists lately is what Tai Chi does for the body. In many ways, researchers are just catching up to what tens of millions of people in China and Chinatowns around the rest of the world already know about Tai Chi. Scientists at the Oregon Research Institute in Eugene reported last week that Tai Chi offers the greatest benefit to older men and women who are healthy but relatively inactive. Previous studies have shown that Tai Chi practiced regularly helps reduce falls among healthy seniors. The next step, from a scientific point of view, is to determine whether Tai Chi can help those who are already frail.

There are several styles of Tai Chi, but most of them start with a series of controlled movements, or forms, with names like Grasping the Sparrow's Tail and Repulse the Monkey. There are many good how-to books to get you started, or you can choose from among the growing number of classes offered at recreational centers and health clubs across the U.S. (These have the added benefit of combining instruction with a chance to meet new people.) Either way, the goal is to move at your own pace. As Tai Chi master Martin Lee puts it, "Pain is no gain."

It can take a few months for the effects to kick in, but when they do, they can act as a gateway to a new lifestyle. Once people start feeling better, they often become more active in their daily life.

Any form of exercise, of course, can do only so much. "For older individuals, Tai Chi will not be the end-all," says William Haskell, an expert in chronic-disease prevention at Stanford University. "But Tai Chi plus walking would be a very good mixture." Younger people probably need more of an aerobic challenge, but they can benefit from Tai Chi's capacity to reduce stress.

The best thing about Tai Chi is that people enjoy it, so they are more likely to stick with it long enough to get some benefit. It helps when something that's good for you is also fun.

Adapted from: Time, August 5, 2002

A. According to the writer, are young people and the elderly alike in terms of the way they benefit from Tai Chi? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

____
__

____
__

____
__

____
__

____
__

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain how physical exercise affects human health, focusing on the psychological, as well as the physical benefits.

TASK 5

FOREST FIRES

Forest fires can endanger people and wildlife, and controlling one is expensive, both in terms of manpower and financial cost. Yet, wildfires are a natural occurrence and serve important ecosystem functions. Forest landscapes are dynamic and change in response to variations in climate and to disturbances from natural sources, such as fires caused by lightning strikes. Forests respond to these disturbances through a natural process called succession, a recovery process that occurs in predictable stages and enables forest regeneration.

Many tree species evolve to take advantage of fire, and periodic outbreaks can contribute to overall forest health. Fires move through the forest burning lower branches and clearing dead wood from the forest floor. This starts regeneration by providing ideal growing conditions. It also improves the forest floor as habitat for many species that prefer relatively open spaces to a thick blanket of brush and dead branches. After a fire burns down an area of woodland, “the succession process” begins. Amid the forest remains, pioneer species begin to flourish. Usually quick-growing grasses and weeds are followed by a steady advance of slower-growing, taller species of plants. The first trees to emerge are often small pines, followed by larger pines and finally by hardwood species such as oak and hickory. The succession process begins quickly , but it can take decades or even hundreds of years for a forest ecosystem to move from its early "pioneer" stage to its "climax" stage.

Forests in which fires are regularly suppressed can burn much hotter and more dangerously when a fire finally breaks out. Without fire, large amounts of underbrush will accumulate on the forest floor, certain tree species may not regenerate (oak and pine, for example, need fire to crack their seeds), and the trees that do flourish become densely packed. According to the USDA Forest Service, "Given favorable weather conditions, forest structure, fuel overload, and other factors, the number of wild land fires has been growing, getting larger, and gaining in intensity." In 2004 these conditions contributed to approximately 8 million acres of burning vegetation, an enormous increase when compared to the figure 50 years ago, and largely attributed to decades of "successful" fire suppression techniques.

As urban areas continue to flourish close to forested areas, the dangers also increase for humans along what forest managers term the ‘wild land-urban interface’. It is understandable for people who live near forests and who own forest land to want their property, and their lives, protected from the ravages of fire. Fire management schemes take human risk into account, but there are always tradeoffs. In the past, the focus on suppressing wildfires in order to protect human communities actually contributed to more intense blazes that have put human communities at an even greater risk. Therefore, better management tactics had to be developed. Current forest management tactics attempt to balance what is known about forest health - i.e. fires help maintain ecosystem balance - and the danger of uncontrolled fires to human communities. It is an attempt at balancing the human fear of fire with both economic costs and the needs of the forest ecosystem.

A. **Is the writer in favor of or against the practice of suppressing (preventing) forest fires? Explain in 3-4 sentences.**

—

—

—

—

—

B. During the hot and dry summer season, hardly a day goes by without the mention of a forest fire in the news. Why do forest fires break out, due to natural causes, human activity or both?

In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain the major cause(s) of forest fires.

TASK 6

FLOODS

If you think that floods are natural disasters that happen only in poorer continents like Africa and Asia, then you are wrong. First, not all floods are caused by nature. They are man-made too. And second, even countries like the USA and the UK get floods that cause huge loss of life and property.

One of nature's most turbulent years was 1998. Floods created chaos in North America, South America, Asia and Europe. At first, *El Nino* and *La Nina* were thought to be responsible for these floods. Scientists later found out that these factors combined with global warming made the disasters more severe. Today, deforestation and global warming are cited as two of the main man-made causes that led to such a disastrous year with loss of lives and huge damage.

That very year in China, a flood affected the lives of 250 million people and led to large scale devastation. *El Nino* was cited as the main cause of this flood; however, subsequent analysis revealed that it was brought about by large scale deforestation leading to loose soil.

Other human activities may also lead to floods. Washington D.C. in the US is an example. The rapid urbanization of Washington has led to more concrete surfaces. As these surfaces — roads, houses, office buildings and parking lots — seal the surface of the soil, they do not allow water to seep in, and so floods occur after heavy rains. Another factor causing floods is disabling the natural water storage system through man-made changes in a river basin. Dams or ditches can help contain the water, but they also cut the river off from the floodplain. The floodplain, which is the flat or nearly flat land adjacent to a river, should help to retain some of the floodwater. However, cutting the river off from the floodplain means that this natural storage system is gone and the consequent pressure on the environment leads to floods.

A. How do man-made changes affect nature? How do they lead to floods? Explain in 3-4 sentences giving specific examples.

____

—

____

—

____

—

____

—

____

—

B. Write a paragraph of about 200 words in which you suggest at least two solutions that can be implemented to minimize the occurrence of floods.

TASK 7

YOUTH CYCLING TEAM

Endorphin Fitness, a local youth and adult coaching organization, has joined forces with the *Richmond Pro Cycling Team* to develop the *Youth Cycling Team*. Twenty-three cyclists from ages 8 to 18 years meet once a week to learn skills that teach them how to be better, safer cyclists as well as problem solvers in cycling and in life. Already underway, this 10-week program will lead into a competition period once these young cyclists have learned the techniques for riding efficiently and safely.

So, what's the big deal? Under the management of a professional coaching organization and the leadership of professional athletes, this team is the first of its kind. With cyclists as young as 8 years old, there are some small bikes at practice. Local cycling enthusiast, Jim Mitchell, has built and donated numerous bikes to fit the younger members of the team. This opportunity will provide these young people with a chance to grow in the sport.

Unlike conventional athletic leagues for kids, cycling offers an individual sport in a team environment. Cyclists rely on and develop strategies with teammates for each race they compete in. 17-year-old Grayson Cobb is thrilled to be a member of the team, explaining, "For the past three years I have been training alone and racing alone. Now I finally have a team I can train with. We have fun committing ourselves to a sport that we are all interested in, regardless of experience level." These young athletes will discover their personal spirit and develop personal goals, but they will also recognize that teamwork is not only important, but essential for success.

With professional athletes working with young people, there tends to be a greater connectivity between the coach and the participant. For these young athletes, coaches cease to be authority figures and become valued more as role models and mentors. Not only will these young athletes learn the skills necessary to enjoy a life of cycling, they will also understand the importance of safety in this sport. Who can better teach them that than professional athletes whom these kids look up to and admire? On the other hand, coaching youth will help the athletes become three-dimensional people. They will learn that the term 'professional' is really about global character development.

The most important component of cycling knowledge that the *Richmond Pro Cycling Team* and *Endorphin Fitness* hope to impart is that riding a bike is about having fun. Manager Dodson believes, "Many youth athletic programs put too much emphasis on physiological development. I'd like to have the majority of our interaction focused on the psyche of these young people. If they don't enjoy it, they are not going to stick with it and then our labor is fruitless."

