

Identifying Writing Errors Made by Primary School Students in Different Writing Genres: A Case Study ¹

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the writing errors made by primary school students in different text types in Turkish lessons. Research was conducted at all grade levels of a primary school in Harran, Şanlıurfa in the 2021–2022 academic year 2021–2022. Data were collected through written documents obtained from 90 students in the form of written text, 116 students in the form of dictation, 71 students in the form of free written text, and 81 students in the form of writing based on comprehension, a writing error evaluation form, and a semi-structured interview form from 8 teachers. The data were analyzed using descriptive analysis. Because of the research, it was observed that students mostly had difficulty in free writing and writing texts based on comprehension in Turkish lessons compared with other writing genres at all grade levels. In the problems related to writing errors, writing of letters with extensions and confusing similar letters were observed in the first grade, not paying attention to the lines and indentation in the second grade, not leaving appropriate spaces between words and sentences in the third grade, and spelling and punctuation errors in general in the fourth grade. Teachers' opinions on the errors made in text types, what kind of errors were made at the grade level, and how to eliminate these errors were shared. Teachers generally stated that students could make writing mistakes in all text types and that they had more difficulty in free writing and comprehension-based writing at all grade levels. Because of the study, it was recommended that students should perform regular writing activities to address writing errors, increase family support to overcome writing difficulties, popularize writing activities, and use writing activities such as keeping a diary.

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Keywords:²

Turkish lesson, writing skills, writing errors.

Introduction

Language allows people to reflect information, thoughts, and actions on each other, organize their ideas, and express their feelings. Most of our cultural values and knowledge are transmitted from generation to generation in written and oral form. People learn much more through language than they learn directly through their own experiences (Güleç & Geçgel, 2012). The development of language skills is among the primary objectives of the education programs of each country. This is because language skills are one of the most important tools for effective communication, which is needed in all areas of life and everywhere (Kaplan, 1992). In primary school, which is the first step of basic education, the aim to provide students with language skills in Turkish lessons. These language skills are reading, listening, writing, and speaking.

Reading and writing skills in Turkish classes constitute the basis of education. Reading and writing are activities that we usually think of together. Writing is often perceived as an action that comes after reading and complements it. Reading is seen as the main activity and writing as the activity that can be achieved after reading. However, the first thing discovered in the foundation of humanity is writing (Kırmızı, 2016). Writing is an important skill that positively affects thinking as well as speaking, reading, and listening. Therefore, writing constitutes one of the most important concepts of human life. Thus, people should acquire this skill to sustain their daily lives, express themselves, and improve themselves (Güneş, 2019). At the primary school level, in which the foundation of writing skills is laid, students' writing is aimed at being correct and beautiful in terms of shape, form, and order. Writing is also a skill that increase students academic success and that the individual will use throughout his/her

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life. Therefore, improving writing can positively affect cognitive, social development, and academic success (Göçer, 2019).

Writing is the last skill to be learned after the acquisition of reading skills in formal education (Bulut, 2017). Acquiring writing skills is necessary for individuals to meet their needs in daily life, to continue their education, to understand and get along with people, and to be able to read the literary works of their mother tongue. Therefore, it becomes clear how necessary writing skills are for humans and society (Erbilen, 2021). Since human beings are social beings, they always need to share what they feel, see, think, and experience, and they want to respond to this need through writing (Bulut & Serin, 2020). Therefore, it is critical for students to acquire writing skills. The general objectives of writing instruction are to enable students to express and summarize their feelings, thoughts, and impressions with clear, legible, and beautiful writing skills (Çelenk, 2019). Writing skills teach students to express themselves in writing and to use the rules and meaning features of language correctly and effectively (Can, 2018).

For the writing to be legible and written fast, there are some factors in writing, and these factors directly affect the writing. These factors include sitting position, pen holding, paper position, child's sitting position, muscle development, writing direction, hand preference, spaces, letters, writing tools, writing speed, and line tracking (Coşkun, 2019). In the first semester of primary school, it is aimed to provide students with the ability to write in accordance with the rules and shapes. However, if a child cannot write the letters correctly, does not position his/her hand correctly on the desk while writing, cannot hold the pen correctly with his/her fingers, writes too fast or too slow, cannot be clean on the page, shows irregular writing, and cannot follow the line, he/she cannot demonstrate legible writing in classroom writing activities (Akyol, 2020, p.73-74). A number of writing errors are observed in the writing works of students who experience these cases. Yılmaz (2012), defines writing errors as, "Adding, skipping, mixing, dividing, distorting, connecting letters incorrectly, writing incorrectly, not paying attention to punctuation marks, merging, incorrect placement, slow writing, illegible writing, irregular writing, reverse writing, and not ensuring the integrity of meaning". Insertion error is writing letters, syllables, words, and sentences that are not in the text. An omission error is the omission of some parts of the text because of haste or carelessness in writing. Confusion error is the writing of similar letters instead of the letters that should be written in the text. Splitting error is the division of words that do not fit at the end of the line from the wrong place. A distortion error is the incorrect writing of letter forms. A misplacement error is the incorrect positioning of the script on the paper.

In addition to the various features of the texts included in textbooks, their types have an important place in education. Text types include narrative texts, informative texts, and poems. Narrative texts are those in which the author fictionalizes life and language. A direct identity relationship cannot be established between the meanings expressed in these texts and the concrete facts of real life. Informative texts take their source from the real world and not from the world of imagination. Special attention is paid not to distort the real life and experiences reflected in the text. Truth, reality, and objectivity are emphasized. Poetry, according to the Turkish Language Institute (TDK) Dictionary (2005), is a form of literary expression characterized by rich symbols, rhythmic words, and the harmonious use of sounds. According to Aksan (2006, p. 8), poetry is a product of verbal art that is original in terms of content, essence, transformation into words and presentation, and that is intended to affect and move, and has the quality of creation.

Examining the literature, it has been observed that most studies on writing are related to reading and writing in the primary literacy process. According to Tok and Ünlü (2014), writing skills are not sufficiently emphasized in terms of the education system and practices, and writing problems continue. Baş and Şahin (2013), stated that according to the findings obtained from the research, the written expression skills of primary school students cannot reach the level targeted in the programs. At the same time, it has been noticed that issues such as determining writing errors and developing suggestions for eliminating errors are emphasized. Within the scope of writing errors, in the study conducted by Kasa Aytan and Ekmekçi (2021), in which the writing errors of 1st and 2nd grade students were determined during the Covid 19 Pandemic, it was seen that students made letter errors, word

errors, spelling and punctuation errors, and writing and page layout errors. It was concluded that 1st and 2nd grade students mostly made the error of capitalizing the size of the letter in letter errors; 1st grade students mostly confused the letter in word errors, 2nd grade students mostly capitalized the letter in proper nouns; 1st and 2nd grade students mostly made capitalization errors at the beginning of sentences in spelling and punctuation errors; and in writing and page layout errors, the space between words was not appropriate. Examining the studies on writing skills in the literature (Akyol & Çetinkaya Özdemir, 2018; Alkan, 2021; Batur & Özdil, 2018; Demircioğlu, 2014; Erdoğan, 2012; Erdoğan, Aydın, & Cankaytar, 2018; Gök & Baş, 2020; Göksu, 2016; Gülay & Uzuner, 2017; Karataş, 2019; Kodan, 2016; Kurtlu & Korucu, 2015; Memiş & Harmankaya, 2012; Şahin, 2012; Şahin & Çakır, 2018; Ulu, 2021; Ünlü & Tok, 2014), it can be observed that the studies conducted in primary schools mostly focused on the literacy process of students. The legibility of students' vertical basic writing, elimination of writing difficulties, problems in italic writing, and factors affecting writing were emphasized.

