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## Examining The Composition Writing Skills of Classroom Teacher Candidates

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### ABSTRACT

Most effective way to improve a person's written expression skills is essay studies. The purpose of the written expression courses taken by elementary school teacher candidates at the beginning of their undergraduate education is to develop effective writing skills in this direction. This research is important in terms of determining how accurate and effective the writing skills are of the elementary school teacher candidates who will teach writing to elementary school students in the future. The aim of the research is to show to what extent prospective elementary school teachers can apply the essay writing skills they learned in the Turkish Language Teaching course, correctly and effectively. With this aspect of it, the research is in accordance with the case study pattern of qualitative research methods. The universe of the study consists of 57 elementary school teacher candidates studying in the 2nd grade of a state university in the Eastern Anatolia region. Accidental sampling method was used in the research. The data were collected from the final exam administered to the students at the end of the semester. For this purpose, the essays of the students were evaluated by two different researchers in 3 parts as "format, language and expression, spelling and punctuation" within the scope of the "Written Expression Evaluation Form" of Yıldız (2008). As a result of the research, it was concluded that the teacher candidates were deficient especially in language and expression, spelling and punctuation.

**Key Words:** Essay, written expression, writing skills.

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## **Sınıf Öğretmeni Adaylarının Kompozisyon Yazma Becerilerinin İncelenmesi**

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### **ÖZET**

Kişide yazılı anlatım becerisini geliştirmenin en etkili yolu kompozisyon çalışmalarındır. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının lisans eğitimlerinin başında almış oldukları yazılı anlatım derslerinin amacı da bu doğrultuda etkili yazabilme becerisini geliştirmektir. Bu araştırma ilkökul öğrencilerine ileride yazmayı ilk öğretecek olan sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazım bilgilerinin ne derece doğru ve etkili olduğunu belirlemesi açısından önemlidir. Araştırmanın amacı sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının Türkçe Öğretimi dersinde öğrenmiş oldukları kompozisyon yazma becerilerini ne derece doğru ve etkili bir şekilde uygulayabildiklerini göstermektir. Bu yönü ile araştırma nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden durum çalışması desenine uygundur. Araştırmanın evrenini, Doğu Anadolu bölgesindeki bir devlet üniversitesinin 2.sınıfında öğrenim gören 57 sınıf öğretmeni adayı oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada kolay ulaşılabilir örneklem kullanılmıştır. Veriler dönem sonunda öğrencilere uygulanan final sınavı aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda öğrencilerin kompozisyonları Yıldız (2008)'in "Yazılı Anlatımı Değerlendirme Formu" kapsamında "biçim, dil ve anlatım, yazım ve noktalama" olarak 3 kısımda iki farklı araştırmacı tarafından değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda öğretmen adaylarının özellikle dil ve anlatım ile yazım ve noktalama kısımlarında eksik kaldıkları sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kompozisyon, yazılı anlatım, yazma becerisi.

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### **MAKALE BİLGİSİ**

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## Introduction

Language is the most important means of communication between people. Using the language effectively and correctly is necessary for communication. According to Graham (2006), writing is very important in self-expression, communication and learning. Since writing is one of the basic linguistic skills, the impact of writing on the effective use of language is also important. The process of making feelings and thoughts permanent was only made possible with the invention of writing (Ağca, 2001). Writing is the signs and shapes we use to convey our feelings and thoughts to others (Uslay, 1969). One of the most important learning tools of our day is writing. The correct expression of people's feelings, thoughts and dreams in writing according to the rules of language is called written expression (Calp, 2005). Written expression necessitates the expression of feelings, wishes and thoughts that are seen, listened to, read and researched in a certain discipline (Özbay, 2011). The development of writing skills also makes the use of language more functional. As a result of this, the individual can speak and write more accurately and effectively (Bryson, 2003).

Writing plays an important role for active participation in educational success (Graham et al., 2001; Morgan, 2010; Norman and Spencer, 2005). As a result of the emphasis on the productive skills of language, the most expected outcome from students is writing (Bhamani et al., 2013). The purpose of teaching writing skills is to provide students with the ability to express their feelings and thoughts in writing by giving them the ability to write legibly with correct spelling and punctuation (Bayat and Küçükayar, 2016). Students generally do not deem writing as a fun activity because they have to adhere to the rules (Aydın et al., 2013). Students' learning of the writing process also contributes to their ability to express themselves effectively (Casewell, 2008; Ozbell, 2006; Smith, 2005).