Adapted from: All About Kids Magazine, March 25, 2008

A. According to the writer, both the participants and the coaches will benefit from the program. What are the benefits for both parties? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

—

—

—

—

—

B. Which do you think is better for teenagers, individual sports or team sports? Explain your view in a paragraph of about 200 words, providing reasons that support it.

TASK 8

TAIWAN: EX-PRESIDENT'S CORRUPTION TRIAL BEGINS

By **Natalie Tso, Taiwan**

Taiwan's trial of the century began Thursday as former president Chen Shui-bian showed up to court to face corruption charges that could result in a life sentence. Chen is accused of taking $9 million in personal kickbacks on a state-sanctioned land deal, embezzling over $3 million from a state fund and laundering millions to overseas accounts. Chen has already admitted his wife transferred $20 million in leftover campaign funds to overseas accounts, but he insists his case is one of political persecution by the new Kuomintang administration, which has been establishing closer ties with China since coming into power last May.

After charges against Chen were announced in November, prosecutors held the former leader, now 58, on grounds that he could collude with other suspects in the case if he remained free. As one of the activists that helped bring democracy to Taiwan in the 1980s, Chen insists that the timing of his detention — shortly after a historic visit from a high-ranking Chinese official to Taiwan — expose that Taiwan's authorities have been biased against him. While being held at the Taipei Detention Center, Chen has been drawing public attention to his cause through extended hunger strikes, writing poetry and publishing his memoir. And some, including Chuang Rui-hsiung, a criminal procedure lawyer in Taipei, agree with the former leader's argument. "People should be treated innocent until proven guilty," Chuang says. "They shouldn't treat Chen differently." Chen's loyal supporters also believe that his case has been politicized.

The case, which marks the first time that a former president has been charged with corruption in Taiwan, has been the target of intense media focus for the past several months. The trial has weighed heavily on his wife, son and daughter-in-law, who have all pleaded guilty to money laundering. His wife's trial began last week. Three of an additional eleven suspects in the case have also made confessions in connection with the bribery and embezzlement charges brought against Chen. But Chen himself continues to insist that any funds the family received were political donations, and that the money was transferred overseas by his wife without his knowledge.

In some ways, Chen's trial is a positive sign that the justice system is alive in the Chinese world's sole democracy. But as the figurehead of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, which was founded to build democracy and fight corruption, the family's scandals have brought the party down, and DPP politicians have tried to distance themselves from the scandal — and the man himself.

Indeed, apart from a few loyal supporters, most of Taiwan remains unconvinced of their former leader's innocence. Circumstances surrounding the embezzlement charges make it difficult to believe that the funds in question were only donations. And since several people involved have already admitted to their role in the scandal, it seems hardly possible that the Chen family will be found innocent.

Adapted from: Time, March 26, 2009

A. What is the writer's opinion regarding the innocence of the ex-president? Does she think he is innocent or not? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

____

____

____

____

____

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, describe what a good politician should be like.

TASK 9

MOVING IN WITH MOM AND DAD

Recession leads to more middle-aged boomerangers

By LAURA KOSS-FEDER

Jennifer Bliss was not an iexperienced lawyer when she moved back in with her parents. At 39, she had burned through her retirement funds after losing her law-firm job in July 2007. She gave the bank the keys to the home she was unable to sell, and last November, she packed up her two dogs and moved about 60 miles to live with her mother and stepfather. "This has been awful," says Bliss, who has sent out some 600 résumés nationwide looking for legal work or a managerial position in another field. "I went to law school to have a solid profession so that I wouldn't wind up in a situation like this."

The term *boomerang children* used to refer to young adults moving back in with their parents, but the recession is forcing people in their 30s and 40s and older — often with a spouse and kids in tow — to move in with their parents until they regain their financial footing. Since the recession began in December 2007, the U.S. has lost 3.6 million jobs. An AARP survey released in May found that more than a third of retirees have had to help a child pay bills in the past year. And the number of multigenerational households has increased from 5 million in 2000 to 6.2 million in 2008, according to AARP. Cramped quarters, wounded pride and general anxiety about the global economic crisis are not the ideal conditions that make living together pleasant. But there are ways to ease the transition.

Talk about expectations. And be sure to discuss one another's needs up front, says Brian Carpenter, a psychology professor at Washington University. Failure to do so can lead to a lot of friction. That's what happened when Michael Gallagher, 40, moved in with his mother in Los Angeles in October 2007 after he was downsized from his job as an audio engineer. "When he came home to live, I was thinking 'family,' and he was thinking 'roommate,' " says BJ Gallagher, 59, an author and a video producer. "I would feel bad when he wouldn't say hello when he walked in the door." At the same time, her son felt she was checking up on him and "lurking" around, she says. "We both ended up disappointed and annoyed until we discussed it and dealt with it."

Build in privacy. If possible, everyone should have at least some space of his or her own. For instance, when Michael Gallagher took over the part of his mother's house that she had been using as an office, she moved her computer and video equipment into a much smaller room adjoining her bedroom. "We each needed our own space. There was no way around that," BJ says of the rearranging she did to accommodate her son.

Share household expenses. Pay parents rent, or help with bills, and take over chores like mowing the lawn. "This way, everyone is helping in some way, and no one feels taken advantage of," says Elizabeth Carll, a psychologist in Huntington, who is an expert on dealing with stress. Bliss does all the cooking and cleaning. Michael Gallagher buys his own food, and beyond that, his mother says, he has "paid in trade" by persuading her to have the hip replacement she had needed for a while and by taking care of her postsurgery.

Adapted from: Time, March 2, 2009

A. How does the writer feel about the obligatory trend of middle-aged people moving back in with their parents? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain how losing his/her job may affect a person.

TASK 10

THE JOY OF BOREDOM

Don't check that e-mail. Don't answer that phone. Just sit there. You might be surprised by what happens.

A decade ago, those monotonous minutes were just a fact of life: time ticking away as you looked idly into space, stood in line, or sat in bumper-to-bumper traffic.

Boredom was unavoidable, yet hidden in it were some of life's most precious moments. A long drive home after a frustrating day could bring back cherished childhood memories. A strong feeling of homesickness at the start of a plane ride might put a journey in perspective.

Increasingly, these ‘empty moments’ are being saturated with productivity, communication, and the digital distractions offered by an ever-expanding array of mobile devices. A few years ago, cell phone maker Motorola even began using the word "microboredom" to describe the ever-smaller slices of free time from which new mobile technology offers an escape. "Mobisodes," two-minute long television episodes of everything from "Lost" to "Prison Break" made for the cell phone screen, are perfectly tailored for the microbored. Cell phone games are often designed to last just minutes — simple, snack-sized diversions like Snake, Solitaire and Tetris. Social networks like Twitter and Facebook turn every mundane moment between activities into a chance to broadcast feelings and thoughts; even if it is just to tap a keypad with the words "I am bored."

But are we too busy twirling through the songs on our iPods — while checking e-mail, while changing lanes on the highway — to consider whether we are giving up a good thing? We are most human when we feel dull. Lolling around in a state of restlessness is one of life's greatest luxuries — one not available to creatures that spend all their time pursuing mere survival. To be bored is to stop reacting to the external world and to explore the internal one. It is in these times of reflection that people often discover something new, whether it is a realization about a relationship or a new theory about the way the universe works. Admittedly, many people emerge from boredom feeling that they have accomplished nothing. But is accomplishment really the point of life? There is a strong argument that boredom is an essential human emotion that underlies art, literature, philosophy, science and even love.

As Dr. Hallowell, the author of the book “Crazy Busy”, puts it, "If you think of boredom as the prerequisite to creativity and loneliness as the prelude to engagement of the imagination, then they are good things. They are doorways to something better, as opposed to something to be detested and eradicated immediately."

Adapted from: The Boston Globe, March 9, 2008

A. **What is the value that the writer attributes to the 'empty moments' we used to have and the boredom they brought? Explain in 3-4 sentences.**

____

__

____

__

____

__

____

__

____

__

B. **Is mobile technology - cell phones and iPods - a necessity for the young generation or does it harm them? Explain your view in a paragraph of about 250 words, providing reasons for your argument.**

APPENDIX G

INTRODUCTION

This booklet contains ten writing tasks which aim to prepare you for the writing component of the English Proficiency Exam (EPE). Before you start working on the actual writing task of the EPE, you will be required to read a passage and write a response to the question following it in Part A. The purpose of this task is to assess and evaluate your reading comprehension, as well as your proficiency in expressing your ideas.

