

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DEPARTMENT**

**IMPROVING THE WRITING SKILLS AND ATTITUDES OF TURKISH EFL
SIXTH GRADERS THROUGH DIARY WRITING**

Burcu ZENGİN

MASTER OF ARTS

ADANA / 2020

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ADANA / 2020

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Burcu ZENGİN

ABSTRACT**IMPROVING THE WRITING SKILLS AND ATTITUDES OF TURKISH
SIXTH GRADERS THROUGH DIARY WRITING****Burcu ZENGİN****Master of Arts, English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Assistant Prof. Dr. Meryem AKÇAYOĞLU MİRİOĞLU****July 2020, 72 pages**

Learning a second or a foreign language requires the mastery of the four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Writing in a second language is regarded as one of the productive skills to acquire and is often neglected. In Turkey, the curriculum of English for lower secondary education (from the fifth to the eighth grade) aims at not only learning a foreign language, but also using it as a tool to communicate and increase positive attitudes towards learning a foreign language. Starting from this point of view, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of diary writing on the writing skills of sixth grade English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners at a state secondary school in Mersin, Turkey. 60 EFL learners studying in the sixth grade were recruited in this mixed-method research design study that used pre-test and post-tests. 30 participants were randomly assigned to the experimental group while the other 30 participants were randomly assigned to the control group. In order to get in-depth data, both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments were used. A five-point Likert-type scale was applied to all the participants as a pre-test and post-test to elicit their attitudes towards writing in a second language. Besides, the participants were asked to write a diary entry which served as a pre-test and post-test instrument to assess their writing ability. Instructed and guided on how to write a diary entry before starting diary writing activities, the participants in the experimental group were asked to write a diary entry twice a week for a duration of eight weeks. After the intervention was over, some of these participants were interviewed in an attempt to collect more detailed reflections to support the quantitative data. The findings of the study revealed that the participants in the experimental group developed more positive attitudes towards writing in L2, and their writing scores were statistically more significant when compared to their control group counterparts.

Keywords: Diary writing in L2, improving EFL writing skills, attitudes towards EFL writing



ÖZET

ALTINCI SINIF TÜRK ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN GÜNLÜK TUTMA YOLUYLA YAZMA BECERİLERİNİN VE TUTUMLARININ GELİŞTİRİLMESİ

Burcu ZENGİN

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı

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İkinci ya da yabancı dil öğrenmek dört dil becerisine hakim olmayı gerektirir: okuma, yazma, konuşma ve dinleme. İkinci bir dilde yazma üretken becerilerden biri olarak kabul edilir ve genellikle ihmal edilir. Türkiye’de ortaöğretim birinci kademe (beşinci sınıftan sekizinci sınıfa kadar) İngilizce müfredatı sadece yabancı dil öğrenmeyi değil aynı zamanda yabancı dili iletişim kurmak için bir araç olarak kullanmayı ve yabancı dil öğrenmeye karşı olumlu tutum geliştirmeyi amaçlar. Bu noktadan hareketle bu araştırmanın amacı günlük yazmanın Mersin, Türkiye’de bir devlet okulunda İngilizce’yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen altıncı sınıf öğrencilerinin yazma becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektir. Ön test ve son test kullanılan bu karma çalışma desenine İngilizce’yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen 60 altıncı sınıf öğrencisi dahil edilmiştir. 30 katılımcı rastgele deney grubuna atanırken diğer 30 katılımcı rastgele kontrol grubuna atanmıştır. Daha derin bilgi edinmek için hem nitel hem de nicel veri toplama araçları kullanıldı. Beşli Likert tipi ölçek tüm katılımcılara ikinci bir dilde yazmaya karşı tutumlarını ölçmek amacıyla ön test ve son test olarak uygulandı. Bununla birlikte katılımcılardan yazma kabiliyetlerini değerlendirmek amacıyla ön test ve son test şeklinde ölçme aracı olarak kullanılan günlük yazmaları istendi. Günlük yazma etkinliklerine başlamadan önce günlüğün nasıl yazılacağı konusunda eğitim verilip rehberlik edilen deney grubundaki katılımcılardan sekiz haftalık süre boyunca haftada iki kez günlük yazmaları istendi. Müdahale bittikten sonra bu katılımcıların bir kısmı ile nitel verileri desteklemek için daha ayrıntılı bilgi almak amacıyla görüşme yapıldı. Çalışmanın bulguları deney grubunun ikinci dilde yazmaya karşı daha olumlu tutum geliştirdiğini ve yazma puanlarının kontrol grubundaki akranları ile kıyaslandığında istatistiksel olarak daha anlamlı olduğunu gösterdi.

Anahtar kelimeler: İkinci dilde günlük yazma, İngilizce yazma becerilerinin geliştirilmesi, İngilizce yazmaya karşı tutumlar



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ABBREVIATIONS

ATWQ: Attitudes Towards Writing Questionnaire

DWA: Diary Writing Activities

DWP: Diary Writing Period

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

L2: Second Language

SFL: Systemic Functional Linguistics

WPA: Writing Performance Activities



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section mainly introduces the study and presents information about the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, significance of the study and definition of key terms.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In this global era, English is one of the most essential communication tools which contributes to the development of science, technology and culture. Therefore, it has become a fundamental necessity for nations to teach English to their citizens. As in many countries, English is a compulsory subject of the curriculum in Turkey. Pupils in lower secondary education take three hours of English instruction per week, which might be supported by two extra hours as an elective class if the parents of the pupils approve it and if there are sufficient number of English teachers to teach.

Because of time constraints and other reasons teachers cannot teach everything in class. Therefore, students need to do more activities outside of class time to use the target language in real life contexts and to acquire the skills they are required to master (Nunan, 1998). When learners spend meaningful time to use L2 out of the class and relate the language production to real needs of communication, they will be ensured to master the target language.

One of the four fundamental skills for EFL learners is the writing skill, which has gained much more prominence in the last few decades (Harmer, 1998). Among the productive skills, writing is the last one to acquire in EFL contexts (Harmer, 2000) and consequently, writing instruction becomes crucial in foreign language teaching.

To enhance the writing skills of EFL learners, product oriented approaches concerning accuracy and form were offered (Kroll, 1990). Writing instructors most of the time paid much attention to grammatical structure, accuracy and punctuation, and asked the learners to imitate model texts. However, the learners were not given sufficient time or opportunity for pre-writing activities or rewriting. The instructors often assessed the learners' essays by summative evaluation which informs the learner about their attainment level of overall knowledge and skills at the end of the course

through focusing on the end product disregarding the dimension of their writing process which needs to be given the attention it needs and deserves.

After the 1980s, the primary focus shifted to the process of writing and the writer rather than the text itself. The writer was given much more freedom and the voice of the writer was emphasized. Writing instruction was regarded as recursive (Raimes, 1983) and allowed the writer to go back and forth while producing a piece of writing. Besides, writing instruction included pre-writing activities and rewriting, and left error correction until final stages.

Nevertheless, process approaches were criticized for overemphasizing the writer and neglecting the reader and the context (Hyland, 2003). At this point, genre approaches tried to meet the needs of the reader as writing in L2 contexts had the aim of bridging communication between the writer and the reader.

Despite the fact that these approaches which influenced the second language writing instruction for decades have emerged as a reaction to the previous one, all may have drawbacks when adopted as a single method. Writing instructors may make use of some techniques of each approach in line with the needs of their learners, which might be a better solution to writing instruction. Thus, this research study aims to investigate the effects of diary writing on writing achievement and attitudes through both process and genre approaches.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

Writing is an important skill to be acquired by EFL learners. Nevertheless, it is quite challenging for the learners to master the writing skills because of some constraints such as the time allocated for English classes, load of curriculum, overcrowded classes, lack of pupils' interest and the pupils' attitudes towards writing in English. Pupils in state schools in Turkey usually learn to express their experiences in English for the first time in the sixth grade. Thus, the aim of this study is to improve EFL writing skills of Turkish sixth graders and their attitudes towards writing through diary-writing. Also, this study aims to let the pupils see what they can do regarding written production in the target language they are learning.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Success in second language acquisition requires the effective use of productive skills, speaking and writing. Therefore, writing in L2 calls for extremely important attention. According to Raimes (1983), writing is not only a way of conveying thoughts, but also an important assistant for learning. It enables students to reinforce grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary they have learned, so that they go beyond what they learned and become involved in the target language. Moreover, they find a real need for finding the right word and sentence to express themselves more clearly. Nevertheless, the hours of classes of English lessons, 3 hours a week in state secondary schools, in Turkey do not supply the students with enough time to promote writing activities sufficiently. Also, “Many students and teachers feel that writing under pressure is a very unnatural situation and perhaps cannot lead to work that is truly representative of anyone’s best capabilities” (Kroll, 1997, p.141). Kroll (ibid) conducted a descriptive research in order to find out if EFL students’ in-class essays outperformed the ones written at home. The results revealed that differences were not statistically significant, but participants wrote better organized compositions when they wrote them at home. Hartvigsen (1981, in Kroll, 1997) found similar results in his research conducted with native speakers. Assigned as homework activities, diary writing might enhance writing skills in the target language.

A diary could be described as recording events, experiences, thoughts and observations which helps to improve writing skills (Nordquist, 2018). Some researchers (DeNisi et al., 1989) suggest that diary keeping helps organize information. Also, Burt (1994) argues that diary-keeping is a way to organize one’s life through enabling him or her to reveal his or her thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

Diary writing has been used in some research most of which were conducted at the tertiary level. Tuan (2010) conducted a research to see if dialogue journal writing, an online diary writing technique, decreases the difficulties of writing that students encounter. The results showed that journal writing fosters learning motivation and improves writing skills. Similarly, Barjesteh et al. (2011) conducted a research in order to find whether diary writing improves EFL college students' grammatical accuracy in writing and their attitudes towards writing. Their results revealed that diary writing had a statistically significant effect on the EFL learners' attitudes towards writing.

Considering the afore mentioned research studies, this research study stemmed from the idea that developing the writing skills of pupils through diary writing activities, which make use of both process and genre approaches. Regarding the needs and interests of the 6th grade pupils, diary writing might improve their writing skills and attitudes towards writing. This study also aims to let the pupils discover what they can do with the language (Raimes, 1983) which they have just learned because “... writing about something we have just experienced fixes that experience in long-term memory and stimulates rational thought” (Hammond, 2002, p. 37).

1.4 Research Questions

This research study aims to find answers to the questions below:

1. Does diary-writing have a significant effect on Turkish EFL six graders' writing skills?
2. Does diary-writing have a significant effect on Turkish EFL six graders' attitudes towards writing?
3. What are the possible outcomes of diary writing on Turkish EFL six graders' writing skills?

1.5 Limitations

This study concentrated on the pupils in the sixth grade at one state secondary school. Hence, the data obtained in this study were limited to the opinions of the participants in the experimental group and control groups. Moreover, the participants in the experimental group were asked to write their responses to the interview questions, which might have prevented the researcher from obtaining in-depth data. Also, the number of the participants could be another limitation in terms of quantitative data.

Additionally, an eight-week period might not be sufficient for data collection. The data collection process in this study started in the spring term when the participants were taught the Simple Past Tense for the first time which might have posed difficulty concerning accuracy in forming sentences in newly introduced grammatical structures. Besides, the opinions of the English teachers who instructed the control and

experimental groups in terms of the outcomes of diary writing were not included in the study.

1.6 Definitions of Key Concepts

The definitions of key terms are given in this section to give readers an insight into the frame of this research study.

English as a Foreign Language: Learning English in a classroom setting in which English is not commonly used in the society (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Product oriented approach: An approach to writing instruction which mainly focuses on reading sample text and producing a similar one without multiple drafts (Campbell, 1998).

Process oriented approach: An approach to writing instruction which focuses on the writer and writing process which involves pre-writing activities and multiple drafts by allowing the writer to go back and forth during the process of writing (Raimes, 1983).

Genre approach: An approach to writing instruction which focuses on meeting the expectations of the reader and on the context which a piece of writing is produced (Hyland, 2002).