Written expression has an important place in teaching Turkish language, and the most effective way to improve a person's written expression skills is essay studies. Students are expected to express their thoughts in the form of essays (Yamaç et al., 2016). Essays are integrations of our feelings and thoughts about a subject formed by adhering to the rules of language (Oğuzkan, 2005). According to Çakır (2011), essays are verbal and written expressions of feelings and thoughts about a certain subject.

According to Özbek (1993), the aim of the written expression courses given to teacher candidates at the university is to enable them to think critically and then to be able to put these thoughts into writing. In order to use the language effectively, it is necessary to also focus on writing (Çamurcu, 2011). Since there are many topics to write about, it may be necessary to write an essay in order for the desired topic to be handled in its entirety. In an essay, the ideas in the paragraphs should be related to each other (Tansel, 1985).

In recent years, academics have been expressing concerns about elementary school teachers' lack of writing knowledge and skills, and they have been raising concerns about this issue (Gallavan et al., 2007). In order to provide a good writing education, teachers should first make efforts in this regard (Blau, 1988). However, most teacher candidates feel inadequate in terms of their writing skills (Frank, 2003; Gallavan et al., 2007; Street and Stang, 2008). In the research conducted, some of the prospective teachers stated that they did not have writing skills (Colby and Stapleton, 2006). For this reason, they expressed that they did not enjoy teaching writing (Morgan, 2010). For this, teacher candidates should first be taught the intricacies of writing and then should be trained about the processes of writing. The aim of this process is to teach teacher candidates the basic principles of essay writing and to enable them to become teachers who give the necessary importance to written expression.

According to Daisey (2009), teacher candidates' writing practices during their student years can be discussed and their beliefs about writing can be revealed. In this way, it can be found out why teacher candidates who develop a negative attitude towards writing have such an attitude and solutions can be produced. Because the sensitivity of elementary school teacher candidates towards writing is an important factor that will affect the writing achievements of their students in the future (Akkaya, 2018).

Reading and writing, which are two basic linguistic skills, are important from the very first stage of primary education (Durukan, 2011). The first people who will provide education for reading and writing are elementary school teachers. In this respect, the writing skills of elementary school teachers should be very advanced (Elkatmış and Toptaş, 2013). What is expected from the elementary school teacher is to instill writing skills, to teach children to express feelings and thoughts in writing, and to convey these skills. A teacher who can make this happen can be considered successful (Sulak et al., 2015). The purpose of the written expression courses taken by elementary school teacher candidates at the beginning of their undergraduate education is to develop effective writing skills in this direction. The basic principles of essay writing and essay writing skills are also included in the written expression courses.

Since an essay is a product of emotion and thought, it is difficult to evaluate it. For this reason, the most healthy way to evaluate an essay is to create an evaluation criteria (Çamurcu, 2011). Özbay (2003) stated that teachers attach importance to grammar and punctuation rules in essay evaluation. The views of Göçer (2005), Zorbaz (2005) and Tompkins (2000) are similar in this regard. In order for the evaluations to be healthy, evaluations should be made for the format, expression, grammar and punctuation in the essay, taking into account the principles of essay writing.

In essay writing, the subject should be handled consistently, explained in its entirety and appropriate transition between paragraphs should be provided. Processing only one emotion and thought in each paragraph will save the essay from complexity. Words should be used in correct meanings, sentence organizations should be appropriate for grammar and punctuation. One should not stray away from the main idea, and if examples and analogies are to be made, attention should be paid to whether they are related to the subject. It is also very important that the final statement is conclusive for the subject and impressive. Evaluations of essays can be made by using these criteria.

Writing is the work of generating texts in writing and requires maintaining a certain logical flow (Keçik and Subaşı, 2007). Essay, which is a written product, aims to transform words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and paragraphs into a meaningful and coherent texts (Ünalın, 2006). From the first day we learn to write in elementary school to the days when we have a job, we may have to write on various subjects. Especially for the profession of teaching, it is important to have knowledge about many subjects at a certain level. Improving students' writing skills should be a goal of all teachers. Instilling students with beautiful and effective writing skills is one of the many important tasks of elementary school teachers. While transferring this knowledge to writing, we need to adhere to certain criteria such as paying attention to the format, following the grammar rules, paying attention to punctuation. This research is important in terms of determining how accurate and effective the writing skills are of the elementary school teacher candidates who will teach writing to elementary school students in the future.