This passage in Part A is thematically related to the writing task in Part B, as is the text of the Listening & Note-Taking Component of the exam. The text for the writing task in Part B of the EPE will not lend itself to the borrowing of ideas. You will have to use your world knowledge and choose the relevant pieces of information from your ‘information bank’. Before starting to write, you must organize your ideas carefully and while writing, you should pay attention to the conventions (rules) of academic writing.

Let's remember the points that you should pay attention to while doing the writing task of the EPE by analyzing the following paragraph.

Introduction

The purpose of this particular piece of writing is to present the conventions necessary for academic purposes.

Body

First of all, a paragraph written for an academic purpose displays certain features in terms of organization and content. It develops and supports a single main idea. It presents credible supporting ideas, explanations and examples in a logical order so that it appeals to the reader. As the audience of the paragraph is members of the academic world, it has a formal style. It tries to be as impersonal as possible and refrains from the use of simple, everyday words used in oral communication. It makes use of a variety of carefully chosen vocabulary items appropriate to the topic. Secondly, a paragraph written for academic purposes presents ideas in such a way that its readers can easily follow and understand them. It repeats the key words, makes use of references and synonyms to avoid unnecessary repetition and ensures a smooth transition from one idea to another with the help of connectors. Also, in order not to cause confusion for the reader, it has consistency. It does not shift from one tense to another unnecessarily, or from one body of subject(s) to another. For example, a paragraph which dwells on "how people are affected by being unemployed", mainly uses the present tenses, and the subjects of its sentences can be 'people who are unemployed / unemployed people/people without jobs / such people/ they' or 'a person who doesn't have a job/ a person who is unemployed / such a person / (s)he'. Lastly, a paragraph which is written for an academic purpose is composed of grammatically correct sentences. As well as the correct use of the tense and verb forms, such a paragraph observes subject-verb agreement and parallelism. In addition, it does not contain sentence fragments or run-on sentences. Also, it is correctly punctuated.

Conclusion

To sum up, from its organization to its punctuation, the paragraph is written with great care so that it conveys the message to the reader clearly and accurately.

The paragraph above starts with an introduction in the form of a topic sentence. Then, there is the body, which is composed of three major supporting ideas, each of which is marked by a signal word (First of all, Secondly, Lastly). There are minor supporting ideas following each major support. Thus, the paragraph does not merely list the features, but elaborates on each one to ensure that the reader is satisfied with the information given. The paragraph ends with a conclusion, which gives a very brief summary of the points mentioned. It is marked by the signal ‘To sum up’.

To be successful in the writing component of the EPE, you must fulfill the requirements of academic writing at paragraph level. The paragraph that we have analyzed provides guidelines for these requirements; therefore, it may be a good idea to refer to it while you are doing the writing tasks in this booklet and editing your paragraphs. Keep in mind that the paragraph you will write in the EPE will be graded according to its **content, organization** and **grammar** by at least two different instructors. To convey your message clearly and accurately to these readers, you need to pay attention to all the elements mentioned in the above paragraph.

SAMPLE TASK

FIGHT FOR FATHERS' RIGHTS

A militant new movement is sweeping Britain, generating headlines and sparking protests. The actors of this movement are the 'Angry Dads'. British fathers are increasingly fed up with a system that they see as favoring mothers during custody battles. In 80 percent of cases, children end up living with their mothers after divorce as British law isn't fond of shared parenting, citing the confusion that dual residences can cause a child. And while most cases are settled out of court -allowing parents to arrange their own solutions - British courts have little inclination to penalize parents who do try to prevent visits in quarrelsome cases. The reason is that a judge's only course of action in such circumstances is to fine a mother or throw her in jail - which is rarely, if ever, in the child's interest. "There is much wrong with our system," said one judge after presiding over a case in which a tearful father abandoned his battle to see his daughter after his wife prevented visits for five years. Too many dads find themselves locked in seemingly hopeless legal struggles as they try to exercise their court-ordered visitation rights. "We just want to see our kids," says Matthew O'Connor, founder of Fathers4Justice, a new lobbying group that boasts 10,000 members.

The authorities are starting to listen. Last week the British government issued a paper recommending several reforms, from more extensive government-sponsored professional help to save marriages before divorces hit the courts, to speeding up the process once they do. It also proposes penalties for parents who ignore court decisions. The punishments - ranging from community service to compensation payments - would be less damaging to the child and would allow judges to be more objective (some say less sexist) in their decisions.

Will that satisfy the Angry Dads? Not likely. The government proposal makes no concrete move toward shared parenting. Nor does it address the growing problem of mothers who move with their kids far from a father and his job. When his ex-wife and son moved to Spain, London-based writer Griffin Stone decided that the expensive flights and hotels were too much, so he gave up writing and moved to Barcelona. "I see my son every other weekend now," he says.

Still, change is in the air. There is a growing understanding in Britain that child care is not gender-specific, and that both mothers and fathers have equal roles to play within a family.

Legal experts believe this more-progressive thinking may eventually have an effect on the law and result in a move towards joint parenting in Britain.

Adapted from: Newsweek, August 2, 2004

A. Answer the following question by referring to the text.

Regarding custody rights, whom does the writer take side with, the mother or the father? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

____

____

____

____

A quick skimming of the text might give the impression that the writer takes side with the father. However, a closer look brings out the fact that she believes fathers as well as mothers should be given the custody of their children. This can clearly be seen especially in the concluding paragraph. Therefore, the question can be answered as follows:

The writer takes side neither with the father nor the mother. She sympathizes with fathers who are fighting for their custody rights as they are the suffering ones in this case. However, on the whole, she believes in joint/shared parenting. In other words, she thinks both the mother and the father should be given the right to take care of their children.

B. As stated in the introduction, one purpose of the text given is to activate your world knowledge and help you generate ideas.

A quick brainstorming may bring out the following ideas:

the advantages of being married (emotional security +social acceptance)

the disadvantages of being married (increased responsibilities + limited freedom)

MARRIAGE

the properties of an ideal marriage (love, respect + communication)

the points to consider when choosing a spouse (personality, interests + social status)

possible reasons for divorce

(personality clashes, betrayal + financial problems)

effects on children

(children's psychological state, social+ academic life)

DIVORCE

effects on spouses

(social, psychological+ financial)

custody rights

(should they be given to the mother or father?)

The writing task which is related to the passage you have read may be built on one of the ideas above. Here are a few examples of how the task may be set:

1. **Describe an ideal marriage, elaborating on the factors that make it so.**
2. **Explain the effects of divorce on children.**
3. **Discuss the advantages of being married, explaining how it contributes to/eases one's life.**
4. **Which is preferable, being single or being married? Support your view by taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages that marriage brings into one's life.**
5. **In cases of divorce, who do you think the custody of children should be given to, to the father or the mother? Support your view by providing reasons.**

Whatever the task is, the first step you should follow is to analyze it well and comprehend it accurately so that you can fulfill its requirements. Let's take **the first task**. A paragraph written in response to this task is expected to be a general **description** of the properties of an ideal marriage. Let's see how the paragraph below deals with the task.

An ideal marriage has three important elements. The first element is love. In an ideal marriage, the spouses never stop loving each other. The nature of the love they feel may change, but the love itself does not disappear. The love in an ideal marriage is filled with empathy. In such a marriage, the parties are never deprived of the emotional support they need. Another element found in an ideal marriage is respect. The partners feel and show respect for each other's needs, interests and priorities. They leave each other some personal space and allow one another to be independent to a certain extent. As a result, they don't feel suffocated by the ties and responsibilities of married life. In addition to love and respect, there is continuous communication between the partners, which makes their relationship an ideal one. They talk about their problems with each other and if necessary, fight over them until they find a solution. Thus, contrary to common belief, there may often be arguments in an ideal marriage. Yet, these arguments serve a purpose. They ensure the maintenance of the relationship as they do not allow the problems between the partners to build up. In brief, love, respect and communication between the partners are the essential elements of an ideal marriage.

Topic : properties of an ideal marriage

Topic Sentence : "An ideal marriage has three elements."

