



## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WRITTEN EXPRESSION SKILLS OF A FIRST GRADE STUDENT AT HOME, SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY PROGRAM: A CASE STUDY<sup>i</sup>

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### Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of a first grade student's writing at home, school, and university program on her written expression skills. In the research, all the student's writing was on subjects that she was interested in or ones she chose to write about from her lived experiences or familiar events. A case study method was used to analyze the pictures and literacy experiences. The study showed that the student's literacy skills had developed at an advanced level. Besides the process-based teaching program used at the school, the parents' habit of reading books to the student and encouraging her to make pictures of interesting events experienced during the preschool period also contributed to development of the written expression skills at an advanced level. The results of the research pointed out that literacy education should be perceived as a whole and that children should experience activities that support the development of literacy from early childhood.

**Keywords:** written skill-process, based writing approach, family support

### 1. Introduction

It is accepted that written expression is an act which requires thinking process at the highest level among language skills (Olinghouse & Santangelo, 2010). Within this context since early ages the development of the written expression skills not only underlies the success of the individuals' school life and determines the limits of their

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personal achievements in the future as well (McCarthy, 2001). In this respect in the first periods, in which the children's writing skills take from, families guiding their children encouraging them to do reading and writing activities is significantly important for literacy development. Writing is the act of putting down the opinions that the individual would like to share after structuring in mind in several contents such as emotion, idea, dream, experience and memory (Norton, 1997; Güneş, 2013).

Mankind presenting opinion, thought, experience and dreams to others' service through writing, enables them to spread through time and pass down from generation to generation (Kaplan, 2007). Writing is a kind of skill, which is needed to be used in several stages of life of an individual, as well as it is included in the skill types supposed to be used in an active way for students. Presently by developing the written expression skills of the students, making them qualified writers is considered as an important matter all over the world (Seban & Tavşanlı, 2015; Beach & Ward, 2013; Gerde, Bingham & Wasik, 2012; Smith, 2008). Although there are many skills that affect the literacy development of the individuals, it is seen that writing skill has become prominent during the process. In the report of the National Early Literacy Panel [NELP] (2008), it is stated that one of the six skills that are related with the literacy development at the highest level is the writing skill. Since the writing skill affects literacy and reading comprehension skills directly in the upcoming years, it is indicated as one of the most important skills which are needed to be developed since early childhood (Hammill, 2004; Gerde, Bingham & Wasik, 2012). Studies reveal that the students, who have advanced writing skills, are also very successful in coding, orthography, spelling, reading comprehension, recognizing words and phonological awareness (Shatil, Share & Levin, 2000; Aram 2005; Bloodgood, 1999; Blair & Savage, 2006). In this regard developing the written expression skills of the students since early ages is considered significant for academic and personal success of the students.

The approaches of how to teach writing to students and what kind of writings should be written have changed through time. In the past the writing studies that were mostly analyzed as output based, give way to an approach that underlies constructivist understanding, and a process, in which the production of written texts are formed, is noticed (Calkins, 1986; Willis, 2001).

Process based writing approach, which was developed by Graves (1983) and prepared considering constructivist model, focuses on points such as teachers' helping students think on the writing matter and the writing act, encouraging teacher and peer feedback, and reviewing writing drafts studied, correction and sharing with friends (Calkins, 1986; Willis, 2001). Since this process obliges different skills work conformably, it may become difficult for students (Vygotski, 1998; Olinghouse &

Santangelo, 2010). At this point it is thought that while studying writing with students at younger ages, using graphic organizers will contribute to students form their writings more freely (Tavşanlı & Seban, 2015; McKnight, 2010). Because graphic organizers are indicated as one of the visual teaching methods that provides convenience in points like students' organizing the subjects they designed in their minds systematically, saving major and minor ideas together, remembering, returning the information, classification and identification (Lubin & Sevak, 2007). In addition, it is known that graphic organizers are useful training tools in terms of increasing the understandability of the information to be learned and organizing the content and the ideas (McKnight, 2010).

Another important factor to develop writing skills of the children is the family. In the first periods, in which writing skills of the children take form, guiding of the family encouraging their children is very important for the literacy development (Ehri & Roberts, 2006; Saracho, 1997; Bindman, Skibbe, Hindman, Aram & Morrison, 2014). It is known that most of the families do reading studies daily in the first literacy process. However in the studies it is reported that in order to develop the writing skills of the students, doing writing studies with the children is more effective (Aram & Biron, 2004; Ritchey, 2008). Moreover, it is stated that few families contribute to their children's writing skills development guiding them well regarding writing matter (Wood, 2002). For this reason, families need to make the right writing activities with their children at home learning basic literacy strategies and contribute to their children's writing development (Neumann, Hood, & Neumann, 2008).

Studies performed on this matter revealed that, together with the teaching methods used, home life, which contributes to the personality formation of the student, in other words parental manner of approaching is also important in the development of the written expression skills of the students (Cottone, 2012; Curenton & Justice, 2008; DeBaryshe, Binder, & Buell, 2000). Similarly, it is determined that the literacy experiences and attitudes of the parents are related with the guidance they give regarding writing (Powell, Diamond, Bojczyk & Gerde, 2008). In addition, a family supported study regarding the development of the written expression skills of the students at first grade is not encountered.

