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# The Case of Composition Questions in the Examinations of Turkish Lesson

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## Abstract

*Problem Statement:* Writing is a skill area that is difficult to teach and evaluate. The fact that writing is a complex skill including many factors underlies on the basis of these difficulties. Such factors as grammar, writing and punctuation, language and expression, text linguistics and thinking skills, which are knowledge and skill areas all by itself, form wholeness through interaction in the writing process. Topics, types, methods of the writing are the decisive factors when reflecting on the students' competence. Thus, quality of the questions affects students' writing achievement in the exams. In the studies, it is not presented how the writing skill is addressed in assessment and evaluation that forms the final link of the teaching process. It is possible to determine the effectiveness of assessment and evaluation regarding writing skills and to correct the deficiencies if any, with the composition of the questions to be addressed from different angles.

*Purpose of Study:* This study aims to identify the case of composition questions in the examination of secondary school Turkish lesson and the teachers' perceptions related to this issue.

*Method:* In this study conducted in case study design, 18 schools have been identified through convenience sampling method. According to

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the method of document review, 432 exam papers were collected from these schools and eight of the teachers those preparing exams were interviewed.

*Findings and Results:* The results obtained are as follows: In 52.08 percent of the exams, composition questions take place. A significant part of these questions require writing according to the method of guided writing. Teachers often did not specify the type of text to be written. In the questions that are specified with text types, event texts become prominent. According to the participants, lack of diversity in terms of writing methods in composition questions results from teachers' habits and unfollowing the latest developments.

*Conclusions and Recommendations:* It can be argued that composition questions examined in the study are not adequate in terms of both quantity and quality. It can be said that writing methods and types learnt in the teaching process haven't been reflected in the evaluation process. Findings reveal that teachers act upon the concerns rather than objectives and attainments of the lesson when preparing exam questions and this causes misevaluation of writing skills of students. To evaluate students' writing skills properly, composition questions should be increased and enriched by teachers.

*Keywords:* Teaching writing, written expression, assessment, evaluation.

## Introduction

Writing is a skill area that is difficult to teach and evaluate. The fact that writing is a complex skill including many factors underlies on the basis of these difficulties. Such factors as grammar, writing and punctuation, language and expression, text linguistics and thinking skills, which are knowledge and skill areas all by itself, form wholeness through interaction in the writing process. An effective education and proper evaluation are possible with dealing with these factors from grammar to thinking skills as a whole. As a result of this inclusiveness, writing skill forms an important part of the objectives and attainments of Turkish lessons and assessment and evaluation activities.

When it comes to writing skills, it is a major challenge to make a valid and reliable assessment of the students' success. Variability of the students creating the text and the teachers making the assessment is the main source of these difficulties. While the student's writing achievement varies according to the situation, topic and text type, teacher's knowledge and experience are determinative to evaluate the text. For this reason, different teachers can evaluate the same text differently. This variation in the process makes it difficult to evaluate the student's overall writing proficiency.

Students' writing skills are determined through direct and indirect assessment. In direct assessment, under prescribed conditions, a sample is taken from the writings of students and is evaluated by one person or more. In indirect assessment, success in the writing skill is determined through observation of such specific knowledge as grammar, sentence structure related to writing. Indirect assessment is usually used with multiple-choice tests. While direct assessment is limited to inconsistency of the assessors and area sampling problem, there are some limitations in the indirect assessment as well (Breland, 1983).

Because that present methods are insufficient to determine writing skills, alternative approaches are required in order to obtain valid and reliable results regarding writing skills assessment and evaluation. Such alternative approaches as peer and self evaluation (Beaven, 1977) and portfolio (Murphy, 1999) have been used in assessment of students' writing skills. Each approach not only gives more responsibility to students, it enables them to evaluate both their peer's writing and their own writings as well. However, this type of assessment hasn't been used effectively for the reason that students are not equipped to make such assessments and a failure to provide such education to students (Huot, 2002).