Major Support 1 : love

minor supports:

- nature of love may change, but love does not disappear
- not selfish, contains empathy; couples always find the emotional support they need

Major Support 2 : respect

minor supports:

- partners feel & show respect for one another's needs, interests & priorities
- they leave each other personal space & allow one another to be independent to some extent → ties and responsibilities of married life do not suffocate them

Major Support 3 : communication

minor supports:

- partners talk about their problems & if necessary, fight to find solutions, so frequent arguments may exist
- problems do not build up, relationship is maintained

Concluding Sentence : "In brief, love, respect and communication between the partners are the essential elements of an ideal marriage."

2) Explain the effects of divorce on children.

Divorce has some negative effects on children. First of all, these children may develop psychological problems after the divorce of their parents. These problems are mostly related to feelings of insecurity. As children have to live with one of the parents, they may feel that they have been abandoned by the other. Also, divorce may lead to financial difficulties since parents have to run two different homes instead of one, and these difficulties might cause children to feel insecure. In addition, some children may blame themselves for the divorce of their parents. This may cause them to develop feelings of guilt, which may create more serious problems, such as the children harming themselves for punishment. Secondly, the children of broken homes may experience difficulties in their school life. Because of their psychological problems, they may find it difficult to concentrate during lessons. When they do not understand the course subjects well, they are likely to perform badly on exams. As a result, their grades may fall. This may have a detrimental effect on their future academic life as well. To conclude, the divorce of parents may affect children seriously; therefore, parents should get professional advice to help their children if separation is inevitable.

Discourse type: Cause-Effect (effect analysis)

3) Discuss the advantages of being married, explaining how it eases one's life.

Getting married means beginning a new life and requires an adaptation period, but once people get used to this new way of life, they start to enjoy its advantages. To begin with, couples gain social recognition by getting officially married. The law identifies them as one unit and so does society. Having fulfilled one of their social responsibilities, the couple also earns the respect of others. Another advantage that makes a married person's life easier is the emotional security that being married offers. It is comforting to have an ally against all the hardships of life and a companion to share all its pleasures. When they are shared with a loved one, difficulties get easier to handle, and the pleasures derived become greater. The last way in which being married eases one's life is that there is the advantage of combined financial assets against the ever-rising cost of living. It is more economical to run one home with two salaries when monthly expenditures such as rent and electricity and phone bills are taken into consideration. In brief, marriage brings social, emotional and financial conveniences into one's life, so it is an advantage to be married

Discourse type: Description (of advantages)

4) **Which is preferable, being single or being married? Support your view by taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages that marriage brings into one's life.**

To decide whether being single or married is preferable, the disadvantages and advantages need to be taken into consideration. Firstly, marriage limits people's freedom to a certain extent. Married couples cannot just do anything they want whenever they feel like doing it. Single people, on the other hand, are free to schedule their time according to their own needs and wishes. Therefore, a spontaneous social arrangement, such as going out for dinner with friends after work, is possible for a single person, whereas it may create problems for a married one. Furthermore, married people have to take on the responsibilities of a shared life while single adults are usually responsible to and for only themselves. Besides these disadvantages, there are also advantages of a married life over a single one. For instance, marriage provides emotional security as the partners are also good friends who share the difficulties and pleasures of life. Single people may not be as lucky in this respect. Moreover, married couples, with their joint income, are usually better off than single people. For the latter, the rent of a flat and monthly bills may be a heavier burden. To conclude, it is not easy to say which life style is better, so the decision whether to lead a married or a single life should be taken after careful consideration of what one expects from life.

Discourse type: Argumentation (through a comparison of advantages and disadvantages)

Now, *you* write a paragraph in response to task 5. Your paragraph should contain 180-220 words. When you complete your paragraph, read it in terms of its content, organization and grammar to correct your mistakes. Also, count the number of words and write it at the end of your paragraph.

TASK 1

TREATS ARE A TRAP

In the U.S., from late November to mid-January, the average American gains 2-3 kg because of the end-of-the-year parade of holiday pies, cakes, cookies and other treats. This is a problem for all Westerners — especially for children, who are increasingly at risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes.

Candy and other sweets marketed to kids are double health risks. Not only are they packed with calories that tend to get stored as extra kilos, but their high sugar content can also cause blood-glucose levels to increase dramatically, which is a particular concern for diabetics.

Yet the holidays are a minefield we can navigate, doctors and dietitians insist. By enforcing a few simple rules, you and your kids may be able to eat your cake and enjoy it too.

The trick is to manage the intake of sweets. According to experts at the Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston, even children with diabetes can eat candy so long as they make allowances for the extra sugar. For example, if a child packs away a small candy bar, which typically contains about 15 grams of sugar, then she should eat 15 fewer grams of carbohydrate at the next meal — say, two fewer spoons of mashed potatoes.

A more proactive strategy is to make sweets less available, Try replacing candy in holiday goody bags with toys or CDs. At family gatherings, serve healthier treats, such as apples and oranges, or dried fruits, such as banana chips or raisins.

Rationing sugary snacks and desserts can work too, but the key is to work out a quota before the party and stick with it. You can make a deal with your children, for example, that they can take a piece of pie or some ice cream from the dessert table, but not both.

Timing sugar intake is also important. Blood-sugar levels tend to drop in the late afternoon, so an after-school treat won't cause glucose levels to spike as sharply as one eaten before bedtime, and the calories it contains are more likely to be burned off right away.

The best way to keep weight off, of course, is to use the calories as they come in. Organize after-meal games or hikes for both you and your kids. After all, they're not the only ones who tend to overindulge at holiday time.

Adapted from: Time, December 20, 2004

A. How does the writer feel about the weight gain among Americans towards the end of the year? Does she regard it as an insoluble problem? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

She is concerned, but not terribly worried about it. She believes the problem can be solved easily if certain strategies such as rationing or timing sugar intake are followed.

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, describe the requirements of a healthy life.

Healthy eating habits, regular exercise and a positive attitude towards life are the basic requirements of a healthy life. People who attach importance to their health should try to have a balanced diet, which contains nutrients from all food groups in varying quantities. Fresh fruit and vegetables should be one of the main constituents of their diet. Also, they should avoid junk food, cigarettes and alcohol. Another requirement of a healthy life is regular exercise. Fitness exercises that are done three times a week contribute a lot to physical well-being. Alternatively, those who want to have a healthy life could take a 35-minute walk every day, as strongly recommended by doctors. On the other hand, those who enjoy competition can play tennis or volleyball. No matter in what form, regular physical exercise is certain to benefit one's health. Lastly, there is the person's approach to life. It is known that people who have a positive attitude towards life tend to be healthier. As they are inclined to taking things easy, they can naturally protect themselves against stress and negative feelings like anger, which upset one's emotional balance. In short, one can lead a healthy life by eating healthy food, getting regular exercise and adopting a positive attitude towards life; all it takes is determination.

Discourse type: Description

TASK 2

AGING NATURALLY

I recently turned 60. To help celebrate the occasion, friends organized a surprise party: after the festivities, there came a time to reflect, and I came to an uncomfortable conclusion: I am closer to that period in life when my energy and powers will diminish, and I will lose my independence. At age 60, the organs of the body gradually begin to fail, and the first hints of age-related disease begin to appear.

I hardly notice my aging on a day-to-day basis. When I look in the mirror each morning, my face and white beard seem the same as the day before. Yet, in photographs from the 1970s, my beard is completely black. On closer inspection, I notice other changes in my body: more aches and pains, less resilience, less vigor. What is more, my memory may not be quite what it used to be. At the same time, despite the evidence, some part of me feels unchanged. In fact, I feel the same as when I was 6.

Some years ago, I went to my 46th high school reunion. I had not seen most of my classmates since our graduation in 1959. A few were just as I remembered them, hardly changed at all. Others looked so aged that I could barely find points of coincidence with the pictures of them I had in my head. Why the difference? Why are some individuals so outwardly altered by time and others not? Or, in other words, why is there often a discrepancy between chronological age and biological age?

I believe the answer has to do with complex interactions of genetics and environment. I also believe, on the basis of evidence I have reviewed, that we actually have control over some of those factors.

I do not subscribe to the view that aging suddenly overtakes us at some point in life, whether at 60 or some other milestone. I meet researchers, physicians and others, who believe that we are born, grow rapidly to maturity and then coast along on a more or less comfortable plateau until we begin to decline. They call the period of decline *senescence* and consider it distinct and apart from what came before.