In Turkey, it is seen that learning outcomes regarding the acquisition of writing skills take place in course books beginning from the first grade of the primary school considering process based writing approaches (M.E.B. 2015 Ministry of National Education). For instance when the elementary school first grade writing skills are examined, learning outcomes such as writing meaningful and grammatical sentences, expressing the writings after making sure, identifying/correcting letter or spelling

mistakes and sharing writings, are seen (M.E.B., 2015). However, when the Turkish course 1. grade learning outcomes in the Turkish Course Teaching Program Book (1-8 grade) (M.E.B. 2015) are examined, a learning outcome regarding forming a text is not found. Also it is seen that academic studies are mostly on the evaluations of "Sound Based Sentence Method" which is used in first literacy process and first read and write learning processes (Tok, Tok & Mazi, 2008; Çelenk, 2008; Obalar, 2009; Durukan & Alver, 2008). Thus, both in 1. grade Turkish Course Teaching Program and in the academic studies, it is seen that there are deficiencies in the studies performed regarding the development of 1. grade students' skills of creating a text.

When the concerning literature is examined, the lack of a study relating to what extent elementary school first grade students' writing skills are affected by directive and educative studies to be done in home, school and university triangle, is obviously felt. From this point of view, the aim of this study is determined as identifying the effect of writing activities to be made in home-school-university triangle on written expression skills of a first grade student. At this stage including the family in the process, a 8 week process based writing program, which was prepared with the help of the graphic organizers, was applied to the student and the results of the application is evaluated.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 The Pattern of the Research**

Within this study, in which the effect of writing activities to be made in home-school and university triangle on the written expression skills of a first grade student is examined, case study method, which is one of the qualitative research methods, was used. Case study is a method, which is related to real life experiences in which the intervention of the researcher is inadequate but the researcher deal with identification, examination and in depth analysis intensively as a whole in one or more events (Yin, 2013; Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2011). Due to the fact that case studies target to examine a person, situation or phenomena multi-directionally and deeply, they give more detailed and real-like information compared to general scanning studies (Merriam, 1988).

### **2.2 Participator**

In this study, the researcher studied with a first grade student, who has a normal intelligence level and has no cognitive advantages or disadvantages compared to his/her peers. The name and the school of the student is concealed as required by the

ethical codes. In the research, the student is mentioned as “D” which is the first letter of his name. “D” is a first grade student at the age of seven and attends in a public school in Nilüfer district in the city of Bursa. “D” is the younger child of a family with two children. “D”’s parents work as academic members at university in the field of science education. Parents read audio-music, fabric and pop-up books to “D”, who started speaking in the normal developmental period, since s/he was two years old. “D” was encouraged by the parents to make pictures of his/her observations and experiences, in preschool period. Within this process “D”, who attended preschool education, joined interactive reading studies in the classroom. When s/he started 1. grade of the elementary school “D”, who did not read and write just like his/her peers, started to read and write in the normal period. Within this process “D”’s family did not hurry on the matter of reading and writing process and “D” continued reading and writing studies with the teacher. “D”’s family, teacher and the school management were interviewed regarding participation in this research and after taking necessary permissions studies with “D” started.

### **2.3 Data Collection Tools**

In this research, data gathering tools consist of written expression outputs taken from the student, and interviews had with the student, parents and teacher and also the observations of the researcher.

### **2.4 Application and Teaching Process**

This study which is performed regarding the development of the written expression skills of a first grade student involves 11 week process. Within this process in the first week, the researcher examined the written expression outputs produced in the class and out of the class, and had interviews with the family, teacher and himself/herself. In the interview “D” was addressed some questions regarding the concept of writing, the importance of writing, the place of writing in his/her life, his/her interest in writing and frequency of writing. Later on “D” was informed about the writing study to be performed and was asked to remember the exciting events s/he lived and write down if possible. “D” was reminded that the writing studies to be performed may consist of his/her own experiences, observation, living and events s/he lived. “D” was free to choose the subject s/he was going to write.

The researcher, who is a specialist in teaching writing, performed a writing workshop study with “D” for 8 weeks considering the stages of process based writing approach with the help of graphic organizers. The study firstly started with the projection of a subject that s/he wanted to write about. “D” shared the subject s/he

wanted to write with the researcher in a detailed way and the researcher asked questions at times. At this stage “D” was supported especially in the matters of organizing, planning, determining the writing sequence, the major and the minor themes of the subject s/he wants to write about. After the writing preparation speech, which took 10-15 minutes, choosing one of the graphic organizers that were prepared appropriate for the level of “D” in advance, the researcher introduced how to use them.

The graphic organizers were prepared appropriate for the level of “D” by the researcher (picture 1 and picture 2). The graphic organizers prepared were checked by an academic member and an elementary teacher and decided to be appropriate for the study. For each writing study, a different graphic organizer was used. After “D” recognized the graphic organizer and learned how to use it, transformed the subject s/he planned to write in his/her mind on the graphic organizers primarily. In the meantime guiding “D”, the researcher asked questions about the writings in the graphic organizers.