Feedback: The response to student writing by the teacher which may be in written or spoken form either on the form or content (Fathman & Whalley, 1990).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents information about what writing is and what approaches to writing have emerged. Two approaches to writing, the process and genre approaches which constitute the basis of this research study, are explained in detail since some of these techniques were implemented to the experimental group in the treatment period. Next, diary writing and the purpose of diary writing is described. Finally, related studies in the field are presented.

2.1 Definition of writing

Many children learn to write when they start primary school which proposes a well-scheduled program with the help of teachers. Learning to write is generally placed into language learning curriculums after two or three years of learning the target language. This may bring an extra load of learning as the target language writing system has its own rules and cultural conventions which are generally quite different from the native language of learners.

Language learning includes the mastery of the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing, the last skill to acquire among other linguistic skills, has been widely investigated for the last few decades and defined by many researchers. According to Crystal (1995), writing is a way of communication in which a set of symbols are made on a surface. Writing is seen as an effort to convey the traces of human experiences and thoughts to the new generations.

From another point of view, Scribner and Cole (1981) argue that the ability to write does not only mean to write a particular script but also use this ability for particular purposes for the readers in specific contexts. To be able to write is not only an act of literacy, but it is the ability to use the language for specific reasons in different contexts. Similarly, Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1997) define writing as an act which occurs in a context, achieving a purpose which is appropriately organized for specific readers. By the same token, Hyland (2015) describes writing as an interaction between readers and writers with communicative purposes.

Olshtain (2001) defines writing as a means for communicating a variety of messages to any kind of readers. Writing has a social dimension which cannot be separable from readers and specific purposes. According to Raimes (1983) writing is not only a way of communication, but it is an important assistant for learning. She defines writing as a skill to teach, which is formal and compact, as writing demands “standard forms of grammar, syntax, vocabulary, punctuation, time and planning, rewriting” (p. 5). She also states that the writer has only one opportunity to be interesting in order to attract the reader’s attention. Similarly, Stubbs (1987) suggests that written language is a complex organization since it requires many forms of referencing, cataloguing, indexing, recording and transmitting information. The writer needs to master those skills to convey the meaning in a well-organized way, so writing is thinking (Rapley, 2007).

Harmer (2000) classifies writing as a productive skill and he claims that language production demands using the language at one’s disposal for communicative purposes rather than to use specific practice patterns. Nevertheless, the definition of writing may vary according to different second language learners, different needs, and different levels of language proficiency. For some, writing consists of accuracy, reviewing grammar, and vocabulary. Some learners perceive writing as future professional benefit while some others view it as the ability to write in EFL examinations or use the target language effectively to convey their thoughts and feelings.

2.2 Approaches to second language writing

Initially, native language composition writing approaches were the rationale for second or foreign language teaching and learning approaches. However, in the 1960s, the issue of immigrants necessitated the teaching of writing to them either for academic reasons or social needs (Ferris & Hedgecock, 2005). Starting from this point of view, some researchers developed a number of approaches to writing skills.

Raimes (1983) mentions six approaches to writing, most of which were originated from L1 writing strategies, and these approaches make use of some components of the strategies she specifies. Writing instructors and learners may adopt any of the proponents which serves best for their aims and needs. Figure 1 shows those proponents suggested by Raimes (ibid).

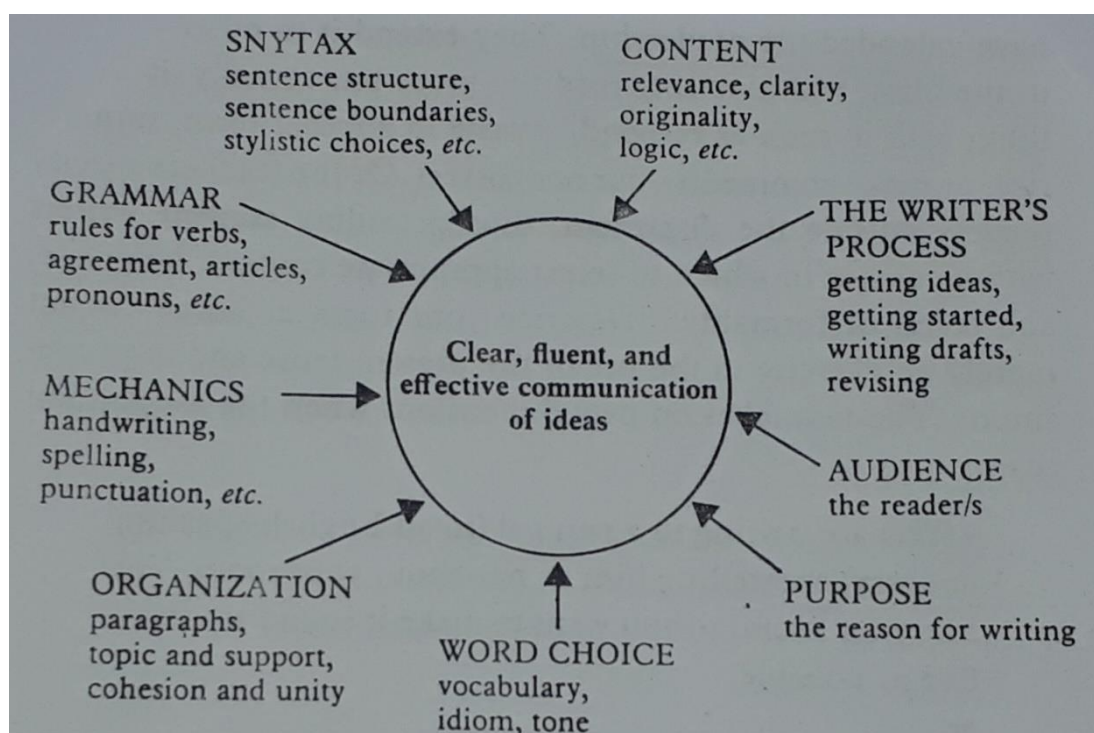


Figure 1. Raimes' model of producing a piece of writing (1983)

The first approach according to Raimes (1983) is Controlled-to-Free Approach which combines grammar, syntax, and mechanics, and this approach views writing as sequential: the learners start with sentence exercises, then they work on paragraphs. Thus, they make fewer mistakes. That is, students at lower grades begin with the sentence and paragraph levels in which they make little changes and avoid errors. Generally, students at upper levels are allowed to use free writing.

The second is Free-Writing Approach which focuses on audience and context by allowing students to write as much as possible on given topics freely without paying much attention to errors at first steps to improve writing fluency. The instructors are expected to comment on the ideas to motivate the learners. As they make progress, the essay will be organized.

The third is Paragraph-Pattern Approach which emphasizes organization which involves studying paragraphs. The students imitate the paragraphs and then make the necessary changes. The main idea of the approach is that culture determines the communication priorities of the students. No matter how organized texts they write in their mother tongue, the texts need be organized in line with the target language.

The fourth is Grammar-Syntax Organization Approach which is based on the idea that writing skills are not separate which can be learned one by one. Hence, the learners are expected to consider how to organize their text while working on required grammar and syntax. It makes use of the purpose in required forms to express the message to the target audience.

The fifth one is Communicative Approach which focuses on the purpose and audience. In a classroom context the learners are expected to write for their classmates, peers or pen-pals, and the receivers are expected to respond to them. Students write for communicative purposes for real readers.

The Process Approach, mainly focusing on the writing process, gives the writer enough time for pre-writing activities which involves discussions, readings, brainstorming and mind maps. When the first draft is composed, feedback is only given on ideas. Correction is left until the final stages.

Silva (1992) mentions four approaches to L2 composition writing, each of which emerged as a reaction to the previous one, as the previous one seemed to fail to meet the needs of the learners. Nevertheless, each approach may have some appropriate techniques for the needs of the learners in mind at different levels.

The first one is controlled writing composition. Until the early-sixties, writing was viewed as a skill to help improve the other language [skills of EFL learners](#). Based on the audio-lingual method, practice of language bits including substitutions, completions, and transformations were regarded as a means of composing original ideas, style, and organization. Towards the mid-sixties, the idea that controlled composition did not fulfil the students' need for extended written discourse constituted the basis for current-traditional rhetoric, whose main idea was arranging, "fitting the sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns" (Silva, 1992, p. 14). The text was viewed as complex discourse structures and each unit constituted a larger part, especially in academic writing, by mainly focusing on paragraphs.

Towards the early-eighties, the drawbacks of the previously mentioned approaches shifted attention on the writer and writing process. Encouraging the learner and giving enough time to start writing, drafting, revising, and editing, the process approach viewed writing as recursive. The popularity of the approach led to the development of many process-oriented approaches. The last one is English for Academic Purposes (ESP). Until the late-eighties, the idea that the process approach

overemphasized the process and ignored the basic skills, which academic contexts required, led to a new point of view, ESP. This approach mainly focuses on genre and writing in academic contexts. For a given topic, learners study and analyse academic discourse formats and related materials, and then they present their data in acceptable forms.

According to Tribble (1997), approaches to writing skills fall into three basic categories which generally conflict with each other and were developed as a reaction. The first one is the text-based approach which focuses on form by supplying learners with an abundance of sample texts which they imitate while also avoiding errors. Accuracy is the main concern, and learning to write is linear. The next one is the process approach. Focusing on the process of writing which includes pre-writing, composing, revising, editing, and enabling the learners' shift among the components when necessary, the process approach has influenced the approaches to writing by giving the freedom that learners need to convey their thoughts. The last one is the genre approach, which views social purpose of a text as the main purpose of writing, and provides more distinct connections between the reader and the writer. The writer is expected to be aware of the conventions of genres, like descriptions, recounts, and reports, and write accordingly.

Harmer (2001) focuses on five approaches to student writing, which he recommends choosing the most appropriate one among them. The first one is the product approach, which deals with only the end product. The second one is the process approach in which the stages of writing, pre-writing, editing, redrafting, and publishing are focused. The third one is the genre approach in which the learners first study related texts in a given genre and then write. Students need to know the reader, context, genre, and topic. The fourth one is creative writing, which involves writing poetry, stories, plays, narratives, or their own experiences. The last one is the cooperative approach, which assumes group work in writing leads to better results. Also, the feedback and motivation given by the teacher are important components of this approach.

Among the approaches mentioned above, this study aims to make use of process and genre approaches. The participants in the experimental group will be given treatment on both process and genre approaches considering the needs. Consequently,

they will be required to write diary entries. Thus, process and genre approaches are presented in detail.

2.3 The Process approach

All the approaches to writing have common features such as writing a connected text rather than just sentences or paragraphs, having a purpose for a specific group of readers, and helping learners in different levels to learn to write. The needs and level of the learners determine which techniques to utilize from different approaches as it may sometimes be necessary to use model paragraphs and analyse them, use sentence exercises, or free writing. Bearing these in mind, writing teachers may use an eclectic approach. As Soven (1999, as cited in Ferris & Hedgcock, p. 33) states, "An eclectic approach by no means implies randomness or lack of theoretical drive. To the contrary, reasoned eclecticism requires principled decision making regarding the literacy-oriented activities".

The process approach is one of the most widely known and adopted approaches to writing instruction that concentrates on the process of writing and the writer. The main concern of the process approach is to explore how the writer writes a piece of writing and how he or she starts writing it. What learners first write on the paper is seen as a draft, not the end product. Thus, it is not corrected, but ideas and organization are commented on. That kind of feedback on drafts helps learners generate new ideas, sentences, and words. Sometimes, learners may write down their ideas in a disorganized way, in words or chunks, and then organize them, which is called brainstorming activities. By means of process writing, learners investigate a topic by writing.

The process approach consists of stages such as prewriting, drafting, reviewing, and editing (Tribble, 1997), and writers can go backwards and forwards between these stages. This means, unlike traditional approaches to writing, producing a piece of writing is not linear and the writer is free to choose which one to go on. Similarly, Raimes (1985, p.229) states that despite the fact that the end product is "in lines," the process that the writer goes through is not fixed, but recursive. When necessary, readings for new ideas or words, reorganizing the text, or going back to brainstorming activities are encouraged.

