

Primary School Teachers' Practices and Troubles with the Students Who They Think Have Undiagnosed Difficulties in Verbal Communication, Reading and Writing

Yusuf Ergen^{1,*}, Cevat Elma²

¹Faculty of Education, Bayburt University, Bayburt, Turkey

²Faculty of Education, Ondokuz Mayıs University, Samsun, Turkey

Copyright©2018 by authors, all rights reserved. Authors agree that this article remains permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License

Abstract The primary school Turkish program was basically built on three learning domains. These are the learning domains of verbal communication, reading and writing. The purpose of the present study is to determine primary school teachers' practices and difficulties related to students considered to have undiagnosed verbal communication, reading and writing difficulties. The study used the phenomenological research design, one of the qualitative research designs. The sample of the study was composed of a total of 21 primary school teachers servicing in the province of Bayburt during the 2016-2017 educational year. The sample of the study was determined by using the maximum variation sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods. The study data was collected through using the semi-structured interview form. In the analysis of the data, the content analysis method was used. Based on the study results, it was concluded that the primary school teachers more frequently carried out the practices of 'speaking in front the class about daily events' for the students having speaking difficulties, 'using the smart board' for the students with listening difficulties, 'one-to-one reading with the teacher' for the students with reading difficulties and 'one-to-one dictation work' for the students with writing difficulties; they more frequently had problems related to the 'timid behaviors' of the students with speaking difficulties, 'losing attention' of the students with listening difficulties and the 'poor time management skills' of the students with reading and writing difficulties; they also expected help from families in all the learning domains.

Keywords Primary School Teachers, Speaking Difficulty, Listening Difficulty, Reading Difficulty, Writing Difficulty

1. Introduction

The Turkish Course Teaching Program acknowledges the development of language skills and competencies as the prerequisite for personal and social development in all areas and the acquisition and learning of professional skills [38]. The Primary Turkish Program was basically built on three learning domains. These are the learning domains of verbal communication, reading and writing. Each of these domains was taken in hand interrelatedly and integratedly in the program. The program focuses on developing students' understanding, sense-making, evaluation and synthesizing skills through acquisitions in the "verbal communication", "reading" and "writing" learning domains by working on different types of texts [38]. In the primary school period, students' having difficulties in any of these learning domains may affect most of the skills which are necessary to acquire in basic education negatively. For example, a difficulty encountered in the learning domain of reading, according to Bloom [9], will affect future learnings.

Difficulties encountered in the learning domains are named in the special education services regulations of the Ministry of National Education's (MNE) as special learning difficulties. According to Mastropieri and Scugg [36], learning difficulty is a term related to individuals with average or above-average intelligence levels although they encounter difficulties in such academic skills as reading, writing, speaking, thinking and information processing skills. Although learning difficulty is not the result of various disability groups (sensory disability, mental disability, social and emotional disability) or environmental effects (cultural differences, insufficient or inappropriate teaching), it can be seen as a combination of all these [43]. Determination of learning difficulty becomes

easier together with the child's starting formal education. Formal education provides both students and teachers with opportunities to decrease learning difficulty. The learning difficulties discussed in this study are briefly explained below.

1.1. Verbal Communication (Speaking, Listening/Watching) Difficulty

"The negative effects of language use, speaking acquisition and communication difficulties on an individual's educational performance and social adjustment due to failures and irregularities occurring in verbal communication at different levels and in different forms are defined as language and speaking difficulty" [39]. The verbal communication skills are included in the program within the scope of speaking and listening/watching skills. Speaking is an inborn ability, but a person's ability to speak smoothly and correctly is related to the speaking education taken during school life [45].

Speaking is directly related to such elements as language, thought, emotion, voice and speaking organs. The deficiency or insufficiency seen in these elements lead to various speaking failures [24]. Speaking is affected not only by the construction of phonemes in the language but also by speaking speed and fluency and the quality of sound coming out of the larynx. Not only speaking too fast with unidentifiable sounds, but also speaking too slowly is not normal. Making a lot of pausing and repetitions during speech indicates that the fluency of speech is affected [20].

Another skill which verbal communication includes is listening. Listening is not an inborn skill area but a skill which can be developed systematically through language and expression courses within the framework of a certain program [54]. Using visuals and monitoring the process continuously in listening activities ensures students' getting higher efficiency from this work [62]. Ironically, the traditional listening teaching is done by making students listen and answer; on the contrary, students are not taught how to listen, but instead their listening is tested [41].

Difficulties related to the verbal communication skills may not only arise from physical or psychological causes, but they may also arise from social causes. Physical causes may be related not only with students' inborn or acquired individual characteristics but also with the communication environment. Causes related to individual characteristics need to be determined in cooperation with primary school teachers, psychological counseling and guidance teachers and related field specialists and educational activities for students need to be planned in this direction. In relation to the causes pertaining to the communication environment, there are precautions which primary school teachers are supposed to take. Such conditions as noise in the educational environment distance between the teacher and students, the tone and loudness of the voice of the teacher, a presentation to address as many sense organs as possible,

pedagogical knowledge required for effective teaching, students' active participation in educational activities should be arranged in a way not to cause difficulties in verbal communication. In the overcoming of the verbal communication difficulties arising especially from social problems, primary school teachers may play an important role. Teaching of the rules of speaking, listening/watching, encouragement of speaking, teaching of effective listening and doing of an effective teaching supporting effective listening are some of these roles.

While being fast in verbal communication, using reinforcers, being able to receive faster feedback and keeping sensitivity high on people are regarded as advantages, paving the way for misunderstanding, not attaching required importance to the delivery of messages, causing loss of time and confidence in mixed structured organizations and being affected by environmental conditions are seen as disadvantages [22].

