Verba Volant, Scripta Manent: Writing Habits of Pre-Service Elementary Teachers*

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Purpose: Writing is the most challenging language skill that is acquired the last. Previous studies demonstrated that problems had been experienced in the acquisition of writing skills and habit at the all educational levels. Thus, elementary teachers and pre-service elementary teachers have significant responsibility in the acquisition of writing skills and transformation of these skills into a habit. The present study aims to examine what pre-service elementary teachers' writing habits are like. **Research Methods:** This research featured 374 pre-service elementary teachers and was based around an explanatory-sequential mixed-method design. About the qualitative portion of this study, seven students are currently doing their practicums in a fourth-grade setting.

The data were collected using a "writing habit scale" and a semi-structured interview form. A combination of descriptive and predictive statistics was used, alongside content analysis to analyze all of the quantitative and qualitative data, respectively.

Findings: The findings revealed that the pre-service elementary teachers frequently applied spelling and punctuation rules and consider themselves decent writers. They also occasionally used writing as a means of communication and employ writing strategies; however, very few write for creative purposes. The qualitative findings, on the other hand, showed that the pre-service elementary teachers faced certain obstacles and difficulties regarding the actual process of writing.

Implications for Research and Practice: The findings obtained in this study suggest that pre-service elementary teachers mostly write within the context of learning and social communication and that they face setbacks when it comes to being able to write in more formal communicative and creative contexts. What can, thus, be concluded is that pre-service elementary teachers ought to receive formal training in writing as well as be encouraged to write.

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Introduction

Language is the most powerful of communication systems, as well as a multidimensional phenomenon. It is a versatile, highly developed system that enables human beings to transfer their thoughts, emotions, and desires onto others by relying on common elements and concerning sound and meaning within a societal context (Aksan, 1998). As a social practice within the process of creation (Wood & Kroger, 2000), language is a constantly evolving communication tool that enables individuals through listening, reading, speaking and writing. People think through language data and transmit their culture to the next generations through language (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). Language education, which is significant in the lives of individuals, included the development of language skills. One thing that is gained from language arts education is the skill of writing.

Writing is the way to put the feelings, thoughts, desires and events stored in the mind to the paper per the conventions of language (Gunes, 2014). As one of the expressional dimensions of the (four basic) language skills, writing is the conveyance of inter-individual communication through symbols (Gogus, 1973). Beginning with primary school education onwards, writing not only enables us to express our emotions and thoughts but it also is a skill that individuals use throughout their lives as learners and their personal development (Bastug, 2015; Daisey, 2009). The functions that writing serves, such as helping people expand upon their thoughts, organize and knowledge, and develop mental dictionaries, all emphasize just how important it is that people develop the habit of writing (Gunes, 2014). Moreover, having effective writing skills and habits contributes significantly to the success of individuals scholastically (Ungan, 2007; Rogers & Graham, 2008). Despite the significance of writing in learning and development processes, previous studies reported problems in all educational levels from primary school to higher education; this skill was challenging to improve, students did not like to write, and their writing skills, habits, tendencies, motivations and attitudes were low (Arici, 2008; Bas & Sahin, 2013; Brender, 1998, Arici & Ungan, 2008). Therefore, writing, which is the final link in the language skill chain, poses a challenge for students and teachers alike at all levels of education. Such cognitive and affective issues as tied to writing skills, or a lack thereof, means that it is necessary to think more about how this skill is taught.

Teaching individuals how to write and providing them with positive experiences depends on how the environment within which they gain those skills is set up. According to Demirel and Sahinel (2006), learning how to write effectively has to do with the quality of one's writing education and whether or not that education can convert writing as a skill into a habit. Writing skills can become a habit through a systematic approach and repetition (Ozbay, 2010; Arici, 2008). For a student to be able to know how to write effectively, teachers need to provide them with meaningful experiences, encourage them to write, and see to it that they take charge of their learning. It thus is up to classroom and language arts teachers to fulfill this (Gunduz & Simsek, 2011). However, various studies show us that pre-service teachers find themselves to be inadequate writers and that they generally do not write habitually (Street & Stang 2008; Frank, 2003; Karadag & Kayabasi, 2013). Scholars indicate that

for teachers to be able to provide students with effective writing training, they need to first and foremost be experienced writers (Morgan 2010; Colby & Stapleton, 2006). Scholars also reveal that teachers who look down on writing generally have a negative impact on their students when it comes to writing as well (Draper, Barksdale-Ladd, & Radencich, 2000). Pre-service elementary teachers will one day move out into the real world and teach young pupils the gift of writing. Therefore, a closer look must be taken at their writing habits, given that the relationship between their skills and those of their students are intertwined. When the literature is examined, to our knowledge, there is no study focusing on this particular issue was found. Hence, the main intention of the present study was to analyze the nature of pre-service elementary teachers' writing habits in detail. In this context, the following questions were posed:

1. How habitually do pre-service elementary teachers write?

2. Does this differ at all by gender?

3. Does this differ regarding what stage of their education they are?

4. Does this differ at all concerning how successful/unsuccessful they are academically?

5. What do they think about habitual writing?

Method

Research Design

This study employed an explanatory-sequential mixed-method design. The research process involved first collecting quantitative data and then supporting the results of that with comprehensive qualitative data. The purpose of this pattern is to use qualitative data to elaborate upon quantitative findings. The initial phase of this method first involved the scientists collecting quantitative data and then explaining their results in detail through qualitative methods (Creswell, 2013). In the quantitative portion of this study, the pre-service elementary teachers' writing habits were described as they are. In the qualitative portion, those findings were supported by quantitative data.

Study Group

The study group included 374 pre-service primary school teachers attending the Primary School Education Program in three public universities during the 2017-2018 academic year. The qualitative data focused on just seven fourth-year students from the original pool of 374 students. Accessible and criterion sampling methods were employed to select the respective pre-service elementary teachers. Fourth-year university students best served the aim of this study because they already came to the table with an abundance of writing experience under their belts. The demographics of the participants in the quantitative section of this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Quantitative Dimension Participant Demographics

	n	*%*
Gender		
Female	285	76.2
Male	89	23.8
Total	374	100
Seniority		
Freshmen	59	15.6
Sophomore	70	18.8
Junior	136	36.5
Senior	109	29.1
Total	374	100

As seen, approximately three-quarters of the participants in the quantitative dimension of this study were females, and one fourth was males. Also, three-quarters of the participants in this study were junior and senior students. The participant demographics in the qualitative dimension of the study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Qualitative Dimension Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender	Code Name
S1	Female	Munevver
S2	Female	Beyza
S3	Female	Ece
S4	Female	Merve
S5	Female	Tugce
S6	Female	Ayse
S7	Male	Anil

As presented in Table 2, the majority of the participants in the qualitative dimension of this study were females. The code names were assigned to the participants for ease of presentation and comprehensibility of the findings. In this study, code names were not the real names of the participants.