Portfolio that is a collection of student's activities deals with assessment, teaching and learning processes entirely. This provides assessment not to be hindering but to be supporting factor for learning (Elbow & Belanoff, 1997; Huot, 2002). Portfolio provides information about a student which cannot be obtained from other assessment approaches. It offers opportunity to analyse both different students' writings and different writings of the same students gathered at various times and situations. Portfolio can help students determine their success in different situations, their low and high performance in the process, scope of their studies and how they consider their writings. In this way, it can be found out which styles and strategies students have, and in which they need support, their thoughts about their own writing and how they see themselves as a writer. This kind of information is useful for guiding activities to be held in next phases for students (Murphy, 1999).

It has been specified in the program that assessment and evaluation will be both for the process and the product. One the other hand, it doesn't work as planned when it is put into practice. In a research conducted demonstrates that 62 percent of teachers do not use portfolios at all (TED, 2009). Even though alternative assessment and evaluation instruments are used in the lessons, final grade of student's success is determined considering conventional instruments (Gok & Sahin, 2009). In this context, it can be said that dominant role of conventional assessment and evaluation instruments has continued in educational system.

In Turkish lessons, such conventional instruments as written exams, multiple choice tests and true/false tests are used as assessment and evaluation instruments. In Turkish lessons, written exams are used commonly though it sometimes varies according to the purpose of the assessment. The most important advantage of the written exams is to test complex learning which cannot be measured by objective tests. As written exams giving students freedom to write require knowledge and skill

(Gronlund, 1969; Linn & Miller, 2005) is very useful assess the person's unique and creative thinking power, written expression skills, their perspective, interest and attitude (Tekin, 1984). Writing skills of students are often evaluated with questions related to writing in these types of exams.

All Turkish language exams include questions related to writing skills. However, a large part of these questions is intended for mechanic elements of writing. Such questions as grammar, writing and punctuation and text types which assess writing with skill levels rather than knowledge levels do not assess students' writing skills directly. Yet, it is not easy to come across composition questions assessing the students' writing skills directly in every exam. In the exams including this type of questions, quality of the questions affects students' writing achievement. Topics, types, methods of the writing are the decisive factors when reflecting on the students' competence.

Secondary School Turkish Lesson Teaching Program (MEB, 2006) examines Turkish lessons with a new approach and has brought many changes in objectives and attainments of the lesson, in lesson activities and in assessment and evaluation. In the studies that seek to demonstrate the effectiveness of the program, different aspects of education and training process have been investigated in the light of these changes and developments. However, in these studies, it is not presented how the writing skill, which forms a significant part of the objectives and attainments of Turkish lesson, is addressed in assessment and evaluation that forms the final link of the teaching process. It is possible to determine the effectiveness of assessment and evaluation regarding writing skills and to correct the deficiencies if any, with the composition of the questions to be addressed from different angles. This study which takes it roots from those needs; it is aimed to identify the case of composition questions in the examination of secondary school Turkish lesson. In this context, this study searches for answers to the following questions below:

1. How often do composition questions take part in the exams for determining the learning levels and what are the opinions of teachers in this regard?
2. Which writing methods and techniques do composition questions demonstrate compliance with and what are the opinions of teachers in this regard?
3. In composition questions, what kind of text types in writing is required and what are the opinions of teachers in this regard?

## Method

*Research Design*

This case study was conducted in qualitative research design. Case studies are the studies in which a limited system is examined thoroughly (Yildirim & Simsek, 2008; Merriam, 2013). Thus, several variables are investigated in order to understand a specific case and their possible effects will be revealed.

*Scope of the Research*

Participants of this study consist of Turkish lesson exams of 2012-2013 school year, in Isparta and Turkish language teachers. 432 exam papers from 18 secondary schools determined through convenience sampling of the purposeful sampling methods form the documents of the study and 8 teachers who are interviewed and selected from the schools from which exam papers have been collected constitute the participants of the study. 6 of the participants were male and 2 of them were female. 3 of them (1st T., 4th T., 5th T.) have less than 10 years of professional seniority, 5 of them (2nd T., 3rd T., 6th T., 7th T., 8th T.) have more than 10 years of professional seniority. Also, 3 of them (5th T., 6th T., 8th T.) have bachelor's degree, while 2 of them (3rd T., 7th T.) have master's degree, 2 of them (1st T., 2nd T.) have master's degree and 1 of them is having (4th T.) doctor's degree.