Faigley (1986) mentions two main categories of process approaches; expressivists and cognitivists who share pre-writing, and feedback and revision as common points. Also, both of them view the process of writing as recursive. From a cognitivist point of view, language production is viewed as actively constructing and expressing meaning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1995). The writer finds his own inner-directed way to convey his or her own thoughts.

As a cognitivist, Anderson (1985) divides language production into three main stages: construction, transformation, and execution. In the construction phase, pre-writing activities, which may be called planning, take place. The writer decides what to say and determines the aims to be conveyed by means of the target language. The writer chooses appropriate information congruent with the aims, and then constructs the information. Organizing the sentence and text level improves the success of communication and the written product (Gagné, 1985). Other than that process, the writer has to consider what the audience already knows and write accordingly at all levels of writing. When the writer decides on the content, he or she has to convert the information into meaningful sentences, which is called the transformation stage. This means the writer shapes his or her goals, ideas, and thoughts in terms of mental representations, which will be written down in the third stage; execution. The first two stages are viewed as recursive between which the writer can go back and forth.

From a cognitivist point of view, writing is a problem-solving activity which necessitates high-order problem-solving operations (Ferris & Hedgecock, 2005) including planning, defining rhetorical problems, placing the problem in a larger context, elaborating definitions, offering solutions, and making conclusions (Flower, 1985). The problem here is the ability to construct the meaning purposefully. Planning consists of developing a route to meet the goals of the writer, which includes the reason to write and the ideas to convey considering the needs and beliefs of the reader. The writer defines his or her goals and conveys his or her intended meaning to the reader in the planning phase. Defining rhetorical problems necessitates considering requirements of an assignment and the reader in order to affect the reader by voice, content, and form of the text. Placing the problem in a larger context means to decide whether the text be political, literary, social, academic, or others. The writer elaborates definitions and makes conclusions, so writing is a communication among the writer, the reader, and the text (Bruce, 1981).

Similarly, Emig (1983) argues that composing is recursive. He sees writing as a personal problem-solving activity which consists of three phases; pre-writing, writing, and post-writing activities. He also argues that writing is learnt, not taught, and the writer conveys his or her own ideas in a co-operative environment.

Expressivists view writing as discovering the self during the process of writing, and this discovery has an equal importance as the product (Zamel, 1982). During the writing process, the writer constitutes original ideas by exploring himself or herself and the written discourse is a means of conveying his or her thoughts with individual voice. Besides viewing writing instruction as non-directive and personalized, an expressivist point of view includes tasks in order to promote self-discovery and elicit personal voice (Ferris & Hedgecock, 2005). According to Ferris and Hedgecock (*ibid*), to achieve these goals, journal writing and personal writing are generally preferred, as learners feel free while writing. They have no anxiety to be criticized, so they can do their best to convey their thoughts (Elbow, 1981). He also argues that writing is an ability which anyone who trusts his or her talent and is interested in can do. On the other hand, he claims that the ability to write requires a balance between creativity and critical thinking. The predominance of either lowers the quality of the text. This means, for a good piece of writing, the writer is expected to generate new ideas and be inventive while he has the ability to criticize those ideas to decide which ones to use. According to him, successful writers use these two opposing forces in a balanced way.

2.3.1. Teacher role in process approach.

A teacher who adopts this paradigm is expected to respect the learners' backgrounds and impose no idea or language of his or her own (Tribble, 1996). In a process-based classroom atmosphere, learners are free to state their original ideas without feeling anxiety to be criticized. Similarly, Hyland (2003) states that in process approaches, the teacher is non-directive, facilitates, and assists writers to convey their intended thoughts by motivating them and trying to interfere as little as possible. In classroom activities, the teacher provides learners with appropriate classroom activities for generating ideas, pre-writing activities, and motivates learners for drafts, while leaving the error correction part until the final stages (Johns, 1997).

In process-oriented classrooms, teachers are seen as guides who boost learners' motivation and freedom to help them express themselves and take responsibility for

their own learning. Learners are given no explicit instruction to construct texts in terms of specific purposes and contexts. Instead, learners are expected to discover the text types (Tribble, 1996).

2.3.2. Criticisms against process approach.

Giving much emphasis to the process of writing and the writer, the process approach has led to a rise in questions of whether these approaches meet the needs of all learners of second or foreign languages. Though they help novice writers generate more effective texts, excluding reader expectations will be disadvantageous (Tribble, 1997).

Process approaches have had a great effect on teaching and learning writing, as most teachers set pre-writing activities, ask for multiple drafts, give feedback, and leave correction until final phases. Nevertheless, there is little evidence that this approach improves writing in second language contexts, as it is mainly ego-centred and discovery oriented, which does not offer “a well-formulated theory of how language works in human interaction” (Hyland, 2003, p.18). Process models may explain how writers write, but they fail to reveal the reason why writers choose specific language and rhetoric. Another point is that in the process approach, personal development and self-articulation are core points, which neglect the importance of valued discourses such as narration, description, exposition and argument. The requirements of the reader are neglected, as well.

2.4. Genre approach

Besides emerging as a reaction to text-based approaches, process approaches, which focus merely on the writer and writing process, are criticized for neglecting the reader and the context. At this point, genre-oriented pedagogies offer writers an explanation of how language is used in a clear and systematic way in social contexts (Hyland, 2003). In educational contexts, there is a specific purpose for a learner to write, which generally helps achieve academic or developmental goals. Hence, writing instruction is expected to equip learners with the abilities to develop strategies and acquire discourse patterns of the academic community that they wish to be in (Hyland, 2002).

In genre approaches, participant relationships are seen as the main reason to use the language. Producing valued texts is seen important, as it is a kind of key to enter some social, institutional, or occupational communities. That kind of ability enhances the opportunities of a writer to survive in those communities. The success of a text is not seen as universal, but it changes depending on the communities, so the aim of genre approaches is to equip learners with required skills.

As mentioned above, one of the aims of genre-based approaches is to help learners be a member of a community. This community is named as a “literacy club” by Smith (1988), discourses by Gee (1992), a “community of practice” by Lave and Wenger (1991), and a “discourse community” by Swales (2005). These communities have common values, concepts, languages, and genres.

According to Eskey (1993, p. 223), a written product is the meeting point of the writer and the reader. From this point of view, a text is considered to interact between the writer and its reader in that the writer conveys his or her ideas by means of a text considering the meaning construction rules of the community of readers.

For Martin (2002, p. 269), the definition of genre is “configurations of meaning that are recurrently phased together to enact social practices.” Genre is a means for a writer to convey his or her thoughts to realize his aims in line with the requirements of a discourse community. Similarly, Johns (1997, p. 21) defines genre knowledge as “conventional,” whose style and form may be repeated. From this point of view, specific genres are expected to have specific set of rules which help learners produce valued texts which are appreciated by certain discourse communities.

Likewise, Hyland (2003, p. 21) defines genre as “abstract, socially recognized ways of using language.” From this point of view, texts which have similar features are written and used in social contexts. These features can be defined in a way to produce similar texts and shape the characteristics the writers act. Similarly, Kress (1988) argues that genres are the influences of the acts of social agents which consider the knowledge of generic types and conventions of particular contexts. Thus, the success of a text reflects the awareness of the writer on these issues.

Hyon, (1996) separates genre approaches into three main categories which follow significantly different ways: ESP, North American New Rhetoric studies and Australian Systemic Functional Linguistics. Australian SFL, also called Sydney School, is based on the works of Halliday (1985), who focuses on the interactive,

purposeful, and sequential nature of each genre. New Rhetoric focuses on the social context of genre. According to Coe (2002), genre is not merely a text type or context but practical connection of "text type and rhetorical situation" (p. 197). In this relationship text, context, purpose, and voice of the writer are interrelated. The main purpose of ESP is to equip learners with the relevant knowledge of specific genres which they wish to act in their target contexts (Hyland, 2003). According to him, genres are rhetorical choices which writers make use of in order to get things done in specific contexts.

According to Swales (1990), a genre is made up of a set of communicative events and the members in these communicative events have common communicative purposes. These purposes are determined by the discourse community and the purposes construct the rationale for a genre. This rationale forms the schematic structure of the text, style, and context. Exemplars of a genre have similar features in terms of these proponents and are valued by the discourse community. Swales (2009) later adds social context of the text to his definition and admits that the communicative purpose may not be attributed to a specific genre if social context of the text is ignored. This means genres are fluid and may be reshaped or have differences in different geographical locations or through time.

Johns (2015) mentions two pedagogies to teaching genre: genre acquisition, and genre awareness. Genre acquisition approaches that focus on language, structures, and the stages of a text, are mainly interested in the skills to reproduce a limited variety of text types which are organized in a predictable way.

Russel (1997) states that the main concern of genre analysis is to help learners make use of their previous genre knowledge to develop rhetorical flexibility with the aim of improving their openness to textual variation. With this approach, learners are expected to become better analysts, acknowledging what they read or write, which are not fixed or predetermined. Instead, learners are expected to view the context, the writer, and audience purposes as living.

2.4.1. Teacher role in genre approach

In genre-oriented classrooms, writing activities have specific purposes which include academic or vocational goals. The aim of this kind of instruction is to provide writers with necessary skills to develop strategies and master the discourse patterns of

a discourse community regarding social context through introducing related discourses and the expectations of the discourse community to learners. This process is regarded as a social practice (Bazerman, 1999) and it requires “exposure to discourses from a variety of social contexts” (Johns, 1997, p.14). She also advises ESL instructors to encourage learners to use their previous strategies to develop new ones and to research the literacy practices of others. Thus, L1 writing skills are the basis for L2 writing strategies which need be improved.

Teachers of ESL are expected to expose their learners to discourses and provide them with the required skills which academic institutions demand (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). In this regard, they argue that teachers of writing appreciate the importance of reading in that reading necessitates “socio-cognitive and cultural interactions among readers, writers, and the text” (p.49).

According to Spack (1993), ESL teachers are responsible for helping students to acquire the necessary information about the purposes of a specific field by writing in that field. As stated above, to improve their students’ writing skills, teachers need to equip them with necessary knowledge during the instruction phase. This is the core point of genre instruction.

Similarly, Smith (1988) argues that it is crucial for the writing instructor to provide their learners with the kind of authentic materials which help them realize themselves as proficient writers in the field that they aim to be. With a well-prepared curriculum, a writing instruction is expected to offer related context, exemplary texts, enough experience on writing and reading, linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge appropriate for the learners’ level, and needs in order for them to become a member of a discourse community.

2.4.2. Criticism against genre approach

Genre approaches are criticized for constraining individual creativity, (Coe, 1994) as learners are given model texts and produce similar ones. By imitating the exemplars, the writer is thought to have little opportunity to reflect his or her own voice. Moreover, these approaches are argued to foster passive learners and hinder active participation of the learners by process approach followers (Tribble, 1996). Hyon (1996) opposes this idea by arguing that being able to produce texts in a certain genre shows the mastery on that genre. Also, Cope and Kalantzis (1993) view these

approaches as product oriented approaches and teaching “formal language facts again” (p. 2).

2.5. Definition of diary

Recording personal reflections, daily events, and experiences periodically is called diary writing, and it has been around as early as the Greeks and Romans. Nevertheless, it was after 1960s that researchers used diary writing in educational settings and researchers from a variety of disciplines have made use of that in different contexts, both as a part of their studies and as a research tool on its own (Curtis & Bailey, 1990).

Brown (2000) states that a journal means free writing. The writer is not very anxious about grammar, rhetoric, or style. Thus, he or she can write on any topics he or she finds important and can record feelings, reactions, and thoughts. Similarly, according to Johnson (2002), diary writing is a personal record of events, thoughts, and experiences written daily or every few weeks. Fitzpatrick (2005) defines diary as a record which includes one’s experiences. Curtis and Bailey (2009, p.68) describes it as “a kind of personal account book” in which the writer has control of the content. Brown and Hood (1989) classify diaries as personal writing.