Research Instruments and Procedures

Writing habit scale. The quantitative data were collected using Erdem and Ozdemir's "Writing Habit Scale" (2012). Before using the scale, it was run through confirmatory factor analysis to figure out whether it was valid for the sample, given that it had originally been developed for pre-service teachers of Turkish as a first language. The result of that did indeed confirm that Chi-square value ($\chi2$ (374) = 718.43; sd = 265 p <0.01) was significant. However, in such cases, it is valuable to evaluate the alternative fit indices to see whether they fit between the two matrices, as the sample size may affect the significance of the p-value. Therefore, it should be evaluated $\chi2$ by proportioning it with the degree of freedom (sd) (Cokluk, Sekercioglu, & Buyukozturk, 2012). In the analysis, the $\chi2$/sd ratio was calculated as being 2.7. This value falls within the limits of perfect harmony (Sumer, 2000). When the other fit indexes were analyzed, it was also evident that RMSEA 0.06, RMR 0.06, NFI 0.91, NNFI 0.93, CFI 0.94, GFI 0.87, AGFI 0.84, and IFI 0.95, too, fall within the accepted limits (Cokluk, Sekercioglu, & Buyukozturk, 2012; Sumer, 2000; Joreskog & Sorbom, 2000; Brown, 2015; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). When these values were considered, it was deduced that the proposed model was valid. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients for the reliability of the data obtained from the scale had been calculated as being 0.904, 0.773, 0.728, 0.768, and 0.559 for the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth factors, respectively. Likewise, within the context of this study, it was calculated the Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients as being 0.914, 0.790, 0.701, 0.725, and 0.520, respectively. The literature reveals that the reliability coefficient is generally excellent at around 0.90, very good at around 0.80, mediocre at around 0.70, and inadequate at below 0.50 (Kline, 2011). Accordingly, it can be said that the internal consistency coefficient of Cronbach Alpha calculated for the scale is very good or mediocre for all but the fifth factor, which does not exceed higher than 0.70. The score ranges for the items listed on the writing habit scale have been provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Score Ranges for Items Listed on the Writing Habit Scale

Criteria	Writing habit level
1.00-1.80	Never
1.81-2.60	Rarely
2.61-3.40	Sometimes
3.41-4.20	Often
4.21-5.00	Always

Semi-Structured Interview Form. A semi-structured interview form was prepared to collect the data necessary for the qualitative dimension of this research. At this stage, two different sets of focus group interviews were conducted. In focus group interviews, researchers ask the interviewees a series of questions. Group dynamics

emerge from the resulting answers as an important factor (Yildirim & Simsek, 2016). Thus, it was opted to employ a focus group interview throughout this research.

Data Analysis

IBM SPSS 21 was used to analyze all of the quantitative data. Before going ahead with the analysis, skewness and kurtosis values were considered as well as histogram graphs to determine whether the scale data were normally distributed. The histogram graphs showed normal distribution, while the skewness and kurtosis values were between ± 1. One might interpret these values as signifying normally distributed data (Buyukozturk, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. Similarly, using the results of the Levene homogeneity test as a base, the t-test and one-factor analysis of variance were employed for unrelated samples. Then, the Scheffe test was used to find the source of any differences within the comparisons. When it came to analyzing qualitative data, content analysis was used, as it is generally designed to arrive at concepts and relationships that might explain the collected data. Then, the themes emerging from the data were co-created and evaluated.

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the writing habit scale used in the quantitative dimension of this study were determined by confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach alpha coefficient. Four main criteria were used to ensure that the qualitative data was valid and reliable: credibility, transferability, consistency and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Results

Findings Regarding the Writing Habit Levels of Pre-Service Elementary Teachers

Initially, the writing habit levels of the pre-service classroom teachers were investigated in this study. Table 4 shows the pre-service elementary teachers' mean scale, broken down by dimension.

Table 4

Writing Habit Levels of the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers

Dimensions	Min.-Max.	$\bar{x}$	sd	Level
Conforming to Spelling and punctuation	1-5	4.20	0.80	
				Often
Total	6-30	25.21	4.80	
Writing proficiency	1-5	3.83	0.69	
				Often
Total	7-35	26.81	4.83	

Table 4 Continue

Dimensions	Min.-Max.	x^-	sd	Level
Writing creatively	1-5	2.15	0.67	
				Rarely
Total	5-25	10.76	3.38	
Writing for communication	1-5	2.94	0.90	
				Sometimes
Total	4-20	11.78	3.62	
Employing writing strategies	1-5	2.91	0.84	
				Sometimes
Total	3-15	8.74	2.54	

The review of Table 4 demonstrated that the pre-service teachers selected "often" in the sub-dimensions of compliance with spelling and punctuation rules and writing proficiency, and they selected "sometimes" in the sub-dimension of using writing as a communication tool and employment of writing strategies. Pre-service teachers selected "rarely" in the sub-dimension of creative writing.

Findings Regarding Pre-Service Elementary Teachers' Writing Habits by Gender

Second, whether the writing habits of pre-service classroom teachers varied based on gender was investigated in this study. Table 5 shows the results of the analysis for each of the scale's dimensions.

Table 5

Writing Habit Levels of the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers by Gender

Dimensions	Gender	n	x^-	sd	t	df	p
Conforming to spelling and punctuation	Female	285	25.68	4.56			
					3.46	372	0.01*
	Male	89	23.69	5.23			
Writing proficiency	Female	285	27.01	4.73			
					1.48	372	0.13
	Male	89	26.01	5.12			

Table 5 Continue

Dimensions	Gender	n	x^-	sd	t	df	p
Writing creatively	Female	285	10.96	3.30			
					1.99	372	0.04*
	Male	89	10.14	3.58			
Writing for communication	Female	285	11.89	3.52			
					0.97	372	0.32
	Male	89	11.46	3.93			
Employing writing strategies	Female	285	9.07	2.49			
					4.59	372	0.00*
	Male	89	7.68	2.41			

*p<0.05

When Table 5 was examined, it was seen that the female teachers' scores were higher than their male counterpart candidates in all of the sub-dimensions of the scale. Upon looking at whether the difference between the mean scores was statistically significant or not, the findings showed that significant differences were in favor of the women in terms of their "conforming the spelling and punctuation," "using writing creatively," and "employing writing strategies."