This study, which aims to determine the writing errors made by primary school students in different text types, will affect the writing skills of students on different texts in Turkish lessons. In addition, it is also very important in the context of being a study to determine what mistakes students make based on the text types. In addition to the limited number of studies on determining writing errors on different texts in the literature, no study has been found on writing errors made at different grade levels in primary schools.

This study was conducted to determine the writing errors made by primary school students in different text types in Turkish lessons. For this purpose, answers the following questions were sought:

1. What are the writing errors made by primary school students in dictated writing, writing by looking, writing what they comprehend from the text they read, and free writing types considering different grade levels?
2. What are the opinions of teachers about the writing errors made by primary school students and their suggestions for eliminating them?

Method

Research Model

In this study, a qualitative research method was used. Qualitative research can be defined as a research method in which qualitative data collection techniques such as observation, interview, and document analysis are used, and events and phenomena are addressed from a realistic and holistic perspective in their natural environment (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016, p.41). In this research, a case study was preferred to determine the existing situation (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Permissions were obtained from the Anadolu University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee, and data were collected through dictation, writing by looking, free writing, and comprehension-based writing.

This study was conducted with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade students and their classroom teachers in a primary school in Harran district center of Şanlıurfa province in the 2021–2022 academic year 2021–2022. Eight classroom teachers in the school were included in the study. Criterion sampling, one of the purposive sampling types, was used to determine the study participants. The participants consisted of 180 primary school students studying in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades in Harran district center. The research was conducted with 366 datasets collected from these students. The research was conducted by having 77 students do free writing activities, 81 students do comprehension writing activities, 116 students do dictation writing activities, and 88 students do writing by looking. Since the activities were conducted on different days, the number of students participating in the study varied in terms of text types due to factors such as the number of students participating in the study, the student's not attending school on the day of the writing activity, and health status. Details about the characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Information on the characteristics of the students

Student Characteristics		n			
Writing Types	Writing by Looking	Writing from Dictation	Free Writing	Comprehension-based writing	
Grade	Grade 1.	12	31	17	18
	Grade 2.	19	17	17	17
	Grade 3.	25	36	9	12
	Grade 4.	34	32	32	34
Gender	Female	50	65	35	36
	Male	38	52	40	39
Total					366 Data

As can be seen in Table 1, when the participants of the study are analyzed in terms of grade level, it is seen that 90 students participated in the writing by looking text type, 116 students participated in the writing from dictation, 71 students participated in the free writing, and 81 students participated in the comprehension-based writing. As for gender in Table 1, 50 female and 38 male students participated in the writing by looking text type, 65 female and 52 male students participated in the writing from dictation, 33 female and 40 male students participated in the free writing, and 36 female and 39 male students participated in the comprehension-based writing.

Data Collection Tool

The writing error evaluation form, teacher interview form, and four different texts were used as data collection tools. The texts dictated to the students were as follows: In Grade 1, the text "Snowball" was chosen as the dictation text; in Grade 2, the text "Crow and Sheep" was chosen as the dictation text; in Grade 3, the text "Little Boy" was chosen as the dictation text; and in Grade 4, the text "What Happened to the Pink Bird?" was chosen as the dictation text. In the genre of writing an opinion on a subject, "Love of Books" was chosen as the common text in all classes. In the genre of writing by looking, the text "Sports and Nutrition" was chosen as the common text in all classes. The text "Is There Something to Laugh About?" was selected as a reading comprehension text in Grades 1 and 2. In Grades 3 and 4, The Adventure of a Snowflake was selected. The texts selected in accordance with the grade levels were narrative, informative, and poetry. The selected text types are those included in the Ministry of National Education (MoNE)-approved textbooks. The texts to be dictated to the students were selected on the basis of their suitability to the level of the students and being interesting by taking expert opinion. While selecting the texts, the number of sentences and words and their attractiveness to the students were considered. Expert opinions were taken from the academic staff at the university, classroom teachers in the area where the research was conducted, and people working in the field of Turkish education. Four field experts in the basic education department and two classroom teachers working in the MoNE were consulted. The time for the texts to be written by the students was planned with the classroom teachers. The texts were written in Turkish for two weeks.

The texts written by the students were coded, and the findings were presented using these codes. The text of writing by looking was coded as B1, B2, B3, etc. The dictation text was coded as D1, D2, D3, etc. The comprehension text was coded as A1, A2, A3, etc. Free writing text was coded as S1, S2, S3, etc. In this way, each student participating in the study was given codes depending on the grade level and text type.

Written and verbal permission was obtained from Assoc. Prof. Dr. Başak Kasa Ayten and Sema Ekmekçi, who developed the writing error evaluation form before its implementation. The writing errors of the students were analyzed at 4 levels in this evaluation form. These are the letter level, word level, handwriting and page layout level, and spelling and punctuation level.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers of the classes (eight teachers) to obtain their opinions on the writing errors made by the students. The semi-structured interview form consisted of pre-prepared questions. In case of unclear questions or unexpected problems during the

interview process, the questions were reorganized and directed to the participants. The participants were 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade teachers, with two teachers from each grade level. The teacher opinions stated in the findings are presented with code names. The teachers were informed about the research to be conducted at the beginning of the interview, and they were asked whether they had any questions or anything they wanted to say. In this way, the teachers aimed to feel comfortable. After answering the interview questions, the teachers answered the interview questions.

Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis technique was used to analyze the data in the study. Data collected in the research were interpreted according to predetermined themes in the descriptive analysis. The data obtained from the interviewed or observed participants are conveyed through direct quotations (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2016). In this study, data were collected using the writing error evaluation form, interview questions, and texts written by the students. Written responses to the interview questions were collected from the teachers. After the data collection process, each data point was analyzed in detail, and then descriptive analysis was conducted. To increase the validity of the study, expert review, detailed description, direct quotations, and triangulation methods were used. To ensure the internal validity of the research, various data collection tools were used in the data collection, and data were collected on different days and hours. To ensure the external validity of the research, participants were selected through purposive sampling, and the data collected in the research were written in the findings in detail. To increase the reliability of the research, the data were processed systematically and in detail while transforming the data into findings. Tables related to the data and visuals of texts written by the students were included in the transformation of the data into findings. After the data collection process, expert opinions were obtained and the findings were categorized into themes based on consensus. The researchers worked in coordination throughout the research process, and the opinions and suggestions of the supervisor were taken throughout the research.