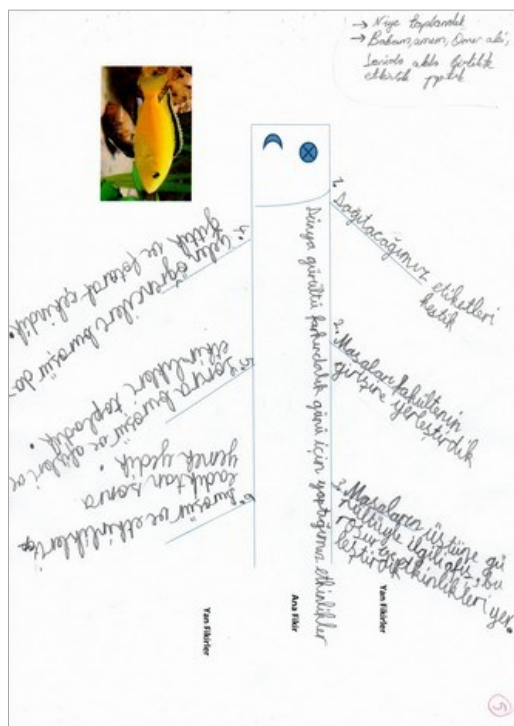


Figure 1: Example for the Organizers Used

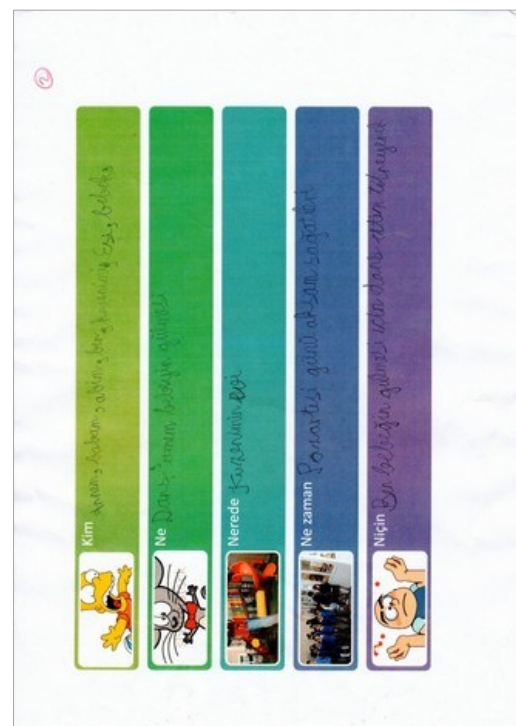


Figure 2: Examples for the Graphic Organizers Used

After the graphic organizer was filled up, the draft of the writing was transmitted to the writing studies papers existed in the field to make pictures and prepared by the researcher. At this stage staying in communication with “D” the text transmitted was mentioned. Reading the text with “D” the points s/he wanted to add or take out were determined and necessary adjustments were made. In the next stage, “D” was asked to

make a picture related with the writing in each page after completing his/her writing. Thus, with the purpose of drawing, reading that page once more was provided and revising process continued. Meanwhile “D” was observed to read the writing more carefully since s/he was going to make a picture about it. After completing the picturing, the whole writing was read together with the researcher and they had interviews regarding the pictures.

In the study, during writing processes family supported actively in the matter of writing studies at home. In accordance with the information and the instruction obtained from the researcher “D”’s written expression outputs were read again at home and “D” was interviewed about the writing. When the writing applications carried out at the university were not completed, having an interview with “D”’s parents, the researcher informed them about how the studies should be continued at home. In addition, parents took information from “D” at home about the events that excited him/her and s/he wanted to write about, they tried to make “D” talk in order not to forget. At this stage, parents informed the researcher at times taking notes.

## **2.5 The Analyze of the Data**

In the analysis of the quantitative data obtained, all the written expression outputs of the students were evaluated according to the evaluation criteria within the context of 6+1 Analytic Writing and Evaluation Model. 6+1 Analytic Writing and Evaluation Model was developed in response to the need of a gradual evaluation tool in the writing process by the researchers and teachers in North West Regional Education Laboratory in 1980s in order to be able to evaluate features a qualified writing should have (Grundy, 1986; Özkara, 2007). Accordingly the processes of forming a good writing and evaluation are:

1. Ideas: The development of the message the writing intend to give,
2. Organization: It constitutes the structure of the writing. The reasonable sequence of ideas and meaning flow,
3. Literary style: The personality the writer give to the writing, its mode,
4. Word selection: In the writing using rich, effective and exact words that illuminate the reader,
5. Sentence fluency: In the writing using the right and fluent expressions,
6. Orthography: Writing the text obeying orthography rules,
7. Presentation: The appearance of the text on the page as a whole, legibility of the text.

Within this context, the written expression outputs of the student were scored from 1 to 5 for each category. In addition, in each text the number of the words used

was considered and included to the analysis. Thus it was attempted to determine whether the student used more words or not in the process of forming the text.

In the qualitative part of the study content analysis method was used in order to understand the words, expressions, comments and characters obtained in the interviews from audio records of the student, teacher and the parents and to reveal what the statements meant (Merriam, 1998; Kızıltepe, 2015). After transcription of the audio records obtained from the interviews had with the student, teacher and parents, all interviews were examined one by one and appropriate codes were developed for the expressions. The codes obtained were grouped under similar titles, themes were accessed and codes and themes were matched. Also giving place to the statements taken from the expressions of the student, teacher and “D”s parents, it was aimed to support codes and themes with examples. In addition to all these, including the observations of the researcher, who carried on the application process, it was aimed to support the interviews had with the student and teacher.

### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 Findings Obtained From the Quantitative Part

The scores obtained from the written expression outputs of the student, who was scored according to the evaluation criteria within the scope of 6+1 Analytic Writing and Evaluation Model, are indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1:** The Scores That the Student Took from the Written Expression Outputs

	Ideas	Organization	Style	Word Selection	Sentence Fluency	Orthography	Presentation	Total Score	Number of Words
<b>1.writing</b>	2	2	1	2	2	3	1	13	52
<b>2.writing</b>	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	17	65
<b>3.writing</b>	3	4	2	2	2	4	3	20	75
<b>4.writing</b>	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	25	107
<b>5.writing</b>	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	31	131

When Table 1 is observed, it is seen that the student scored 13 in the first writing study and used 52 words in the written expression output. It is determined that the student not only increased his/her scores in the writing study but also took better scores generally throughout the study in all criteria. The number of the words used in the writings increased in each study and in the last study the student used more than twice as much of the words used in the first study. When the Table is examined carefully, it is seen that the field that the student proved the maximum success was presentation and



the least was orthography. The first and the last writing of the student are indicated in picture 3 and picture 4.



**Figure 3:** The First Writing of the Student



Figure 4: The Last Writing of the Student

In this part of the study, the data obtained was evaluated according to 7 different criteria. Considering the concerning criteria some examples of the students' writings are presented below.

**Table 2:** Examples from the Written Expression Outputs of the Student

Criteria	"D"s First Writing	"D"s Last Writing
<b>1. Ideas</b>	My mother, my father and my brother and I went to my cousin's home on Monday evening and when we went there, they had their babies at home. Arda is not 1 year old yet. Arda has chubby cheeks. When he smiles, it is cute. I danced to make him fun. When I danced, Arda smiled. I was very happy.	Today is April 27 Wednesday.
<b>2. Organization</b>		Today is a special day. It is the world awareness day against noise. My father, my mother my brother Ömer and sister Jonida came together to make an activity.
<b>3. Style</b>	I danced to make him fun. When I danced, Arda smiled. I was very happy.	I was very tired today when I was making the activities but I had fun too. I don't want schools to make noise anymore because of today.
<b>4. Word Selection</b>	Arda has chubby cheeks. When he smiles, it is cute.	Silent and quiet school means successful and healthy kids.
<b>5. Sentence Fluency</b>	My mother, my father and my brother and I went to my cousin's home on Monday evening and when we went there, they had their babies at home. Arda is not 1 year old yet. Arda has chubby cheeks. When he smiles, it is cute. I danced to make him fun. When I danced, Arda smiled. I was very happy.	Today firstly, my father, my brother Ömer and I cut the labels we are going to hand out especially for today. After we cut the labels, we put tables in the entrance of the faculty. Then we put the labels we cut to the tables. After we put the leaflets, we handed them to the students and we had our photos taken all together. When the activity was over we gathered leaflets, banners and labels. Later on we had a meal with my father and my mother, my brother Ömer and Jonida sister.
<b>6. Orthography</b>	My mother, my father and my brother and I went to my cousin's home on Monday (should start with small letter) evening and when we went there, they had their babies at home. Arda is not 1 year old yet (full stop at the end of the sentence) Arda have chubby cheeks. (possessive suffix) when he smiles it is cute.(the sentence should start with capital letters) I	Today is April 27 Wednesday. Today is a special day. It is the world awareness day against noise. My father, my mother my brother Ömer and I came together to make an activity for today. (inflectional suffix and adverb confusion)

danced shaking to make him  
 fan.(miswriting) When I danced Arda  
 (private names have capital  
 letters)smiled (full stop at the end of  
 the sentence) I was very happy  
 (sentence should start with capital  
 letters and full stop at the end)

**7. Presentation**

See Picture 3 and 4

See Picture 3 and 4

**3.2 Findings Obtained From the Qualitative Part**

In this part of the study, the interviews with the student, teacher and parents and the observations of the researcher will be presented.

**A. The data obtained from the interviews with the student.** According to the results of the interviews with the student, it is seen that s/he uttered 28 statements under 7 different themes. These themes consist of the features of a good writer, the importance of writing, attitude towards writing, the development of writing skills, the evaluation of the writing program, the attitude towards getting help and the attitude towards sharing the writings.

While explaining the features of writer “D” stated that a good writer should be smart, helpful, attentive, who do not upset the teacher and listens carefully, read a lot and lean to get help, laborious and someone who pay attention to details. The features “D” stated while defining a good writer are indicated in Table 3.

**Table 3:** The Features of a Good Writer

The Features of a Good Writer	f	%
Smart	1	10
Does not upset the teacher	1	10
Helpful	1	10
Listens to the teacher carefully	1	10
Reads a lot	1	10
Leans to get help	2	20
Attentive	1	10
Laborious	1	10
Pays attention to details	1	10

For instance;

D: *“If somebody is a good writer, s/he is smart and does not upset his/her teacher.”*

D: *“Also when somebody says something s/he is someone who contributes to the offer.”*

D: *"It should be detailed and well written. Should labor. Should be attentive."*

"D" uttered three statements towards the attitude of getting help. While doing writing studies "D" uttered that s/he wrote better when s/he got help, and felt happy at the same time. The features "D" uttered under the theme of the attitude towards getting help are indicated in Table 4.