Findings regarding the Writing Habits of Pre-Service Elementary Teachers' by Academic Year

In the third stage of this study, whether the writing habits of pre-service classroom teachers varied based on seniority was investigated. Table 6 shows the results of the analysis for each of the scale's dimensions.

Table 6

The Level of Writing Habits of the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers, Broken down by Academic Year

Dimensions	Year	n	x^-	sd
Conforming to spelling and punctuation	1st year	59	23.33	5.42
	2nd year	70	24.74	4.45
	3rd year	136	26.22	4.53
	4th year	109	25.27	4.70

Table 6 Continue

Dimensions	Year	n	$\bar{x}$	sd
Writing proficiency	1st year	59	25.10	5.28
	2nd year	70	26.71	4.53
	3rd year	136	27.58	4.68
	4th year	109	26.12	4.77
Writing creatively	1st year	59	10.18	3.03
	2nd year	70	11.05	3.88
	3rd year	136	10.78	3.41
	4th year	109	10.87	3.17
Writing to communicate	1st year	59	10.13	3.15
	2nd year	70	10.62	3.45
	3rd year	136	12.78	3.78
	4th year	109	12.18	3.27
Employing writing strategies	1st year	59	8.47	2.91
	2nd year	70	9.05	2.41
	3rd year	136	8.38	2.60
	4th year	109	9.12	2.28

Looking at Table 6, it can be seen that the scores of all of the pre-service elementary teachers across most of the sub-dimensions except using writing for creative purposes and employing writing strategies gradually increased alongside the academic year. By the time the students reached fourth-year university, their scores appeared to take a steep. Another evident point was that the pre-service elementary teachers' habit of conforming the spelling and punctuation differs statistically depending on what year of their studies they were in [F (3.370) = 5.405, p <0.05]. When the Scheffe test was considered, it was found that the difference between the mean scores in terms of conforming to spelling and punctuation was higher among the third year than first-year students.

It can also be seen that the pre-service elementary teachers' writing proficiency also differed significantly according to what year of university they were in as well [F (3.370) = 3.716, p <0.05]. Again, when Scheffe test results were examined, it was evident that the difference in the subject mean scores for the writing proficiency dimension was in favor of third-year students versus their first-year counterparts. The pre-service elementary teachers' habits were observed to not differ significantly regarding writing for creative purposes statistically speaking according to years [F (3.370) =0.785, p> 0.05]. However, when it came to their using writing to communicate, statically significant differences were found [F $(3, 370)$ = 11.189, p<0.05]. The analysis of the Scheffe test findings demonstrated that the difference between the mean writing as a communication tool scores favored the juniors when juniors were compared with

freshmen and sophomores and favored the seniors when they were compared with freshmen and sophomores. Another thing that was seen was that the pre-service elementary teachers' scores did not differ significantly regarding whether or not they employed writing strategies [F (3.850) = 2.341, p> 0.05].

Findings regarding the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers' Writing Habits based on their Academic Success

In the third stage of this study, whether the writing habits of pre-service classroom teachers varied based on their academic achievements was investigated Table 7 shows the results of the analysis for each of the scale's dimensions.

Table 7

The Writing Habits of the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers based on their Academic Success

Dimensions	GPA	*n*	$\bar{x}$	*sd*
Conforming to spelling and punctuation	1-1.99	2	13.00	5.65
	2-2.99	172	24.97	4.86
	3-4.00	187	25.59	4.65
Writing proficiency	1-1.99	2	22.50	2.12
	2-2.99	172	26.38	5.04
	3-4.00	187	27.21	4.61
Writing creatively	1-1.99	2	9.00	4.24
	2-2.99	172	10.46	3.42
	3-4.00	187	11.09	3.34
Writing to communicate	1-1.99	2	8.00	2.82
	2-2.99	172	11.95	3.83
	3-4.00	187	11.75	3.41
Employing writing Strategies	1-1.99	2	9.00	0.00
	2-2.99	172	8.21	2.47
	3-4.00	187	9.24	2.52

The analyses conducted to determine whether the differences between the mean scores presented in Table 7 were significant demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference between pre-service teachers' habits of implementing the spelling and punctuation rules based on their academic success levels [F (2, 358) = 7,425, p <.05]. The analysis of the Scheffe test findings demonstrated that the difference between the mean compliance with the spelling and punctuation rules scores favored the pre-service teachers with an academic achievement level of 2-2.99 in the comparison between the pre-service teachers with an academic achievement level of

2-2.99 and 1-1.99 and favored the pre-service teachers with an academic achievement level of 3-4.00 in the comparison between the pre-service teachers with an academic achievement level of 3-4.00 and 1-1.99. The writing proficiency [$F_{(2, 358)} = 2,126$, p> .05], creative writing [$F_{(2, 358)} = 1,833$, p> .05] and using writing as a communication tool [$F_{(2, 358)} = 1,268$, p> .05] levels of the pre-service classroom teachers did not differ statistically significantly based on their academic achievement levels.

It was observed that the pre-service teachers' habits of employing writing strategies statistically significantly differed based on their academic achievement levels [$F_{(2, 358)} = 7,569$, p <.05]. The analysis of the Scheffe test findings demonstrated that the difference between the mean employing writing strategies scores favored the pre-service teachers with an academic achievement level between 2 and 2.99 when they were compared with those with an academic achievement level between 3 and 4.00.

Findings regarding How the Pre-Service Elementary Teachers View Writing Habits on whole

Within the context of the aim of this research, the qualitative dimension of this study aimed to look at how the pre-service elementary teachers viewed the habit of writing as a whole. Based on the findings, three main themes emerged, including, 'why do we write?', 'why don't we write?' and 'the habit of writing'.

Why do we write?