I find it more useful to think of aging as a continuous and necessary process of change that begins at birth. Wherever you are on the continuum, it is important to learn how to live in appropriate ways in order to maximize health and happiness. That should be an essential goal for all of us. What is appropriate when you are in your twenties is likely not going to be appropriate in your fifties.

We can mask the outward signs of the process, or try to keep up old routines in spite of it, but we cannot change the fact that we are all moving toward physical change. The best we can do — and it is a lot — is to accept the inevitability of aging and try to adapt to it, to be in the best health we can at any age. To my mind, the denial of aging and the attempt to fight it are counterproductive, a failure to understand and accept an important aspect of our existence. Such attitudes are major obstacles to aging gracefully.

To age gracefully means to let nature take its course while doing everything in our power to delay the onset of age-related disease. Or, in other words, to live as long and as well as possible, then have a rapid decline at the end of life.

Adapted from: Time, October 17, 2005

A. What is the writer's attitude towards ageing? What does he recommend that people do to cope with it? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

<u>He thinks it is a natural process of change that starts at birth. He recommends that people accept the inevitability of ageing and try to adapt to it instead of masking the outward signs of the process or trying to keep up old routines.</u>

B. As far as ageing is concerned, public opinion concentrates on its negative aspects, regarding it as something to be feared. However, careful consideration may bring out its positive sides as well.

In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain your view on whether aging is really something to be feared or not, providing reasons that support your view.

Aging is a natural process, and only those who die young can avoid it. Despite this fact, some people have a negative attitude towards this process. Admittedly, when people grow older, they become more prone to illnesses, and recovering from an illness may take longer. In addition, the physical appearance of people changes as they age, wrinkles and graying hair being the most visible signs. However, not everything about aging can be considered a loss. It replaces what it takes away physically with mental and emotional maturity. For instance, people become wiser as they grow older. Thanks to their life experience, they have improved problem-solving and decision-making skills. Furthermore, they become more tolerant and understanding towards themselves and others because by the time they reach a certain age, they learn that everyone makes mistakes and forgiveness is a virtue. Above all, people appreciate life more as they become older. They come to realize that being healthy and having peace of mind when one is surrounded with loved ones is the essence of life, and the rest is just details which are not worth worrying about. Thus, they derive pleasure from every moment shared with others and spent in good health and peace. In conclusion, if a person is aging, it means he or she is alive and this is something to be happy about, not something to be feared.

Discourse type: Argumentation (through comparison of disadvantages and advantages.

TASK 3

NUCLEAR POWER

Forget Chernobyl. From India to Finland, nuclear energy is making a comeback. But old fears die hard.

In winter, when the temperature regularly falls to -4ºF (-20ºC), the Finnish island of Olkiluoto feels like the edge of the world. Today, the snow is falling so hard that visibility is down to a few meters, and the air is so cold that it's impossible to write with a pen because the ink freezes. But despite these harsh conditions, there is a blizzard of activity on this remote isle, where the French firm Areva and the German giant Siemens have teamed up to build the first new nuclear power plant in western Europe since 1986. Some 1,200 workers are putting the finishing touches to a 203-ft.-high (62-m) concrete cylinder designed to protect the reactor core from the force of a collision with a commercial aircraft. The giant cylinder has another purpose that is equally terrifying to think of: in case of a meltdown, it's intended to shield the outside world from the nuclear danger within.

Atomic energy is the most powerful and potentially destructive force man has discovered, so it's not surprising that a new reactor would be built in a place as remote as Olkiluoto. Over the past 20 years, terrifying images of meltdowns and explosions have led much of the world to call for the phasing out of nuclear plants. After growing by 750% in the '70s, and 140% in the '80s, nuclear generating capacity increased by only 8% in the '90s. But new fears of sky-rocketing oil prices, global warming and an overdependence on unpredictable but energy-rich countries, such as Russia and Iran, have led to reconsideration. Nuclear energy is back from the dead, and Olkiluoto is at the forefront of its rebirth.

A decade ago, Finland, with its cold climate, long distances between cities and energy-intensive industry, began looking for a way to meet its energy needs while trying to reduce greenhouse gases. Coal was cheap but crammed with polluting carbon. Thermal plants fueled by Russian gas seemed unreliable due to Finland's uneasy relationship with its neighbor. Renewable-energy sources like hydropower and wind, though promising, could not meet demand on their own. The debate kept circling back to the only other carbon-free option — nuclear. As Mikko Elo, a former MP who helped secure Finland's 2002 decision to build the new Olkiluoto reactor, recently put it: "If you worry about climate change, there is no other economically or environmentally stable alternative to nuclear power."

That sentiment has quickly gained traction elsewhere in Europe, even in regions that have been strictly antinuclear since the partial meltdown at the Chernobyl nuclear power station in Ukraine 22 years ago. On January 10, the British Secretary of State for Business declared that nuclear power is "safe and secure" and that it's central to the country's goals for cutting greenhouse emissions. In Sweden, which decided even before Chernobyl to phase out nuclear power, an opinion poll released on January 21 showed that almost half of voters now favor the technology. And even in Germany, where atomic fears helped the spread of the nation's green movement, many high-profile politicians, are calling for the country's official opposition to nuclear energy to be overturned.

Outside Europe, the news is even brighter for the nuclear industry: globally, 34 nuclear plants are now being built in places as far as India and Argentina.

In the meantime, back in Olkiluoto, workers are focusing on the challenges of finishing their long-awaited reactor. Nearby, engineers are beginning an assessment of the feasibility of yet another reactor on the island. Amid all the activity, it's still not clear whether this historic project — and the nuclear future it indicates — should be a source of fear or hope.

Adapted from: Time, February 25, 2008

A. **How does the writer feel about the comeback of nuclear power? Does he have a firm stance on the issue? Explain in 3-4 sentences.**

   <u>It seems that the writer has mixed feelings about the comeback of nuclear power. He believes that it is the only alternative to carbon-emitting non-renewable energy sources, yet</u>

he is worried about the risks involved. In other words, he knows that nuclear energy is economical and environmentally friendly. However, he is concerned, as it is extremely dangerous in case of a meltdown.

B. It is becoming more and more difficult to meet the energy needs of the growing world population, and it wouldn't be wrong to say that the globe is on the verge of an energy crisis.

In a paragraph of about 200 words, suggest 2-3 solutions that can be applied on a personal level, by ordinary people, to the problem of the over-use of non-renewable energy sources.

The problem of the over-use of non-renewable energy sources can be solved if ordinary people take a few precautions. One thing people could do to solve this problem is to conserve the energy used for heating by insulating doors and windows during cold months so as to prevent heat loss. Also, it is advisable that people keep the heating on all day at a low temperature rather than turn in off at certain times of the day and then run it at a high temperature. Another solution lies in the area of transportation. Using public transport and car-pooling are simple but effective steps that an ordinary person can take. People could also consider walking or cycling for short distances. When it comes to electricity, moderating consumption is the best action that can be taken on a personal level. If people avoid using electrical appliances unnecessarily, turns off the lights when they are not needed and use energy–efficient light bulbs, a lot of electricity can be conserved. To sum up, by trying not to waste energy in our daily life, ordinary people can help the existing energy sources last longer.

Discourse type: Problem Solution

TASK 4

WHY TAI CHI IS THE PERFECT EXERCISE

It’s easy to tell people to make exercise part of their daily routine. It’s not so easy to tell them what to do. Some folks like to run marathons or climb mountains. But if you would rather care for your body without risking life or limb or increasingly creaky joints, you might consider Tai Chi Chuan, the ancient martial art that looks like a cross between shadow boxing and slow-motion ballet. Tai Chi combines intense mental focus with deliberate, graceful movements that improve strength, agility and — particularly important for the elderly — balance.

Practitioners praise Tai Chi’s spiritual and psychological benefits, but what has attracted the attention of Western scientists lately is what Tai Chi does for the body. In many ways, researchers are just catching up to what tens of millions of people in China and Chinatowns around the rest of the world already know about Tai Chi. Scientists at the Oregon Research Institute in Eugene reported last week that Tai Chi offers the greatest benefit to older men and women who are healthy but relatively inactive. Previous studies have shown that Tai Chi practiced regularly helps reduce falls among healthy seniors. The next step, from a scientific point of view, is to determine whether Tai Chi can help those who are already frail.