*Data Collection*

Turkish lesson exam papers which constitute the study document were collected from 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders in Isparta city centre within the framework of legal permission from Isparta Provincial Directorate of National Education. First term 3 and second term 3, totally 6 exam papers were gathered from each grade level. These exam papers form the all proficiency exams of a class that take place in Turkish lesson during a school year. In this way, 432 exam papers were collected from a total of 44 teachers.

First of all, documents were examined in order to get teachers' opinions on the composition questions and the findings were categorized into 3 groups in accordance with the purpose of this study. After that, findings related to composition questions obtained from exam papers were sent to 8 teachers via e-mail and they were asked to interpret them. In spite of the advantages of face to face interviews, due to the fact that the participants have more time to response thus, deeper ideas may be created, this technique was applied with the thought that e-mail responses can shed light on the unmentioned problems (Merriam, 2013).

To ensure the validity of the research, expert review was referred for the results obtained in this study and the opinions of each teacher (Yildirim & Simsek, 2008) were given place in the results part of the study. For the reliability of the research, documents were evaluated by the each researcher. Coding reliability of three researchers was calculated as 0.88 according to the formula of Miles & Hubermann (1994). Expert opinion was received when the researchers were in conflisct with coding.

*Data Analysis*

Descriptive analysis method was applied to analyse the data. In this kind of analysis which intends to introduce the obtained findings in an orderly and interpreted manner, the data are first described systematically and clearly. Afterwards, these descriptions are explained, interpreted, cause and effect relationships are examined and a number of conclusions are reached (Yildirim &

Simsek, 2008). For this reason, in the study, methods and techniques of writing and text types are determined first and questions were examined accordingly.

Questions were examined in terms of the compliance with the purpose of writing methods in the program. In the analysis of text types, expressions denoting the type of the text specified in the question or any type of text were taken into consideration. Findings were presented in the tables and composition questions in the exams were cited time to time.

The data obtained in the interview were analyzed according to the findings of the study. Because that in the first phase of the study the findings obtained from the documents were analysed in three categories in accordance with the purposes of the study, new categorization was not needed. Instead, teachers' opinions were examined according to the previous categories.

## Results

In this section, findings were examined in three categories according to the specified questions within the scope of the research and interpretations regarding findings were included.

*The Case of Composition Questions in the Exams*

The first subgoal of the research is the question "How often do composition questions take part in the exams for determining the learning levels and what are the opinions of teachers in this regard?" Findings obtained from the exam papers regarding the case of composition questions in Turkish lesson exams are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Frequency of the Composition Questions That Are Asked*

| | *5th Grade* | *6th Grade* | *7th Grade* | *8th Grade* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Included | 48 | 59 | 62 | 56 | 225 |
| Excluded | 60 | 49 | 46 | 52 | 207 |
| Total | 108 | 108 | 108 | 108 | 432 |

In Table 1, it has been seen that more than half of the exam papers (52.08%) include composition questions. When these questions are examined at grade levels, it has been observed that they take part in 7th grade most and in 5th grade at least. A certain background, thinking skills and method knowledge and skills are prerequisite to produce texts. In this regard, it is acceptable that composition

questions are asked at least 5th grade level considering language and cognitive development. Participants interpret the table in this was as well. While one of the teachers (3rd T.) relates this to the reason that *"students writing skills (as knowledge and saturation) didn't develop until secondary school"* (3rd T.) another teacher relates it to *"readiness level of the students to write a composition is not sufficient, student's self-expression and increase of life experience, it takes time to be capable of writing composition"* (1st T.). Another teacher states that *"students who failed to develop writing skills pleadingly ask their Turkish language teacher not to ask composition questions at 5th grade, thus most of the teachers prefer not to ask those questions instead of failure"* (4th T.) and expresses the other dimensions refering to the matter.