The pre-service elementary teachers stated that they primarily wrote for personal, educational and social reasons. As seen in Figure 1, the reason why pre-service elementary teachers wrote and the effects that this had on them individually were dealt with in context.
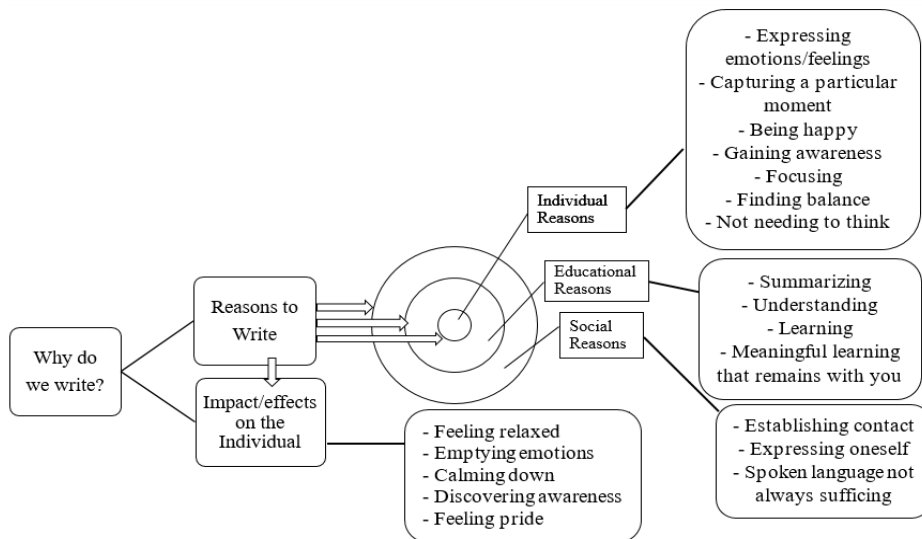

Figure 1. *Why do we Write?*

The pre-service elementary teachers noted that they wrote to express their feelings, capture a moment, capture their feelings, sort out their thoughts and past events, and give themselves a sense of focus and balance. Anil, one pre-service elementary teacher, stated that "*Writing allows me to access my inner world when I otherwise cannot express myself. When I write, I can open up and pour out my feelings.*" Several pre-service elementary teachers stated that they wrote because it required them to think. Others, who indicated that they wrote for academic reasons did so to summarize and understand what it was they were learning, and to ensure that it stuck in their minds. Another student, Munevver, stated that "*Writing is very important because it makes learning permanent. The palest ink is stronger than the sharpest memory. By writing, I ensure that what I learn is physically and cognitively etched into me.*" Many of the pre-service elementary teachers stated that they wrote to communicate and express themselves when the verbal expression did not suffice. They explained that writing had a calming effect, that it helped them sort out and made them aware of their work emotions, and that it even made them felt a sense of pride.

Why don't we write?

The pre-service elementary teachers explained that various factors prevented them from writing and that many even encountered problems while writing. Figure 2 shows the reasons why pre-service elementary teachers did not write.
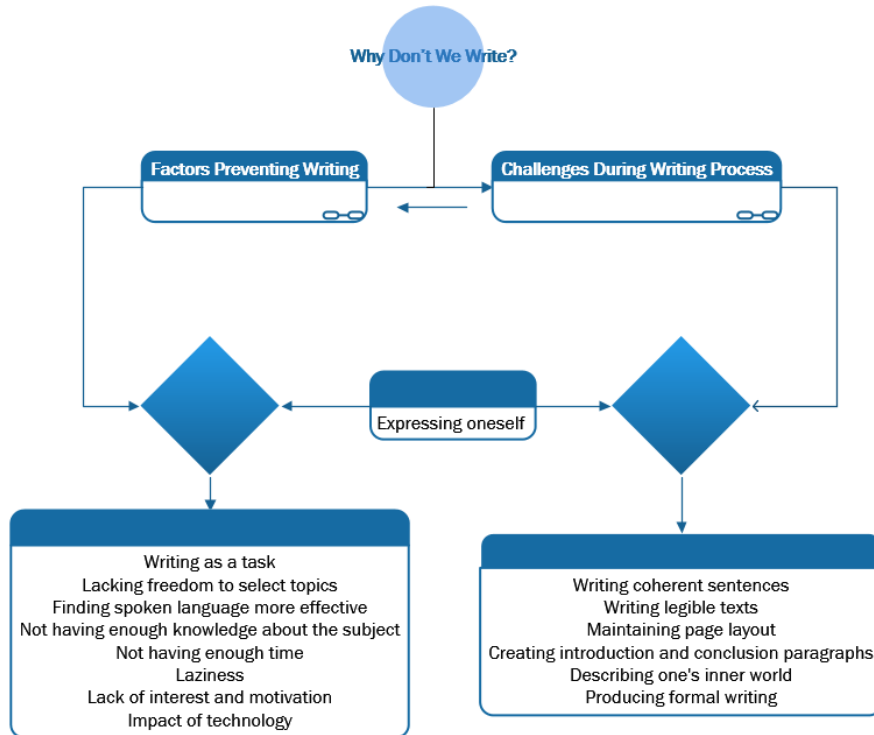

Figure 2. *Why don't we Write?*

As seen in Figure 2, the pre-service elementary teachers stated that they did not want to write when writing was presented to them as a task, as well as when they were not free to choose what they wanted to write about. Many also cited that they found verbal expression to be more effective, that they did not write because they mediocre knowledge about the subject at hand, that they lacked not only the time to write but also motivation, largely due to the impact of technology. Many the pre-service elementary teachers stated that they struggled when it came to expressing themselves during the actual process of writing. Other areas in which people appeared to struggle with included forming semantically correct sentences, writing legible texts, preserving the layout of the page, forming introduction and conclusion paragraphs, describing their inner worlds and producing professional texts.

Writing habits

The findings allowed us to be able to break down the pre-service elementary teachers' writing habits into six sub-categories:

1. How frequently the pre-service elementary teachers wrote,

2. When they chose to write,

3. What strategies they used when they wrote,

4. What types of genres they wrote in,

5. What their level of writing proficiency is, and

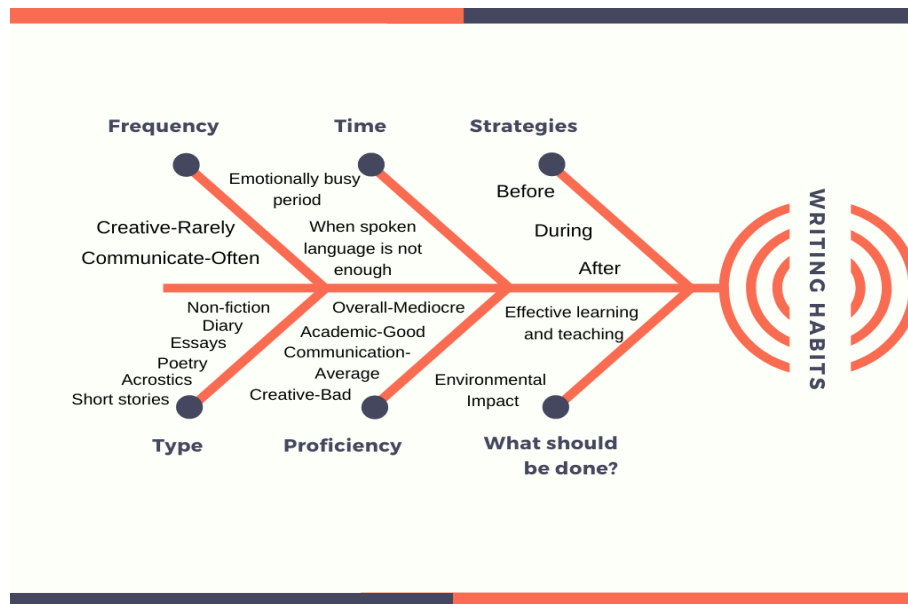6. What they suggested for others in terms of getting into the habit of writing regularly.