**Table 4:** The Attitude towards Getting Help

The Attitude towards Getting Help	f	%
Increasing the writing skill	2	67
Feeling happy	1	33

For example;

D: *"I become happy. Because while helping me your purpose is not bad it is good. Also you make me write well."*

D: *"I mean you help me then I can write better, I can write more detailed."*

Another theme, which consists of the statements "D" uttered, constitutes from the ideas towards sharing the writings. "D" stated that s/he became happy when s/he shared her/his writings. In addition, s/he stated that sharing the writings support his/her fighting spirit. The attitudes "D" uttered towards sharing the writings are indicated in Table 5.

**Table 5:** The Attitude towards Sharing the Writings

The Attitude Towards Sharing the Writings	f	%
Feeling Happy	1	50
Feeling As a Fighter	1	50

For instance;

D: *"Yes I mean I become happy. If they see that my writings are beautiful."*

D: *"If they do not like it, if my writing is bad then I make an effort to make my writing well. I struggle."*

In the interviews, "D" talked about the studies and applications performed in order to make his/her writing better and develop writing skill. Accordingly, "D", who stated that s/he read books for the development of the writing skills, also uttered that s/he performed writing applications as well. The studies "D" performed for the development of the writing skills are indicated in Table 6.

**Table 6:** The Development of the Writing Skills

The Development of the Writing Skills	f	%
Reading books	1	50
Performing Writing studies	1	50

For instance;

D: *"I read books in order to write better. Also I write a lot."*

Another theme emerged from the results of "D"s statements consists of the views on the writing program carried out within the context of the study. "D" stated that the writing program carried out enable him/her to remember the information to be written and organize the writing better. It is seen that "D" generally stated that the program developed his/her writing success. "D"s views on the writing program are indicated in Table 7.

**Table 7:** The Evaluation of the Writing Program

The Evaluation of the Writing Program	f	%
Increasing the writing success	1	33
Remembering the information to be written	1	33
Increasing the organization skills	1	33

For instance:

D: *"Graphic organizers make my writings easier. Because if I start to write in details and if I forget what I will write, I look from there immediately."*

D: *"This helps me plan my writing. By the help of this study now I can write better texts."*

In the interviews with "D", it was seen that "D" developed expressions regarding the importance of writing. According to "D" the reasons of the importance of writing were based upon the functions of affecting academic success, providing individual assumptions and fulfilling the social needs. "D"s views on the importance of writing are indicated in Table 8.

**Table 8:** The Importance of Writing

The Importance of Writing	f	%
Academic success	1	33
Individual assumption	1	33
Social needs	1	33

For instance;

D: *"For example if I am at the university they give me grades according to my writing. Exams are evaluated according to that."*

D: *"To be a good writer. We should write well for ourselves."*

D: *"Because if I did not know how to write or if I cannot write when my mother told me to write something I wouldn't write. Then I would be ashamed of it that's why."*

The last theme obtained from the statements of "D" includes "D"s attitude towards writing. Regarding writing "D" uttered that when s/he wrote s/he felt happy, loved writing and associated writing with his/her own life. The views of "D" s/he uttered under the theme of attitude towards writing are indicated in Table 9.

**Table 9:** Attitude towards Writing

Attitude Towards Writing	f	%
Association with real life	3	60
Feeling love	1	20
Feeling happy	1	20

For instance;

D: *"Writing my experiences pleases me more. I have more fun. My experiences and my writing become closer."*

D: *"I become happy as long as I write. I love writing very much that's why."*

**B. The data obtained from the interviews with the teacher.** According to the results of the interviews with the teacher, it is seen that "D"s teacher uttered 22 statements under 3 different themes. These themes consist of the features of a good writer relating "D"s writing skills, "D"s past of writing and "D" attitudes towards writing. The teacher uttered 3 statements about the "D"s past of writing. These statements are; before starting to write "D" was quite successful in drawing lines and dictation studies and also read a lot of books. Teacher's views towards "D" past of writing are indicated in Table 10.

**Table 10:** "D"s Past of Writing According to the Teacher

"D"s past of writing according to the teacher	f	%
Successful in drawing lines	1	33
Reads a lot	1	33
Successful in dictation	1	33

For instance;

T: *"S/he was quite a successful child in drawing lines."*

T: *"I guess since s/he was willing to read and write and comprehend what is said immediately s/he writes well."*

T: *“S/he was one of the best students in writing what is said in dictation studies and perceiving the sound.”*

In the interview, the teacher often expressed that “D” was a successful writer and stated the features that a good writer should have over “D”. At this point, the teacher uttered that “D” had a character in the writings, the writings are well stylistically and had strong expressions, successful in orthography and s/he made few mistakes, was successful in transferring what s/he understood, could organize the events and create coherence and could use a fluent language together with rich vocabulary. The views of teacher regarding the features of a good writer relating “D”’s writing skills are indicated in Table 11.