Findings

The findings obtained within the scope of the research are presented together considering the distribution of writing errors made by students regarding different text types and different grade levels, sample texts with examples of errors made at different levels, and the opinions and suggestions of classroom teachers regarding the writing errors made by their students, taking the integrity of the data into consideration.

Findings on Writing Errors and Teachers' Opinions in Terms of Text Types and Grade Levels

In accordance with the first aim of the study, the writing errors made by primary school students in terms of text types were identified. Based on this main purpose, the errors made by primary school students studying in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades regarding letter, word, spelling, punctuation, writing, and page layout in the text types of writing by looking, free writing, writing by dictation, and comprehension-based writing, and the frequency levels of these errors are presented in Table 2. In addition, text samples related to the types of errors made by students at different grade levels and text types are also given below.

Table 2. Findings on Writing Errors of Students in Terms of Text Type and Grade Level

Theme	Category	f															
		Writing by Looking				Writing by Dictation				Free Writing				Comprehension-based writing			
		1 st GR	2 nd GR	3 rd GR	4 th GR	1 st GR	2 nd GR	3 rd GR	4 th GR	1 st GR	2 nd GR	3 rd GR	4 th GR	1 st GR	2 nd GR	3 rd GR	4 th GR
Letter Errors																	
Inline a letter with an extension below the line	8	18	20	24	23	16	29	26	17	16	6	26	14	15	10	30	
Writing the size of the letter large or small	10	18	18	21	20	16	30	22	17	15	5	24	15	15	10	28	
Leave a space in the shape of the letter	3	5	6	9	2	9	15	10	3	4	1	15	8	6	3	16	
Writing the letter form in reverse	7	15	18	21	23	16	29	26	16	14	4	26	15	14	9	28	
Missing letter extensions	8	18	20	24	23	16	29	26	17	16	5	23	15	15	10	30	
Word Errors																	
Adding a letter	0	3	8	5	3	3	11	0	2	4	1	3	3	7	1	4	
Letter removal	4	11	14	15	22	11	19	22	14	12	6	18	10	12	8	21	
Change the place of the letters	4	10	11	16	17	13	15	18	6	7	3	14	9	10	7	20	
Letter confusion	3	8	9	10	15	7	10	15	6	7	2	15	8	8	2	18	
Syllable errors	1	12	13	16	3	5	6	1	2	5	1	0	1	6	0	1	
Syllable removal	1	9	8	12	11	18	11	17	13	7	4	15	7	10	5	18	
Word skipping	1	11	9	12	14	11	10	14	9	5	1	1	2	9	5	20	
Word repetition	1	2	6	2	4	5	6	3	5	5	1	1	2	6	0	1	
Writing the word incorrectly	4	10	11	16	17	13	15	18	12	10	8	17	9	10	7	20	
Capitalization error in the proper name	8	14	18	16	9	13	27	20	10	15	4	25	8	11	10	26	
Capitalization error at the beginning of a sentence	4	16	16	14	19	13	20	21	11	15	3	21	14	11	10	27	
Capitalization error in the title	1	7	6	7	13	13	27	11	8	15	6	21	7	16	9	17	
Writing the question suffix contiguous	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
Spelling and punctuation errors																	
Full stop	6	16	16	14	20	12	11	23	13	16	4	25	14	13	11	27	
Comma	10	18	23	20	18	15	13	27	7	16	9	29	17	14	12	31	
Exclamation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	
The question mark	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	24	18	14	*	3	
Apostrophe	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	25	3	*	*	2	
Em dash	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	*	*	
Hyphen	11	19	22	28	17	16	*	28	17	17	9	31	17	17	12	33	
Text and page layout errors																	
No space between letters	3	5	6	9	2	9	15	10	3	4	1	15	8	6	3	16	
Inappropriate spacing between words	7	17	16	18	22	12	29	10	13	15	5	26	13	15	9	22	
Not centering the title on page	4	7	6	7	7	7	17	15	6	12	4	14	10	10	4	10	
Not starting the paragraph from the appropriate place	9	18	24	28	31	15	29	27	17	18	9	32	18	16	12	32	

Examining Table 2, it can be seen that the most common error made by primary school students in the letter category was not writing the extension of the letters with extensions correctly, and the least error was in the form of vertical basic letters. Regarding the word category, it was observed that primary school students made the highest number of mistakes by leaving missing letters in words and the lowest number of mistakes by using excess letters in words. In the spelling and punctuation category, primary school students made the highest number of errors in the use of the hyphen and the least number of errors in the appropriate positioning of the title. In the category of writing and page layout, it was observed that primary school students made the highest number of errors in page layout and cleanliness and the lowest number of errors in writing by paying attention to indentation. In Grade 1, the most common errors in the text type of writing by looking were not writing the size of the letter appropriately and the use of punctuation marks. In Grade 2, the most common errors were made in not writing letters with extensions in the line, in the size of the letter, and in punctuation marks. In Grade 3, errors such as not starting the paragraph from the appropriate place, not writing the letters with extensions, and extensions inline were made. In Grade 4, the most common errors were made in the use of punctuation marks.

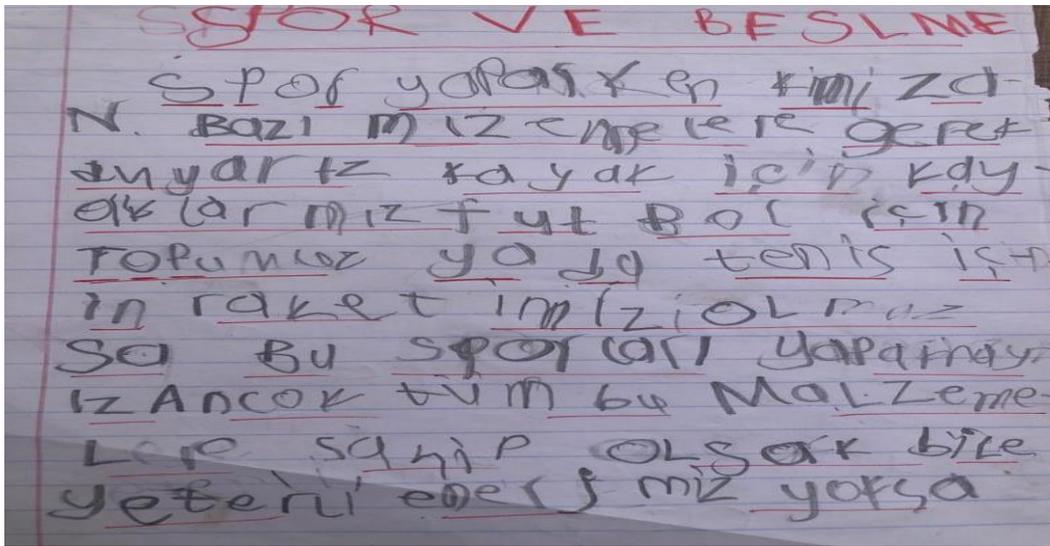


Image 1. Spelling errors made by 1st grade student B2 in the writing by looking activity

Examining Image 1, it can be seen that the student did not write the letters in accordance with their shape at the letter level, the letters were not in the required size, and the letters with extensions and affixes were written incorrectly in the 1st grade looking and writing activity. At the word level, the students wrote words with missing letters and syllables. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student positioned the title appropriately, capitalized it, and left missing letters in the word. The student did not pay attention to capital letters and instead used capital letters in the sentences. He/she did not use punctuation marks where necessary. The student used the hyphen incorrectly. He/she wrote without paying attention to the lines in the writing or page layout. There is no appropriate space between the letters. It was observed that he/she wrote words by separating them from their syllables. In this regard, although teachers mostly say that writing errors are less common in writing by looking activities, it is seen that students make errors similar to other text types. Teacher Ahmet said, "In writing by looking at texts, students have less difficulty than other types of texts because they see the correct word, the use of punctuation marks, and the correct form of letters, but it can also be seen that students cannot adjust the font size when writing the text on their own page." Teacher Kübra commented on writing by looking activities as, "Students generally do not make mistakes because they write by seeing the shape and form of the letters and proper and correct use of spelling/punctuation marks while doing writing by looking activities."