Figure 3. *The Habit of Writing*

The findings presented visually in Figure 3 are detailed in this section. The pre-service elementary teachers stated that they rarely wrote creatively but rather that they wrote out of the simple need to communicate, noting that they only wrote either then they felt particularly emotional or when the spoken language did not suffice. In the words of Beyza, "*I usually prefer to talk. However, when that isn't enough, especially when it comes to conveying my inner-most feelings, then I write.*" The types of strategies the students employ when they write can be broke down into three sub-categories: pre-writing, writing, and post-writing. Many had mentioned that not only they wrote drafts before they wrote, they also had to ready their minds and created a space for themselves conducive to writing. Ece, for example, told us that, "*I first prepare myself mentally before I put pen to paper. I think about what I'm going to write and for what purpose. I feel that by doing this, my writing will be clearer.*"

Regarding the actual process of writing itself, pre-service elementary teachers noted that they make sure to check over their content, spelling, punctuation, and the overall format of their composition. Among these, they paid close attention to particularly stood out. The pre-service elementary teachers stated that spelling was important to them, and at the same time, pointed out how punctuation might change from writer to writer and from text to text. Within that context, they indicated that for the most part, they paid attention to punctuation, except regarding informal writing and social media posts/messages. Commenting on this, Merve stated that, "*I'm always very careful when it comes to spelling---be it when I write any sort of prose, social media posts, and messages to my friends, or class notes. However, regarding punctuation, then my carefulness slides. When I write something formal for someone important, then I'm careful.*" All of the pre-service elementary teachers emphasized that they read over and edited their writing after they finished.

Concerning what types of writing they dabbled in, the students cited poetry, short stories, acrostics, essays, diaries, and non-fiction prose. One student, Ayse, stated, "*I love writing essays. I used to get involved in all sorts of competitions when I was in high school. I now no longer write as much nearly as I used to now that I'm in university. Nevertheless, I still write. I enjoy writing. That said, I'm nowhere near the level of my former self. For the most part, I simply don't have the time to write, largely because of exams.*" Overall, the pre-service elementary teachers felt that they were generally mediocre writers. They were good when it came to writing for academic, average at communicative-type writing, and bad at creative writing. Munevver, for example, said, "*Generally speaking, I'd say that my writing skills are middle-of-the-road at best. That said, I'm good at writing notes and summaries for class. That is because that is essentially all we do in university. We don't write anything else. This, of course, as an impact on us, whether we want it to or not.*"

Concerning how the pre-service elementary teachers felt that one could get into the habit of writing, they all felt that developing a sense of inner motivation was critical, and that not only was an effective educational environment important but also that the environment within which one wrote had to be positive. They also felt that those who taught writing need to introduce their student to different genres and that they should offer exercises that were interesting, fun, and creative, noting that the students ought to be able to receive constructive feedback and take part in activities that foster

the writing process. On the contrary, the students unanimously felt that writing homework should not be given as punishment and that students needed first to gain the habit of reading and broaden their vocabulary under guided supervision. Additionally, most had commented that teachers needed to encourage students to write (especially from an early age), that they should serve as a role model for them, and that it was up to family, peers, and external media to persuade and externally motivate students as well. Beyza expressed that:

"I think it is important that students shouldn't be forced to simply write notes or to be punished with writing. That said, you can't develop a writing habit without being a reader first. Much like being a good counselor requires one to be a good listener first. Likewise, for example, being a good basketball teacher means that you first have to be a good basketball player. Therefore, you first need to read everything that is written to be a good writer."

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

The main intention of the present study was to analyze the nature of pre-service elementary teachers' writing habits in detail. This study employed an explanatory-sequential mixed-method design. The quantitative findings of the present study, which was conducted with the explanatory-sequential mixed-method to investigate the writing habits of the pre-service classroom teachers, demonstrated that they often complied with spelling and punctuation rules. In the qualitative dimension of this study, it was determined that the pre-service elementary teachers paid attention to spelling rules in all cases; however, they did not pay attention to punctuation rules in all cases. It was concluded that their mistakes in punctuation varied based on the objective, type, and the recipient of the manuscript. What therefore may be stated is that the difference between the quantitative and qualitative results stems from the fact that the measurement tool's items try to measure the pre-service elementary teachers' habit conforming spelling and punctuation together as a single unit. Contrastively, the pre-service elementary teachers, were able to assess their habits concerning these two elements separately during the interviews with them. According to Karadag and Kayabasi (2013), pre-service teachers generally do not pay attention to either punctuation or grammar when they write. What can be understood from this is that this sense of inadequacy on the part of the students reflects inadequacy on the part of teachers and pre-service teachers alike. Recent research reveals that this problem is not only prevalent among primary school teachers but it also extends into high school and even university as well (Arici, 2008; Kula, Budak, & Tasdemir, 2015; Ozbay, 2011).

Another thing that has emerged in the findings is that the pre-service elementary teachers by and large consider themselves to be competent writers. The qualitative results showed us their level of self-sufficiency was generally mediocre, that they were good when it came to writing for school, average at communicative-type writing, and poor at creative writing. It is thought that this difference between the quantitative and qualitative results is due to items on the measurement tool, as well as due to that those who partook in the interviews were not the same. Concerning the latter, the interviewees were fourth-year university students only. Additionally, in the

quantitative dimension of this research, the findings showed that the pre-service elementary teachers' writing competence had gradually increased from the first year onwards, and then showed a steep decline again as soon as they reached fourth-year university. Based on this, it might be deduced that the KPSS exam, which enters the students' lives in a fourth-year university, gears them strictly towards writing for academic purposes, thus leaving students to feel mediocre concerning writing in other genres (Erdem & Ozdemir, 2012). This is in line with studies by Gallavan, Bowles, and Young (2007), as well as by Morgan (2010), who reveals that pre-service teachers do feel themselves to be incompetent writers. According to Brilliant (2005), the reason why university students feel inadequate in writing is that they have been harshly criticized by teachers, and therefore are convinced that their flaws will only continue to show in virtually anything else they write. However, Frank (2003) and Morgan (2010) point out that those who are confident about their writing tend to be more effective writers within the scope of writing classes. The logic being is that self-efficacy has an impact not only on individual choices and where they direct their effort but also on how they cope with challenges as well (Bandura & Schunk, 1981).