There are several styles of Tai Chi, but most of them start with a series of controlled movements, or forms, with names like Grasping the Sparrow’s Tail and Repulse the Monkey. There are many good how-to books to get you started, or you can choose from among the growing number of classes offered at recreational centers and health clubs across the U.S. (These have the added benefit of combining instruction with a chance to meet new people.) Either way, the goal is to move at your own pace. As Tai Chi master Martin Lee puts it, "Pain is no gain."

It can take a few months for the effects to kick in, but when they do, they can act as a gateway to a new lifestyle. Once people start feeling better, they often become more active in their daily life.

Any form of exercise, of course, can do only so much. "For older individuals, Tai Chi will not be the end-all," says William Haskell, an expert in chronic-disease prevention at Stanford University. "But Tai Chi plus walking would be a very good mixture." Younger people probably need more of an aerobic challenge, but they can benefit from Tai Chi's capacity to reduce stress.

The best thing about Tai Chi is that people enjoy it, so they are more likely to stick with it long enough to get some benefit. It helps when something that's good for you is also fun.

Adapted from: Time, August 5, 2002

A. According to the writer, are young people and the elderly alike in terms of the way they benefit from Tai Chi? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

Young people can benefit from Thai Chi's capacity to reduce stress, but actually they need more of an aerobic challenge. The elderly, on the other hand, can benefit from Thai Chi to a greater extent, as it combines intense mental focus with movements that improve strength, agility and above all balance, which is especially important for the elderly,.

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain how physical exercise affects human health, focusing on the psychological, as well as the physical benefits.

Physical exercise has positive effects on human health, both physically and psychologically. People who are involved in regular physical activity are usually in good health for obvious reasons. For one thing, such activity regulates blood circulation and reduces the level of cholesterol as it helps to get rid of the fat stored in the body. Therefore, the likelihood of coronary diseases is minimized. In addition, exercise increases muscle strength, which means there is less burden on the bones. As a result, the risk of bone injuries or backaches is greatly reduced. As well as its benefits for physical health, exercise also improves one's psychological health. When people keep themselves busy with exercise, they can forget about their daily problems and worries. This provides relief and relaxation, which are vital for the mind. Furthermore, physical activity triggers the release of certain hormones, such as endorphins, which are known to create feelings of happiness. Consequently, people do feel good when they get regular exercise. To summarize, physical exercise benefits not only the body but the mind as well, so it is a must for everybody who attaches importance to his/her health.

Discourse type: Cause-Effect (effect analysis)

TASK 5

FOREST FIRES

Forest fires can endanger people and wildlife, and controlling one is expensive, both in terms of manpower and financial cost. Yet, wildfires are a natural occurrence and serve important ecosystem functions. Forest landscapes are dynamic and change in response to variations in climate and to disturbances from natural sources, such as fires caused by lightning strikes. Forests respond to these disturbances through a natural process called succession, a recovery process that occurs in predictable stages and enables forest regeneration.

Many tree species evolve to take advantage of fire, and periodic outbreaks can contribute to overall forest health. Fires move through the forest burning lower branches and clearing dead wood from the forest floor. This starts regeneration by providing ideal growing conditions. It also improves the forest floor as habitat for many species that prefer relatively open spaces to a thick blanket of brush and dead branches. After a fire burns down an area of woodland, “the succession process” begins. Amid the forest remains, pioneer species begin to flourish. Usually quick-growing grasses and weeds are followed by a steady advance of slower-growing, taller species of plants. The first trees to emerge are often small pines, followed by larger pines and finally by hardwood species such as oak and hickory. The succession process begins quickly , but it can take decades or even hundreds of years for a forest ecosystem to move from its early "pioneer" stage to its "climax" stage.

Forests in which fires are regularly suppressed can burn much hotter and more dangerously when a fire finally breaks out. Without fire, large amounts of underbrush will accumulate on the forest floor, certain tree species may not regenerate (oak and pine, for example, need fire to crack their seeds), and the trees that do flourish become densely packed. According to the USDA Forest Service, "Given favorable weather conditions, forest structure, fuel overload, and other factors, the number of wild land fires has been growing, getting larger, and gaining in intensity." In 2004 these conditions contributed to approximately 8 million acres of burning vegetation, an enormous increase when compared to the figure 50 years ago, and largely attributed to decades of "successful" fire suppression techniques.

As urban areas continue to flourish close to forested areas, the dangers also increase for humans along what forest managers term the 'wild land-urban interface'. It is understandable for people who live near forests and who own forest land to want their property, and their lives, protected from the ravages of fire. Fire management schemes take human risk into account, but there are always tradeoffs. In the past, the focus on suppressing wildfires in order to protect human communities actually contributed to more intense blazes that have put human communities at an even greater risk. Therefore, better management tactics had to be developed. Current forest management tactics attempt to balance what is known about forest health - i.e. fires help maintain ecosystem balance - and the danger of uncontrolled fires to human communities. It is an attempt at balancing the human fear of fire with both economic costs and the needs of the forest ecosystem.

A. Is the writer in favor of or against the practice of suppressing (preventing) forest fires? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

<u>The writer is against the practice of suppressing forest fires because they serve important ecosystem functions/they contribute to overall forest health through regeneration/succession. When fires are suppressed, large amounts of underbrush accumulate on the forest floor, certain tree species may not regenerate and the trees that flourish become densely packed. As a result, when a fire eventually breaks out, the forest can burn much hotter and more dangerously.</u>

B. During the hot and dry summer season, hardly a day goes by without the mention of a forest fire in the news. Why do forest fires break out, due to natural causes, human activity or both?

In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain the major cause(s) of forest fires.

Some of the forest fires we hear about in the media occur due to natural causes such as a lightning strike, but mostly, forest fires break out because of human activity. Man causes forest fires either intentionally or accidentally. The major reason for a fire being deliberately caused by man is that space is needed for building or agriculture. For example, forested areas near or around popular tourist resorts may be set on fire so that new hotels can be built. In the same way, the forest near farming land can be burned so that more land for agriculture is obtained. In addition to being started on purpose, forest fires may also break out accidentally because of man's carelessness. For instance, a burning cigarette dropped on the forest floor may cause the dry underbrush to catch fire, and thus a fire may start. Similarly, pieces of broken glass left on the forest floor by picnickers may result in a fire as they concentrate the sun's rays onto the forest floor, causing it to catch fire. In brief, the major cause of forest fires is man's activities. Without his involvement, much fewer fires would occur, which would leave more forests for future generations.

Discourse type: Cause-Effect (cause analysis)

TASK 6

FLOODS

If you think that floods are natural disasters that happen only in poorer continents like Africa and Asia, then you are wrong. First, not all floods are caused by nature. They are man-made too. And second, even countries like the USA and the UK get floods that cause huge loss of life and property.

One of nature's most turbulent years was 1998. Floods created chaos in North America, South America, Asia and Europe. At first, *El Nino* and *La Nina* were thought to be responsible for these floods. Scientists later found out that these factors combined with global warming made the disasters more severe. Today, deforestation and global warming are cited as two of the main man-made causes that led to such a disastrous year with loss of lives and huge damage.

That very year in China, a flood affected the lives of 250 million people and led to large scale devastation. *El Nino* was cited as the main cause of this flood; however, subsequent analysis revealed that it was brought about by large scale deforestation leading to loose soil.

Other human activities may also lead to floods. Washington D.C. in the US is an example. The rapid urbanization of Washington has led to more concrete surfaces. As these surfaces — roads, houses, office buildings and parking lots — seal the surface of the soil, they do not allow water to seep in, and so floods occur after heavy rains. Another factor causing floods is disabling the natural water storage system through man-made changes in a river basin. Dams or ditches can help contain the water, but they also cut the river off from the floodplain. The floodplain, which is the flat or nearly flat land adjacent to a river, should help to retain some of the floodwater. However, cutting the river off from the floodplain means that this natural storage system is gone and the consequent pressure on the environment leads to floods.

A. How do man-made changes affect nature? How do they lead to floods? Explain in 3-4 sentences giving specific examples.

<u>Man-made changes interfere with natural systems and cause disturbances in these systems. As a result, they lead to disasters including floods. For example, the cutting down of trees, deforestation, leads to loose soil, which is not capable of holding rainwater. In the same way, concrete surfaces, which accompany urbanization, seal the surface of the soil and prevent rainwater from seeping in. Thus, floods occur.</u>

B. Write a paragraph of about 200 words in which you suggest at least two solutions that can be implemented to minimize the occurrence of floods.