**Table 11:** The Features of a Good Writer Relating “D”’s Writing Skills According to the Teacher

The features of a good writer relating “D”’s writing skills according to the teacher	f	%
Stylistically writing well	2	14
Correct use orthographic rules	2	14
The existence of writing character	2	14
Adaptation	1	7
Strong expressions	1	7
The power of transferring what is understood	1	7
Organizing the sequence of events	1	7
Create coherence	1	7
Rich vocabulary	1	7
Fluent narration	1	7
Successful presentation	1	7

For instance;

T: *“S/he uses the lines of the notebook very well for example some children go down quickly. Although they see those lines and in spite of my warnings they suddenly go down. However “D” does not do that.”*

T: *“I also like orthography dimension. Using orthography and punctuation marks, starting the sentence with capital letters, putting question mark instead of exclamation point but of course it will settle in time.”*

T: *“I think s/he has very good writing skills. Moreover the writing has a character. Even more recently it crossed my mind without knowing that I was going to make this speech with you.”*

T: *“...right in here I see “D” very successful in terms of reading comprehension and put down on paper.”*

T: *“S/he can make fluent sentences and put them down on paper.”*

Finally, regarding “D”’s attitude towards writing the teacher stated that, “D” was very willing to writing studies, felt the absence of it when s/he did not write, enjoyed



writing studies and felt love. The views of the teacher towards writing are indicated in Table 12.

**Table 12: "D"'S Attitude towards Writing According to the Teacher**

<b>"D"'s attitude towards writing according to the teacher</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Willingness towards writing studies	2	40
Feeling love for writing studies	1	20
Enjoying writing studies	1	20
Feeling absence of it when s/he does not write	1	20

For instance;

T: "D" always says that teacher can we write to our notebook? Teacher I want to write to my notebook."

T: *"I give them small texts for them to write. Several times s/he stated that s/he liked them writing them pretty much."*

T: *"Even more yesterday s/he said teacher we haven't written to our notebooks for a few days why don't we write."*

**C. The data obtained from the interviews with parents.** According to the results of the interviews with the parents of "D", it is seen that "D" parents uttered 33 statements under 4 different themes. These themes consist of the features of a good writer regarding "D"'s writing skill, "D"'s writing past, motivation for writing studies and views on writing program carried out.

The parent uttered 4 statements about "D"'s writing past. These statements are in the way that "D" was encouraged to do simple line and drawing studies before starting to write and "D" listened to his/her parents reading books regularly. The views of "D"'s parent towards "D"'s writing past are indicated in Table 13.

**Table 13: "D"'s Writing Past**

<b>"D" s writing past</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Doing simple line and drawing studies	2	33
Reading books to "D"	2	33
Making draw pictures	1	17
Positive attitude towards writing	1	17

For instance;

P: *"I think when s/he was 1,5 or 2 years old we started with appropriate books that such a child could understand and attribute to his/her sense of touch since they were made of cloth or cardboard."*

P: *“Also especially we encouraged him/her to make pictures of the events s/he observed, lived or saw.”*

P: *“In preschool I guess they had a few studies on writing letters and numbers. Also they had a study to make every child write their names.”*

P: *“I mean s/he was always interested in writing and drawing.”*

It is seen that “D”’s parent evaluated the features that a good writer should have together with the features “D” had in writing. At this point “D” parent defined a good writer as someone who had an effective verbal expression, successful expression strength, presentation talent and persons that write texts with qualified content. The views of “D”’s parent regarding the features of a good writer relating “D”’s writing skill are indicated in Table 14.

**Table 14:** The Features of a Good Writer Regarding “D”’s Writing Skill According to the Parent

The features of a good writer regarding “D”’s writing skill according to the parent	f	%
Effective verbal expression	1	25
Successful expression strength	1	25
Successful presentation	1	25
Qualified content	1	25

For instance;

P: *“I think that way his/her verbal transfer I mean s/he can express experiences very easily.”*

P: *“S/he can convey his/her thoughts using conjunctions, S/he has a successful expression strength.”*

P: *“His/her writing skill is not bad due to the content of the writings and his/her handwriting is decent...it looks good.”*

“D”’s parent uttered some statements about encouraging “D” for writing studies. At this point “D”’s parent stated that they bought some presents for him/her after writing studies. In addition “D”’s parent stated that while doing writing studies they encouraged “D” for writing especially the events “D” experienced. The parent uttered that “D” avoided giving negative feedback during the writing studies and tried to give feedback to the point that s/he considered positive. Herein the parent said that making “D” draw pictures about the writings motivated “D” positively. The views of “D”’s parents about encouraging students for writing studies are indicated in Table 15.

**Table 15:** Encouraging Students for Writing Studies According to the Parent

Encouraging students for writing studies according to the parent	f	%
Buying presents	1	20
Making them to write the experiences	1	20
Making them to draw pictures	1	20
Avoiding negative feedback	1	20
Giving special feedback to good points	1	20

For instance;

P: *"I could never imagine that the diary notebook would encourage "D" for writing. If I knew I would buy a more beautiful one long before. However s/he found it in the toy store by chance and wanted to buy. After buying the diary, s/he started to write at home. The diary encouraged him/her pretty much."*

P: *"Still in the first place I started to encourage for example we went for a walk to a garden in the woods I asked whether s/he wanted to write about it and s/he said yes. If s/he liked it s/he started to write and s/he can write without help."*

P: *"I never criticize. Because I know that the criticism of the writings of the children whether grammatically or in terms of other aspects will cause them write less. Instead I try to emphasize the points that I recognize in the writing."*

The theme, about which "D"s mother made statements primarily, consists of the views s/he uttered on the writing program carried out. Herein the parent stated that the writing program carried out increased the writing success, was useful in developing positive attitude towards writing studies, the application was appropriate for effective guidance and also the parent gave some advice for making the program better. The views of "D"s parent regarding the writing program carried out are indicated in Table 16.