Again, the quantitative findings indicate that the pre-service elementary teachers write to communicate only now and again, while the qualitative findings show us that they do much more frequently. The reason behind this discrepancy lies in the difference in the tools used to measure this item in each case. The quantitative measurement tool is generally focused on communication tools such as e-mail, letter, and fax. In contrast, the qualitative dimension of the study encompassed all types of communication, from short text messages to writing on the Internet. Here, the pre-service elementary teachers stated that they often write to communicate. Parallel with the findings, Clark and Dugdale (2009) and Sulak (2018), too, revealed that young people regularly write for communication purposes. On the other hand, both the quantitative and qualitative sides of the research indicate that the pre-service elementary teachers rarely write creatively. This coincides with Erdem and Ozdemir's findings as well (2012), which also shed light on the fact that pre-service teachers generally lack the habit of writing for creative purposes.

Regarding whether or not the pre-service elementary teachers employ writing strategies of any sort, the quantitative portion of this study revealed that they use them, albeit only sparingly. Erdogan (2017), for example, shows us that teachers generally lack time to sit down and write, and when they do, most do not employ any sort of strategy whatsoever. The qualitative side of the findings, in contrast, did reveal that the pre-service elementary teachers did write drafts and that before they wrote, they prepared themselves both mentally and environmentally. When they began the process of writing, the pre-service elementary teachers indicated that they were keen to pay attention to content, spelling, punctuation, and overall format. After writing, they noted they read their work over and edited it accordingly. In essence, the teachers do seem to use writing strategies, albeit focusing on technical details. Ulper (2011) found that pre-service teachers of Turkish also checked over their writing mostly for spelling, punctuation, and other technical details, but generally overlooked content editing. In short, it can be seen that pre-service elementary teachers do not make the

most of any sort of effective writing strategies. In this context, it can be deduced that those who do not use effective writing strategies themselves will be unable to provide much in the way of support to their future students. According to the quantitative findings, the female pre-service elementary teachers appeared to be more inclined towards paying attention to, writing creatively, and making use of writing strategies than their male counterparts. Similarly, Clark and Dugdale (2009) also show us that women outperform men concerning writing. They also found that students get into the habit of writing as they advance in their studies until about third-year university. By the time they reach fourth-year university, however, their ability to habitually write creatively and to use writing strategies gets eclipsed and falls behind. It might be attributed this is to the fact that much of their fourth year of university is focused solely on exams. Likewise, the findings showed that, quantitatively speaking, the more successful the students were scholastic, the more they paid attention to spelling, punctuation, and using writing strategies.

On the qualitative side of things, the students indicated that they largely write for academic purposes. Moore (1994) states that perhaps the greatest advantage that writing offers individuals is that it helps them learn. They explain that writing has a calming effect, that it helps them sort out, as well as makes them aware of their own emotions, and that it gives them a sense of pride. Daisey (2009) correspondingly indicates that writing provides students with the opportunity to clarify their thoughts and thus enables them to become more self-aware. The writing process aids students in better understanding what it is they already know, what they need to know, and what they feel, thus clarifying their thoughts.

The pre-service elementary teachers indicated that among the things that prevented them from writing included when it was given to them as a task, when they did not have the freedom to choose what they wanted to write about, when they lacked mediocre knowledge about the subject, when the writing was timed and, of course, the impact of technology. Buyukkarci and Muldur (2017) concluded that while technology generally has a positive effect on students' writing skills, it at the same time detracts them from writing and has a negative impact on them regarding the process of writing. Myers (1997) found that university students generally felt that because teachers seldom granted them the right to choose what they wanted to write about, they, in turn, felt psychologically unprepared to write. Ungan (2007) also states that this also is a major problem in Turkey as well. Countering this, research shows that leaving the choice of subject to students makes writing more enjoyable for them, it contributes to improving their writing skills, and it makes them feel more competent as writers (Morgan, 2010). In parallel with this, other research shows us that the main reason why individuals are unsuccessful and unwilling to write is their lack of subject knowledge and understanding (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008; Richards, 2002). Street and Stang (2008) specify that pre-service teachers did not write both because they lack mediocre knowledge and experience and because they lack time.

Several studies point us in the direction that university students see writing as a difficult task (Harris, Schmidt, & Graham, 1998; Torrance, Thomas, & Robinson, 1992).

In connection with this, another aspect of the findings is that the pre-service elementary teachers indeed struggle with the actual process of writing. Underlining that writing is an individual skill, Brender (1998) states that almost everyone, regardless of who you are, struggles when it comes to writing. Writing is perhaps the most difficult of the four basic language skills for people to acquire because of its complex structure. Of course, various other factors are at play as well. The findings also indicate that students lack experience when it comes to writing in a broad array of genres. Various studies back this up and indicate that most university students are inexperienced writers and that they lack the skills required to fully express themselves and their ideas through the written word (Morgan, 2010; Street & Stang, 2008; Torrance, Thomas, & Robinson, 1992). The same studies also put forth that students feel themselves to be inexperienced as well, and that this reflects onto their success as either academic writers or otherwise (Clark & Dugdale, 2009; Frank, 2003; Street & Stang, 2008; Torrance, Thomas, & Robinson, 1992). The above noted, teachers thus cannot be expected to expose their students to various genres of writing if they lack any sort of background. Nonetheless, many educators and researchers emphasize how important it is that primary school students be exposed to different forms of writing and that their ability to write poses many benefits concerning their cognitive and behavioral development (Coskun, 2011; Widosari, Suwandi, Slamet, & Winarni, 2017). On top of that, limited writing experience has a negative experience on a teacher's sense of self-efficacy when it comes to teaching writing (Street & Stang, 2008).