2.5.1 Benefits and purpose of diary writing

Diaries boost learner autonomy as the writer controls his or her writing in which accuracy is of little importance (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). The writer is free to determine the context of the writing and is not afraid to make mistakes, which encourages him or her to write and consequently leads to better writing. Langan (2008) argues that diary keeping is one of the best ways for writing practice and it enhances the ability to think on paper. Writing diaries also “helps learners discover what they can and cannot confidently write” (Curtis & Bailey, 2009, p. 72).

The purpose of diary writing is to help learners better master writing skills, as writing continually will help them produce the target language in a more satisfactory way. Massiello (1986) explains the aim of writing a diary as to “give your writing ‘muscles’ a daily workout” (p. 37). The more the writer practices, the better results he or she gets.

One of the purposes of writing a diary is to keep a record of what one feels, thinks, or experiences. Reflecting on their real-life experiences, language learners can organize their life better and can learn a lot from their mistakes. Harmer (2007, p.28) asserts that writing a diary is useful in many ways as well as improving writing skills: the writer expresses himself or herself freely and “reflects on what happened in their real-life.” Also, by means of this reflection process, the writer can reshape those events in the present conditions (Olshtain & Kupferberg, 1998, as cited in Bailey, Curtis & Nunan, 2001).

2.6 Research findings of previous studies on diary writing.

Cook (2005) offers that authentic use of written language should be used in the early stages of writing instruction and should make use of real written language properly. Congruent with this idea, writing a diary on a regular basis has been investigated to see what kind of effects it has on EFL learners.

Diary studies have widely been used to investigate language learning processes (Bailey, 1983, 2001; Richards, 1992; Huang, 2005) and teaching processes (Appel, 1995; Ho and Richards (1993); Tsang, 2003), both introspectively and non-introspectively. Beside this, writing a diary is used to improve certain language skills or some aspects of language like vocabulary and grammar.

Kırkgöz (2009) investigated vocabulary learning strategies used by 32 prospective English teachers at Çukurova University. The participants were asked to write a diary during fourteen weeks of a vocabulary course, and the diaries were analysed at regular intervals. The analysis revealed that the participants gained insight into their vocabulary learning process and writing a diary improved learner autonomy. Also, the analysis helped the teacher to evaluate both the course and learning strategies of the learners.

Ghulami, Barjesteh and Vaseghi (2011) argue that Iranian college students find writing in English difficult and have low confidence in writing classes. Starting from this point, they wanted to investigate whether diary writing improves EFL college students' grammatical accuracy in writing, their attitudes towards writing, and achievements in writing classes. They conducted the research with 44 third year students at a university in Iran, dividing them into control and experimental groups. The experimental group were asked to write on predetermined topics as pre and post-

tests. The students were also given two questionnaires as pre and post-tests. The results show that diary writing could be a productive activity, but there is not a significant difference between the scores of control and experimental groups.

Hashemi and Amerian (2011) made an interventional study with 40 Iranian university students at Vali-el-asr University of Rafsanjan to investigate the outcomes of diary writing upon the correct use of grammar. Half of the students were selected randomly as the experimental group. Both of the groups were given a writing test as a pre-test. The experimental group were asked to write 15 diary entries for a semester. After the intervention, the groups were given another writing test as a post-test. The grammatical errors of the students were marked and the scores of the groups were compared. The results of the study showed that the students in the experimental group acquired grammar by themselves and their writing ability in L2, self-confidence, and motivation improved.

Yulianti (2014), made an action research with 31 tenth grade participants to improve their writing skills by means of writing diary. The quantitative data were obtained through the writing scores of the students before and after the implementations. The qualitative data were gathered through observations during classes, interviews with students, and the English teacher of the class. The quantitative data were analysed by a t-test, and findings revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the scores of the participants. Diary writing improved the participants' writing skills in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics.

Vaseghi, Mukundan and Barjesteh (2014) aimed to investigate whether writing a diary improves the writing autonomy of intermediate learners of English at Sanjesh English Institute by means of a quasi-experimental research design with two control and two experimental groups, each of which consisted of thirty participants. Both groups took an expository writing test on a TOEFL topic. The experimental group were asked to write twice a week about the events in English classes which seemed interesting or unbearable to them. At the end of the treatment, both of the groups took a writing test on another TOEFL topic. Beside this, students were asked to rate fifteen Likert-type scale statements to elicit their attitudes towards diary writing and learner autonomy. The results revealed that diary writing was an effective tool to improve L2 writing autonomy.

Putri, Salatar and Sustano (2015) did a preliminary study on improving students' writing skills by means of diary habits. The participants were four fourth semester students at Teacher Training Faculty, English Education Program. The study involved two of the students as the experimental group and the others as the control group. They implemented a pre-test and post-test design in which the students were asked to write a recount text. They were then asked to hand in diary entries for seven days before the post-test. The results showed that diary writing had a significant effect on students' writing skills.

Taqi et. al. (2015) conducted a study to investigate the effects of diary writing on the participants' EFL writing achievement and language skills. During the fall semester, for fourteen weeks, fifty-two college students in the English Department were asked to write a diary on a daily basis on any topic they chose, and they were also instructed to compose four essays, each of which on predetermined topics in different genres. At the end of the study, they were asked to answer an open-ended questionnaire. The diaries were collected after ten entries and the participants were given feedback on topics encouraging self-expression. The analysis of the data showed that diary writing developed students' writing skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary when they wrote in a free environment.

Mutslihah (2016) conducted a quasi-experimental study with a pre-test and post-test design to see the effectiveness of diary writing with 252 pupils in the sixth grade on recount text. The control group received conventional instruction and the experimental group wrote diary twice a week for six weeks. She also conducted a semi-structured interview with the pupils in the experimental group. The data analysis showed that diary writing was an effective means to improve writing recount texts. The interview results revealed that diary keeping helped pupils to find ideas to write, improve writing fluency, and build a writing habit.

Autila (2017) conducted a classroom action research to improve the students' writing skills on recount text through diary writing. She used field notes, a writing test, and an observation checklist as the instruments. She designed one cycle which she divided into four steps: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The participants were undergraduate students in the English department, many of whom had difficulties in vocabulary, grammar, organization, content, and mechanics. She asked the students to do a writing test of recount text at the end of the cycle to see the progress. She found

out that writing a diary helped improve the students' writing ability of recount text and helped students write independently and creatively.

Maharani (2017) researched to investigate the problems of students in mechanics of writing and how they constructed grammatical sentences to develop their ideas. The main objective of the research was to find out if diary writing improved the writing ability of the students. It was a quasi-experimental research design whose participants were in the English department of a university. Literature students were chosen as the control group, and education students were chosen as the experimental group. Both groups took the pre-test before applying the treatment to the experimental group. After the treatment, the groups took the post-test. The analysis of the data showed that diary writing improved students' writing skills.

Dewi (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental research with 60 third year students at ELT department of Syarif Hidayetullah State Islamic University in Jakarta. There were control and experimental groups with 30 participants in each. Both of the groups were asked to write a narrative for pre-test. After the pre-test, the experimental group were asked to write diary for 3 months. After the treatment, both of the groups were asked to write a narrative for post-test. The data were analysed through t-test. The results showed that diary writing had a statistically significant effect on the participants' narrative writing skills. The scores of the experimental group were higher than the control group's scores. Also, their vocabulary and enthusiasm to write improved.

Farikha (2020) conducted an experimental research with pre-test and post-test design with 2 classes at Universitas Islam Kadiri. The students were enrolled at Electrical Engineering Faculty. The classes were assigned as the experimental and control groups. Both of the classes had the same lesson plan and worksheet. The groups were asked to write a recount text about a topic determined by the researcher as pre-test. After the pre-test, the experimental group were asked to write diary four times a week for six weeks, and they were given feedback on grammar and content before they wrote the next diary entry. After the treatment, the groups were asked to write a recount text as post-test. When the scores were analysed, it was revealed that the experimental group got higher scores than the control group, and the difference was statistically significant.

Yüce (2020) conducted a qualitative study at a state university in Turkey with nine foreign language instructors. The participants were directed semi-structured interview questions to elicit their ideas about Penzu, an online diary writing technique. The researcher aimed to get an idea about Penzu's strong and weak points and whether it was applicable and able to improve writing skills of EFL learners. According to the results, instructors reported that diary writing through Penzu could improve writing skills of EFL learners.

This chapter gave various definitions of writing and approaches which influenced writing instruction. Two approaches, process and genre approaches, which constitutes a basis for this study, were given in detail. Finally, the definition of a diary, benefits of diary writing, and diary studies related to this study are presented. The next chapter gives detailed information about the research methodology.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the participants' attitudes toward writing in the second language and to see how diary writing affects their attitudes and their writing achievement. This section of the study presents the research methods utilized in the research, the participants, and the procedures.

3.1 Research design

This mixed-method study explores the sixth graders' attitudes towards diary writing and its possible effects on the improvements of writing skills at a state secondary school in Mersin, Turkey. Employing this method is thought to support the final results of the current study because well-designed mixed- method studies boost the quality of research studies.

Recently, the concept of mixed method research type has gained popularity in the social sciences community (Timans, R., P. Wouters, P. & Heilborn, J.). In this design the general goal is to amplify the validity and thus the conclusion of the research by combining the qualitative and quantitative data results. According to Creswell (2013), mixed method approaches require using qualitative and quantitative research methods, data collection tools and analysis in a study, which enable researchers to analyse the issue to be investigated in a more detailed way. Utilizing a mixture of tools was expected to strengthen overall and to produce complementary insight to obtain a bigger picture. Hence, this mixed-method research contains pre and post-test design to elicit the potential effects of the instruction in diary writing on the development of writing skills of the participants as well as finding out their attitudes about writing before and after the intervention. This study attempts to answer to the following research questions:

1. Does diary writing in EFL have a significant effect on the sixth-grade pupils' EFL writing skills?
2. Does diary writing in EFL have a significant effect on the sixth-grade pupils' attitudes towards writing in EFL?

3. What are the effects of diary writing activities in EFL on the sixth-grade pupils' EFL writing skills?

3.2 Participants

This research was conducted with 60 pupils at Candan Merzeci Secondary School, a state school in Mersin, Turkey. Convenience sampling was used (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Two sixth grade classes, with 30 pupils in each were assigned randomly as the control and experimental groups. The ages of the students range between 11 to 13 years old. There were 33 females and 27 males. The participants are basic users of English so, their English proficiency level is A1 according to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and as stated in the İngilizce Dersi Öğretim Programı, Turkish Ministry of Education Curriculum (2018) The participants in this study had been exposed to the English language since they were in the second grade primary school. They were instructed in English for five class hours per week, two hours of which was elective. Table 1 summarizes the demographic information about the participants.

Table 1

The profile of the participants

Age	Between 11 and 13
Gender	33 females and 27 males
Mother tongue	Turkish
English level	A1
L2 (English) background	4 years

3.3. Data collection tools

The data in this study was obtained by qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments which were a questionnaire (a Five-point Likert scale), diary-writing activities, and interview. The data were collected in the spring semester of the 2018-2019 Academic Year. The first quantitative tool was a Five-point Likert-type scale through which the numeric data was gathered. The scale was administered as a pre-test and post-test. Additionally, the pupils' writing performances were assessed

through diary entries before and after diary writing period (DWP). Also, the majority of the participants of the experimental group were interviewed after DWP to obtain in-depth qualitative data. Figure 2 below illustrates the triangulation utilized in the current study.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

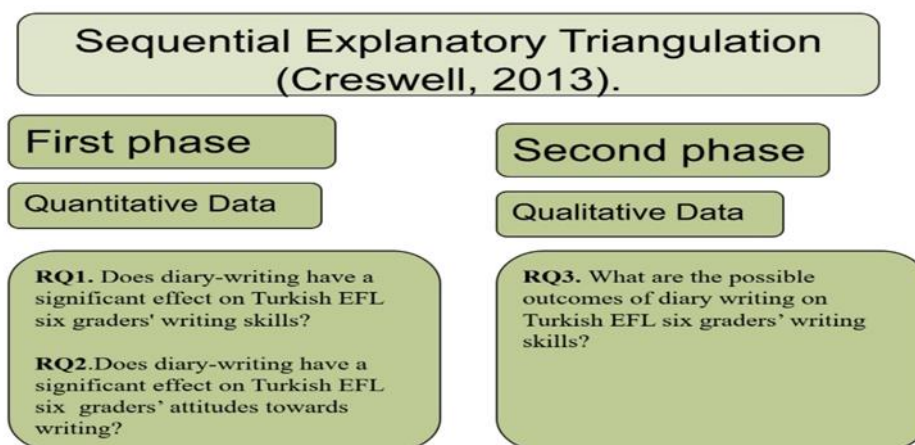


Figure 2. Triangulation method of the study

The aim of using triangulation is to increase and strengthen the research findings and the validity of evaluation (Long, 2005). Figure 2 explains the triangulation method used in this study. While the quantitative data were obtained in the first phase to seek answers to the first and second research questions, the qualitative data were gathered in the second phase to seek answers to the third research question. Each data type was expected to enhance the other and produce complementary insight to investigate the issue.