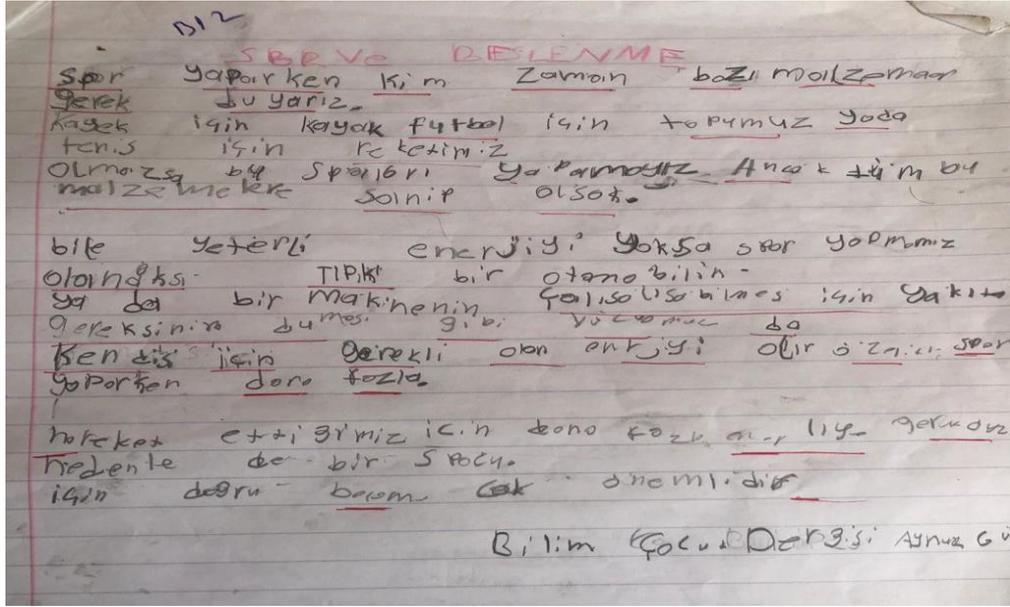


Image 2. Spelling errors made by 3rd grade student B12 in the writing by looking activity

When Image 2 is examined, it can be seen that the student did not write the letters in accordance with their shape at the letter level, made mistakes in the size of the letters, mixed similar letters, and wrote the letters with extensions and affixes incorrectly in the writing by looking activity in the 3rd grade. At the word level, the student missed letters and syllables in the word. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student only used the full stop, but it can be seen that the usage areas were incorrect. The student positioned the title appropriately, but wrote the title with missing letters in the word and did not capitalize the beginning of the sentence. Looking at the handwriting and page layout, it can be seen that the students did not write with appropriate spacing between words. They skipped lines between sentences. They did not pay attention to the indentation and the line itself, and they did not start the paragraph in the appropriate place. It can also be seen that the student's writing was illegible.

The research also revealed that there were texts with few writing errors at every grade level. Below is the image in which the student's writing error is the least in the writing by looking at text type.

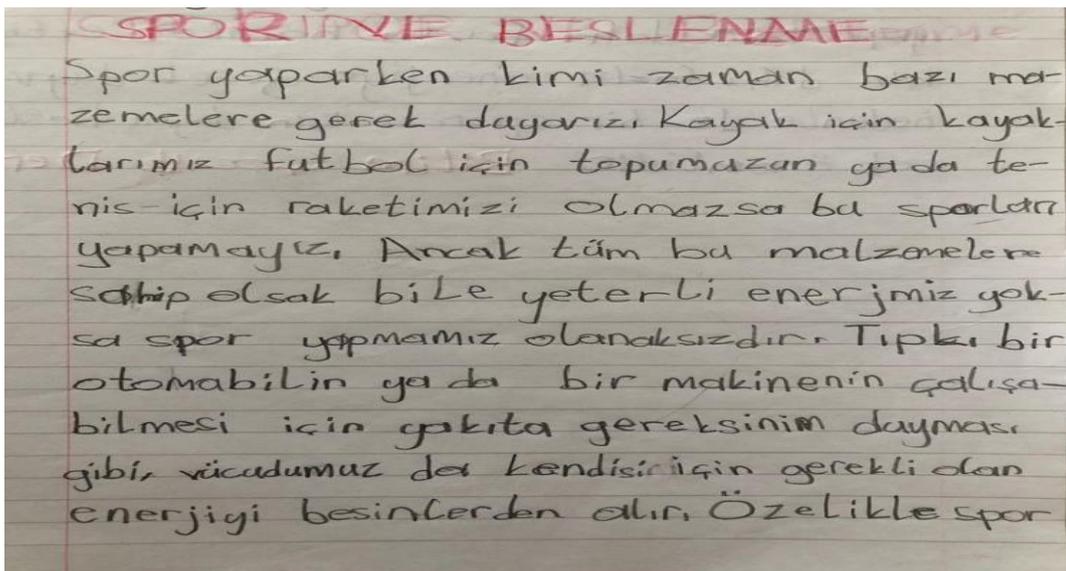


Image 3. Spelling errors made by 1st grade student B7 in the writing by looking activity

Examining Image 3, it can be seen that the student did not make any writing errors at the letter level in the 1st grade writing activity. At the word level, he wrote only one word, leaving one letter

correctly in the appropriate places. At the 2nd grade level, there were also students with very few writing errors similar to this.