The occurrence of floods can be minimized by implementing a few solutions. One solution is to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and find cleaner sources of energy. Even with existing technology, it seems that mankind is still a long way from the widespread use of alternative energy sources. All the same, man should try to keep his use of fossil fuels to a minimum. Another factor that causes floods is deforestation. When trees are cut down, there is nothing left to hold the soil together and when soil is washed away by rainwater, there is nothing left to absorb the water. As a result, floods become inevitable. Thus, it seems necessary to minimize deforestation as well if the occurrence of floods is to be minimized. The third solution is to prevent rapid urbanization. In the twenty-first century, when everything is being modernized, it would be unrealistic to suggest trying to reverse the trend. Yet, it is possible to impose controls on urbanization and allow it to happen in an environment-friendly way. Otherwise, in urban areas covered with concrete surfaces, rainwater will continue to be a threat. To sum up, floods are caused by man's activities to a certain extent, and man's controlling his activities would be a wise step towards solving the problem.

Discourse type: Problem Solution

TASK 7

YOUTH CYCLING TEAM

Endorphin Fitness, a local youth and adult coaching organization, has joined forces with the *Richmond Pro Cycling Team* to develop the *Youth Cycling Team*. Twenty-three cyclists from ages 8 to 18 years meet once a week to learn skills that teach them how to be better, safer cyclists as well as problem solvers in cycling and in life. Already underway, this 10-week program will lead into a competition period once these young cyclists have learned the techniques for riding efficiently and safely.

So, what's the big deal? Under the management of a professional coaching organization and the leadership of professional athletes, this team is the first of its kind. With cyclists as young as 8 years old, there are some small bikes at practice. Local cycling enthusiast, Jim Mitchell, has built and donated numerous bikes to fit the younger members of the team. This opportunity will provide these young people with a chance to grow in the sport.

Unlike conventional athletic leagues for kids, cycling offers an individual sport in a team environment. Cyclists rely on and develop strategies with teammates for each race they compete in. 17-year-old Grayson Cobb is thrilled to be a member of the team, explaining, "For the past three years I have been training alone and racing alone. Now I finally have a team I can train with. We have fun committing ourselves to a sport that we are all interested in, regardless of experience level." These young athletes will discover their personal spirit and develop personal goals, but they will also recognize that teamwork is not only important, but essential for success.

With professional athletes working with young people, there tends to be a greater connectivity between the coach and the participant. For these young athletes, coaches cease to be authority figures and become valued more as role models and mentors. Not only will these young athletes learn the skills necessary to enjoy a life of cycling, they will also understand the importance of safety in this sport. Who can better teach them that than professional athletes whom these kids look up to and admire? On the other hand, coaching youth will help the athletes become three-dimensional people. They will learn that the term 'professional' is really about global character development.

The most important component of cycling knowledge that the *Richmond Pro Cycling Team* and *Endorphin Fitness* hope to impart is that riding a bike is about having fun. Manager Dodson believes, "Many youth athletic programs put too much emphasis on physiological development. I'd like to have the majority of our interaction focused on the psyche of these young people. If they don't enjoy it, they are not going to stick with it and then our labor is fruitless."

Adapted from: All about Kids Magazine, March 25, 2008

A. According to the writer, both the participants and the coaches will benefit from the program. What are the benefits for both parties? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

The participants will learn the skills necessary to enjoy a life of cycling and the importance of safety in this sport from professional athletes whom they respect and admire. The coaches, on the other hand, will learn what professionalism really means and become three-dimensional people.

B. Which do you think is better for teenagers, individual sports or team sports? Explain your view in a paragraph of about 200 words, providing reasons that support it.

In order to decide whether doing individual sports or team sports is better for teenagers, it is worthwhile to compare the two forms of sports. In individual sports, athletes train alone. Until they participate in a race or a tournament, they compete with themselves, trying to perfect their performance. When they take part in a competition, they want to be the winner and losing may really hurt them. In other words, individual sports contribute to the development of a competitive spirit and create self-centered individuals. In team sports, on the other hand, athletes train as a group. The members try to compensate for each other's weaknesses, which leads to the development of a strong sense of responsibility. Furthermore, they learn to play for the team, not for themselves because what is important is to be successful as a team, not as an individual. In this way, they acquire team spirit, which helps them a lot both in social and professional life. In conclusion, it is clear that teenagers benefit from team sports to a greater extent; therefore, it is advisable that they be encouraged to take up team sports.

Discourse type: Argumentation (through comparison-contrast)

TASK 8

TAIWAN: EX-PRESIDENT'S CORRUPTION TRIAL BEGINS

By **Natalie Tso/Taiwan**

Taiwan's trial of the century began Thursday as former president Chen Shui-bian showed up to court to face corruption charges that could result in a life sentence. Chen is accused of taking $9 million in personal kickbacks on a state-sanctioned land deal, embezzling over $3 million from a state fund and laundering millions to overseas accounts. Chen has already admitted his wife transferred $20 million in leftover campaign funds to overseas accounts, but he insists his case is one of political persecution by the new Kuomintang administration, which has been establishing closer ties with China since coming into power last May.

After charges against Chen were announced in November, prosecutors held the former leader, now 58, on grounds that he could collude with other suspects in the case if he remained free. As one of the activists that helped bring democracy to Taiwan in the 1980s, Chen insists that the timing of his detention — shortly after a historic visit from a high-ranking Chinese official to Taiwan — expose that Taiwan's authorities have been biased against him. While being held at the Taipei Detention Center, Chen has been drawing public attention to his cause through extended hunger strikes, writing poetry and publishing his memoir. And some, including Chuang Rui-hsiung, a criminal procedure lawyer in Taipei, agree with the former leader's argument. "People should be treated innocent until proven guilty," Chuang says. "They shouldn't treat Chen differently." Chen's loyal supporters also believe that his case has been politicized.

The case, which marks the first time that a former president has been charged with corruption in Taiwan, has been the target of intense media focus for the past several months. The trial has weighed heavily on his wife, son and daughter-in-law, who have all pleaded guilty to money laundering. His wife's trial began last week. Three of an additional eleven suspects in the case have also made confessions in connection with the bribery and embezzlement charges brought against Chen. But Chen himself continues to insist that any funds the family received were political donations, and that the money was transferred overseas by his wife without his knowledge.

In some ways, Chen's trial is a positive sign that the justice system is alive in the Chinese world's sole democracy. But as the figurehead of the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, which was founded to build democracy and fight corruption, the family's scandals have brought the party down, and DPP politicians have tried to distance themselves from the scandal — and the man himself.

Indeed, apart from a few loyal supporters, most of Taiwan remains unconvinced of their former leader's innocence. Circumstances surrounding the embezzlement charges make it difficult to believe that the funds in question were only donations. And since several people involved have already admitted to their role in the scandal, it seems hardly possible that the Chen family will be found innocent.

Adapted from: Time, March 26, 2009

A. What is the writer's opinion regarding the innocence of the ex-president? Does she think he is innocent or not? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

The writer doesn't think that the ex-president is innocent. Although she uses a neutral language when she reports the Chen case and what he is charged with, her final remarks reveal her opinion quite clearly.

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, describe what a good politician should be like.

A good politician should have several qualities. The first and the most important quality that politicians must have is honesty and trustworthiness. What they do and how they live should be compatible with what they say. They should place the interests of their society before their own and use the political power in their hands for the good of their people, not for their own benefit. Another requirement of being a good politician is treating oneself as an ordinary citizen. Politicians should not be privileged people living in their ivory towers, isolated from their society. On the contrary, they should live simple lives among their own people and see the world from their perspective. Only then can they do their part in making their country a better place to live in. The last requirement of being a good politician is being knowledgeable in the field of politics, which can be achieved through education and improved through experience. Therefore, it is perhaps much easier to fulfill in comparison with the first two. To sum up, an honest politician who doesn't isolate himself from the public and is knowledgeable in his field deserves to be described as a good politician.