When the related literature was examined, it was seen that the studies on speaking and listening [13,16,23,44,45,46,63] were generally the ones focusing on the development and description of these skills. It was seen that there were few studies on teachers' practices in relation to this matter and difficulties encountered during practices. Moreover, it was also observed that while most of the researchers carried out studies on speaking difficulty, very few of them made studies on listening difficulty.

1.2. Reading Difficulty

Harris and Sipay [30] define reading difficulty as "a reading achievement which is extremely lower than it is expected from a student's age and learning potential and not in line with his/her cultural, linguistic and educational experiences". Reading difficulty is a general concept and should be taken in hand in different dimensions. Otherwise, there may occur some mistakes in practices aiming to diagnose and eliminate it. According to Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs and Barnes [25], reading difficulty can be dimensionalized as visually recognition of a word, fluency and understanding difficulty. Visually recognition of a word considerably gives shape to the reading ability affecting different areas of academic success. Understanding depends on solving a word quickly and recognizing it fluently.

Approximately 80% of children diagnosed as having learning difficulty have reading difficulty (dyslexia) [18]. Students with reading difficulty have difficulty perceiving sounds in speech, recognizing voice, establishing sound-symbol relationships, articulating and analyzing correctly, reading fluently, understanding what they read and motivating to read [6]. A student reading little or not reading at all becomes deprived of many contributions of reading to linguistic/cognitive skills [53].

It is possible to come across students with reading

difficulty at almost every school. In order to develop these students' reading skills, it is necessary to determine appropriate methods [1]. Systematic education and early interventions may prevent the advancement of these problems of the students with reading difficulty. According to Boscardin, Muthén, Francis and Baker [10], phonological awareness and fast naming predict the skills of reading a word and sense-making at a high rate. Starting from this knowledge, it can be stated that it is necessary to organize activities to develop students' phonological awareness and fast naming skills.

1.3. Writing Difficulty

Students with learning difficulty produce shorter writings which have less connection and are weaker in terms of all qualities compared to the ones without learning difficulty. These students show a gradually increasing negative attitude toward writing within the course of time [29]. In the study of Graham, Collins & Rigby-Wills [26], it was observed that the students with learning difficulty had lower scores from the variables of writing quality, organization, vocabulary, sentence fluency, spelling, grammar and handwriting rules, format elements, motivation and product compared to the other students. For these reasons, writing difficulty is evaluated as one of the sub-dimensions of learning difficulty.

Writing is one of the most important skills required by daily life. People express their thoughts through written messages in many areas mainly social media (web sites, facebook, twitter, etc.). Writing denotes the ability to deliver an idea through texts [14]. Writing performance is affected by such components as self-efficacy beliefs, focusing on the target, interest, values and reactions to success and failure [58]. In order to realize the act of writing, a person need to think what to write about beforehand. The act of writing includes a lot of cognitive effort, attention control and self-regulation [27]. Therefore, writing is a skill during which a person is required to use his/her cognitive characteristics and ability. This can be evaluated as one of the aspects of writing which is seen more important than reading. For, writing entails thinking. However, reading can be done in the form of articulation without thinking as well.

In the study by Elma and Bütün [21], it was determined that the students had more difficulty in writing skills compared to the other skill areas. Even if students with writing difficulty has an idea, they may have difficulty expressing it in writing [47]. They write short sentences with different and complex words [50]. Students with writing difficulty cannot organize their writings, adjust letter spacing and make word and spelling mistakes [56]. Previous studies [19,28,33] revealed that the students with mechanical difficulties in writing did not pay attention to the content and use their mental skills in relation to the content sufficiently since they focused on this dimension of

writing.

For students with writing difficulty, teacher support is important. In the study by Bingham, Quinn and Gerde [8], it was determined that the children supported by teachers exhibited more powerful writing ability. However, in the study by White and Hall [61], 21% of the teachers did not make any preparations for writing teaching. However, in the study by Zhang [67], it was concluded that computer-assisted writing instruction affected the writing behaviors of the students with learning difficulty and low writing skills in a positive way.

The purpose of this study is to determine the practices of the primary school teachers servicing in the provincial center of Bayburt and the villages connected to center in relation to students considered to have undiagnosed verbal communication, reading and writing difficulties and the difficulties which they encounter during these practices. In the direction of this purpose, answers were sought for the following questions:

1. What kind of practices do you carry out for your students with verbal communication (Speaking, Listening) difficulty?
2. What kind of difficulties do you encounter in your practices for the students with verbal communication (Speaking, Listening) difficulty?
3. How can you be helped with your practices for the students with verbal communication (Speaking, Listening) difficulty?
4. What kind of practices do you carry out for your students with reading difficulty?
5. What kind of difficulties do you encounter in your practices for the students with reading difficulty?
6. How can you be helped with your practices for the students with reading difficulty?
7. What kind of practices do you carry out for your students with writing difficulty?
8. What kind of difficulties do you encounter in your practices for the students with writing difficulty?
9. How can you be helped with your practices for the students with writing difficulty?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study was carried out in the phenomenological research design, one of the qualitative research designs. In phenomenological studies, the aim is to determine common points in people's experiences [32].

2.2. Study Group

The study was carried out during the 2016-2017 educational year with a total of 21 primary school teachers servicing in the provincial center of Bayburt and the

villages connected to the center. In the determination of the study group, the maximum variation sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used. In the direction of this method, in order to achieve variation, the primary schools in the provincial center of Bayburt were grouped according to the socio-economic statuses of the parents as “low, middle and high”. Moreover, the village primary schools were grouped as “schools with single grade classes” and “schools with multi-grade classes”. From “middle socio-economic level” group, five teachers and from each of the other groups, four teachers were studied. The information about the demographic characteristics of the study group was given in Table 1.