3.3.1 Quantitative data collection tools

3.3.1.1. Questionnaire Attitudes Towards Writing (ATWQ).

A questionnaire is a data collection tool in which a group of participants rate for specific purposes (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010). The rationale behind using a questionnaire is that it requires little time, helps examine the target hypothesis, is easy to manage, and is low cost.

In order to gauge the attitudes of the participants towards writing in general and in English, a Five-point Likert scale questionnaire which includes 12 items, was

implemented twice as pre and post test, before and after the intervention. The questionnaire (See Appendix 1) was developed by Ho (2006) in Chinese context and adapted into Turkish context by Avcı (2017). The participants were required to select from the options ranging from 5 to 1 (strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, strongly disagree). The questionnaire contained reverse items with the aim of increasing its reliability.

3.3.1.2 Writing Performance Assessment (WPA).

Both of the control and experimental groups were given pre and post writing performance tasks in the target language. In the classroom they were asked to write about the topic “What did you do yesterday?” to assess their current writing performances. The aim of this task was to reveal their diary writing abilities, if any, before and after the diary writing treatment.

3.3.2 Qualitative data collection tools

3.3.2.1 Semi-structured Interviews.

The main purpose of using interviews is that they can eliminate misunderstandings which might occur in questionnaires and increase the reliability and validity of the questionnaires (Oppenheim, 1992). Besides, interviews provide the researcher with more in-depth data than questionnaires because with interviews the participants are not limited while expressing their ideas or opinions.

The semi-structured interview questions (Appendix 3) were prepared compatible with the research questions and the questionnaire in order to elaborate on the pupils' attitudes towards writing in English. During the interview, the participants were asked to compare their ideas about writing in English as foreign language before and after DWP. They were also required to explain their opinions about whether DWP heightened their confidence and improved their writing skills in English or whether DWP reduced the difficulties they had in terms of writing in the target language before the treatment. Also, the participants were asked to reflect what they thought about the feedback they were given. The interview was conducted in the native language of the participants so that they could feel more comfortable in articulating themselves. Twenty-three pupils from the experimental group volunteered to

participate in the semi-structured interview. They were asked to write their responses to the questions. The interview was implemented after the post-tests. Table 2 summarizes of data collection tools.

Table 2

Summary of data collection tools

Type of data	Tools	Purpose
Quantitative data	Pre and post attitude scale	To reveal attitudes towards writing
Quantitative data	Writing score evaluation	To test diary writing development before and after treatment
Qualitative data	Interview	To explore the effects of diary writing

3.4. Treatment

After the pre-test aimed to assess all the participants' diary writing abilities, randomly assigned experimental group participants were given a treatment on diary writing for eight weeks. The treatment consisted of some techniques of process and genre approaches considering the participants' needs. The pupils were provided with sample diary entries (Appendix 2) including Anne Frank's. They attended training sessions that were prepared and presented by the researcher to help them get a better understanding of what a diary entry is and how a diary entry should be written. Also, they practiced brainstorming activities as pre-writing activities, and did writing practice after each training session. From the following week on, they were asked to write diaries twice a week for eight weeks on predetermined topics related to their routines, friendship, family relationship, school life, Ramadan days, Ramadan Feast, Children's Day and Mother's Day. Each topic was presented by the researcher using audio- visuals in the classroom. To activate their schemata about the topic they would write about, they were presented with colourful pictures, short videos and short narrations. They were required to write their diaries within three days after training the sessions. At the end of the third day, the diary entries were collected and the participants were provided with positive feedback on both content and language

including motivating statements before the next topic of diary was assigned. At the end of the DWP, the participants were required to write about the same diary entry as the one they wrote in the classroom settings on “What did you do yesterday?” as a post-test.

3.5. Data analysis procedures

To analyse the results of the semi- structured interview, Informed Grounded Theory generated by Thornberg (2012) was considered. In Informed Grounded Theory the researcher uses the theories and findings in previous studies to synthesize information creatively and flexibly for his or her own theoretical accounts. To obtain the prominent parts of the data, first previous research in the field was reviewed before categorizing the data. To reduce subjectivity, two coders were involved in the analysis process. The research questions and the interview questions constituted the rationale for categorizing the responses of the pupils. The repeated codes in the data were determined. After analysing 25% of the data, the coders compared the categories they found to examine the agreement level in the results for the inter-rater reliability concerns of Miles and Huberman (1994).

To analyse the scores obtained by the Five- point Likert scale questionnaire SPSS 25 was used for normality, reliability and paired t-tests. Thus, descriptive statistics were obtained.

The assessment of diary entries for pre and post-test was done through a rubric prepared by Jacobs et. al. (1981) (Appendix 4). The researcher and another teacher of English, with nine years of teaching experience, at the same school assessed the diary papers individually for inter-rater reliability. The means of the marks which each scorer gave was used for statistical assessment. Table 3 shows the data collection tools and analysis process.

Table 3

Summary of data collection tools and analysis process

Phase	Procedure	Product
Quantitative data collection tools	Questionnaire Writing assignments	Numeric data
Quantitative data analysis	SPSS 25 Reliability Normality T-test Means	Descriptive statistics
Connecting quantitative and qualitative phases	Selecting participants for the interview	23 participants Interviews
Qualitative data analysis	Informed Grounded Theory by Thornberg (2012) Trustworthiness criteria of Guba (1981) Inter-rater reliability	Codes and themes
Integrating the results	Interpretation of the results	Discussion

Considering the Sequential Explanatory Triangulation of Creswell (2003), the data collection tools and analysis procedures are illustrated in Table 3. To implement the process the researcher met the pupils for 22 times; once for the pre-test, twice for diary writing trainings the treatment, sixteen times to introduce the various topics of diary entries, once for the post-test, once for the interview and once to thank them.

3.6. Trustworthiness

To judge the trustworthiness of the naturalistic inquiry paradigm, Guba (1981) suggests four criteria; credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. The credibility is related to the truth value of the results of a research reveal, and the truth that participants reveal. Dependability is concerned with reproducing similar results when the research is implemented in similar conditions. Transferability is related to the applicability of the results in other contexts, and conformability is the

neutrality of the researcher. Shenton (2004) offers twenty-four sub criteria on the basis of Guba's (1981) four criteria.

In terms of credibility, which might also be called internal validity, the researcher has worked in the secondary school level for seven years and spent enough time to understand the curriculum and language level of the pupils. Also, to increase credibility, the researcher herself delivered the trainings during the treatment to the experimental group considering their needs and adjusting the time accordingly. Moreover, the triangulation method was utilized a Five-point Likert-type scale to reveal the participants' attitudes, pupils' writing scores, and the interviews. Besides, the participants were informed to feel entirely free about revealing their opinions while answering the open-ended questions during interviews and filling out the questionnaire. Moreover, the interview questions were based on the statements in the Five-point Likert-type scale in order to get more valid data.

As for transferability, which might be called external validity, the institution, the participants, the various data collection tools, the period which the study lasted were described in detail. In order to provide dependability, also called external reliability, peer and member check methods were utilized throughout the data collection and analysis process. Also, to enhance the quantitative data, the participants were interviewed. Thus, it was aimed to reveal objectively the effects of diary writing on the participants' writing skills. In terms of conformability, to provide neutrality, the researcher was working as full time staff member in the same school; nevertheless, she was not involved in teaching the six graders. Moreover, the researcher was on maternity leave and was familiar with the six graders. Two classes were randomly selected as the control and experimental groups. All along the research process, two teachers of English and one teacher of Turkish made comments whenever needed. Besides, every step of the research was guided by the supervisor, the teachers, and the researcher herself.

The data gathered by the questionnaire were analysed through SPSS 25. The conformity of the data was tested by Shapiro Wilk. If the significance value of Saphiro-Wilk is higher than ,05 then the data can be regarded as normally distributed, and the skewness and kurtosis values are expected to be between -1,96 and +1,96 (Özyürek & Tarım, 2020). When these conditions are provided, the data is considered in normal range. The significance values of Saphiro-Wilk for the pre and post-tests of ATWQ

for the control and experimental group were higher than ,05. The results of the normality tests are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

The normality test of the questionnaire

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Exper. g. pre-test	,100	30	,200*	,957	30	,264
Exper. g. post-test	,151	30	,077	,938	30	,080
Control g. pre-test	,169	30	,029	,949	30	,158
Control g. post-test	,158	30	,053	,933	30	,060

*This is a lower bound of true significance

A Lilliefors significance Correction

As displayed in Table 4, the scores of Attitudes Towards Writing Questionnaire ($p > 0.05$) are in the normal range. For the experimental group, p values were ,264 and ,080 for the pre and post-test respectively, and for the experimental group p values were ,158 and ,060 for the pre and post-test respectively. Furthermore, the experimental group's skewness (,683 SE=,427 and ,583 SE=,427 for the pre and post-test respectively) and kurtosis (-,199 SE=,833 and, -333 SE=,833 for the pre and post-test respectively) values were in normal range. Similarly, the control group's skewness (,571 SE=,427 and ,633 SE=,427 for the pre and post-test respectively) and kurtosis (,443 SD=,833 and -,335 SD=,833 for the pre and post-test respectively) values were in normal range as well.

Cronbach's Alpha values were calculated for reliability results. The reliability results of the Five-point Likert scale are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

The reliability test of the questionnaire

	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Questions
Exper. group pre-test	,756	12
Exper. group post-test	,729	12
Control group pre-test	,766	12
Control group post-test	,754	12

Cronbach's Alpha value is expected to be between +1.00 and -1.00. If Cronbach's Alpha is ,70 or higher, then it can be regarded as high in terms of reliability (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). As seen in Table 5, Cronbach's Alphas for ATWQ were ,766 and ,756 for the control group and the experimental group respectively. When the post-test scores were analyzed, Cronbach's Alphas were ,754 and ,729 for the control group and the experimental group respectively. It could be argued that the reliability results of the scale are high enough.

3.7. Ethical issues

The research proposal of this study was approved by Çukurova University on March 4, 2018. The researcher asked for official permission from the principal of Candan Merzeci Secondary School, where the researcher had been working for three years. Afterwards, necessary approval was obtained through e-mail from the researcher to use the Five-point Likert Scale (Avcı, 2017). Also, parental consent was insured (Appendix 5) and confidentiality was strictly kept.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of this research study. The findings are presented according to the order of the application of the data collection tools and are supported by related tables and figures.

4.1 Results from the Attitudes Towards Writing Questionnaire

The data gathered through the pre and post-test were analysed by paired samples t-test to see the difference between the participants' attitudes towards writing before and after DWP. As shown in Table 6, the results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the scores of the experimental group ($t=-2,473$ $p=,019$), while there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores of the control group ($t=-,912$ $p=,369$).

Table 6

Paired samples t-test results of the ATWQ for the groups

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	p
Exper. g. pre-test	2,0917	30	,30744	-2,473	,019
Exper. g. post-test	2,3806	30	,60199		
Control g. pre-test	2,3444	30	,43535	-,912	,369
Control g. post-test	2,4500	30	,52958		

When the results in Table 6 considered, it might be argued that the writing instruction in the curriculum and the course book of the six graders does not improve their attitudes towards writing in EFL. However, diary writing on a regular basis might be beneficial to improve the attitudes of the pupils towards writing skills in EFL context.