It can be said that questions show increase until 7th grade in parallel with the development of students. However, as can be seen in the Table, rate of written expression questions decreases at 8th grade level. Although not certain, lack of written expression questions in the high school entrance exams might direct the teachers to other question types. Alongside the teachers consulted put forward various reasons for this case and the opinion that test-based central exams are effective supports this view. One of the participants indicates that *"it is important for students to comprehend test techniques better and to develop solution-oriented technique in order to prepare for central exams in this context; as it is considered that students need to achieve success in interpretation, reading comprehension, and multiple choice questions, composition questions as written expression are given less part"* (2nd T.). Another participant in parallel with this opinion articulates that*"The most important factor is that composition questions are not included in state exams. OKS, (High School Entrance Exam) SBS (Placement Test) or whatever named, all the examinations conducted by the state is in the form of multiple-choice tests. Hence, composition loses its significance in this system through which the success is measured*" (6th T.). In addition to them, it s stated that such reasons as "*the challenge of reading students' writings*" (6th T., 7th T.) and*"difficulty of objective assessment of the composition questions"* (6th T., 7th T., 8th T.) also effective on the case that composition questions take less place in the exams.

*The Case of the Questions in terms of Methods and Techniques*

The second subgoal of the research is the question "Which writing methods and techniques do composition questions demonstrate compliance with and what are the opinions of teachers in this regard?" Findings obtained from the composition questions in Turkish lesson exams in terms of their relevance to the objectives of the writing methods are shown in the Table 2.

**Table 2.**

*Distributions of the Questions at Grade Levels According to Writing Methods and Techniques*

| | *5th Grade* | *6th Grade* | *7th Grade* | *8th Grade* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Guided writing | 29 | 28 | 43 | 33 | 133 |
| Text completion | 7 | 15 | 4 | 3 | 29 |
| Creative writing | 4 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 19 |
| Writing based on senses | 3 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 14 |
| Writing choosing from words and concepts | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 12 |
| Critical writing | 0 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 11 |
| Creating a new text based on a text | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Free composition | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Summarising | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 48 | 59 | 62 | 56 | 225 |

It has been observed in Table 2 that teachers ask questions appropriate to guided writing technique (59.19%) most. This was followed by text completion (13.00%) and creative writing (8.52%) technique respectively. It is seen that the techniques summarising and free composition are required to be written at least. Such questions included in the program as taking notes, filling in the blanks, guided writing, guessing, creating a text in his/her own words, group writing are not included in the exam.

Such questions as a proverb, idiom or concept "*Please explain the verb phrase 'Four eyes see more than two (Bir elin nesi var iki elin sesi var.)' in the framework of the rules of composition.*" (6th Grade: 11), *Please write a composition about Patriotism.* (5th Grade: 2), *'Friend is like a medicine when you are in need of help (Hastalik aninda ilac ne ise sikinti aninda da dost odur.)' Please write a composition about the importance of friendship based on this phrase.'* (7th Grade: 328) that require explanation aim to measure the students' ability to explain their knowledge, feelings and thoughts about a subject effectively. Such questions are frequently used in writing activities as it is easy to prepare. However, this method is not sufficient to reflect students' knowledge. In addition,

guided writing activities require the subject to be discussed and inform the students about the topic before writing. Yet, it is not possible to provide this prerequisite during the exam. Hence, it can be considered as deficiency of the exams to include these types of questions at a great rate.

Such methods as text competion, creative writing and writing based on senses which allow students to write more comfortably, stimulate their emotions and imaginations, and enable them to generate ideas are all included in the exams. The question appropriate to creative writing "*What would have happened without electricity?"*(6th Grade: 179) forces students to go beyond their habitual style of thinking. In this way students build a reality outside of their own world and they behave more freely in their imaginary world thus, they can create text more easily. Likewise, it can be said that the question appropriate to text completion method "*Complete the following story left unfinished according to your own ideas in accordance with the rules of composition by putting an appropriate title"* (6th Grade: 79) also enable students to put forward an idea by enriching the students' world of feelings, thoughts and imaginations.

Participants expressing their views on Table 2 relate this situation to "taking the easy way out" and "not to be open to new ideas". While the participants state that taking the easy way out results from "*teachers sometimes find it difficult to give up conventional methods and techniques… and they find it easy to ask just proverbs and idioms in the questions*" (2nd T.) the other participant articulates the reason as "*they are not yet accustomed to the new system and they get the composition questions prepared in the form of old system available on the internet*" (4th T.). In addition to these "*inability to use technology"* (6th T.) and*"failure to follow technological developments"* (2nd T.) are the reasons that force the teachers to taking the easy way out. According to the participants, the reasons why the teachers do not open to the new ideas are "*teachers are far from questioning the existing sytem*" (8th T.) and "*many of the teachers are unaware of the developments in creative writing*" (1st T.).