2.3. Data Collection Tool

In the study, as the data collection tool, the semi-structured interview form was used. After the interview form was prepared by the researcher, it was reviewed by three teaching staff members specialized in their fields and three primary school teachers with at least 10 years of professional experience and then necessary corrections were made. Later, the interview form was administered to 11 primary school teachers for the pilot study and the form was finally revised.

2.4. Collection and Analysis of the Data

In the collection of the study data, the semi-structured

interview technique was used. With the use of this format, it was aimed to open up the subject and reach new ideas about the subject with different questions during the interview [40]. The interviews were held by taking necessary permissions from the Bayburt provincial directorate for national education within the framework of ethical rules. The interview durations varied between 30 and 60 minutes. Since the participants did not want, tape recording was not made, but instead the participants' statements were noted by the researcher. These notes were read to the participants at the end of the interview and they were asked if they wanted to correct or add anything.

In the analysis of the data obtained in the study, the qualitative descriptive analysis method was used. Descriptive analysis identifies socially important phenomena. In many instances, descriptive analysis can point toward causal understanding [35]. In the direction of the qualitative descriptive analysis method, the data was read both with an inductive and a deductive understanding and with a care which would not to cause any data loss and, for each question, separate code lists were formed by the researcher and another academician. For the reliability calculation of the study, the reliability formula (Reliability = Agreement / (Agreement + Disagreement) suggested by Miles and Huberman [42] was used. The fittingness ratios of the code lists were examined separately for all the questions and given in Table 2.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Study Group

Demographic Characteristics		Participants	f
Gender	Female	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9	9
	Male	T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19, T20, T21	12
Length of Service	0-5 years	T2, T14	2
	6-10 years	T9, T12, T5,	3
	11-15 years	T1, T6, T8, T11, T17, T19	6
	16-20 years	T3, T4, T7, T13, T16, T18, T21	7
	20 years and over	T5, T10, T20	3
Class Taught	1st Grade	T4, T11, T17, T21	4
	2nd Grade	T5, T6, T12, T19	4
	3rd Grade	T7, T8, T13, T18, T20	5
	4th Grade	T1, T3, T10, T16,	4
	(1+2+3+4) Multigrade Class	T2, T14	2
	(1+2) Multigrade Class	T9	1
	(3+4) Multigrade Class	T15	1

Table 2. Fittingness Ratios of the Coding Lists

	Coding Fittingness Ratio
1st Question	0,91
2nd Question	0,90
3rd Question	0,97
4th Question	0,93
5th Question	0,89
6th Question	0,94
7th Question	0,92
8th Question	0,91
9th Question	0,96
Total	0,93

According to Miles and Huberman [42], a coding fittingness ratio is required to be 0.70 and above. According to this, the fittingness ratios of the coding lists are at acceptable level. After the pieces of data were coded, they were grouped under categories and sub-categories and then the sub-categories under which the codes were included were determined together with their frequencies.

3. Findings

This section includes the primary school teachers' opinions about their practices for the students considered to have undiagnosed verbal communication, reading and writing difficulties, the difficulties which they encounter during these practices and how they can be helped with these practices. In this section, the participants were coded as T1, T2, T3, etc. and sample participant statements were included.

3.1. Findings Related to the Learning Domain of Verbal Communication

The teachers' practices for the students considered to have verbal communication (Speaking, Listening) difficulty were given in Table 3.

Table 3. Primary School Teachers' Practices for the Students Considered Having Verbal Community Difficulty

Learning Domain		Teachers' Opinions	f
Verbal Communication	Speaking	I ask them to speak in front of the class about daily events.	8
		I organize in-class group games.	6
		I give them a lot of opportunities to speak.	6
		I ask off-topic questions.	3
		I listen to them effectively.	3
		I ask short-answer questions.	1
		I have them interpret pictures.	1
		I have them sing songs.	1
		I start a discussion where they are stuck.	1
		I have them read a poem.	1
		I have them tell a story.	1
		I leave it to time.	1
		I don't hurry when taking their answers.	1
		I give them the teacher's role.	1
	I have a one-to-one conversation in their fields of interest.	1	
	I reward them in the end of their speech.	1	
	Listening	I use the smart board.	7
		I give short breaks during the lesson.	5
		I try to use my gestures, mimics and voice tone effectively.	5
		I teach via games.	4
I start with a warm-up activity.		1	
I sit next to them.		1	
	I have them do drama activities.	1	
	I make them participate in the lesson.	1	
	I keep auditory activities short.	1	
	I associate the lesson with their daily lives.	1	
	I change their places in the lesson.	1	
	I do the dream activity.	1	
	I halt the auditory activity and ask questions.	1	

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the teachers more frequently carry out the practices of "speaking in front of the class about daily events", "organizing in-class group games", "giving students a lot of opportunities to speak", "effective listening" and "asking off-topic questions" for the students considered to have speaking difficulty. Some of the statements of the participants about these practices are as follows;

I ask them to come to the board so that they can overcome their timidity and talk and express their thoughts about a daily event (T5).

I organize in-class group games so as to create an environment to have them talk with their classmates (T11).

I especially try to give these students a lot of opportunities to speak with the aim of having them exert themselves (T15).

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the participants more frequently perform the practices of "using the smart board", "giving short breaks during the lesson", "teaching via games" and "adjusting gestures, mimics and voice tone" for the students considered to have listening difficulty. Some of the statements of the participants about these practices are as follows;

The smart board answers my purpose very much. When I open it, the students pay utmost attention to what is taught (T13).

When they get bored, they start not to listen. I give a break and tell them they are free for five minutes or tell a story (T1).

I sometimes turn the lesson into a game. When I do this, the child both think s/he is playing a game and listen on the other hand (T12).

The difficulties which the teachers encountered during their practices for the students considered to have verbal communication (Speaking, Listening) difficulty were given in Table 4.