4.2. Results of the analysis of the diary-writing scores

The scores obtained by pre and post diary-writing activities of the control and experimental groups were analysed by SPSS 25. Paired samples t-test was calculated

for each group in order to find out if there was a statistically significant difference between their pre and post-test scores. Also, independent samples t-test was calculated to compare the control and experimental groups' pre and post diary-writing scores. Table 7 depicts the scores of the control and experimental groups obtained through pre-test of diary-writing.

Table 7

The Comparison of the mean scores of the groups before the intervention.

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	P
Control group	64,9500	30	11,20295	-,890	,337
Exper. group	68,0000	30	15,06995		

In Table 7, independent samples t-test was applied in order to compare the levels of the control and the experimental groups in terms of writing achievement in EFL before the treatment. The results of the independent samples t-test for the pre-test revealed no statistically significant difference ($M=64,95$ $SD=11,20$ and $M=68,00$ $SD=15,06$ for the control group and the experimental group, respectively). This means both of the groups had nearly the same competency levels. In other words, they were homogenous in regard with their writing abilities in EFL before the experiment was carried out ($t=,890$ $p=,377$).

Table 8 below presents the scores of the control and experimental groups obtained by the post-test of diary-writing.

Table 8

The comparison of the mean scores of the groups after the intervention.

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	P
Control group	66,1167	30	13,98748	-5,140	,000
Exper. group	83,5833	30	12,28125		

Table 8 shows independent samples t-test results of the groups after the treatment. When the scores obtained through the post-test of diary-writing activities ($M=66,11$ $SD=13,98$ and $M=83,58$ $SD=12,28$ for the control group and the experimental group, respectively), it was observed that there was a statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups' post-test scores ($t=-5,14$, $p=,000$), which meant that the diary writing period clearly contributed to the experimental group's writing achievement in EFL.

In Table 9, pre and post diary-writing scores of the control group is given.

Table 9

The writing scores of the control group before and after DWA

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	p
Pre-test	64,9500	30	11,20295	,474	,637
Post-test	66,1167	30	13,98748		

Table 9 presents paired samples t-test results of the control group. When the mean scores of the control group obtained through the pre and post DWA ($M=64,95$ $SD=11,20$ and $M=66,11$ $SD=13,98$ for the pre and post test respectively) compared, it was seen that there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores ($t=,474$ $p=,637$). The analysis of the pre and post writing scores of the control group indicate that writing instruction limited only to the curriculum and the course book of the six graders fails to improve the writing skills.

In Table 10, pre and post diary-writing scores of the experimental group are depicted.

Table 10

The overall writing scores of the experimental group before and after DWA

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	p
Pre-test	68,0000	30	15,06995	-4,291	,000
Post-test	83,5833	30	12,28125		

The analysis of the overall diary-writing scores of the experimental group before and after the diary writing period is given in Table 10. The mean scores of the participants of the experimental group in the pre and the post-test were $M=68,00$ $SD=15,06$ and $M=83,58$ $SD=12,28$ respectively ($t=-4,29$ $p=,000$). The difference between the scores was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), which might mean that diary-writing activities improved the experimental group's writing skills in EFL.

Table 11 shows the EFL writing success of the experimental group before and after the diary writing period. According to the results obtained through the analysis of pre and post diary-writing scores , content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics improved.

Table 11

The scores of the experimental group before and after the DWA in terms of writing development

Areas	Paired	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	P
Content	Before	21,8000	30	4,50593	-	,000
	After	27,3333	30	4,72946	5,024	
Organization	Before	14,4000	30	3,13600	-	,019
	After	16,2667	30	3,49318	2,489	
Vocabulary	Before	13,4000	30	3,39980	-	,001
	After	16,0333	30	3,21079	3,549	
Language	Before	16,3667	30	5,64760	-	,043
	After	19,0667	30	5,17909	2,113	
Mechanics	Before	3,9333	30	,94443	-	0,47
	After	4,4667	30	1,00801	2,075	

As seen in Table 11, the pupils' diary entries before and after DWP were analysed in terms of content. A statistical increase was detected between the scores ($t=5,024$ $p=,000$). The success of organization before and after the DWP was analysed. A statistically significant increase was seen between the scores ($t= 2,489$ $p= ,019$). The pupils' diary entries before and after DWP were analysed in terms of vocabulary. There was an increase in the scores of the participants ($t=3,549$ $p=,001$). The success of language use before and after the diary writing period was analysed. There was an increase in the scores of the participants. ($t=2, 113$ $p=,043$). The pupils' pre-test and post-test papers were analysed in terms of mechanics. According to the results, the difference was statistically significant ($t=2,075$ $p=, 047$). In each component of writing assessment p value was lower than ,05 which means that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post diary-writing scores of the experimental group. The training they received during the treatment, may have helped them improve their EFL writing skills in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, language and mechanics.

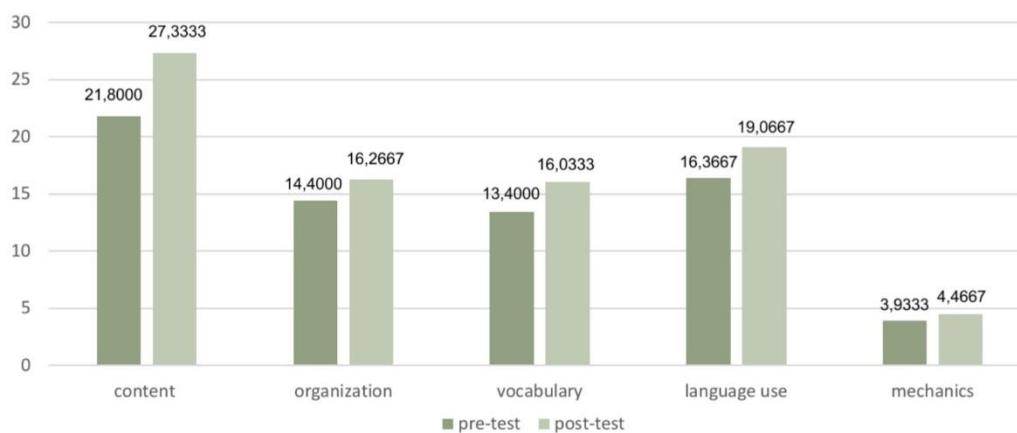


Figure 3. Comparison of the pre and post writing scores of the experimental group in five aspect of the assessment.

Figure 3 summarizes the increase in the scores of the experimental group obtained through pre and post writing tasks. Maximum scores which could be obtained from the assessment criteria was 30 points for content, 20 points for organization, 20 points for vocabulary, 25 points for language and 5 points for mechanics. The increase can be seen clearly in the scores obtained.

4.3. Results from the semi-structured interviews

Some themes emerged during the analysis of the responses gathered from the semi-structured interview questions. The themes could be divided into two as before and after the DWP. The themes before the treatment were as follows:

- ***Prejudice against writing in English.*** To start with, the participants were required to state their opinions about writing in EFL to elicit their attitudes towards writing in English. Nearly all of the participants had negative attitudes towards writing in English; either they did not like writing, or they did not know how to write. 13 out of 23 pupils indicated that they found it difficult to write in English, and 8 pupils explained that they did not even know how to write. Here are some samples from their reflections:
 - “*I had never written before...*” (Pupil 11).
 - “*It was impossible for me to write before.*”(Pupil 13).
 - “*I thought it was difficult*” (Pupil 4).
 - “*I thought I was not able to write*” (Pupil 7).
 - *It was hard at first.*”(Pupil 2).
- ***Lack of self- confidence*** Many of the participants stated that they thought they were not able to write in EFL. They agreed that they knew little about writing in EFL. Thus, they did not have much self-confidence in themselves to write before the diary writing period.
 - “*I used to think that I was not able to write...*” (Pupil 2).
 - “*I used to ask for help. I was never able to write by myself. I used to make incorrect sentences...*” (Pupil 6).
- ***Lack of planning activities.*** All of the participants stated that they did not do any planning activities before the DWP. Thus, according to them, those who tried to write could not produce a good piece of writing.
 - “*I did not use to do planning activities and the texts I wrote wouldn't be good...*” (Pupil 4).
 - “*I was not able to do planning activities because I did not know...*” (Pupil 12).

- *“I did not use to do planning activities. I did not use to organize the texts I wrote. I used to write everything in the sun...”* (Pupil 17).
- **Lack of writing techniques** Some of the pupils stated that they were not able to generate new ideas when they tried to write in L2. Nearly all of the pupils admit that they had problems at sentence construction and organization levels, both of which were barriers for them to compose a text.

“I did not know how to make a sentence before the DWP. This period taught me how to do it” (Pupil 16).

 - *“I had difficulty in making sentences, but now I make sentences much more easily”* (Pupil 10).
 - *“I did not know how to write in English”* (Pupil 14).
 - *“I used to write everything in the sun. I did not used to think about how to write and what to write. Now I do”* (Pupil 19).
 - *“I did not use to consider the conventions of writing...”* (Pupil 5).
- **Lack of interest.** Many of the participants reported that they were not interested in writing in English. They lacked the reason to write.
 - *“Writing was difficult and unnecessary”* (Pupil 6).
 - *“I was not interested in writing in English before and I used to write uncaringly...”* (Pupil 11).
- **Limited vocabulary.** Many of the pupils regarded that learning a language starts with knowing words. They believed they could be successful at the related language skills if they knew enough words. All of the pupils stated that they learned many new words during the DWA and that they learned how to choose the right word for their context.
 - *“I had difficulty in finding the right word...”* (Pupil 10).
 - *“I did not know which word to use...”* (Pupil 23).
 - *“I used to know less words to articulate myself...”* (Pupil 6).

After the DWP, most of the participants developed positive attitudes towards writing as they performed the tasks. The themes emerged after the DWP were as follows:

- **Overcoming prejudice against writing in L2.** After the treatment, 18 out of 23 pupils stated that they loved writing, putting forward similar reasons.
- “*I have fun while writing because it teaches me*” (Pupil 22).
 - “*Now I find it easy and enjoyable*” (Pupil 22).
 - “*I think it is enjoyable. It improves my imagination*” (Pupil 11).
 - “*Writing is a good activity. When I am going to write a text I can easily write drafts*” (Pupil 23).
 - “*I thought I was not able to write before, but now I know I can*” (Pupil 10).
 - “*In fact I do not like writing in general, but when I write in English I have a good time*” (Pupil 18).
- **Gaining self- confidence.** Most of the participants gained self- confidence at the end of the DWP. They discovered what they can do with the language and they were pleased with the level they reached.
- “*Writing diaries helped me become more confident in writing in English because my writing improved. I got 100 out of 100 on the exam*” (Pupil 8)
 - “*I gained self- confidence because I learnt how to write*” (Pupil 12).
 - “*Yes, I feel more confident. I was not able to make sentences before, but now I can make good sentences*” (Pupil 5).
 - “*I was afraid of writing in English before, but I am not afraid of that now*” (Pupil 15).
- **Learning writing techniques.** The participants were instructed about how to write a diary in English for 4 hours of English class. They were informed about pre-writing activities and how to organize their texts. Many of them stated that they basically developed awareness of writing techniques.
- “*It improved my self- confidence because I learnt how to write*” (Pupil 12).
 - “*... I have a better understanding of the rules to write in English*” (Pupil 2).
 - “*Now, I can convey my thoughts in a better way...*” (Pupil 8).
 - “*I began to understand how to write in English*” (Pupil 14).
 - “*This period taught me how to write*” (Pupil 18).