When the opinions of the teachers on this issue were examined, it was stated that first graders made more writing errors in dictation texts than other grade levels, where they made fewer writing errors, similar letters were often confused in dictation texts, and punctuation marks were not used. In addition, as in other text types, there were mistakes in the shapes of letters and there was no appropriate space among letters, words, and sentences. Regarding the dictation text type, Teacher Melike said, *"I occasionally use dictation texts in my lessons to check students' spelling mistakes. In this way, I have the opportunity to check and correct the letters that students can confuse and their spelling mistakes. While dictating, they have difficulty writing unfamiliar and foreign words and can write them after a few repetitions. Apart from that, they also have difficulty in following spelling rules and correctly using punctuation marks during dictation."* Teacher Mehmet said, *"As a solution suggestion, frequently made errors can be emphasized a little more in the lessons. Different activities can be attempted to explain them. Children should be encouraged to read many books. When writing dictation, especially when writing long words, students can be asked to write them by spelling them in their minds and writing them completely."* Teacher Seda said, *"In order to correct mistakes, I think that writing by looking and dictation studies should be focused on. I think that this problem can be solved by doing activities where they can encode the confused letters in their minds. Errors can be eliminated by showing the correct spelling of words through activities and constantly addressing the words with errors. Each student should be shown what should be done and how it should be done by showing them their own mistakes. When the students see the wrong and correct mistakes in front of their eyes, they can comprehend them more quickly."*

Table 2 shows that primary school students made the highest number of errors at the letter level in the free writing activity in writing the letters with extensions correctly. It was observed that they made the least number of errors in the form of vertical basic letters. At the word level, primary school students made the highest number of errors in writing the word correctly and without errors. Primary school students made the least error in writing a word without extra letters. At the spelling and punctuation level, primary school students made the highest number of errors in the use of the hyphen and the lowest number of errors in the use of the conversation line. In writing and page layout, primary school students made the highest number of errors in writing the paragraph without starting from the appropriate indentation, and the lowest number of errors in writing with appropriate spacing between letters. In Grade 1, the most common errors were made in writing the extensions of letters with extensions below the line, in letter size, in the use of the hyphen, and in not starting the paragraph from the appropriate indentation. In Grade 2, the most common errors were in the use of hyphens, writing letters with extensions and add-ons, sideways, and not capitalizing proper nouns. In Grade 3, the most common errors were made in punctuation marks. In Grade 4, the most common errors were made in punctuation, capitalization of proper nouns, and not capitalizing the beginning of sentences.

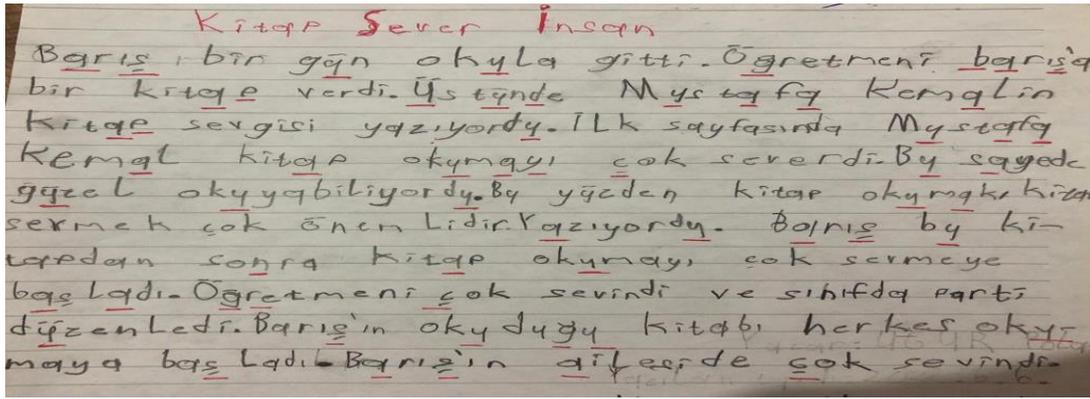


Image 7. Spelling errors made by 4th grade student S18 in the free writing activity

When Image 7 was examined, it was seen that in the fourth grade free writing activity, the student did not write the vertical basic letters at the letter level in accordance with their shape. The extensions of the letters and the letters themselves were written incorrectly. The student wrote similar letters without confusing them. At the word level, the student wrote without leaving any missing letters or syllables in the word. Likewise, they wrote sentences without leaving any missing words. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student used the appropriate punctuation mark at the end of sentences. However, although he separated the suffixes to proper nouns with an apostrophe in a few words, he did not do so for all proper nouns. The student positioned the title appropriately but did not capitalize it. The student did not make a mistake in this regard by capitalizing the sentence beginnings. In handwriting and page layout, the student did not leave the appropriate space between the letters. There was no space between the letters and syllables in some words. Appropriate spacing was left between words and sentences. Teacher Dilek said for free writing text, "Free writing texts are seen as a type of text in which students have difficulty. In this type of text, students should think first, sort their thoughts, and write them down." It was observed that students who could express themselves well in this type of text were successful.

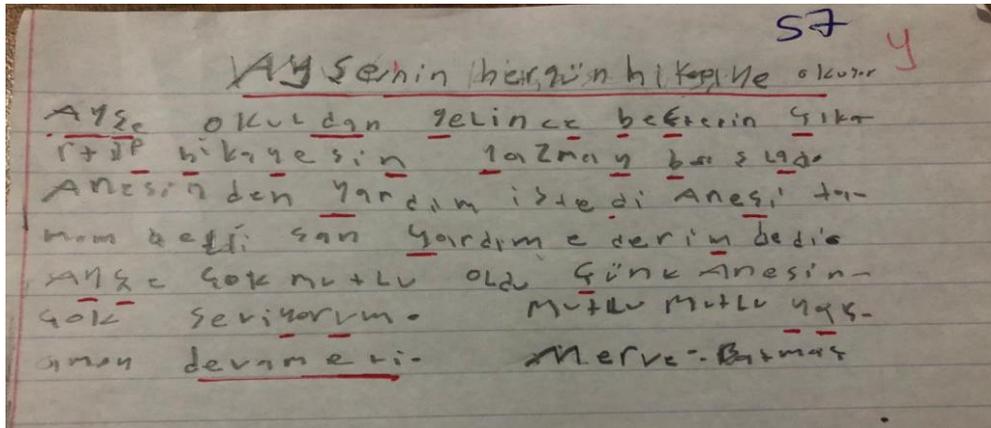


Image 8. Spelling errors made by 1st grade student S7 in the free writing activity

Examining image 8, it can be seen that the student did not write the vertical basic letters at the letter level in accordance with their shape, did not write the letters in the appropriate size, wrote the extensions of the letters with extensions incorrectly, and wrote the affixes of the letters with affixes incorrectly in the 1st grade free writing activity. The student wrote similar letters by confusing them. At the word level, the student wrote using missing letters and syllables in the word. The student wrote by missing words in the sentences. The students' words were generally incorrect and inaccurate. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student used full stops at the end of some sentences but did not start the sentence with a capital letter. The student divided the words with a hyphen at the end of the line and moved them to the line below. The student capitalized proper nouns. The student did not position

the title appropriately. In handwriting and page layout, the student wrote without paying attention to the line or indentation. The student wrote without leaving an appropriate space between letters, words, and sentences.

Below is an image of a free writing text type with few writing errors.