The goal of the research is to show to what extent prospective classroom teachers who continue their higher education can apply the essay writing skills they learned in the Turkish Teaching course correctly and effectively. For this purpose, the essays of the students were evaluated by two different researchers in 3 parts as "format, language and expression, spelling

and punctuation" within the scope of the "Written Expression Evaluation Form" of Yıldız (2008).

Within the framework of this goal, answers to the following questions have been sought.

- As a result of the evaluation of the students' essays, depending on the format criterion, is there a difference in their arithmetic averages?
- As a result of the evaluation of the students' essays, is there a difference in their arithmetic averages depending on the language and expression criteria?
- As a result of the evaluation of the students' essays, depending on the grammar and punctuation criteria, is there a difference in their arithmetic averages?

### **Methodology**

In line with the purpose of the study, case study design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the research. A case study is a method in which a single event is examined in depth and the collected data is looked at in a real environment (Subaşı and Okumuş, 2017).

### **Study group**

The study group of the research consists of a total of 57 elementary school teacher candidates (30 female and 27 male), studying in the 2nd grade of a state university in the Eastern Anatolia region. The data were collected in the 2nd semester of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Accidental sampling method was used in the research. This type of sampling method, also known as opportunity sampling, is used in cases where the individuals to be researched will be more easily included and accessed in the research process (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008).

### **Data Collection Tool, Data Collection Process and Analysis of Data**

The data were obtained through the "Written Expression Evaluation Form" issued by Yıldız (2008). The form consists of 17 items. The form consists of 3 parts: form, language and expression, grammar and punctuation. There are 2 articles in the first part, 13 in the second part and 2 in the third part. According to this, students will be able to get a maximum of 10 points for the format, 80 points for the language and expression, 10 points for grammar and punctuation.

The data were collected from the final exam administered to the students at the end of the semester. Students were given a specific topic and asked to write an essay.

This study is a 3-factor study. The results were obtained by getting the arithmetic averages of the scores given in response to the quality of the students' essays by two different researchers for each article.

**Table 1.:** The Characteristics Sought For in the Essays and the Highest Points that Can be Received

<b>Format</b>	Appropriate spaces (gaps) have been left on the edges of the paper between paragraphs and lines.	5 points
	A neat, legible and practical writing was used.	5 points

	The title is relevant to the topic.	5 points
	The topic was explained in logical consistency and in whole.	5 points
	Appropriate transition between paragraphs were provided.	5 points
	A single feeling and thought were processed in each paragraph.	5 points
<b>Language and Expression</b>	The title is relevant to the topic.	5 points
	The topic was explained in logical consistency and in whole.	5 points
	Appropriate transition between paragraphs were provided.	5 points
	A single feeling and thought were processed in each paragraph.	5 points
	The main idea desired to be given in the text has been conveyed.	10 points
	The main idea and emotion were supported with auxiliary ideas and emotions.	10 points
	Quotations, examples and analogies were sufficient and appropriate to the context.	10 points
	The final statement is conclusive and on point.	5 points
	Sentence structures comply with the grammar rules.	5 points
	The words were used in the proper and correct context.	5 points
	There are no word repetitions in the sentence.	5 points
	Resources related to the subject have been looked into and used adequately.	5 points
	The writer explained the subject with his/her own unique expressions.	5 points
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	The grammatical rules have been complied with in the article.	5 points
	Punctuation marks have been used correctly.	5 points

The results of the evaluations, which were made by considering the criteria sought in the essays, were scored by two different researchers in order to increase their validity and the results were compared with one another. It was concluded that the results were similar.

### **Findings and Comments**

It will not be realistic to expect that every person who will become a teacher, who has received this education, will be a perfect writer. However, everyone who has received teacher training should know the criteria for writing, to a certain degree, and should be able to write their thoughts on any subject up to a certain level. Especially if we consider that the first person to introduce a student to the act of writing will be the elementary school teacher, it is a fact that especially these teachers should have sufficient knowledge on this subject. The findings given below showed how much the writing skills of elementary school teacher candidates were developed as a result of the Turkish Language Teaching course they took,

and how they were able to express their thoughts in writing. In this section, the findings obtained from the research results are put in tables.