*The Case of Questions According to Text Types*

The third and the last subgoal of the research is the question "In composition questions, what kind of text types in writing is required and what are the opinions of teachers in this regard?" Findings related to the text types in exam papers in which students were asked to create their own wiritngs are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.**

*Distributions of the Composition Text Types at Grade Levels*

| | *5th Grade* | *6th Grade* | *7th Grade* | *8th Grade* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unspecified | 24 | 37 | 44 | 38 | 143 |
| Story | 15 | 14 | 7 | 9 | 45 |
| Tale | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 10 |
| Essay | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| Free writing | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Travel writing | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Letter | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| Critical review | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Memoir | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Discourse | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Petition | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Fable | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Poem | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 48 | 59 | 62 | 56 | 225 |

As can be seen in Table 3, more than half of teachers (63.55%) did not specify the types of texts students will create. In the composition questions, in which the text types are specified, story (20.00%) is taking the lead. This is followed by tales and essays.

In this kind of exams, as seen in the questions*"Write a composition explaining the proverb 'Keep a thing seven years and you'll always find a use for it (Sakla samani, gelir zamani).'* (5th Grade: 314) *"Please write an essay about one of the following topics"* (5th Grade: 28) phrases are used that do not refer any kind of text type in the question. This is because of fix question type rather than teachers making students choose any text types given the reality that explaining a proverb, idiom and phrase requires expressing the ideas, it is considered that students are supposed to create their own

writings. In this case, it can be said that non-fictional becomes prominent as type of text in the composition questions. Notwithstanding, the participants state that text types are not specified for the reason that "*limiting students increases their anxiety and reduces their success*" (1st T., 5th T., 6th T., 8th T.). Even if this approach is accepted as true, it is incosistent with those ideas "*writing expository makes the stundent feel comfortable*" (4th T.) and as mentioned below "*story and tale are easier*". In addition, participants articulate that it is on the grounds that "*it provides more opportunity to teachers when grading*" (4th T.), "*students' inability to write according to the text type*" (8th T.) and"*as the writing activities of text types are appropriate to high school level*" (7th T.). The reasons put forth so far why teachers do not specify text types in the questions establish that teachers act upon the concerns rather than objectives and attainments of the lesson.

On the other hand, in the exams in which the text types are specified "*Write a story by choosing topics above.*" (7th Grade: 280) and"*Complete the tale Bald Boy (Keloglan) left unfinished in accordance with the features of tale and remember to put appropriate title*" (6th Grade: 178) teachers clearly explains as seen in the questions. As seen in Table 3, while fictional writing is prominent in the specified text types decreases gradually starting from 5th grade, non-fictional increases. It can be said that this case is appropriate to the students' development features. However it was an obstacle for students thinking clearly as most of the questions were not specified in the exams. Respondents expressing an opinion on the specified types that they prefer asking text types in the form of story and tale due to such reasons as"*they are the ones that students are more familiar with*" (8th T.), "*they are easy to comprehend*" (7th T.), "*they are easy to write*" (4th T.) and "*secondary school students are prone to give answers related to story most*"(3th T.).

## Discussion and Conclusion

It is not enough for a student to know the content and rules of writing to turn it into a skill. Writing as a skill can only be perceptible by creating a text. In this respect, essay questions must have an essential place in the Trukish Language exams in order to evaluate students' writing skills correctly. However, test driven examination as a prominent reason in the opinions of the teachers does not allow it. Students who are succesful on text free type of exams while the same students fail in writing exams (Ozbay, 1995) reveals that writing requires different skills. So writing skill can be directly assessed with the essay questions that require students to create a text. Therefore, it can be said that it will be useful to use more questions that directly measure writing skill which is one of the most important activity to be used in the Turkish course and requires to use other skills.