Table 4. Difficulties which Primary School Teachers Encounter in their Practices for the Students with Verbal Communication Difficulty

Learning Domain	Teachers' Opinions	f	
Verbal Communication	Speaking	Students exhibit timid behaviors.	9
		Students abstain from speaking due to having difficulty pronouncing some sounds.	3
		Other students behave mockingly towards them.	3
		I can't vary activities.	2
		Students forget what they say.	2
		Families do not listen to our recommendations.	3
		Activity places are not appropriate.	2
	Listening	I have difficulty having them concentrate.	14
		I have difficulty lowering to their levels.	4
		Families do not provide effective listening examples.	4

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that the participants more frequently encounter difficulties arising from "timid behaviors" of the students considered to have speaking difficulty and "attention focusing problem" of the students considered to have listening difficulty. Some of the statements of the participants about this matter are as follows;

At the point of speaking, I have most difficulty due to the students' shy and timid behaviors. To overcome this, I carry out some practices which I have mentioned above, but ... (T9).

The students lose their attention quickly and I have difficulty collecting their attention again; perhaps I'm short on methods, I do not know (T16).

The opinions of the teachers about how they can be helped in their practices for the students considered to have verbal communication (Speaking, Listening) difficulty were given in Table 5.

Table 5. Primary School Teachers' Opinions about How They can be helped with their Practices for the Students with Verbal Communication Difficulty

Learning Domain	Teachers' Opinions	f	
Verbal Communication	Speaking	Families should let their children express themselves.	10
		Their friends should continue communication.	6
		Other stakeholders should work in coordination with the teacher.	3
		They should be listened until the end of their speech.	2
		Families should warn them about their pronunciation mistakes.	1
	Listening	Families should provide effective listening examples.	10
		Activity places should be created to carry out listening activities at schools.	7
		The teaching program should be rearranged according to students' levels.	4

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that most of the participants stated that they could be helped via "Families' letting their children express themselves" and "Their friends' continuing communication" in their practices for the students considered to have speaking difficulty and via "Families' providing effective listening examples" and "Creating activity places for listening activities at schools" in their practices for the students considered to have listening difficulty. Some of the statements of the participants are as follows;

Actually, families do not let their children speak; they immediately interrupt their speech or scold them. If they let their children express themselves, this will reflect to the school. (T2).

Children talk most comfortably with their friends. If their friends do not cut off communication with them and be together with them, they will definitely speak and these children will also increase their speaking skills (T4).

A child learns to listen from his/her environment, mainly family; that's why, they should listen to their children effectively so that they can see and learn how to listen (T20).

Special classrooms can be created to carry out listening activities and, in these places, listening works can be done via earphones (T6).

3.2. Findings Related to Learning Domain of Reading

The teachers' practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty were given in Table 6.

Table 6. Primary School Teachers' Practices for the Students with Reading Difficulty

Learning Domain	Practices	f
Reading	Doing one-to-one reading with the teacher.	8
	Reading aloud.	3
	Having them read texts to catch their interest.	3
	Having them read poems.	3
	Having them read rhymes.	3
	Having them read short texts.	2
	Having them read the same text again and again.	2
	Doing reading with peer support.	1
	Working with syllable cards.	1
	Having them read texts with a lot of visuals.	1
	Letting them select the text to read.	1
	Asking them to do recitative reading.	1
	Allowing for comparison with peers through group works.	1
	Benefiting from drama activities.	1
	Having them read the stories which they have written by themselves.	1
Having them read the story which his/her friends have written for them.	1	

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that the teachers more frequently carry out the practices of "one-to-one reading with the teacher", "reading aloud", "reading interesting texts" and "reading poems and rhymes" for the students considered to have reading difficulty. Moreover, the practices of "reading a story written personally" and "reading a story written by friends about them" can be considered as interesting practices as well. Some of the statements of the participants about this matter are as follows;

Sometimes I ask them to come next to me and read passages from a story book or the course book for about half an hour sometimes after school sometimes within the lesson (T19).

I have them read aloud in the classroom and correct

their mistakes; when they read aloud, they can hear their mistakes (T7).

Since poems and rhymes are short, they do not get bored. I find them from resources and give them to read (T5).

The findings in relation to the difficulties which the teachers encounter in their practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty were given in Table 7.

Table 7. Difficulties which Primary School Teachers Encounter in their Practices for the Students with Reading Difficulty

Learning Domain	Difficulties Encountered	f
Reading	Unable to use time efficiently.	12
	Not doing reading at home.	6
	Other students get bored.	2
	Students' friends' verbal interference.	2
	I have no difficulty.	1
	The teacher's impatience.	1
	Students get bored due to slow reading.	1

When Table 7 is examined, it is seen that the teachers more frequently have the problems of "being unable to use time efficiently" and "not doing reading at home" in their practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty. Some of the statements of the participants are as follows;

When I spare time for these students, others lose their interest in the lesson or fall behind. That is to say, more time is needed (T3).

When families do not have them read at home, the child comes to the school as s/he went home the day before, no progress is seen (T17).

The opinions of the teachers about how they can be helped with their practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty were given in Table 8.

Table 8. Primary School Teachers' Opinions about How They Can Be Helped with their Practices for the Students with Reading Difficulty

Learning Domain	Opinions	f
Reading	Families can do reading practices with their children.	15
	Teachers with no classes can be charged.	5
	School administrations can provide private reading areas.	2
	Trainee teachers can be charged.	1
	Students' friends can help.	1

When Table 8 is examined, it is seen that most of the teachers stated that they can be helped via "families' doing reading practices with their children" and "charging teachers with no classes" in their practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty. Some of these statements are as follows;

Families are our biggest supporters; of course, if they

gave support. When they do reading practices at home, it helps us progress twice as much. About this matter, their help is important. (T14).