Discourse type: Description

TASK 9

MOVING IN WITH MOM AND DAD

Recession leads to more middle-aged boomerangers

By **LAURA KOSS-FEDER**

Jennifer Bliss was not an inexperienced lawyer when she moved back in with her parents. At 39, she had burned through her retirement funds after losing her law-firm job in July 2007. She gave the bank the keys to the home she was unable to sell, and last November, she packed up her two dogs and moved about 60 miles to live with her mother and stepfather. "This has been awful," says Bliss, who has sent out some 600 résumés nationwide looking for legal work or a managerial position in another field. "I went to law school to have a solid profession so that I wouldn't wind up in a situation like this."

The term *boomerang children* used to refer to young adults moving back in with their parents, but the recession is forcing people in their 30s and 40s and older — often with a spouse and kids in tow — to move in with their parents until they regain their financial footing. Since the recession began in December 2007, the U.S. has lost 3.6 million jobs. An AARP survey released in May found that more than a third of retirees have had to help a child pay bills in the past year. And the number of multigenerational households has increased from 5 million in 2000 to 6.2 million in 2008, according to AARP. Cramped quarters, wounded pride and general anxiety about the global economic crisis are not the ideal conditions that make living together pleasant. But there are ways to ease the transition.

Talk about expectations. And be sure to discuss one another's needs up front, says Brian Carpenter, a psychology professor at Washington University. Failure to do so can lead to a lot of friction. That's what happened when Michael Gallagher, 40, moved in with his mother in Los Angeles in October 2007 after he was fired from his job as an audio engineer. "When he came home to live, I was thinking 'family,' and he was thinking 'roommate,' " says BJ Gallagher, 59, an author and a video producer."I would feel bad when he wouldn't say hello when he walked in the door." At the same time, her son felt she was checking up on him and 'lurking' around, she says. "We both ended up disappointed and annoyed until we discussed it and dealt with it."

Build in privacy. If possible, everyone should have at least some space of his or her own. For instance, when Michael Gallagher took over the part of his mother's house that she had been using as an office, she moved her computer and video equipment into a much smaller room adjoining her bedroom. "We each needed our own space. There was no way around that," BJ says of the rearranging she did to accommodate her son.

Share household expenses. Pay parents rent, or help with bills, and take over chores like mowing the lawn. "This way, everyone is helping in some way, and no one feels taken advantage of," says Elizabeth Carll, a psychologist in Huntington, who is an expert on dealing with stress. Bliss does all the cooking and cleaning. Michael Gallagher buys his own food, and beyond that, his mother says, he has 'paid in trade' by persuading her to have the hip replacement she had needed for a while and by taking care of her post surgery.

Adapted from: Time, March 2, 2009

A. How does the writer feel about the obligatory trend of middle-aged people moving back in with their parents? Explain in 2-3 sentences.

She thinks it is difficult for both 'the child' and the parents and she puts it as: "Cramped quarters, wounded pride and general anxiety about the global economic crisis are not the ideal conditions that make living together pleasant." All the same, she believes, by talking about expectations, building in privacy and sharing household expenses, the transition can be eased.

B. In a paragraph of about 200 words, explain how losing his/her job may affect a person.

Losing one's job may affect a person in several ways. First of all, there are financial difficulties that await. Everything from buying food to paying the rent becomes a problem and if the person who loses his/her job is the sole bread-winner of the family, the whole family suffers. This leads to the second effect, which can simply be put as depression. When people lose their jobs, they can hardly look after themselves, let alone the ones who depend on them. This fills them with feelings of resentment and uselessness, and it becomes difficult for them to stand up again and try to make a new start. It is this kind of helplessness that causes some people without jobs to commit suicide. Whereas some direct their anger to themselves, some may direct it to others and here comes another possible effect of being jobless: aggressiveness. In this case, people may harm others, especially the ones they love most, and may even turn to crime. In brief, losing his/her job is one of the most unfortunate things that may happen to a person, and it is not easy to cope with it.

Discourse Type: Cause-Effect (Effect Analysis)

TASK 10

THE JOY OF BOREDOM

Don't check that e-mail. Don't answer that phone. Just sit there. You might be surprised by what happens.

A decade ago, those monotonous minutes were just a fact of life: time ticking away as you looked idly into space, stood in line, or sat in bumper-to-bumper traffic.

Boredom was unavoidable, yet hidden in it were some of life's most precious moments. A long drive home after a frustrating day could bring back cherished childhood memories. A strong feeling of homesickness at the start of a plane ride might put a journey in perspective.

Increasingly, these ‘empty moments’ are being saturated with productivity, communication, and the digital distractions offered by an ever-expanding array of mobile devices. A few years ago, cell phone maker Motorola even began using the word "microboredom" to describe the ever-smaller slices of free time from which new mobile technology offers an escape. "Mobisodes," two-minute long television episodes of everything from "Lost" to "Prison Break" made for the cell phone screen, are perfectly tailored for the microbored. Cell phone games are often designed to last just minutes — simple, snack-sized diversions like Snake, Solitaire and Tetris. Social networks like Twitter and Facebook turn every mundane moment between activities into a chance to broadcast feelings and thoughts; even if it is just to tap a keypad with the words "I am bored."

But are we too busy twirling through the songs on our iPods — while checking e-mail, while changing lanes on the highway — to consider whether we are giving up a good thing? We are most human when we feel dull. Lolling around in a state of restlessness is one of life's greatest luxuries — one not available to creatures that spend all their time pursuing mere survival. To be bored is to stop reacting to the external world and to explore the internal one. It is in these times of reflection that people often discover something new, whether it is a realization about a relationship or a new theory about the way the universe works. Admittedly, many people emerge from boredom feeling that they have accomplished nothing. But is accomplishment really the point of life? There is a strong argument that boredom is an essential human emotion that underlies art, literature, philosophy, science and even love.

As Dr. Hallowell, the author of the book “Crazy Busy”, puts it, "If you think of boredom as the prerequisite to creativity and loneliness as the prelude to engagement of the imagination, then they are good things. They are doorways to something better, as opposed to something to be detested and eradicated immediately."

Adapted from: The Boston Globe, March 9, 2008

A. What is the value that the writer attributes to the 'empty moments' we used to have and the boredom they brought? Explain in 3-4 sentences.

According to the writer, with the boredom they brought, empty moments were some of life's most precious moments. It was in those moments that people stopped reacting to the external world and started to explore their internal world, which led to new discoveries.

B. Is mobile technology — cell phones and iPods — a necessity for the young generation or does it harm them? Explain your view in a paragraph of about 250 words, providing reasons for your argument.

Mobile technology, cell phones and iPods are not a necessity when their harms are considered. First of all, looking at their current state of use by the young generation, they are being used inappropriately and excessively. It is a fact that cell phones emit electromagnetic waves and may cause health problems, the slightest being headaches when they are overused. In the same way, when they are used excessively, iPods may lead to hearing problems because young people usually turn them up to the highest volume, and it has been scientifically proven that prolonged exposure to loud noise results in hearing loss. More importantly, by using mobile technology even when they are not mobile, youngsters are wasting their precious time, which they should be using more productively. Instead of playing a game on the cell phone or listening to music lazily on the iPod, young people should be involved in more creative activities, such as reading and participating in social and cultural events to improve themselves, because they are the ones who are going to build the future. To conclude, mobile technology is not an absolute necessity for young people; they could be healthier and more productive without its interference.

Discourse type; Argumentation (through cause-effect analysis)

APPENDIX H

Chunks: Hedges/ Emphatic expressions employed by TR Non-native Speakers

The opponents of the issue claim that..

Although people who are against children learn a foreign language believe that..

Although proponents claim that..

People who are against the proposal assert that..

Although it is claimed that..

Although some people believe that..

Although many people think that..

Although proponents say that..

Although the defenders of this idea believe that..

Those who do not favor this proposal (might) argue that..

Some interest groups claim that..

The opponents of the issue/this proposal (may) claim that..

Those who are against this proposal would claim that..

Those who are against this idea point out that..

Proponents of this view assert that..

Some people think that..

Some people say that..

Someone may say that..

Some researchers argue that..

They seem to ignore the fact that..

It is claimed that..

Despite the arguments, some people believe that..

I (strongly) believe that..

I am in favor of the fact that

This indicates that..

It goes without saying that..

It is essential that

It is (very) important that

It is vital that..

It is necessary that..

It is crucial that..

It is advisable that..

...due to the fact that..

...because of the fact that..

..owing to the fact that..