One of the attaintments that students are expected to acquire in Turkish language lessons is "*using writing methods and techniques*". In Turkish lessons, for this purpose, writing activities with different methods and techniques are applied. However, in the light of the findings obtained in this study, it can be said that diversity in

coursebooks thus, writing techniques used in teaching process are not seen in evaluation process. Although the teacher states that they usually use creative writing in teaching process (Cetinkaya, 2015). Moreover, it has been observed that guided writing technique is given more place and even some methods and techniques are not included at all. Participants relate this situation to the reasons that teachers take the easy way out and they are not open to new ideas. Studies conducted also assert the deficiencies of teachers regarding professional development (Taga & Unlu, 2013; TED, 2009). Such teachers who do not follow the latest development in education and do not get benefit from them tend to apply "classical" methods.

Writing activities carried out in the form of explaining proverbs, idioms and phrases are far from the quality to stimulate imagination and creativity which deepen thestudents' thoughts and feelings. Not surprisingly, it is not possible for students to be successful in explaining an abstract idea and concept which do not attract their attention and on which they do not have sufficient knowledge and have difficulty in generating opinion. In the related literature it has been established that writing achievements of the students vary by the methods applied (Arici & Ungan, 2008; Graham & Perin, 2007; Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012; Hillocks, 1987). In this regard, it should be noted that such questions appropriate to writing methods that demonstrate the students' success on expression are to be included in the exams in order to evaluate accurately. Yet, the findings of this research reveal that most of the teachers evaluate the students' writing skills with the compositions icluding proverb, idiom and phrase explanation. In his study, Temizkan (2003) states that 53.3%, and as Zorbaz (2005) articulates that 47.7% of teachers use the proverb and idion description as a method in the writing activities. These results are similir to the ones obtained in our study.

In Turkish language lessons, students are expected to acqurie such skills as "*writing fictional, non-fictional, descriptive and poem*". Therefore, students' writing skills in different text types need to be evaluated as well. However, in exam papers it has been observed that this case is not taken into consideration in the evaluation process, it can be seen that there is not a balanced distribution. In 36.45% of the exams the text types are specified. Yet, this finding can be said to be insufficient although it is more than the percentages of teachers (10%) who asks their student to write in the specified types, in the study of Zorbaz (2005).

Participants indicate that the opinion that students should not be limited to text types in order to write freely is effective on teachers not to include text types. Although this is an accaptable reason, it contradicts with the case that teachers give less importance to the questions appropriate to free writing method which do not limit students' writing in terms of topic and type. Contrary to this idea, Tepeli & Baydar (2013) indicate the importance of specifying the text type on the writing to be more effective, on creating diversity for students and enhance students' enhusiasm towards writing. Besides, they articulate that despite the fact that students know the text types, they do not use them but when the text types are given they write

successfully. Also, Uyar (2016) points out that students need to know which criteria they are assessed.

The purpose of the study is taken into consideration when selecting an appropriate text type and this type gives shape to the style, language and expression of the text. Thus, in writing activities, students need to get acquainted with different types of writing and turn them into skill. The studies in the literature (Cooper, 1999; Cooper & Breneman, 1988) indicate that writing achievement in terms of types differ. Hence, the teachers should evaluate their ability to generate different types of text in the process of assessment to determine level of comprehension and application of the text types. However, it has been observed in the papers that students concentrate more on non-fictional writing they express their opinions on a specified topic and on fictional writing that allow them to create writing easier.

As a result, it can be argued that composition questions examined in the study are not adequate in terms of both quantity and quality. It can be said that writing methods and types learnt in the teaching process haven't been reflected in the evaluation process. Findings reveal that teachers act upon the concerns rather than objectives and attainments of the lesson when preparing exam questions and this causes misevaluation of writing skills of students.