If teachers with no classes are charged by the school administration with practicing reading with children having reading difficulty, it may make an important contribution (T21).

3.3. Findings Belonging to the Learning Domain of Writing

The practices of the teachers for the students considered to have writing difficulty were given in Table 9.

Table 9. Primary School Teachers' Practices for the Students with Writing Difficulty

Learning Domain	Practices	f
Writing	Doing one-to-one dictation work with the teacher.	6
	Definitely checking what they write.	4
	Having students write a catchy part of the book they have read.	2
	Doing firstly syllable then word study.	1
	Using rewarding.	1
	Having students write on the board.	1
	Having them write texts, poems and words which they like.	1
	Reminding them of the rules when having them write.	1
	Correcting spelling errors with a red pencil, not letting them erase.	1
	Having each student check his/her desk friend's writings.	1
	Doing story and poem completion works.	1
	Doing writing works in their fields of interest.	1
	Having them write punctuation marks with a red pencil.	1
	Having them write a story with key words.	1
	Doing the practice of writing hours.	1
Having students write the names of their family members.	1	
Having students check their writings.	1	

When Table 9 is examined, it is seen that the participants more frequently carry out the practices of “One-to-one dictation with the teacher”, “Definitely checking students’ writings” and “Having students write a catchy part of a book which they have written” for the students considered to have writing difficulty. Moreover, the practice of “Having students write punctuation marks with a red pencil” can be considered as an interesting practice as well. Some participant statements regarding these practices are as follows;

I do one-to-one dictation work with the students, hence I can correct their mistakes immediately (T8).

I think the most important factor in writing works is

checking. I definitely check their writings so as to prevent them from going on with their mistakes, but correct them (T9).

I ask them to write a catchy part of a story which they have read. Hence, both their understanding and writing develop (T13).

The findings related to the difficulties which the teachers encounter in their practices for the students considered to have writing difficulty were given in Table 10.

Table 10. Difficulties which Primary School Teachers Encounter in their Practices for the Students with Writing Difficulty

Learning Domain	Difficulties Encountered	f
Writing	I can't spare time	13
	Other students get bored	4
	Need for an individual education environment	2
	I have difficulty teaching running handwriting	2
	I can't get support from families	1

When Table 10 is examined, it is seen that the participants more frequently have the problems of “being unable to spare time” and “other students' getting bored” in their practices for the students considered to have writing difficulty. In relation to these problems, some of the statements of the participants are as follows;

There are not only these students in the class, we are also supposed to deal with other students. That's why, although we need to spare a bit more time for them during writing works, it is not possible to spare that amount of time. (T10)

When I deal with the students having writing difficulty and have them write and check their writings, other students in the class naturally get bored because of doing nothing. (T18)

The teachers' opinions about how they can be helped with their practices for the students considered to have writing difficulty were given in Table 11.

Table 11. Primary School Teachers' Opinions about How They Can Be Helped with their Practices for the Students with Writing Difficulty

Learning Domain	Opinions	f
Writing	Families can have students do dictation works.	16
	Families should not correct but only check students' writings.	2
	Teachers with no classes can be charged.	1
	Trainee teachers can be charged.	1
	Students themselves can help.	1
	Students' friends can help.	1

When Table 11 is examined, it is seen that most of the participants held the opinion that “if families had their children do dictation works”, it would help them with their

practices for the students considered to have writing difficulty. Moreover, the opinions that “families should not correct but just check their children's writings” are also remarkable. Some of these statements are as follows;

Families should have their children do writing works at home as well. For we cannot spare much time at school (T9).

With writing works at home, families should support both us and their children (T1).

Sometimes families take the pencil and write themselves when their children's writings are incorrect; however, they should only check and specify mistakes (T7).

4. Conclusions, Discussion and Suggestions

According to the findings obtained from this study, it can be stated that the participant primary school teachers more frequently carry out the practices of "having students speak in front of the class about daily events", "organizing in-class group games", "giving students a lot of opportunities to speak", "effective listening" and "asking off-topic questions" for the students considered to have speaking difficulty. According to Uçgun [59], one of the most effective ways of correcting mistakes in students' speeches is listening to their teachers' speeches. For this reason, in order for the speaking education to reach its goal, the teacher's pronunciation and diction should be smooth. However, in this study, no findings were found in relation to the teachers' working on their own pronunciations and dictions. However, it is pleasing that the primary school teachers carry out practices in which they assume responsibility such as “effective listening”. According to Büyükkiz and Hasırcı [11], elocution trainings should be made by considering real communication situations in daily life. Moreover, according to Yalçın [64], elocution training should not only be a teaching activity, but it should also include games and practices.

It was concluded that the participant primary school teachers more frequently carry out the practices of “using the smart board”, “giving short breaks during the lesson”, “teaching via games” and “adjusting gestures, mimics and the tone of voice” for the students considered to have listening difficulty. According to this, it can be stated that the participant teachers thought that the audio-visual characteristics of the smart boards make an important contribution to listening activities.

It was concluded that the participant primary school teachers more frequently have the difficulty related to "timid behaviors of the students" in their practices for the students considered to have speaking difficulty and they have the difficulty of "focusing attention" in their practices for the students considered to have listening difficulty. These are closely related with the teachers' classroom management skills. Therefore, it can be stated that the

teachers need to develop themselves in these sub-skills of classroom management. Students' reserved behaviors toward speaking can be decreased through teachers' encouraging them, establishing empathy with them and listening to them without judging. In order to help students focus their attention, such practices as planning the lesson in line with students' fields of interest and enriching the lesson with activities addressing as many sense organs as possible can be carried out.

In this study, it was found that the primary school teachers held the opinion that “families' letting their children express themselves” and “their friends' continuing communication” can help them with their practices for the students considered to have speaking difficulty and “families' providing effective listening examples” and “creating activity places for listening activities at the school” can help them with their practices for the students having listening difficulty. According to these results, it can be stated that the participant primary school teachers have high expectations from families to overcome both speaking and listening difficulties of the students. However, it should not be forgotten that not every family may have the pedagogical knowledge to meet these expectations.