- **Planning their writing** The participants made use of planning activities to write better texts. They used spidergrams or scattered notes to organize their thoughts. This period facilitated their organization skills that resulted in writing better in English.
- “... now I search for information first and then write” (Pupil 15).
 - “... now I plan and I think planning is good. I write better texts” (Pupil 17).
 - “... now I make a plan about the topic I will write” (Pupil 22).
 - “This period helped me organize my thoughts in a better way thanks to planning activities” (Pupil 10).
- **Feeling of competency in vocabulary.** Majority of the participants believed that learning a foreign language starts with knowing words and if they know the words they need, they can manage more easily. Many of the participants stated that DWP improved their vocabulary. Consequently, they thought that their fluency in writing in EFL improved. Also, some of the participants learnt how to look up unknown vocabulary in an English dictionary properly and choose the correct word. Additionally, they learnt the correct pronunciation of words, as well. They developed their skills of dictionary by using it.
- “I did not use to know how to pronounce English words but now I know”
 - (Pupil 14).
 - “... but I know I do not have this difficulty anymore. My vocabulary has improved” (Pupil 6).
 - “I make sentences as I know many words” (Pupil 5).
 - “I know more words and I write more fluently” (Pupil 10).
 - “... now I know more words and how to use them” (Pupil 5).
 - “... I did not know how to pronounce English words... I look up the words and their pronunciations” (Pupil 20).
- **Improving speaking skills** 8 out of 23 pupils stated that they improved their ability to speak in English through writing practices. The pupils began to make meaningful sentences and learned to organize both their sentences and texts, which increased the enthusiasm for speaking in the target language as by product.

- *“DWA improved my speaking. I understand more words. I want to speak English at any occasion”* (Pupil 3).
 - *“My speaking skills improved. I could not speak before, but now I can”* (Pupil 12).
 - *“This period improved my speaking, too. I did not know how to pronounce English words... I look up the words and their pronunciations”* (Pupil 20).
- **Importance of writing practice in L2** Nearly all of the pupils argued that they were provided limited writing activities during English classes. The pupils had no idea of writing for a specific purpose. DWP gave them the idea that if they do more writing practice in EFL, they improve their EFL writing skills, decrease the number of mistakes they make, and increase the quality of the texts they write.
- *“Writing improves writing”*. (Pupil 4).
 - *“...I wrote a lot so I write fluently”* (Pupil 2).
 - *“I could not write before, but now I can because I revise everything while writing”* (Pupil 14).
- **Attaching importance to writing in EFL** The diary writing activities helped the participants grasp the importance of writing in EFL. Many of the participants acknowledged that writing improved both their EFL writing skills and some other foreign language aspects such as speaking, grammar, writing fluency, vocabulary and organizing their thoughts to write.
- *“Writing is important because we compose our sentences. Also, it improves our speaking skills, so I love writing”* (Pupil 2).
 - *“Writing is good. I love writing. It is important because it improves my writing skills”* (Pupil 13).
 - *“It improved my language skills so it is good”* (Pupil 10).
 - *“Writing is necessary. Diary writing activities improved my English”* (Pupil 6).
- **Feedback.** 21 out of 23 pupils agreed that written feedback during DWP had a positive effect upon improving writing skills. All of them learned something from the mistakes they made. Also, motivating statements were added [by the](#)

researcher. Their success was do much related to the positive feedback and reinforcement they were given.

- *“I think feedback is a good thing. I consider my mistakes and and advice given by the teacher (researcher), and I try to do my best next time” (Pupil 2)*
- *“I felt ambitious and I did not repeat the mistakes in my following tasks” (Pupil 3).*
- *“The feedback was useful and it improved my motivation. I became more successful when I considered the feedback I was given” (Pupil 7).*
- *“It was useful and enjoyable for me to read the notes by the researcher” (Pupil 13).*
- *“It was useful. I felt a bit bored, but I tried to make less mistakes. Our teacher (the researcher) was so kind, so my heart was not broken (Pupil 19).*

When the pupils were asked to compare their ideas before and after the diary writing period, only few pupils stated that they still found it difficult to write and still had difficulties. However, the number of pupils who thought so declined at the end of the DWP. Some of the pupils stated that they sometimes felt bored as they wrote so often or they did not like the topic.

- *“I started to have a better understanding of how to write in English, but I still find it difficult” (Pupil 14).*
- *“I love writing but I still have a bit difficulty in writing in English and feel anxious while writing, but I like it generally” (Pupil 9).*
- *“I feel bored while writing, but I have fun if the topic is interesting” (Pupil 20).*

Table 12 summarizes the findings of the interview which enhance the ATWQ and the criteria in the rubric which was used to assess the pre and post diary-writing.

Table 12

The relationship between the findings obtained through the data collection tools.

Support the questionnaire	Support the assessment criteria in the rubric
Overcame their prejudice against writing in EFL.	Got the idea of writing techniques.
Gained self-confidence.	Improved organizing their thoughts.
Attached importance to writing in L12.	Learned how to choose the right word.
Grasped the importance of practice.	Had a feeling of competency in vocabulary.
Improved their writing fluency.	Improved their writing ability.
Improved their speaking skills	

To sum up, the interview questions were based on the ATWQ and the criteria in the rubric. As seen in Table 12, some themes which emerged during the analysis of the interview were compatible with the results of the ATWQ in that the participants in the experimental group improved their attitudes towards writing in EFL in terms of overcoming their prejudices against writing in EFL, gaining self-confidence and grasping the importance of writing in EFL. They improved their language skills such as constructing grammatically and semantically correct sentences which also contributed to their general speaking skills. Some other themes were in line with the criteria of the rubric such as learning and using writing techniques, organizing their writing, using vocabulary in a more correct way and improving EFL writing skills in general.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter confers the findings with the results of previous studies in regard to similarities and differences by giving probable reasons under three main categories. All of the data gathered from the data collection tools are discussed below.

5.1 Discussion of findings

In this part of the study, the discussion of findings related to the research questions are presented.

5.1.1 Discussion of the findings of the first research question

To assess the current writing performance of the pupils in L2, pre-and post-writing tasks were assigned to the pupils. The aim of these tasks was to elicit possible effects of diary writing. The findings showed that the participants of the experimental group got higher scores in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics according to the paired samples t-test results. The findings obtained by the analysis of the pre and post-tests are in accordance with Yulianti (2014) in that she also detected a statistically significant difference between the pre and post diary-writing scores of the participants, which means that diary writing improved the participants' writing skills in EFL in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, language and mechanics. Likewise, findings of Hashemi and Amerian (2011), who investigated the effects of diary writing on EFL grammar acquisition, demonstrated a similarity in that the grammar use of the participants improved, which might correspond to 'language' criteria of the rubric used in this study. Improvement in 'language' aspect is also in accordance with Maharani (2017) who detected an improvement in the participants' EFL writing skills and grammar. The findings about EFL writing skills in this study are also supported by Dewi (2020) whose findings indicated that diary-writing improved the participants' grammar and vocabulary, including the enthusiasm to write. Improvement in vocabulary increase is also in line with the outcomes of the research study conducted by Kirkgoz (2009) who investigated

the effects of diary-writing on vocabulary learning strategies in that the participants improved their vocabulary as well. Correspondingly, the findings of Putri et al. (2015), Mutslihah (2016), Autila (2017) and Farikha (2020), who investigated the effects of diary writing on EFL learners' writing skills, revealed that diary-writing improved their writing skills.

Contrary to the findings of this current study, the results of Vaseghi et al. (2014), who investigated the effects of diary-writing on EFL learners' writing autonomy, showed that diary writing did not improve the participants' writing skills. The difference between the pre and post writing scores of the experimental group was not statistically significant.

5.1.2 Discussion of the findings of the second research question

The data obtained by pre-and post ATWQ were analyzed through paired samples t-test to see the difference between the pupils' attitudes towards writing in L2, both in the control and the experimental groups. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group ($t=2,473$ $p=,019$), while there was not a statistically significant difference between the scores of the control group ($t=912$ $p=,369$). Hence, the findings of the analysis of ATWQ suggest that diary writing has quite a positive effect on pupils' attitudes towards writing in L2. The findings of this research question are compatible with the research study of Yulianti (2014), who made an action research study with 31 tenth grade students in Indonesia. Her findings showed that diary writing led to the development of positive attitudes towards writing in L2, since diary writing as a free activity improved the participants' motivation and gave them the opportunity to write freely for real needs (Raimes, 1983).

This study is congruent with Ghulami et al. (2011) in that their results also showed that diary-writing improved the participants' attitudes towards writing in EFL. Vaseghi et al. (2014), who investigated the effects of diary writing on writing autonomy, further reported that diary-writing was an effective tool in improving EFL college students' attitudes towards writing in EFL.

5.1.3 Discussion of the findings of the third research question

Semi-structured interview questions were implemented after DWP. The findings respond to the third research question.

When the responses to the interview questions were analyzed, some themes emerged; most of the pupils had prejudices and negative attitudes towards writing in L2 before the diary writing period. They also stated that they had limited vocabulary and that they lacked writing techniques and motivation. Writing a diary on a regular basis had changed the participants' negative attitudes towards writing into positive attitudes. After the diary writing period, they reported that the opportunity to write helped them understand how to start writing. Most of them explained that they had a basic understanding of organizing their thoughts and writing. Mutslihah (2016) found that diary writing helped the participants improve writing fluency, find ideas to write, and build a writing habit. Similarly, the findings of Vaseghi et. al. (2014) revealed that diary writing in a free environment improved the students' writing in terms being considerably autonomous writers.

Also, the feedback they were provided with was a great help in this period. The results about the feedback resonate with the study of Fathman and Whalley (1990), who studied the effects of the kinds of feedback on students' writing. They discovered that "general comments giving encouragement and suggesting revisions helped improve the content of composition..." and "...students can improve their writing in situations when content and form feedback are given simultaneously" (p. 186). Some of the pupils also remarked that diary-writing activities improved their speaking ability in L2. These results can be supported by Avcı (2017), who studied the insights of EFL students into writing; she found that writing practice might improve speaking skills.

Additionally, most of the participants stated that their self-confidence, motivation, and writing skills in L2 improved. These findings can be supported by Hashemi and Amerian (2011), who investigated the outcomes of diary writing on EFL students. They found that the students' writing ability in L2, self-confidence, and motivation improved. Also, the participants in this study explained that their vocabulary improved after the diary-writing period. The findings of Taqi et. al. (2015) resonate with this study as well; they found that the participants' writing skills in L2 and vocabulary improved when they wrote in a free environment. Moreover, Kırkgöz,

who investigated the effects of diary-writing on vocabulary learning strategies, found that the participants gained insight into their vocabulary learning strategies.

To summarize, when compared and analyzed, qualitative and quantitative findings are coherent. It might be argued that diary writing in the target language might improve the writing skills of EFL learners and their attitudes towards writing in L2.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the possible effects of diary-writing on sixth-grade EFL learners' writing skills and their attitudes towards writing in L2. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments were used in order to collect data.

6.1. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to improve writing skills of EFL six graders' through diary-writing. This study stemmed from the fact that the time allocated for English lesson, 3 hours a week for lower secondary education (MEB, 2018), is not sufficient for improving writing skills and there is a need for out-of-class activities.

With the aim of seeking answers to whether diary-writing had a significant effect on Turkish six graders' writing skills and their attitudes towards writing, a mixed method was used considering Sequential Explanatory Triangulation method by Cresswell (2013). Initially, the attitudes of the participants towards writing in L2 were elicited by means of ATWQ which was used as pre and post-test. Next, the scores obtained by the pupils' pre and post diary writing papers were analyzed, and finally the participants were interviewed to elicit their ideas about the diary-writing period.

When the pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups obtained by diary writing activities were analyzed, it was seen that both the control and experimental groups had nearly the same competency level of writing in EFL before the treatment. The analysis of the post-test scores revealed that the treatment lead to an increase in the scores of the experimental group while the instruction solely based on the curriculum and the coursebook did not improve EFL writing skills of the control group. Also, findings of ATWQ revealed that the experimental group developed positive attitudes towards writing in English while the control group did not. Finally, semi-structured interview questions were addressed to the participants of the experimental group after the DWA to elicit their ideas about the diary writing period. It was initially found out that Turkish six graders were prejudiced against writing in English in that they did not know writing techniques, lacked self-confidence,

vocabulary and interest to write. However, diary writing period helped them discover what they can do with the language. Firstly, they overcame their prejudice against writing in L2. They basically learned to plan their writing and writing techniques, gained self-confidence, attached importance to writing in L2, grasped the importance of writing practice in L2. They also felt competent in building up their vocabulary knowledge and improved their speaking skills. According to the participants, the feedback was useful for them to become more competent in writing in English. Only few participants reported that they did not benefit from the DWP.