**Table 16:** The Views of "D"s Parent Regarding the Writing Program Carried Out

The views of "D"s parent regarding the writing program carried out	f	%
Increasing writing success	5	31
Positive attitude towards writing studies	4	25
Advice for the program	4	25
Effective/successful guidance	2	13
More willingness for writing	1	6

For instance;

P: *"I mean I see a development in his/her skills that s/he can write longer, it enabled him/her to have a better perception on writing."*

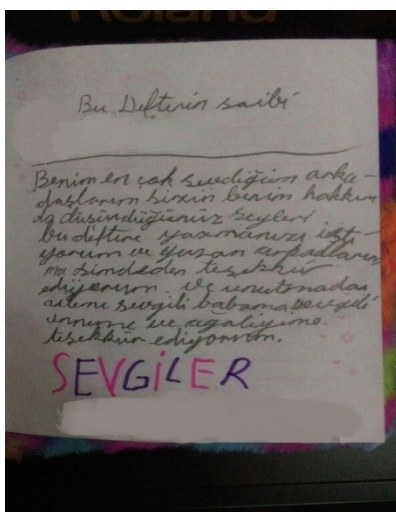
P: "Although s/he leaves school at 16:20 I mean although s/he is partly tired, the fact that s/he comes here and do writing studies with you indicates that s/he enjoys it."

P: "S/he says detailed writings etc. s/he not only knows about the main idea and there are details as well which means it enables a frame to constitute in his/her mind."

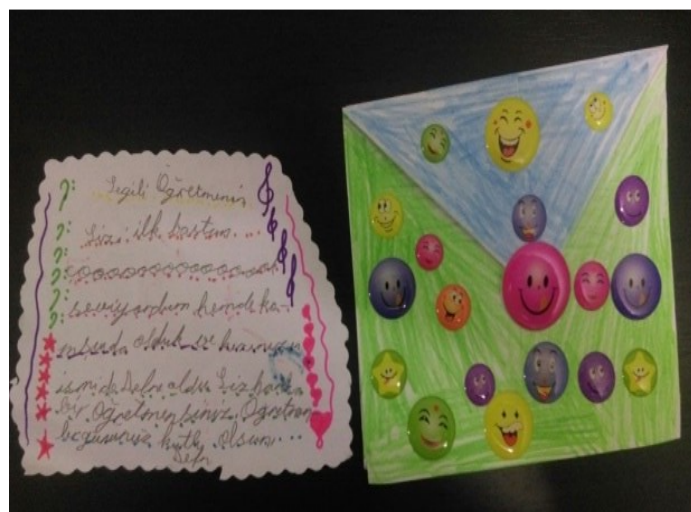
P: "Once I had the opportunity to observe one of the studies you performed with "D". What I liked or found interesting was that you as a specialist enter into a dialogue with a student and leave the process of pulling him/her to an upper point from where s/he is and guiding for writing is very favorable I suppose."

P: "Also the environment, in which distractions, entrances and exits are less, is very important in writing it is important in reading too but in writing it is more important."

**D. The data obtained from the observations of the researcher.** According to the data obtained from the observations of the researcher, it is seen that the researcher lays emphasis on four points. These points are the titles of the increase of positive attitude regarding student's writing studies with the program carried out, the increase in the writing success, the increase of awareness level of the student towards writing and association of writing with daily life. First of all it is seen that the writing program carried out help the student participate in the writing studies and increase the will of maintaining these studies day by day. In addition writing became a part of the student's life and s/he wants to do writing studies concerning his/her experiences without delay, proved that the student associates life with the writings seriously. For example "D" wrote an introduction to the diary that his/her mother bought from the bookstore and worked excitedly in order to make his/her friends and teacher write their thoughts and feelings about himself/herself (picture 5 and 6).



**Figure 5:** The text "D" wanted his/her friends to write about himself/herself



**Figure 6:** The letter "D" wrote to his/her teacher

As a result of the studies performed with this, it is observed that in the writings the student gained awareness in the matter of writing, and paid attention to the content, word selection, fluency and sequence of events. Early on when the study started while it was seen that the student had trouble in planning and organizing the writings, at the end of the study it was seen that these troubles were overcome. As a result of the studies performed and the program carried out the researcher reported that the writing success of the student increased.

#### **4. Discussion**

In the study quantitative and the qualitative findings pointed out an advanced increase in the written expression success of the student. It is seen that the student got a higher score in each step of criterion evaluated. It is determined that among these criteria the field which proved the maximum development was the presentation step, the field which proved minimum development was the orthography step. In the writing of the students in the beginning of the study, the existence of less orthographic mistakes already can be accepted as the reason for this situation. The reason for the maximum development in the presentation dimension is the instructions of the researcher throughout the applications performed and that the student was willing to write. The interviews had with the student, teacher and the parent point out "D"s enthusiasm for writing. In addition, throughout the program carried out it is thought that the student's exposure to writing processes was also effective in this development.