In light of the findings of this study, it can be said that one of the reasons why the pre-service elementary teachers feel themselves to be inadequate at writing is because they lack writing experience. Accordingly, teachers, therefore, need to work with students towards having them get into the habit of actively writing and to provide them with plenty of feedback. Moreover, various studies also emphasize that the habit of reading first and foremost contributes to the habit of writing (Benevides & Stagg Peterson, 2010). Unfortunately, research shows us that (Turkish) language arts teachers generally give their students more technical feedback and shy away from dealing with the actual context of the text, which in turn has a negative impact on students' writing habits (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008; Myers, 1997; Stern & Solomon, 2006; Ulper, 2012). However, Ulper (2012) states that success in writing depends on a combination of technical form, consistency, and content. The pre-service elementary teachers feel that the environment, especially one's family members, peers, and teachers, plays a very significant role in several aspects regarding students and their writing habits. This is in line with Morgan (2010), who also essentially arrives at the same conclusion. Research shows us that teachers, family members, and one's home environment are all very important factors when it comes to helping students and pre-service elementary teachers alike get into the habit of writing (Draper, Barksdale-Ladd, & Radencich, 2000; Tok, Rachim, & Kus, 2014; Ulper & Celikturk Sezgin, 2019). Therefore, families should be informed about how important as well as how necessary writing is. Many other studies emphasize that effective teachers are those who write regularly, who have a diverse writing background, who love writing, and who share their experience with their students (Morgan, 2010). Thus, more efforts on the part of universities should be made towards

providing professional development opportunities for teachers who are expected to eventually teach students how to write (Chambless & Bass, 1995; Taga & Unlu, 2013). Given that the pre-service teachers' creative writing and employing writing strategies levels were low, the literary aspect of writing and writing strategies should be instructed in undergraduate education. The reasons for low writing habit levels of the male students when compared to female students should be investigated and necessary action should be adopted to remedy this issue starting from primary education. To bring their writing habits up to an acceptable standard, universities need to begin to train them right from the first year and ensure that by the time they reach fourth-year university that their exams do not eclipse their ability to write. Education faculties should also shift the focus on the Turkish language and writing courses on to content. Such courses ought also to devote part of their energy to teaching writing strategies alongside proper. Teachers who wish to get their students into the habit of writing should also emphasize the importance of reading as much as they do writing and broaden their vocabulary. Also, more longitudinal studies need to be conducted that examine how individuals can develop their writing habits in academic settings. This work is limited by the variables it considers, sampling methodology, and sampling size. The writing habit scale scores may not reflect pre-service elementary teachers' actual habits as the scale relies on self-reporting. Data gathered from semi-structured interviews may not reflect the experiences of other pre-service elementary teachers.

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Söz Uçar, Yazı Kalır: Sınıf Öğretmeni Adaylarının Yazma Alışkanlıkları

Atıf:

Özet

Problem Durumu: Yazma becerisi; bireylerin düşüncelerini genişletme, bilgilerini düzenleme, bilgi birikimlerini zenginleştirme ve zihinsel sözlüklerini geliştirmelerine yardım etme gibi işlevleri olan temel bir dil becerisidir. Yazma becerisinin işlevleri, bireylere yazma alışkanlığı kazandırmanın önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Dil öğretimi sürecinde yazma becerisinin geliştirilmesiyle amaçlanan, öğrencilerin kendilerini ifade edebilmeleri ve yazmayı kendilerini ifade etmede bir alışkanlığa dönüştürmeleridir. Araştırmalar, öğretimin her kademesinde yazma becerisinin ve alışkanlığının öğrencilere kazandırılmasında sorunlar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu açılardan bakıldığında; öğrencilere yazma becerisini kazandırmak ve bu becerinin alışkanlığa dönüşmesini sağlamakla görevli olan sınıf öğretmenlerine ve sınıf öğretmeni adaylarına büyük sorumluluklar düşmektedir. Öğrencilere yazma becerisinin ve alışkanlığının kazandırılmasını sağlayacak olan öğretmen adaylarının yazma alışkanlığı düzeylerini incelemek, atılacak adımların ilkini oluşturması sebebiyle son derece önemli görülmektedir.

Araştırmanın Amacı: Bu araştırmanın amacı, sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıklarının incelenmesidir. Bu bağlamda şu sorulara yanıt aranmıştır:

1. Sınıf öğretmeni adayları yazma alışkanlığına ne düzeyde sahiptir?

2. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıkları cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık göstermekte midir?

3. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıkları öğrenim gördükleri sınıf düzeyine göre anlamlı farklılık göstermekte midir?

4. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıkları akademik başarılarına göre anlamlı farklılık göstermekte midir?

5. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıkları hakkındaki görüşleri nelerdir?

Araştırmanın Yöntemi: Açıklayıcı sıralı karma yöntem deseninde gerçekleştirilen araştırma süreci; öncelikle nicel verilerin toplanması, ardından da nicel sonuçların geniş kapsamlı nitel veriyle desteklenmesini içermektedir. Araştırmanın nicel boyutunda sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıkları var olduğu haliyle betimlenmiş; nitel boyutunda ise nicel veriler nitel verilerle desteklenerek açıklanmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu 2017-2018 eğitim öğretim yılında üç farklı devlet üniversitesinin Sınıf Öğretmenliği Programlarının bir, iki, üç ve dördüncü sınıflarında eğitim gören 374 sınıf öğretmeni adayı oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmanın nitel verileri, 374 sınıf öğretmeni adayı arasından belirlenen ve dördüncü sınıfta öğrenim gören 7 aday üzerinden toplanmıştır. Katılımcılar belirlenirken uygun ulaşılabilir örnekleme ve ölçüt örnekleme yöntemlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Görüşme için belirlenen öğretmen adaylarının dördüncü sınıfa devam ediyor olmaları, araştırmaya üniversite yaşamlarındaki yazma deneyimlerini de aktarabilmeleri bakımından örnekleme ölçütünü oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın nicel verilerinin toplanmasında "Yazma Alışkanlığı Ölçeği", nitel verilerinin toplanmasında yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu kullanılmış ve katılımcılarla iki farklı odak grup görüşmesi gerçekleştirilmiştir. Türkçe öğretmenleri için geliştirilen ölçeğin sınıf öğretmeni adayları örnekleminde doğrulanıp doğrulanmadığının tespiti için doğrulayıcı faktör analizi yapılmıştır. Nicel verilerin çözümlenmesinde betimleyici ve yordayıcı istatistikler, nitel verilerin çözümlenmesinde ise içerik analizi kullanılmıştır.