The findings regarding the question "As a result of the evaluation of the students' essays, depending on the format criterion, is there a difference in their arithmetic averages?" are as follows:

**Table 2:** Arithmetic Averages of the Results Scored by the Researchers Depending on the Format Criterion of the Essays

	<b>The maximum points that can be received</b>	<b>Student Averages</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>The Lowest Score Received</b>	<b>The Number of Students Who are below the Average</b>
<b>Score of the 1st Researcher</b>	10	8.66	8.365	3	27
<b>Score of the 2nd Researcher</b>	10	8.07		2	31

Table 2 shows the highest score that can be obtained depending on the format criterion, and the averages of the scores obtained by the students according to the scoring of the two researchers separately, the lowest score obtained for the format criterion and the number of students who are below the average in that criterion. The student averages given are the arithmetic averages of the scores obtained by evaluating the format criteria of the essays written by the 57 students participating in the study.

The format factor found in the evaluation form constitutes the 10-point section. According to the results of the evaluation, in this section, the arithmetic mean of the student scores was 8.66 in the light of the scoring of the 1st researcher, and the arithmetic mean of the student scores was 8.07 in the light of the scoring of the 2nd researcher. The lowest score obtained for the first researcher was 3 and the number of students below average was 27. For the second researcher, the lowest score obtained was 2 and the number of students below average was 31. In Table 2, it was concluded that the scores given by the 1st and 2nd researchers were similar. There is no major differentiation in this section.

The features sought in the format factor are given in Table 1, and the evaluations made depending on the format factor are given in Table 2. Here, according to the evaluation of two different researchers, the students in general gave due importance to paper layout and legibility of writing. The most remarkable features in any essay is the page layout and legibility of writing. Students who were below average did not pay attention to the paper layout, did not make an indent in the beginning of the paragraph, did not align words at the end of the lines, and did not comply with the format criteria. Although they learned that paper layout and legibility of writing are essential in writing essays in the Turkish Language Teaching course, the fact that these teacher candidates did not pay attention to these criteria showed that they were sloppy and tried to haste writing these essays. The issue here is not to write beautifully, but the visual appeal of the whole essay written. Among the students who were below the average, 27 students according to the scoring of the first researcher and 31 students according to the scoring of the second researcher were observed to have these inadequacies.

The findings regarding the question "As a result of the evaluation of the students' essays, depending on the language and expression criteria, is there a difference in their arithmetic averages?" are as follows:

**Table 3:** Arithmetic Averages of the Results Scored by the Researchers Depending on the language and expression criteria of the Essays

	<b>The maximum points that can be received</b>	<b>Student Averages</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>The Lowest Score Received</b>	<b>The Number of Students Who are below the Average</b>
<b>Score of the 1st Researcher</b>	80	53.63	54.645	31	28
<b>Score of the 2nd Researcher</b>	80	55.66		29	26

Table 3 shows the highest score that can be obtained depending on the language and expression criteria, and the averages of the scores obtained by the students according to the scoring of the two researchers separately, the lowest score obtained for the language and expression criteria and the number of students who are below the average in that criterion. The student averages given are the arithmetic averages of the scores obtained by evaluating the language and expression criteria of the essays written by the 57 students participating in the study.

The language and expression factor found in the evaluation form constitutes the 80-point section. According to the results of the evaluation, in this section, the arithmetic mean of the student scores was 53,6 in the light of the scoring of the 1st researcher, and the arithmetic mean of the student scores was 55,66 in the light of the scoring of the 2nd researcher. The lowest score obtained for the first researcher was 31 and the number of students below average was 28. For the second researcher, the lowest score obtained was 29 and the number of students below average was 26. In Table 3, it is striking that there is a slight difference between the scores given by the first and second researchers.

The characteristics sought for in the language and expression factor are given in Table 1, and the evaluations made depending on the language and expression factor are given in Table 3. As a result of the evaluations of two different researchers, it was concluded that most of the students did not give due importance to the content of their essays. Most students did not write titles to their essays, could not transition between paragraphs, went off topic, could not use unique expressions, could not enrich the content with quotations and examples, and could not come to a conclusive sentence effectively. As the name suggests, the grammar rules of the language and expression criterion have been neglected by the students in general. It is very sad that teacher candidates, who have an average score of 53.63 according to one researcher and 55.66 according to another researcher, are inadequate in terms of language and expression. One of the most important criteria in this section is to ensure an appropriate transition between various paragraphs. A large part of the 57 students did not properly transition between paragraphs, and even some of them did not even make paragraphs. It was observed that some students wrote the entire essay in a single paragraph. One of the rules of essay writing is to express thoughts in 3 parts: introduction, development and conclusion. The fact that a teacher candidate does not take this into account is also an indication of a lack of proficiency. The main idea of the subject should be given clearly and concisely, and the main idea should be supported by auxiliary thoughts. Some teacher candidates have not practiced content enrichment by adhering to a single idea. This is another sign of sloppy writing. The adequacy of quotations and examples adds value to the essay and enriches the content. Among the 57 teacher candidates, very few of them did so. In order to be able to quote, it is



also necessary to have a certain amount of knowledge on the subject matter. It was observed that teacher candidates did not have much knowledge on the subject. Inverted sentence structures were also observed. Sources in regard to subject matter have not been referenced.