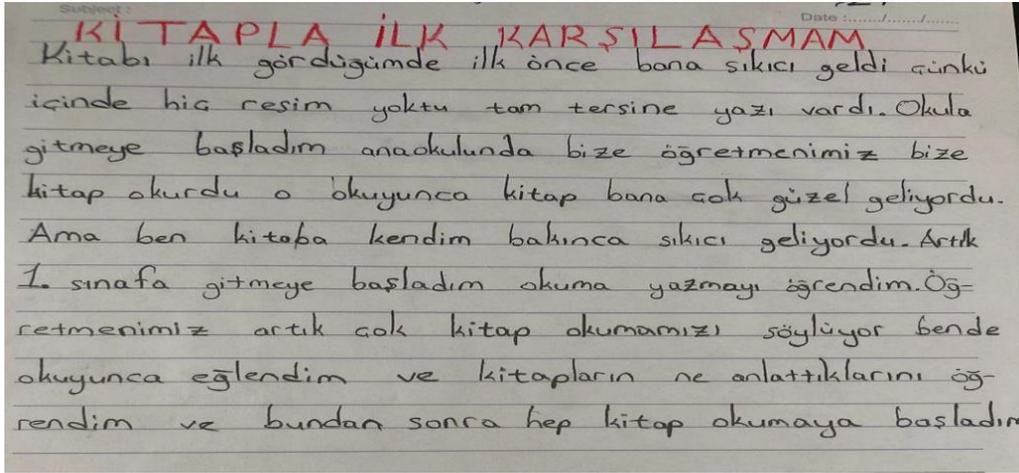


Image 9. Spelling errors made by fourth grade student S2 in the free writing activity

Image 9 reveals that the student did not make any writing errors at the letter level, word, or page layout in the 4th grade free writing activity. The student did not use commas and hyphens in some places at the spelling and punctuation level.

When the opinions of the teachers on this regard were examined, it was stated that the text type that students had the most difficulty with was free writing, that students could not create what they would write in their minds and accordingly made writing errors. In this respect, teacher Seda said, "Since they need to use both writing and thinking skills in free writing, students who can imagine and express themselves well are successful, while other students are anxious. In free writing, there are writing errors in the following punctuation marks and spelling rules as well. In addition, some have difficulty summarizing the subject while writing and those who unnecessarily repeat what they wrote." To solve these problems, teacher Melek said, "The student's low vocabulary in free writing may have caused him/her to be unable to write words and sentences at the desired level. Encouraging students to read books can be important for the development of vocabulary in free writing. The more the student sees and reads, the more he/she will improve in the writing process. Encouragement to write calligraphy can be practiced."

Table 2 shows, that the most common errors made by primary school students at the letter level in the comprehension-based writing activity were in the correct writing of letters with extensions and in the correct writing of letters with affixes. The least error was made in writing vertical basic letters obliquely. At the word level, primary school students made the most common errors in writing without leaving any missing letters in the word. The least number of errors was in writing without extra letters in the word. At the spelling and punctuation level, primary school students made the most common errors in the use of the hyphen and the least common errors in the use of the conversation line. Concerning handwriting and organization, it was observed that primary school students made the most common errors in starting the paragraph from the appropriate indentation, and the least common errors were made in the title of writing by leaving the appropriate space between the letters. In Grade 1, the most common errors were made in the use of punctuation marks and not starting the paragraph from the appropriate indentation. In Grade 2, the most common errors were made in writing the letters whose extension was below the line in the line, not writing the size of the letters appropriately, not starting the paragraph from the appropriate indentation, and using punctuation marks. In Grade 3, errors were made in the use of punctuation marks and not starting the paragraph from the appropriate indentation. In Grade 4, the most common errors were in the use of punctuation marks in general and not starting the paragraph with the appropriate indentation.

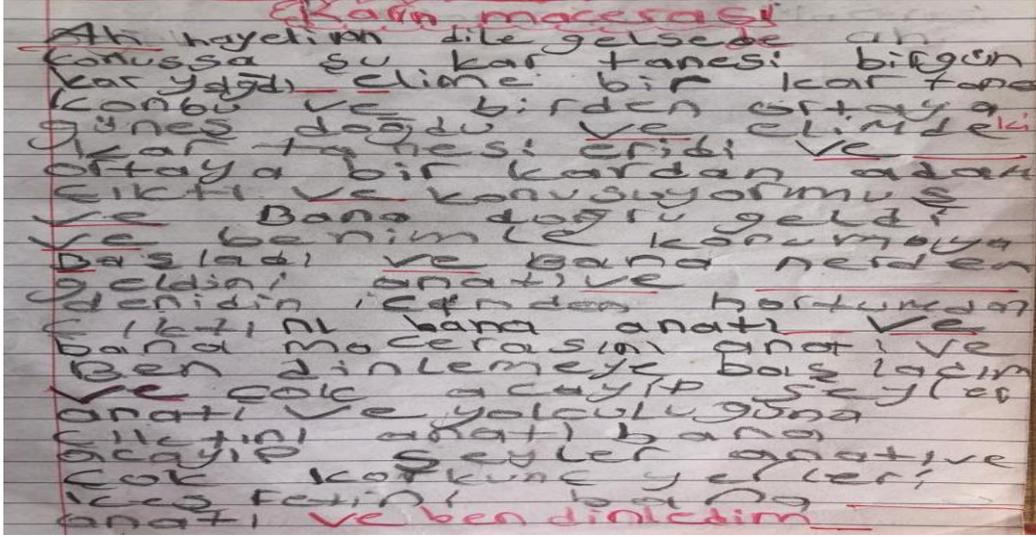


Image 10. Spelling mistakes made by 3rd grade student A1 in the comprehension-based writing activity

Examining image 10, the student wrote the vertical basic letters at the letter level in accordance with their shape in the third grade comprehension writing activity. He/she did not write the letters in an appropriate size. He/she wrote letters with extensions incorrectly. The affixes of the letters with affixes were written incorrectly. The student wrote similar letters without confusing them. At the word level, the student left missing letters and syllables in the word. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student did not use any punctuation marks in his/her writing. Instead of using full stops at the end of sentences, the student continued to write by connecting sentences with the conjunction and. The student did not capitalize the initials at the beginning of the sentences. The student positioned the title appropriately but did not capitalize it. In terms of legibility of handwriting and page layout, the student wrote without leaving the appropriate space between letters, words, and sentences. He/she also wrote without paying attention to page layout and neatness. The student wrote by paying attention to the lines and the beginning of each line.

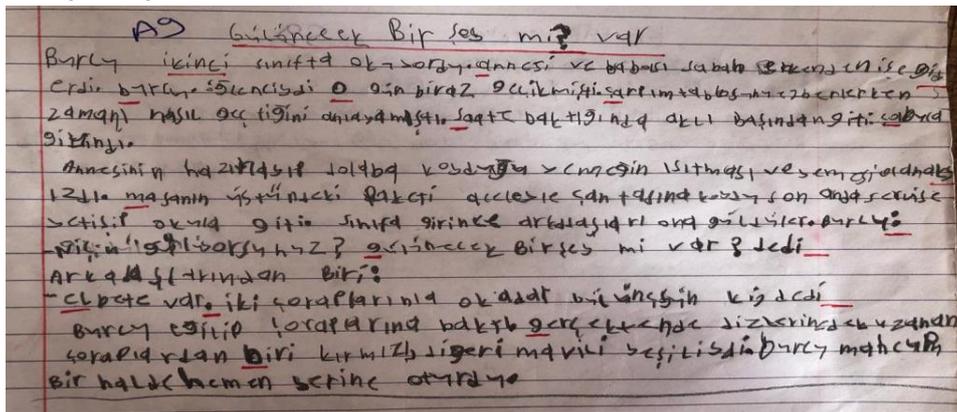


Image 11. Spelling mistakes made by 2nd grade student A9 in the comprehension-based writing activity

Examining Image 11, considering the activity of comprehension-based writing in the 2nd grade, it was seen that the student wrote the vertical basic letters incorrectly at the letter level, did not write the letter in the appropriate size, and wrote the affixes of the letters incorrectly. At the word level, the student wrote without missing letters and syllables. However, he misused letters in some words. The sentences were written without missing or excess words. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student used punctuation marks in incorrect places. The student started the sentence with a lowercase letter. It was observed that he capitalized on proper nouns. The student positioned the title appropriately, but it

was written in lower case. Punctuation marks were used in incorrect places. Regarding the legibility of handwriting and page layout, the student wrote without paying attention to the lines and the beginning of each line. Although he left appropriate spacing between words in some places, he did not leave appropriate spacing between words in most places. It can be seen that the student did not write the paragraph starting from the correct place.