In the present study, it was also found that the primary school teachers more frequently carry out the practices of "one-to-one reading with the teacher", “reading aloud”, “reading interesting texts” and “reading poems and rhymes” for the students considered to have reading difficulty. However, different from this study, in the study by Baydık, Ergül and Bahap Kudret [7], it was found that few of the teachers carry out the practices of "asking their students to read books, having their students work individually, having their students do reading frequently and having their students read and memorize poems". In the same study, most of the teachers stated giving place to the practices of “setting a model about how to read, having their students read by making word analysis (having them read via letter-syllable articulation)”. Moreover, in the study by Altun, Ekiz and Odabaşı [2], it was determined that the primary school teachers more frequently carry out the practices of reading hour and rewarding to prevent reading difficulty. In the literature, there are also studies on which practices would develop students' reading levels. According to these studies [31, 34, 48, 49, 52, 55, 60, 66], benefiting from the basic elements and principles of the multi-sensory approaches and computer technologies, collaborating with families, having students read words which are in line with their levels, having students dramatize texts, increasing students' motivation to reading and using the strategies of word repetition, repeated reading, eco-reading, reading by sharing, pair reading, word box and listening of the paragraph beforehand increase students' reading levels. Teachers may add these strategies to their practices as well.

In this study, it was found that the primary school teachers more frequently have the problems of “having

insufficient time” and “students' not doing any reading practice at home” in their practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty. Likewise, in the study by Doğan [17], the teachers stated that they could not spare enough time for their students with reading difficulty due to the heavy load of the curriculum. According to these results, it can be stated that the primary school teachers more frequently have time problem in planning their works. By creating effective lesson plans, more time can be allocated for students with reading difficulty. Moreover, if families are guided about how to help their children, teachers can benefit from this. In the study, most of the participant teachers stated that they could be helped with their practices for the students considered to have reading difficulty via “families' having their children do reading practices at home” and “charging of teachers with no lessons”. Similarly, in the study by Doğan [17], it was found that the teachers emphasized the necessity of getting help from school counselors, other teachers and families.

In this study, it was found that the primary school teachers more frequently carry out the practices of “doing one-to-one dictation works”, “definitely checking students' writings” and “having their students write a catchy part of a recently-read book” for the students considered to have writing difficulty. Arslan [4] stated that the 1st grade teachers more frequently used the method of air-writing in their writing works. In the study by White and Hall [61], it was determined that the teachers carried out the practices of doing daily or weekly mini-lessons, holding meetings and establishing a writing center in relation to writing. In the same study, it was also found that only 40% of the teachers allowed for the use of computer for the development of writing skills and 57% of them did not regard the use of technological tools as important in writing education. Moreover, in the study by Yıldız [65], it was found that a writing teaching hierarchized from big muscle movements to small muscle movements with the aim of developing the students' legible writing skills developed the legibility of the students' handwritings. Moreover, in Maucione's [37] study, it was found that the teachers were required to understand the interests of students with writing difficulty and support their writing difficulty trainings. Similarly, in Calp's [12] study including activities aiming to teach letters and punctuation marks and how to sit at their desks and also have students acquire the skills of holding a pencil and a notebook in order to eliminate a student's writing problem, it was found that the students' writing mistakes decreased and their writings reached the acceptable legibility level.

In this study, it was found that the primary school teachers more frequently have the problem of “not being able to allocate more time” in their practices for the students considered to have writing difficulty. In the same way, in the study by Ateş, Çetinkaya and Yıldırım [5], though not the majority, there were participants linking writing difficulty to the impossibility of allocating

sufficient time to writing education. Besides this, in the same study, there were also participants linking writing difficulty to the incapability of giving a good education. Moreover, Arslan [4] found that a great majority of the teachers allocated less than two hours a week to teaching writing. Similarly, in the study by White and Hall [61], it was also found that 70% of the teachers stated having met with the obstacle of not finding enough time in writing education. Likewise, in the study by Dennison [15] and Troia [57], it was concluded that the teachers allocated little time to writing education. All these results may be pointing to a planning problem in writing education. For this reason, it can be suggested that teachers should take the developmental characteristics of their students into consideration while planning their lessons.

In the present study, the majority of the participant primary school teachers stated that they could be helped more via “families' doing dictation works” in their practices for the students considered to have writing difficulty. According to this result, it can be stated that the teachers have expectations from families about writing difficulty as they have about the other difficulties. However, as it was stated above, not every family may be capable of meeting these expectations. For this reason, it might be more appropriate to expect this from families after allocating time to the training of families about these matters. However, in the study by Altun and Uzuner [3], it was found that the parent-teacher cooperation in relation to the students with learning difficulty was weak. According to these results, practitioners can be suggested to make parent-teacher cooperation more qualified.

Acknowledgements

This study was presented as oral presentation in IX. International Education Research Congress.