The findings regarding the question "As a result of the evaluation of the students' essays, depending on the writing and punctuation criteria, is there a difference in their arithmetic averages?" are as follows:

**Table 4:** Arithmetic Averages of the Results Scored by the Researchers Depending on the writing and punctuation criteria of the Essays

	<b>The maximum points that can be received</b>	<b>Student Averages</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>The Lowest Score Received</b>	<b>The Number of Students Who are below the Average</b>
<b>Score of the 1st Researcher</b>	10	7.64	7.82	2	20
<b>Score of the 2nd Researcher</b>	10	8		3	13

Table 4 shows the highest score that can be obtained depending on the writing and punctuation criteria, and the averages of the scores obtained by the students according to the scoring of the two researchers separately, the lowest score obtained for the writing and punctuation criteria and the number of students who are below the average in that criterion. The student averages given are the arithmetic averages of the scores obtained by evaluating the writing and punctuation criteria of the essays written by the 57 students participating in the study.

The writing and punctuation factor found in the evaluation form constitutes the 10-point section. According to the results of the evaluation, in this section, the arithmetic mean of the student scores was 7,64 in the light of the scoring of the 1st researcher, and the arithmetic mean of the student scores was 8 in the light of the scoring of the 2nd researcher. The lowest score obtained for the first researcher was 2 and the number of students below average was 20. For the second researcher, the lowest score obtained was 3 and the number of students below average was 13. In Table 4, although it was observed that the averages of the scores given by the first and second researchers were approximately similar, it was striking that there was a difference in the number of students who were below average.

The characteristics required in the spelling and punctuation factor are also included in Table 1. The evaluations related to this factor can be seen in Table 4. When we look at the findings here, as a result of the evaluation of two different researchers, it was found that the average score of one researcher was 7.64 out of 10 and for the other researcher it was 8 out of 10. We can conclude that the researchers' scores obtained were close to one another. Mistakes made by students who were below the average were spelling and punctuation mistakes, as can be understood from the criteria. It can be clearly seen in the evaluation part of this criterion that the words are not written as they should be written, but by abbreviation, in a kind of social media language. It seems that the only punctuation mark that was paid attention to was the full stop. In particular, no importance was attached to the use of the comma, the sentences were written haphazardly. According to one researcher, 20 students remained below average, and according to the other, 13 students remained below average. According to the scoring

results of the researchers, although the averages are close to one another, there is a difference between the number of students who are below average.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Elementary school teachers, who will teach writing to young students, have an important role in the development of writing skills (Akkaya, 2018). Kim, Yang, Reyes and Connor (2021) also stated in a study in which they investigated the writing skills of elementary school students that elementary school teachers had the important task of teaching how to write. In this study, when the essays written by the teacher candidates were examined, the mean score of the essays according to the first and second researcher were usually above 50% in each factor, however, these scores can still be considered low for a elementary school teacher. In this study, as in the elementary school teacher candidates, it was determined that there were deficiencies in the skills of Turkish language teacher candidates to express their feelings and thoughts in writing. We cannot expect every teacher candidate to produce a literary product, but every teacher candidate should be able to effectively write down their thoughts and feelings (Akkaya, 2018).

It was observed that the highest average score was for the format criterion according to the scores of both researchers. The number of students who were below the average was also the highest in this criteria. It seems that the most remarkable reason for this was their failure to attach a title to their essays. When the studies in the literature were examined, it was seen that in a study conducted by Temizkan (2008), elementary school teachers generally did not put titles to the texts that they wrote. In the study of Bağcı (2007), which encountered a similar result, it was determined that most of the Turkish Teacher candidates did not attach a title to their essays. In addition, another issue that is similar in our study and Bağcı (2007)'s study was the lack of paragraph use by the teacher candidates. This shows that the written expression skills of the teacher candidates were average at best. Teacher candidates should pay attention to being able to express their thoughts logically and consistently with correct grammar and punctuation marks, and they should master the format in the essays that they write.