Below is an image in which writing errors in the activity of comprehension-based writing were few.

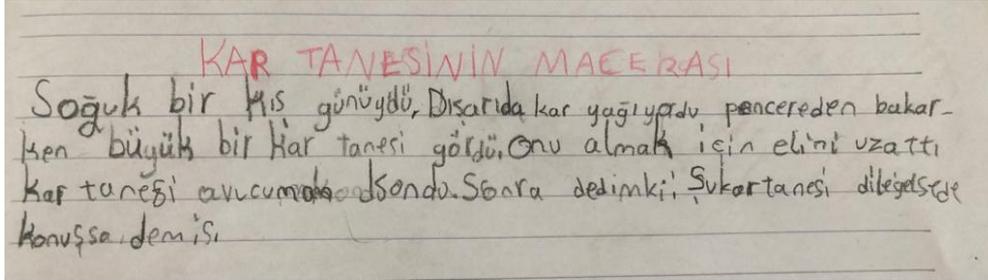


Image 12. Spelling mistakes made by 3rd grade student A9 in the comprehension-based writing activity

As can be seen in Image 12, the student wrote the vertical basic letters correctly at the letter level in the 3rd grade comprehension-based writing activity. At the word level, the student wrote without leaving an appropriate space between some words. Regarding the legibility of handwriting and page layout, the student wrote a word without paying attention to the line when writing it. At the spelling and punctuation level, the student used the appropriate punctuation mark where necessary.

When the opinions of the teachers regarding the writing errors made in the text types of comprehension-based writing were analyzed, it was stated that the students had problems arising from the comprehension of the meaning while writing in this text type. It was stated that in the first and second grades, students generally remembered the beginning of the text and mentioned only the beginning of the text in the writing, while in the third and fourth grades this problem did not exist, and that the writing errors were similar to those in other texts in terms of the shape of the letters, not adjusting the size of the letters, and not leaving appropriate spaces between words and sentences. In this regard, Teacher Mehmet said, "My students mostly have difficulty writing what they understand. They have difficulty both because they need to comprehend what they read and because they should do writing work." Teacher Gülce said, "My students are first graders; they only remember the beginning of the text I read, and my students generally remember only the beginning of the texts and try to complete their writing with word repetitions." In this regard, Teacher Dilek said, "The source of writing errors could be analyzed. In letter and word errors, the fact that the student has not fully learned the spelling and form of the letter and the lack of immediate feedback and intervention can be seen as the reason." Teacher Melek said, "Identifying the mistakes made by our students can help them complete their deficiencies by doing more activities and studies on this subject. With the habit of reading more books, they are forced to see these mistakes themselves." It can be stated that the most common difficulty of primary school students was in comprehension-based writing activities, and this situation occurred due to the need for students to both comprehend what they read and write based on their comprehension.

Conclusion, Discussion, and Suggestions

In this study, the writing errors of primary school students attending the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades in dictation, comprehension-based writing, free writing, writing by looking text types were examined. In this context, while writing the dictated text, the students made errors at the letter level in terms of correctly writing the letters with extensions and affixes. At the word level, students missed letters and syllables in the word. At the spelling and punctuation level, students generally did not use punctuation marks. They also wrote proper nouns and the beginning of sentences without capitalizing

them. In handwriting and page layout, it was observed that students wrote without leaving appropriate spaces between letters and words. In the free writing text type, students had difficulty in writing the form of the letter at the word level and wrote by confusing similar letters. At the word level, students frequently made the mistake of skipping words. They skipped words in the sentences. At the spelling and punctuation level, students usually did not use punctuation marks. They used the hyphen, but incorrectly. In handwriting and page layout, the students did not position the title appropriately and did not capitalize it. Moreover, they wrote without proper spacing between words and sentences. In the free writing text type, the students had great difficulty. The topic was assigned to the students, but it was observed that some students could not create a text. It was also observed that most of the students over-repeated words in the text. This situation shows that students cannot structure a text in their minds. In the text type of comprehension-based writing, the participants remembered the beginning of the text and only included the beginning of the text in their writing. At the letter level, students made the mistake of writing the extension of a letter properly in the line. At the word level, students made the mistake of missing one or more letters in a word or missing words in a sentence. At the spelling and punctuation level, students did not capitalize the beginning of sentences and proper nouns, did not position the title appropriately, and did not capitalize the title. Among the punctuation marks, full stops and hyphens were generally used however, it was observed that the places of these marks were incorrect. Writing by looking at the text type was less difficult than other text types. The teacher wrote the text on the board, and the students wrote it on paper by looking at the board. In the first and second grades, errors were generally observed in letters, words, spelling and punctuation, and handwriting and page layout, whereas in the third and fourth grades, spelling and punctuation errors were mainly made. The texts that were to be written were determined in accordance with the grade levels; therefore, the students made writing errors in each type of text.

The writing mistakes made by the students considering their grade levels were generally as follows: First graders made the most errors in the dictation text type and fourth graders made the least errors. First graders usually wrote by confusing similar letters with missing letters and syllables in the word. Second graders wrote without paying attention to the indentation. They wrote without leaving an appropriate space between words and sentences. They also did not pay attention to punctuation marks. They used initial capital letters at the beginning of sentences but also made writing errors by using capital letters in sentences. In the third grade, students did not leave appropriate spacing between words and wrote without paying attention to capitalization. Fourth graders did not position the title appropriately and made mistakes in the spelling of proper nouns. In the free writing text type, first graders had difficulty creating texts. In other-grade levels, texts were created, but errors were observed in letters, words, spelling and punctuation, handwriting, and page layout. In the first grade, students wrote using confusing similar letters. Second graders wrote without paying attention to indentations and punctuation marks. Third graders generally wrote without leaving appropriate spacing between letters, words, and sentences. Fourth graders made errors in the use of punctuation marks, drawing extensions of letters with extensions and letter shapes. In the comprehension-based writing text type, first graders made errors in leaving the appropriate space between words, writing without paying attention to the indentation, and capitalizing the beginning of the sentence. In the second grade, students paid attention to the indentations, but not to the line. In general, the initials of sentences and proper nouns were not capitalized, and errors were made in the use of punctuation marks. In the second grade, students paid attention to the indentations, but not to the line. In general, the initials and proper nouns were not capitalized and mistakes were made in the use of punctuation marks. In the third grade, the students did not write the letter size appropriately. No punctuation marks were used. There was no appropriate spacing between words, and paragraphs did not start from the appropriate place. Fourth graders wrote with missing syllables in words and with missing words in sentences. Punctuation marks were used, but some sentences were not punctuated appropriately. Likewise, while some sentence initials were capitalized, others were written in lower case. In the writing by looking text type, the students in the first grade generally made mistakes in the size of the letter, leaving appropriate space between words and sentences. In the second grade, writing without paying attention to the line and