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# Türkçe Dersi Sınavlarında Kompozisyon Sorularının Durumu

**Atıf:**
Taga, T., Unlu, S., & Oztırk, H. (2016). The case of composition questions in the examinations of Turkish lesson. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research,* 65, 199-216
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## Özet

*Problem Durumu*: 2006 Türkçe Dersi Öğretim Programı, Türkçe dersini yeni bir yaklaşımla ele almış ve dersin amaç ve kazanımlarında, ders etkinliklerinde, ölçme ve değerlendirmede birçok değişim ve gelişimi beraberinde getirmiştir. Programın etkililiğini ortaya koymaya çalışan araştırmalarda bu değişim ve gelişimler ışığında eğitim-öğretim sürecinin farklı boyutları incelenmiştir. Ancak bu tür araştırmalarda Türkçe dersi kazanım ve etkinliklerinin önemli bir bölümünü oluşturan yazma becerisinin, öğretim sürecinin son halkasını oluşturan ölçme ve değerlendirmede nasıl ele alındığı yeterince ortaya konulmuş değildir. Yazma becerisi; dinleme, konuşma ve okuma becerilerinin gelişmesinden sonra gerçek anlamda olgunlaşan bir beceridir. Son derece zor ve zahmetli bir sürecin sonunda istenilen düzeye gelebilen bu becerinin ölçülmesi ve değerlendirilmesi de öğrenilmesiyle doğru orantılı bir biçimde zor ve zahmetlidir. Bilişsel gelişimin en üst basamaklarına gelmiş olmayı gerektiren yazma becerisi; dil bilgisi, yazım ve noktalama, dil ve anlatım, metin bilgisi ve düşünme becerileri gibi alt bileşenlerden meydana gelir. Bu çok boyutluluk, yazma becerisinin tek tip ölçme değerlendirme yöntemine göre planlanamayacağının bir göstergesidir. Öğrencilerin yazmadaki başarısını belirlenmek için alternatif ölçme değerlendirme yöntemlerinin işe koşulması; yazım ve noktalama gibi yalnızca mekanik unsurlara değil özgünlük, tutarlılık ve yaratıcılığa da önem verilmesi gerekir. Bu bakımdan yazma becerisine ilişkin ölçme ve değerlendirmenin etkililiğini belirlemek, varsa eksikliklerini gidermek kompozisyon sorularının farklı açılardan ele alınması ile mümkün olabilir.

*Araştırmanın Amacı*: Bu araştırma, ortaokul Türkçe dersi sınavlarında yer alan kompozisyon sorularının durumunu ve buna ilişkin öğretmen görüşlerini belirleme amacını taşımaktadır. Bu doğrultuda araştırmada aşağıda yer alan şu sorulara cevap aranmıştır:

1. Öğrenme düzeyini belirlemeye dönük sınavlarda kompozisyon ne sıklıkta yer almaktadır ve buna ilişkin öğretmenlerin görüşleri nasıldır?

2. Kompozisyon soruları hangi yazma yöntem ve tekniklerine uygunluk göstermektedir ve buna ilişkin öğretmenlerin görüşleri nasıldır?

3. Kompozisyon sorularında yazıların hangi metin türünde oluşturulması istenilmektedir ve buna ilişkin öğretmenlerin görüşleri nasıldır?

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi*: Yukarıdaki sorular doğrultusunda bu araştırmada kompozisyon sorularının sorulma sıklığı, soruların ilgili olduğu yazma yöntem ve teknikleri ile metin türlerinin dağılımı incelenmiş ve öğretmen görüşlerine başvurulmuştur. Durum çalışması deseninde gerçekleştirilen bu araştırmada kolay ulaşılabilir durum örneklemesi yoluyla 18 okul belirlenmiştir. Belirlenen bu okullardan doküman incelemesi yöntemine göre 432 sınav kâğıdı toplanmış ve sınavları hazırlayan öğretmenlerden 8'i ile görüşme yapılmıştır. Veriler, betimsel analize tâbi tutulmuştur. Bu analiz türüne uygun olarak veriler, önce sistematik ve açık bir biçimde betimlenmiş; sonra bu betimlemeler açıklanmış ve yorumlanmış; sebep-sonuç ilişkileri irdelenmiş ve sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmada öncelikle programda yer alan yazma yöntem ve teknikleri ile metin türleri belirlenmiş ve sorular buna göre incelenmiştir. Sorular, programda yer alan yazma yöntemlerinin amaçlarına uygunluğu bakımından incelenmiştir. Metin türlerinin analizinde ise soru köklerinde belirtilen metin türü veya herhangi bir metin türünü işaret eden ifadeler dikkate alınmıştır. Bulgular tablolar halinde sunulurken sınavlarda bulunan kompozisyon sorularından yer yer alıntı yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın birinci aşamasında dokümanlardan elde edilen bulgular araştırmanın amaçlarına uygun olarak üç kategoride değerlendirildiğinden görüşmede elde edilen veriler için tekrar kategori oluşturma yoluna gidilmemiştir. Bunun yerine öğretmen görüşleri daha önceden belli olan kategorilere göre incelenmiş ve ilgili bulguların altında betimlenmiştir.