In the study, it is seen that besides the increase of written expression success the use of vocabulary improved two times more nearly. Although the student used 52 words in the first written text, s/he reached 131 words in the last written text study, making the number of words used more than twice as much. Karatay (2007) states that the development of the students' vocabulary is closely associated with their basic word attack skills. Özbay and Melanlıoğlu (2008) express that the vocabulary of the students' needs to be developed in order to enable them express themselves better. In this sense it can be said that the program carried out is useful in terms of enabling students express themselves better.

Among the reasons for the success of the writing program carried out, it is thought that process based writing teaching approach used in the application was effective. It is revealed that the writing teaching program carried out, developed the written expression skills significantly. Process based writing teaching program used in the study, focuses on issues like helping students think on writing matter and writing act, encouraging peer and teacher feedback, reviewing writing drafts they study,

revising and sharing with friends (Calkins, 1986; Willis, 2001). Studies on this matter assert that creative writing studies performed considering process based writing approach has a positive effect on the student's written expression skill (Pardlow, 2003; Öztürk, 2007; Temizkan, 2011; Feuer, 2011; Erdoğan, 2012).

In the study, one of the factors that contribute to the increase in the student's written expression success is the graphic organizers used in the process of creating text. This result coincides with the results that indicate graphic organizers are effective in the development of the students' written expression skills (Culbert, 2008; Katayama & Robinson, 2000; Tavşanlı & Seban, 2015). For elementary school first and second grade students organizing the pieces of information and combining them and doing writing studies is quite difficult (Seban & Tavşanlı, 2015). According to the observations of the researcher, graphic organizers are useful concerning organization of structure that provides texts constitute. As it is known learning only grammar or orthographic rules is not enough for writing a text (Sharples, 2003). At the same time teaching the students the ways of editing and forming a text is necessary. Within this frame it is advised that graphic organizers should be used by students in organizing and combining the pieces of information.

In the study, all of the studies performed with the student consisted of subjects that s/he chose among the events or experiences s/he lived or was interested in. Because, studies performed indicate that the foreknowledge possessed about the subject to be written is effective on the quality written expression outputs (McCutchen, Covill, Hoyne & Mildes, 1994). Offering options to the student about the subjects to be written may have affected the attitude toward writing positively. Because, students generally tend to write their own experiences (Ruddell, 2006). In the study, the student decided to write a text when s/he wanted to. S/he was asked to consider the events s/he lived while making this decision. As a result of this it was observed that the student shared the experiences with the researcher before writing and that s/he was very happy during the writing process. On the other hand, it is known that the students' performing writing studies regarding the subjects they are interested in is quite effective in terms of having positive attitude towards writing (Bruning & Horn, 2000). Students' performing writing studies toward their own wishes and interests fosters their enthusiasm towards writing (Nauman, 2007). Similarly, researchers state that students tend to write events in which they are interested and they occupy in the process in person (Bus & Out, 2009; Lee, 2008).

Another reason for the increase of the student's success is the family support. The interviews indicate that it starts from the preschool and continue in the process of the study. The family's reading books to the students during the preschool period and

encouraging drawing pictures comes out as a factor that affects literacy development in a positive way. It is a known fact that the process of reading books advances language development besides vocabulary, increasing the level of readiness toward writing. Researches point out that past literacy experiences shape the later literacy skills in life (Collier, 2010; Seban & Tavşalı, 2015).

It can be advised to families that they frequently read books appropriate for the children's level beginning from the babyhood considering the advance development observed in the writing skill. In the education system of Holland, Ministry of Education sends a package to the families that have 3 year old children. Within this package, there are books to read, activities to develop the literacy skills of the children and leaflets to increase the literacy awareness of the family. Accordingly, in the matter of literacy education in favor of creating awareness in every part of the society the families, whose children are over a certain age, it is advised to make various activities to develop the literacy skills of the children (Erginer, 2012). From this point of view, those who regulate the education policies should be in charge in terms of performing such activities. Besides beginning from the preschool period, the children should be encouraged to draw pictures and for the development of their finger muscles, play dough games should be performed. The experience of a rich literacy past helps students find themselves competent positively beginning from the writing studies and participate in the writing studies with the feeling of confidence.

Another contribution of the family to the success of the program is that they were in cooperation with the researcher encouraging the student during the writing studies and guiding the student with the part of the studies to be applied at home. Studies carried out reveal that family support is quite effective in the literacy development of the children (Worzalla at al., 2009; Gerde, Foster & Skibbe, 2014). Especially for the acquisition of competences such as coding, alphabet knowledge and increasing vocabulary, it is emphasized that the family support needs to be included to the child's literacy development process (Otto, 2008; Worzalla at al., 2009; Aram, 2010; Gerde, Bingham & Wasik, 2012).

Due to the fact that the study performed is carried out with a student, its generalizability is quite limited. In further studies the program to be carried out need to be performed with a larger sample group. Besides, the effect of the program prepared can be tested after being applied to the students in different grades. It is thought that the interpretation of the results of the quantitative researches to be performed explaining through qualitative research methods in a detailed way will contribute to the development of the program. Thus, further studies in this field will not only contribute

to the concerning literature and reveal which methods and techniques should be used in terms of the development of written expression skills as well.

The study performed indicates the importance of activities that will include family support for the literacy development of children beginning from the preschool period. It is not right to think that literacy education starts in the first grade of the elementary school. Within this, context parents need to perceive literacy education as a whole and should be involved in activities that support the development of children beginning from the early ages.

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