REFERENCES

- [1] Akyol, H. & Kodan, H. (2016). Okuma güçlüğü'nün giderilmesine yönelik bir uygulama: Akıcı okuma stratejilerinin kullanımı. *Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 35(2), 7-21.
- [2] Altun, T., Ekiz, D., & Odabaşı, M. (2011). Sınıf öğretmenlerinin sınıflarında karşılaştıkları okuma güçlüklerine ilişkin nitel bir araştırma. *Dicle Üniversitesi Ziya Gökalp Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 17, 80-101.
- [3] Altun, T., & Uzuner, F.G. (2016). Sınıf öğretmenlerinin özel öğrenme güçlüğü olan öğrencilerin eğitimine yönelik görüşleri. *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies*, 44, 33-49.
- [4] Arslan, D. (2012). İlköğretim birinci sınıf öğretmenlerinin yazı öğretimlerinin incelenmesi. *Kuram ve Uygulamada*

- Eğitim Bilimleri*, 12(4), 2829-2846.
- [5] Ates, S., Cetinkaya, C., & Yildirim, K. (2014). Elementary school classroom teachers' views on writing difficulties. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 6(2).
- [6] Baydık, B. (2002). Okuma güçlüğü olan ve olmayan öğrencilerin sözcük okuma becerilerinin karşılaştırılması. *Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Ankara Üniversitesi, Ankara*.
- [7] Baydık, B., Ergül, C., & Bahap Kudret, Z. (2012). Reading fluency problems of students with reading difficulties and their teachers' instructional practices towards these problems. *Ilkogretim Online*, 11(3), 778-789.
- [8] Bingham, G. E., Quinn, M. F., & Gerde, H. K. (2017). Examining early childhood teachers' writing practices: Associations between pedagogical supports and children's writing skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 39, 35-46.
- [9] Bloom, B. S. (1995). İnsan nitelikleri ve okulda öğrenme, çev. Durmuş Ali Özçelik, MEB Yay, İstanbul.
- [10] Boscardin, C. K., Muthén, B., Francis, D. J., & Baker, E. L. (2008). Early identification of reading difficulties using heterogeneous developmental trajectories. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(1), 192-208.
- [11] Büyükkız, K. K., & Hasırcı, S. (2013). Ana dili öğretiminde konuşma becerisinin yeri. *Okuma Yazma Eğitimi Araştırmaları*, 1(1), 57-63.
- [12] Calp, M. (2013). Yazma problemi olan bir öğrenciyi bitişik eğik yazı öğretimi (Bir eylem araştırması). *E-İnternational Journal of Educational Research*, 4(1), 1-28.
- [13] Chou, M. H. (2013). A content-based approach to teaching and testing listening skills to grade 5 EFL learners. *International Journal of Listening*, 27(3), 172-185.
- [14] Costa, L. J. C., Edwards, C. N., & Hooper, S. R. (2016). Writing disabilities and reading disabilities in elementary school students: Rates of co-occurrence and cognitive burden. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 39(1), 17-30.
- [15] Dennison, A.A. (2011). Teaching handwriting: Research vs. teacher practice. Retrieved from http://amandadennison.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/2/9/12297064/teaching_handwriting_research_vs_teacher_practice.pdf
- [16] Dewi, R. S., Kultsum, U., & Armadi, A. (2017). Using Communicative Games in Improving Students' Speaking Skills. *English Language Teaching*, 10(1), 63-71.
- [17] Doğan, B. (2013). Türkçe ve sınıf öğretmenlerinin okuma güçlüğüne ilişkin bilgileri ve okuma güçlüğü olan öğrencileri belirleyebilme düzeyleri. *Okuma Yazma Eğitimi Araştırmaları*, 1(1), 20-33.
- [18] Eden, G. F., & Vaidya, C. J. (2008). ADHD and developmental dyslexia. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1145(1), 316-327.
- [19] Edwards, L. (2003). Writing instruction in kindergarten: Examining an emerging area of research for children with writing and reading difficulties. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 36(2), 136-148.
- [20] Ege, P. (2006). Farklı engel gruplarının iletişim özellikleri ve öğretmenlere öneriler. *Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Özel Eğitim Dergisi*, 7(02), 1-23.
- [21] Elma, C., Bütün, E. (2015). İlkokul ve ortaokul öğrencilerinin yazılı anlatım becerilerine ilişkin öğretmen görüşleri. *Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 15(2), 104-131.
- [22] Emerson, C., & Goddard, I. (1993). *Managing staff in schools*. Heinemann.
- [23] Erdem, A., & Erdem, M. (2015). Yapılandırmacı karma öğrenme ortamlarının dinleme ve konuşma becerilerine etkisi. *İlköğretim Online*, 14(3), 1130-1148.
- [24] Erenoğlu, S. Ö., & Topçu, S. (2007). *Türkçenin doğru kullanımı: (iletişim, etkili konuşma, yazma ve okuma kılavuzu)*. Genelkurmay Askerî Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Yayınları. Ankara.
- [25] Fletcher, J. M., Lyon, G. R., Fuchs, L. S., & Barnes, M. A. (2006). *Learning disabilities: From identification to intervention*. Guilford press.
- [26] Graham, S., Collins, A. A., & Rigby-Wills, H. (2017). Writing characteristics of students with learning disabilities and typically achieving peers: A meta-analysis. *Exceptional Children*, 83(2), 199-218.
- [27] Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (2003). Students with learning disabilities and the process of writing: A meta-analysis of SRSD studies. In L. Swanson, K. R. Harris, & S. Graham (Eds.), *Handbook of learning disabilities* (pp. 383-402). New York: Guilford.
- [28] Graham, S., & Weintraub, N. (1996). A review of handwriting research: Progress and prospects from 1980 to 1994. *Educational psychology review*, 8(1), 7-87.
- [29] Harris, K. R., Graham, S., Mason, L. H., & Saddler, B. (2002). Developing self-regulated writers. *Theory into practice*, 41(2), 110-115.
- [30] Harris, A. J. & Sipay, E. R. (1990). *How to increase reading ability* (ninth edition). New York: Longman.
- [31] Holtzheuser, S., & McNamara, J. (2014). Bridging literacy acquisition and self-regulated learning: Using a SRL framework to support struggling readers. *Exceptionality Education International*, 24(1), 2-17.
- [32] Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2004). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative and mixed approaches* (2nd edition). Boston, MA: Pearson Education Inc.
- [33] Jones, D., & Christensen, C. A. (1999). Relationship between automaticity in handwriting and students' ability to generate written text. *Journal of educational psychology*, 91(1), 44-49.
- [34] Kocaarslan, M. (2013). Sınıf öğretmenlerinin türkçe dersinde okuduğunu anlama güçlüklerine ilişkin görüşleri: nitel bir araştırma. *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies*, 6(8), 373-393.
- [35] Loeb, S., Dynarski, S., McFarland, D., Morris, P., Reardon, S., & Reber, S. (2017). Descriptive analysis in education: A guide for researchers. (NCEE 2017-4023). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.
- [36] Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (2004). Effective classroom instruction. In C. Spielberger (Eds.),