Araştırmanın Bulguları: Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlığına ne düzeyde sahip oldukları ile ilgili araştırma bulguları sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının, "yazım kurallarına ve noktalama işaretlerine uyma" alışkanlığını sıklıkla gösterdiklerini ve kendilerini yazı yazma konusunda yeterli gördüklerini göstermektedir. Bulgulara göre sınıf öğretmeni adayları "yazıyı bir iletişim aracı olarak kullanma" ve "yazma stratejilerini kullanma" alışkanlıklarını ara sıra sergilemekte; "yazıyı edebi bir tür olarak kullanma" alışkanlığını ise nadiren sergilemektedirler. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıklarının cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık gösterip göstermediğine yönelik araştırma bulgularına göre kadın öğretmen adayları "yazım kurallarına ve noktalama işaretlerine uyma", "yazıyı edebi bir tür olarak kullanma" ve " yazma stratejilerini kullanma" boyutlarında erkek öğretmen adaylarından anlamlı düzeyde yüksek puanlar almışlardır. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıklarının öğrenim gördükleri sınıf düzeyine göre anlamlı farklılık gösterip göstermediğine yönelik araştırma bulguları yazma alışkanlığının birinci sınıftan üçüncü sınıfa kadar arttığını; dördüncü sınıfta ise azaldığını göstermektedir. Ayrıca sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının "yazım kurallarına ve noktalama işaretlerine uyma" alışkanlıklarının, "yazma yeterliklerinin" ve "yazıyı iletişim aracı olarak kullanma"

alışkanlıklarının öğrenim görülen sınıfa göre farklılaştığı belirlenmiştir. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıklarının akademik başarılarına göre anlamlı farklılık gösterip göstermediğine yönelik bulgulara göre, öğretmen adaylarının "yazım kurallarına ve noktalama işaretlerine uyma" ve "yazma stratejilerini kullanma" alışkanlıkları akademik başarı düzeylerine göre anlamlı düzeyde farklılaşmaktadır. Sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlıkları hakkındaki görüşlerine yönelik araştırma bulguları öğretmen adaylarının bireysel, eğitsel ve toplumsal nedenlerle yazı yazdıklarını göstermektedir. Daha çok kalıcılığı sağlamak için eğitsel amaçlı yazı yazdığını söyleyen bir katılımcı bu konuda: "*Yazı yazmak öğrenme anlamında kalıcılığı sağlamak adına oldukça önemli. Söz uçar, yazı kalır. Hem fiziksel hem de bilişsel olarak kalıcılığı yazı ile sağlıyorum.*" diyerek görüşünü bildirmiştir. Öğretmen adayları yazı yazmama nedenlerini ise; yazı yazmanın kendilerine görev olarak verilmesi, konuları belirleme özgürlüklerinin olmaması, sözlü anlatım türünü daha etkili bulmaları, konu hakkında yeterli birikime sahip olmamaları, yazı yazmanın zaman gerektirmesi, tembellik, ilgi ve motivasyon eksikliği ve teknolojinin etkisi olarak ifade etmişlerdir. Araştırma bulgularına göre sınıf öğretmeni adayları; kendini ifade etme konusunda zorlandıkları için yazı yazmadıklarını, yazı yazma sürecinde yine kendini ifade etme konusunda güçlük çektiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Yazı yazma sürecinde zorlandıkları diğer konuları ise anlamsal olarak doğru cümle kurma, okunaklı yazı yazma, sayfa düzenini koruma, giriş ve sonuç paragrafı oluşturma, iç dünyayı tasvir etme ve resmî yazılar oluşturma şeklinde ifade etmişlerdir. Katılımcılar yazma alışkanlıklarını ise; sıklık, zaman, kullanılan stratejiler, tür, yazma yeterliliği ve ne yapılmalı? (öneriler) alt temalarında açıklamışlardır.

Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri: Araştırma sonuçlarına göre öğretmen adayları yazıyı çoğunlukla öğrenme ya da toplumsal iletişimi sağlama gibi amaçlarla kullanmakta, yazının edebi yönünü yeterince kullanmamakta ve yazılarında yazma stratejilerini yeterince uygulamamaktadırlar. Öğretmen adayları yazılarında yazım kurallarına her daim dikkat etmeye çalışmakta ancak noktalama konusundaki dikkatleri öğretmen adaylarının kime, hangi amaçla ve ne yazdıklarına göre değişmektedir. Araştırma sonuçları kadın öğretmen adaylarının yazma alışkanlığına yönelik davranışları erkek adaylarına göre daha fazla sergilediklerini göstermektedir. Araştırmanın bir diğer sonucuna göre yazma alışkanlığı birinci sınıftan üçüncü sınıfa kadar olması gerektiği biçimde gelişim göstermekteyken; üçüncü sınıftan dördüncü sınıfa geçen sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazma alışkanlığı puanlarında bir azalma olmaktadır. Akademik başarı düzeyi arttıkça sınıf öğretmeni adaylarının yazım kuralları ve noktalama işaretlerine uyma ve yazma stratejilerini kullanma alışkanlıklarının arttığı da araştırma sonuçları arasındadır. Yazı yazma nedenlerini bireysel, eğitsel ve toplumsal nedenlerle açıklayan katılımcılar; yazı yazmama nedenlerini ise yazı yazmalarını engelleyen faktörler ve yazı yazma sürecinde karşılaştıkları zorluklar bağlamlarında açıklamışlardır. Öğretmen adayları eğitsel amaçlı yazı yazma konusunda kendilerini iyi düzeyde yeterli görmekteyken; iletişim amaçlı yazılarda orta düzeyde yeterli görmektedirler. Edebi amaçlı yazılarda ise kendilerini yetersiz görmektedirler. Duygusal olarak yoğun veya konuşma dilinin yeterli gelmediği zamanlarda yazı yazmayı tercih etmekte ve yazma sürecinin öncesinde, sırasında ve sonrasında birtakım stratejiler kullanmaktadırlar. Sınıf

öğretmeni adayları, bireylere yazı yazma alışkanlığını kazandırmak için özellikle öğretmen ve aile gibi çevresel etmenlerin ve etkili bir öğrenme-öğretme sürecinin önemi üzerinde durmuşlardır. Araştırmanın sonuçları, öğretmen adaylarının yazı yazma konusunda tür bağlamında deneyimsiz olduklarını göstermektedir. Bu yüzden öğretmen adayları iyi bir yazma eğitimi almalı ve yazı yazmaya teşvik edilmelidirler. Ayrıca yazma becerisinin alışkanlığa dönüşme süreci boylamsal çalışmalarla incelenmeli, yazma alışkanlığını geliştirmeye yönelik uygulamalı çalışmalar yapılmalıdır.

Anahtar Kavramlar: Yazma stratejileri, yazma becerisi, dil becerileri, yazma yeterliliği, yazma alışkanlığı.