When the two items in the format criterion were examined, it was seen that the most points were given for these two items, namely the paper layout and legible writing skill. According to the two researchers, the most points were given for these aspects of the essay writing. Although the number of students who are below the average is high, the highest scores was still given for format criteria. It has been seen that teacher candidates often attach the necessary importance to the edges of the paper and the heads of paragraphs.

It has been observed that the features sought in the language and expression criteria were putting a title to the essay, providing an appropriate transition between paragraphs, conveying the main idea, supporting this main idea with auxiliary ideas, and enriching the content with quotations and examples. It has been concluded that teacher candidates do not attach much importance to their essays in terms of compliance with this criterion. In order to be able to practice the teaching profession, the individual must first have sufficient knowledge in the subject area that he/she is supposed to teach (Bağcı, 2007). Most teacher candidates did not enrich the content of their essays at all, and most of them did not even put a title to it. Although the conclusivity of the final statement is known as a factor that will elevate the essay, some teacher candidates did not give it the necessary importance. Reimer (2001) also stated when describing his research results of a writing workshop that all of his subjects were staring at their papers with blank minds. The same was observed for our teacher candidates in this research. Although there was a lot to write, it has been seen that candidates had difficulty

writing because there was no connectivity and impressionability. In terms of not enriching the content, our study also shows similarities with the studies of Elkatmış and Toptaş (2013). Elkatmış and Toptaş (2013) also conducted a study on the development levels of written expression of elementary school teacher candidates and found similar results, especially in the field of language and expression. In that study, although sentence structures were mostly established in accordance with the grammatical structure, it was also observed that some teacher candidates did not pay any attention to it. In essay writing, as important as it is to enrich the content, it is also important to express our thoughts with original intent. It is necessary to balance these two aspects. While some of our teacher candidates were able to establish this balance quite well, some of them attached importance to content enrichment and failed at expressing their own thoughts. From the evaluation results of our two researchers, these were the results for the language and expression criteria.

The grammar and punctuation criterion, which is the last one, is also the one where the lowest scores were given. The most mistakes were made in grammar and punctuation. Written expression requires systematizing thought, planning ahead and following the rules of grammar (Sever, 2000). As an explanation for why this criterion caused such low scores, it can be considered that teacher candidates wrote in anxiety so that they were subjected to time limitations. In a study conducted by Yıldız (2002), it was determined that the average skill level of applying grammar rules for teacher candidates was 73.16 out of 100, and the average skill level of applying punctuation marks was 36.08 out of 100. We can reach the conclusion that there is a similarity between our study and the study of Yıldız (2002). Instead of seeing the success rate above 50% in all 3 criteria as a sufficient success criterion, we should focus on reducing the number of students who are below average and how we can increase the scores of these criteria, and we should also focus more on writing studies throughout undergraduate education. Studies in areas such as correct sentence construction, grammar and punctuation are expected to affect the success in understanding and expression (Kavcar and Oğuzkan, 1997). As we saw when evaluating essays with different criteria in this study, Kellogg (2008:22) also stated that writing involves more than one process.

As a result, elementary school teacher candidates need to know to effectively write an essay, which is an example of the written expressions, taking into account the fact that they will become teachers in a few years and teach students how to write and punctuate. Anyone who can write should know their mother tongue well and write correctly (Deligönül, 1988). Using language incorrectly, not paying attention to format, grammar, and punctuation by the teachers while writing essays will also mislead students and hinder their writing abilities. As stated by Rachim, Tok and Kuş (2014), in order to instill the habit of writing, constant writing studies and giving feedback are important factors. For this reason, teacher candidates should be constantly required to write essays on different subjects throughout their undergraduate education, in order to improve their writing skills. After these repetitive writing studies, teacher candidates will gradually reduce their mistakes, and possibly, start to like the practice of writing. Over time, they may also be able to become teachers with ideas about various subjects.

### **Recommendations**

Our suggestions that we think will guide the future education of teachers are as follows.

- In teacher education, more emphasis should be placed on essay studies as writing exercises rather than providing only theoretical knowledge.

- In teaching programs, "Written Expression" courses should be increased and feedback should be given to the students after the essays written, so that they do not repeat their mistakes.
- This study should be expanded by increasing the universe even more and applying it in other universities.

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