- Encyclopedia of applied psychology* (pp. 687– 691). Oxford, UK: Elsevier
- [37] Maucione, L. (2015). Teachers of struggling writers in the upper elementary grades. *Doctoral dissertation*, Northeastern University Boston, Massachusetts.
- [38] MEB (2015). Türkçe dersi öğretim programı (1-8. sınıflar). Talim Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı. Ankara.
- [39] MEB (2000). Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Özel Eğitim Hizmetleri Yönetmeliği. <http://mevzuat.meb.gov.tr/html/66.html>
- [40] Merriam, S. B. (2013). *Nitel araştırma: Desen ve uygulama için bir rehber*. (S. Turan, Çev.). Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık.
- [41] Mendelsohn, D. J. (2006). Learning How to Listen Using Learning Strategies. In E. Uso-Juan & A. Martinez-Flor (Eds.), *Current Trends in the Development and Teaching of the Four Language Skills* (pp. 75-90). Berlin. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- [42] Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2015). *Nitel veri analizi*. (S. Akbaba Altun & A. Ersoy, Çev. Eds). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- [43] NJCLD (1990). *Learning Disabilities: Issues on Definition*. Retrieved from <http://www.lonline.org/about/partners/njclcd/archives>
- [44] Özbay, M. (2005a). Ana dili eğitiminde konuşma becerisini geliştirme teknikleri. *Journal of Qafqaz University*, 16, 177-184.
- [45] Özbay, M. (2005b). Sesle ilgili kavramlar ve konuşma eğitimi. *Milli Eğitim*, 33(168), 116-125.
- [46] Özbay, M., & Çetin, D. (2011). Dinleme becerisinin geliştirilmesinde prozodik farkındalığın önemi. *Sosyal ve beşeri bilimler araştırmaları dergisi*, (26), 155-175.
- [47] Poplin, M. S., Gray, R., Larsen, S., Banikowski, A., & Mehring, T. (1980). A comparison of components of written expression abilities in learning disabled and non-learning disabled students at three grade levels. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 3(4), 46-53.
- [48] Rasinski, T. V. (2003). The fluent reader: Oral reading strategies for building word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. Scholastic Inc.
- [49] Rinehart, S. D., & Ahern, T. C. (2016). Toward a New Model of Usability: Guidelines for Selecting Reading Fluency Apps Suitable for Instruction of Struggling Readers. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 45(1), 124-136.
- [50] Saddler, B., Asaro, K., & Behforooz, B. (2008). The effects of peer-assisted sentence-combining practice on four young writers with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, 6(1), 17-31.
- [51] Sidekli, S., & Yangın, S. (2005). Okuma güçlüğü olan öğrencilerin okuma becerilerinin geliştirilmesine yönelik bir uygulama. *Atatürk Üniversitesi Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 11, 393-413.
- [52] Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading research quarterly*, 360-407.
- [53] Şahin, A. (2011). İlköğretim 6. sınıf öğrencilerinin dinleme becerisi farkındalıklarının sosyo-ekonomik düzeye göre incelenmesi. *Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 2(1), 178-188.
- [54] Therrien, W. J. (2004). Fluency and comprehension gains as a result of repeated reading: A meta-analysis. *Remedial and special education*, 25(4), 252-261.
- [55] Tompkins, G. E. (2002). Struggling readers are struggling writers, too. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 18(2), 175-193.
- [56] Troia, G. A. (2005). Writing instruction for students with learning disabilities. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of writing research* (pp. 77-97). New York: Guilford.
- [57] Troia, G. A., Shankland, R. K., & Wolbers, K. A. (2012). Motivation research in writing: Theoretical and empirical considerations. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 28(1), 5-28.
- [58] Uçgun, D. (2007). Konuşma eğitimi etkileyen faktörler. *Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 22, 59-67.
- [59] Uzunkol, E. (2013). Akıcı okuma sürecinde karşılaşılan sorunların tespiti ve giderilmesine yönelik bir durum çalışması. *Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 9(1), 70-83.
- [60] White, K. M., & Hall, A. H. (2014). Examining teachers' perceptions of effective writing strategies and barriers to implementation. *Publications*, 24.
- [61] Winn, D. D. (1988). Develop listening skills as a part of the curriculum. *The Reading Teacher*, 42(2), 144-146.
- [62] Woods, J., & Shoho, A. R. (2009). The forgotten aspect of communication: Principals' listening skills. *Journal of School Public Relations*, 30(2), 150-165.
- [63] Yalçın, A. (2002). Türkçe öğretim yöntemleri yeni yaklaşımlar. Ankara: Akçag Yayınları.
- [64] Yıldız, M. (2013). Yazma güçlüğü (disgrafi) olan bir ilkokul 2. Sınıf öğrencisinin el yazısı okunaklılığının geliştirilmesi: Eylem araştırması. *Uşak Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 16, 281-310.
- [65] Yüksel, A. (2010). Okuma güçlüğü çeken bir öğrencinin okuma becerisinin geliştirilmesine yönelik bir çalışma. *Kuramsal Eğitimbilim Dergisi*, 3(1), 124-134.
- [66] Zhang, Y. (2000). Technology and the writing skills of students with learning disabilities. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 32(4), 467-478.