It can be argued that diary writing improved EFL Turkish six graders' writing performances and their attitudes towards writing in English. The findings of this study imply that improving writing skills necessitates to decide on the right techniques, methods and approaches considering the needs of the learners, which means implementing an eclectic approach to reach the goals of the instruction is prominent.

Writing is a “provoked activity” which needs to be taught (Widdowson, 1983). Similarly, Ho (2006) states that the students could have more positive attitudes towards writing in EFL after they learn appropriate writing techniques. Thus, it seems that if teachers of English teach their students by utilizing appropriate writing techniques and integrate EFL into their real-life, better results can be obtained. Teachers need to keep in mind that success may not simply depend considering writing in L2 as a school subject, but seeing it as a part of their daily life. Of course, it is time-taking on the part of the teachers in terms of assessment and feedback, but it is worth seeing the results.

6.2. Recommendations for future research

This research study was carried out at a state primary school, and the experimental group consisted of 30 pupils. Further studies might be conducted with more pupils since more participants may give more interpretable results.

Also, the participants in the experimental group were given predetermined topics to write diary entries. Some participants stated that they thought writing in English was more enjoyable when the topic was interesting for them. For further studies participants could be allowed to choose the topic to write.

Additionally, some participants argued that DWP helped them improve their speaking skills and enthusiasm to speak English. For further studies, the effects of diary-writing on speaking skills could also be investigated.

Additionally, the opinions of the English teachers who instructed the control and experimental groups in terms of the outcomes of diary writing can be included in the study. An interview can be conducted with the teachers of the groups to get a more detailed picture by sharing their thoughts based on their teaching experiences.

Other genres might be studied to see the impact of writing in that genre on the pupils' writing skills, and their attitudes towards writing in L2. For example, they can write about a film they saw or a story they read.

6.3. Implications

Results of this study reveal that diary writing activities in EFL might improve the writing skills of EFL learners as Massielo (1986) suggests that the aim of diary-writing is to strengthen writing 'muscles' on daily basis. Also, these activities affected their attitudes towards writing in EFL positively. Nevertheless, just three hours of English instruction per week with six graders (MEB, 2018), though supported by extra 2 hours as elective, is still insufficient and cannot provide EFL learners with enough time for in-class writing activities, so pupils might be encouraged to write diary on regular basis. Hence, diary writing might be integrated into the annual curriculum for of the six graders by teachers of English. Course book writers and curriculum designers and may give more room to diary writing to promote better writing skills in teaching English as foreign language.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Attitudes Towards Writing Questionnaire

A- Attitude towards writing

	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1- I like writing.	✓				
2- I like the writing lessons at school.		✓			
3- I think writing is interesting.		✓			
4- I think it is easy to write in English.			✓		
5- I have confidence in writing in English.	✓	✓			
6- I like to be given a lot of guidance by the teacher.	✓	✓			
7- I enjoy working with my classmates while writing.	✓				
8- Writing in English is difficult for me.				✓	
9- Writing in English is useful for my future career.			✓		
10- In my writing class, I generally feel anxious.		✓			
11- I can develop my writing skill if I do writing practice.	✓				
12- Writing helps me improve my English	✓				

Appendix 2. A Sample Diary Entry Given to the Participants

Dear Diary,

Today has been super! I am having a great time on holiday!

First we had breakfast on the beach, I had some toast. Then me and my family swam in the sea and played with a big football. After that I walked back to the hotel with my big brother, we played catch in the pool and had some orange juice.

Next I went shopping with my dad and I found a cool shark tooth necklace, I am wearing it now! Finally I walked back to the hotel with my dad to find the rest of my family. We had a nice meal and I fell asleep watching Frozen.

Daisy

Appendix 3. Interview questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you think about writing in general?
2. Can you compare your ideas about writing in English before and after the diary writing activities?
3. Did diary writing help you improve your English in terms of
 - a) Vocabulary
 - b) Grammar
 - c) Writing fluency
 - d) Organizing your ideas.
 - e) Speaking
 - f)
 - g) Why or why not?
4. Did diary writing help you become more confident in writing in English? Why or why not?
5. Did you have any difficulties in writing in English? If yes, please specify. Do you still have the same difficulties?
6. How did you use to start writing? (Did you use to make any "planning" activities? How do you start now?
7. What do you think about the feedback you are given?

Appendix 4. The Scoring Profile of Jacobs et. al. (1981)

ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE				
STUDENT		DATE	TOPIC	
SCORE	LEVEL	CRITERIA		
CONTENT	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable. substantive. thorough development of thesis. relevant to assigned topic		
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of subject. adequate range. limited development of thesis. mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail		
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR : limited knowledge of subject. little substance.inadequate development of topic		
	16-13	VERY POOR : does not show knowledge of subject.non-substantive.not pertinent.or not enough to evalut		
ORGANIZATION	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression.ideas clearly stated/supported.succint.well-organized.logical sequencing.cohesive		
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat copyy. loosely organized but main ideas stand out..limited support.logical but incomplete sequencing		
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR non-fluent.ideas. confused or disconnected. lacks logical sequencing and development		
	9-7	VERY POOR : does not communicate.no organization.or not enough to evaluate		
VOCABULARY	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range.effective word/idiom choice and usage.word form mastery appropriate register		
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range.occasional errors of word/idiom form choice,usage but meaning not obscured		
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range.frequent errors of word/idiom form,choice, usage.meaning confused or obscured		
	9-7	VERY POOR :essentially translation.little knowledge of English vocabulary,idioms,word form.or not enough to evaluate		
LANGUAGE USE	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions.few errors of agreement,tense, number word order function,articles pronouns, prepositions		
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions.minor problems in complex constructions.several errors of agreement,tense,number,word		
	17-11	order/function,articles,pronouns,prepositions but meaning seldom obscured		
	10-5	FAIR TO POOR : major problems in simple/complex constructions.frequent errors of negation,agreement,tense,number,,word order/function,articles,pronouns,prepositions,and/or fragments,run-ons,deletions.meaning confused or obscured		
MECHANICS	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventios.few errors of		
	4	spelling,punctuation,capitalization,paragraphing		
	3	GOOD TO AVERAGE : occasional errors of spelling,punctuation, capitalization,paragraphing but meaning not obscured		
	2	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling,punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.poor handwriting.meaning confused or obscured		
		VERY POOR: no mastery of conventios.dominated by errors of spelling,punctuation,capitalization,paragraphing,handwriting illegible.or not enough to evaluate		
TOTAL SCORE		READER	COMMENTS	

Appendix 5. Consent Form

BİLGİ VE KABUL FORMU

Sayın veli,

Bu çalışmanın amacı Çukurova Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi bölümünde yüksek lisans yapan Burcu Zengin tarafından yürütülecek olan bir çalışma için veri toplamaktır. Çalışma araştırmacının yüksek lisans tezinde kullanılacaktır. Çalışma, yabancı dilde (hedef dilde) günlük yazmanın altıncı sınıf öğrencilerinin yazma becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktır. Öğrenciden sekiz hafta boyunca haftada iki kez günlük yazması istenecektir. Ayrıca, öğrenciye yazma tutum ölçeği ön test ve son test olarak uygulanacak, çalışmanın sonunda öğrenci ile görüşme yapılacaktır. Öğrencinin adı, yazdığı günlükler, görüşme ve ölçek sonuçları sadece bu çalışma için kullanılacak ve gizli tutulacaktır.

Çalışmayı yürütmek için rızanız gerekmektedir.

Yukarıda yazılanları okudum, anladım ve çocuğumun bu çalışmaya katılmasına izin veriyorum.

WRITTEN CONSENT FORM

Dear parent,

The aim of this research is to collect data for a research study conducted by Burcu Zengin who is attending Graduate School of Social Sciences, TEFL Program at Çukurova University. The study will be used for the researcher's master thesis. The study aims to investigate the effects of diary writing in the target language on the sixth grade students' writing skills. The learner will be asked to write diary twice a week for eight weeks. Also, the learner will be given a writing attitude scale as pre-test and post-test, and be interviewed at the end of the study. The name of the learner, the diary entries, the result of the interview and the scale will be used only in this research and kept confidential.

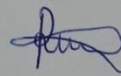
In order to conduct the study your consent is required.

I have read and understood the above and agree to allow my child to participate in the study.

Name:

Perihan Gayir

Signature:



Appendix 6. Sample Diary Entries for Pre-test

Darling daily

I did got up. I did had breakfast. I did homework. I went to school at half past twelve. I did read. I did you stay. I went to home at six o'clock. I had a rest. I did homework. I did test. I played game. I watched tv. I did had dinner. I spoke family. I ate fruit. I sat. I watched tv. I read book. I went to bed.

GOOD BYE

C - 27

O - 17

V - 14

L - 24

M - 5

Appendix 7. Sample Diary Entries for Post-test.

I have breakfast at seven o'clock and I play basketball at half past eight. I love play basketbell. I arrive home and ten o'clock I have lunch at quarter past twelve. I go to school at half past twelve. I love my school. We have a seven classes in a day. I listen to teacher at the classes. I come to home at six o'clock. We have. We go to do shopping at quarter past six. I do all my homework and studying. I want to shoe and skin. I do kst and read a book. I go to bed at half past ten.

C - 28

O - 18

V - 17

L - 23

M - 5

Dear Diary

20th May

I and my family got up because ^{it was} Sahur time. I ~~eat~~_{ate} soup then again reacted. We fasted. I pray^{ed}. We went ^{to} bed. We slept. I got up then I did homework. I prepared ~~my~~ school bag. I went to school. ^{my} first two ~~less~~^{best} friends then ~~since then~~ ^{I had} Turkish ~~then~~ ^{P.E} education. I went ~~to~~ home. We ~~break~~^{broke} fast. We watched TV. We drank tea. I read a book. I did homework. We went bed.

C 30

O 18

V 17

L 21

M 5

20th May 2019

Dear Diary ...

I got up at seven o'clock. I went to school course and I had breakfast at half past eight. The first ^{lesson} ~~study~~ is science. I love science but it is ^{a bit} ~~some~~ difficult.

It's ^{the break time} ~~was~~ recess at 09:10 a.m. After that I ^{went} ~~left~~ to school at ten o'clock. I and my family went to forum at twelve o'clock.

I like forum because it ^{is} ~~was~~ very big. We bought a drink and junk food. We went to home at two o'clock.

After that we went to palm city at three o'clock.

We bought a fish. We went to home at five o'clock. We ate fish at seven o'clock. It was very

delicious. I read a book at eight o'clock. We

slept at nine o'clock.

C - 30
O - 20
V - 20
L - 24
M - 5

CURRICULUM VITAE

Adı Soyadı: Burcu ZENGİN

Doğum Tarihi: 19.03.1982

Derece	Alan	Üniversite	Yıl
Yüksek Lisans	İngiliz Dili Eğitimi	Çukurova Üniversitesi	2020
Lisans	İngilizce Öğretmenliği AÖF	Anadolu Üniversitesi	2005

Yüksek Lisans Tez Başlığı: IMPROVING THE WRITING SKILLS AND ATTITUDES OF TURKISH EFL SIXTH GRADERS THROUGH DIARY WRITING

Danışman: Assist. Prof. Dr. Meryem AKÇAYOĞLU MİRİOĞLU

Görevler: -

ESERLER

A. Uluslararası hakemli dergilerde yayımlanan makaleler :

-

B. Uluslararası bilimsel toplantılarda sunulan ve bildiri kitabında (*Proceedings*)

basılan bildiriler :

-

C. Yazılan uluslararası kitaplar veya kitaplarda bölümler :

-

D. Ulusal hakemli dergilerde yayımlanan makaleler :

-