confusing similar letters were observed. Third graders made errors in leaving appropriate space between words and sentences. It was concluded that fourth graders did not pay attention to handwriting and page cleanliness. In addition, it was observed that errors increased in some text types as the grade level increased. The increase in these errors was because the text levels were different depending on the grade level, and the higher the grade level, the more students tried to write, and as a result, writing errors of the students increased. It was observed that the punctuation errors of primary school students were high. Students at all grade levels used the full stop, but it was observed that most students used it in the wrong places.

Regarding the writing mistakes made by primary school students, teachers stated that students mostly had difficulty in comprehension-based writing and free writing texts, and accordingly, writing mistakes were frequently made. They stated that they used the dictation text type to teach spelling and punctuation errors, and that these errors could be reduced with feedback. In terms of grade levels, they stated that writing errors were made more frequently at the letter and word level in the first and second grades, while spelling and punctuation errors were made more frequently in the third and fourth grades. To eliminate writing errors, the teachers suggested that writing activities should be emphasized in general, writing activities should be popularized by using different activities, feedback should be given to the writings of the students, and plenty of reading should be done.

In the study, most of the students made errors in leaving the appropriate space between letters, leaving the appropriate space between words, leaving the appropriate space between sentences, and starting the paragraph from the appropriate place. In a study, it was stated that primary school students were not at a sufficient level in following the format, spacing, and line tracking while writing (Kuşdemir, Katrancı & Arslan, 2018). In the study, it was stated that students at all grade levels made this mistake. This error increases especially in free writing and comprehension-based writing text types. Teachers also stated that students often make this writing error in these text types because they have difficulty in deciding exactly what to write. Considering the text types in the study, it was seen that students mostly made this writing error in all text types. However, it was observed that this error decreased as the grade level increased. Mostly first and second graders made mistakes. While writing activities are carried out in Turkish lessons, teachers can give warnings on this issue so that the rate of errors made by students can decrease. In a previous study, it was stated that students did not write the letter forms correctly and did not leave appropriate spaces between words during the acquisition of writing skills (Bay, 2008). In another study, it was revealed that students did not write the letters correctly on the line and wrote the extensions of the letters with extensions incorrectly (Çelebi, 2014). In another study, it was stated that students had problems in adjusting the size of letters in legible writing (Bayraktar, Yurduseven, Başaran, & Bektaş, 2007). The results of this research are in parallel with the literature. Because of the research, it was found that in all text types and at all grade levels, one of the common writing errors was that the letters with extensions were not written correctly. In particular, students in the first grade did not write the letters in the appropriate size.

The most difficult text type for students was free writing. Especially in the first, second, and third grades, it was observed that students spent a lot of time thinking during the implementation of the research. Students had difficulty creating a text about a topic with a specific framework in mind. Besides, the students had negative thoughts thinking that their writing would not be good. In a study, it was stated that if students negative feelings toward writing were eliminated, they would be able to plan their writing and write longer texts because the lessons were fun (Tolaman, 2017). In another study, it was stated that students did not like writing because they had difficulty identifying problems (Yegen, 2019). In the research, it was stated that students often made writing errors because they had difficulty in this regard. This mistake may have been made frequently because the students did not know where to start writing and could not plan their writing.

Depending on the results of the research, it was seen that one of the most common errors encountered was spelling and punctuation. It was stated that students did not position the title appropriately, did not capitalize proper nouns and the initials of sentences, and did not use punctuation marks in general. Memiş and Harmankaya (2012) stated that students did not use punctuation marks

in the correct places. It can be said that primary school students do not know the usage areas of punctuation marks, or they cannot remember their usage areas during writing, and they do not think of using punctuation marks in writing activities. Because of the research, it was observed that primary school students had problems with punctuation marks. In particular, it was stated that fourth-grade students used different punctuation marks, but in incorrect places. In other-grade levels, students either did not use the required punctuation mark or used only the full stop. These were the writing errors observed in the writings of the students.

The suggestions of the teachers as solutions to writing errors were to conduct more writing activities, to give one-to-one feedback to students, and to make students like writing activities. Teachers can increase students' interest in writing activities by including different text types in their lessons. At the same time, writing activities should be carried out not only in Turkish lessons but also in other lessons so that students realize that writing is not only within the scope of one lesson.

The research was conducted in Harran, Şanlıurfa. This region, where the research was conducted, receives a lot of immigration from outside, family support for homework and schoolwork is at a very low level, and students' course materials are not provided by their families. Accordingly, class sizes are crowded. Bilingualism emerges. Therefore, communication between students and teachers is limited. As a result, this situation negatively affects the success of the students and is also effective in the high number of writing errors. The type and rate of writing errors may vary in different samples.

This study was conducted to determine the writing errors of primary school students in different text types. Another similar study was conducted by Başak Kasa Ayten and Sema Ekmekçi in Diyarbakır's Çermik district and titled "Determining the writing errors of primary school 1st and 2nd grade students during the COVID-19 pandemic period". Because of the research conducted to correct the writing errors of primary school students, it was observed that the participants improved in correcting their writing errors. While 4 students in the study group could not write legibly before the application, they were able to write legibly in the studies conducted after the application. The letter, word, sentence, text, and punctuation activities of the dictation study used in the application contributed to the correction of the study group's writing errors.

In general, it can be seen that the literature and the results of the research are similar. The writing errors seen in primary school students are at the letter level, in the form and size of the letter, not writing the letters with extensions correctly, writing the letters with extensions in the line, and confusing similar letters. Writing errors at the word level are in the form of missing letters and syllables in the word, and spelling and punctuation errors are in the form of not capitalizing proper nouns, writing the beginning of sentences in lower case, and using punctuation marks in the wrong places. In terms of handwriting and page layout, it can be said that the appropriate space was not left between letters, words, and sentences, and the paragraph was not started from the appropriate place. In line with the results of the research, in parallel with the students' writing mistakes, writing activities should be carried out regularly in Turkish lessons starting from the 1st grade, family support should be increased, and students should be enabled to see their own mistakes by using different text types. To eliminate the writing errors made by students in free writing and comprehension-based writing text types, reading comprehension activities should be conducted and students should be encouraged to read books. In addition to all these suggestions, students should be encouraged to discuss, travel, observe, write about their experiences, and keep a diary to make them enjoy writing activities and improve their writing skills. Peer support should be used during education and training. Various studies can be conducted in the form of application-oriented action studies and technology-supported applications to eliminate students writing errors.

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