*Araştırmanın Bulguları:* İnceleme sonunda ulaşılan sonuçlar şöyledir: Sınavların %52,08'inde kompozisyon sorusu bulunmaktadır. Öğretmenlerin en çok güdümlü yazma tekniğine (%59,19) uygun sorular oluşturdukları görülmektedir. Bunu sırasıyla metin tamamlama (%13,00) ve yaratıcı yazma (%8,52) tekniği izlemektedir. En az kullanılması istenilen yazma yöntem ve tekniğinin özet çıkarma ve serbest yazma olduğu görülmektedir. Programda bulunan not alma, boşluk doldurma, kontrollü yazma, tahminde bulunma, bir metni kendi kelimeleriyle yeniden oluşturma ve grupla yazma yöntemlerine yönelik sorular ise sınavlarda yer almamıştır. Öğretmenler genellikle yazılacak metnin türünü belirtmemiştir. Metin türünün belirtildiği sorularda ise olay yazıları öne çıkmaktadır. Sırasıyla hikaye, masal ve deneme en çok tercih edilen türler olmuştur. Kompozisyon sorularına sınavlarda az yer verilmesini katılımcılar ağırlıklı olarak teste dayalı sınav sistemine bağlamaktadır. Öğrencilerin gelişim düzeyine paralel olarak 7. sınıfa kadar düzenli bir artış gösteren kompozisyon sorularının, 8. sınıfta düşüş göstermesi katılımcıların yorumunu destekler görünmektedir. Katılımcılara göre kompozisyon sorularında yazma yöntemleri bakımından çeşitliliğin azlığı öğretmenlerin alışkanlıklarından ve yenilikleri takip etmeyişinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Katılımcılar, sorularda metin türlerinin belirtilmeme gerekçesinin de öğrencilerin daha kolay yazmalarını sağlamak olduğunu ifade etmektedir. Çalışmanın sonuçları öğretmenlerin, kompozisyon sorularında "klasik" uygulamaları kullanma eğiliminde olduğunu göstermektedir.

*Araştırmanın Sonuçları ve Önerileri:* Araştırmada incelenen kompozisyon sorularının hem nicelik hem nitelik bakımından yeterli olmadığı ileri sürülebilir. Bulgulardan,

yazma yöntemleri ve metin türleri bakımından öğretim sürecinde sağlanan zenginliğin değerlendirme sürecine yansıtılamadığı anlaşılmaktadır. Ayrıca bulgular, sınav soruları hazırlanırken dersin amaç ve kazanımlarından daha ziyade ders dışı unsurların dikkate alındığını, dolayısıyla öğrencilerin yazma becerilerinin sağlıklı bir şekilde değerlendirilemediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Öğrencinin yazının unsur ve kurallarını bilmesi onun yazmayı bir beceri hâline getirmesi için yeterli değildir. Bir beceri olarak yazma, ancak ortaya konan bir metin ile somutlaşır. Bu bakımdan öğrencilerin yazma becerilerinin doğru bir biçimde değerlendirebilmesi için kompozisyon sorularının Türkçe dersi sınavlarında vazgeçilmez bir yeri olmalıdır. Türkçe dersinin en önemli etkinlik alanlarından biri olan ve diğer dil becerilerini kullanmayı gerektiren yazma becerisini doğrudan ölçen sorulara sınavlarda daha fazla yer verilmesinin yararlı olacağı söylenebilir. Sınavlarda yer alacak sorular hazırlanırken programda yer alan yazma becerisine ilişkin amaç ve kazanımlar bir bütün olarak göz önünde bulundurulmalı ve sorular öğrencilerin yazma becerilerini ortaya koymaya imkân verecek zenginlikte olmalıdır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Yazma öğretimi, yazılı anlatım, ölçme, değerlendirme.