



folk/ed. Derg, 2020; 26(1): 187-201
DOI: 10.22559/folklor.1032

The Effects of the Creative Collaborative Short Story Writing Technique on Developing Teacher Candidates' Writing Skills

Yaratıcı ve İşbirliğine Dayalı Kısa Hikâye Yazma Tekniğinin Öğretmen Adaylarının Yazma Becerilerini Geliştirmeye Etkisi

Çelen Dimililer*

Mustafa Kurt**

Ahmet Güneyli***

Ezgi Gömeçli Ulu****

Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine how the collaborative technique influenced undergraduate English Language Teaching students' writing skills in general and creative collaborative short story writing skills in particular. The study commenced by investigating the writing background of the students. Then the participants experienced an intervention period in which they were taught the creative collaborative technique and practiced collaborative short story writing. The effects of

Geliş tarihi (Received): 23 Mayıs 2019 - Kabul tarihi (Accepted): 03 Ocak 2020

* Assist. Prof. Dr., Çelen Dimililer, Near East University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, celen.dimililer@neu.edu.tr, ORCID ID: 0000-0001-8886-6201

** Assoc. Prof. Dr., Mustafa Kurt, Near East University, Faculty of Education, mustafa.kurt@neu.edu.tr, ORCID ID: 0000-0003-0790-0725

*** Assoc. Prof. Dr., Ahmet Güneyli, European University of Lefke, Faculty of Education, aguneyli@eul.edu.tr, ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2168-1795

**** Assist. Prof. Dr., Ezgi Ulu, Near East University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, ezgi.ululu@neu.edu.tr, ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6418-8995

this technique on the participants' writing skills and their creative collaborative short story writing skills were investigated, which was the principal focus of this research study. The study was conducted with a mixed methods research design which is a methodology for conducting research that integrating quantitative and qualitative research with 8 students studying in the English Language Teaching Department at Near East University. The students' short story writings and interview questions were used as a data collection tools. The textual data that was gathered regarding the writing background of the senior students was analysed by thematic content analysis, whereas the pre- and post-tests regarding the students' creative collaborative writing results were analysed with Wilcoxon test. The findings showed that, even in a short time, creative and collaborative story writing activities had a positive effect on writing success. Moreover, the results revealed that writing success was supported by performing creative writing in conjunction with group writing activities.

Keywords: *creative, collaborative, writing technique, writing skills*

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, işbirliğine dayalı öğrenme tekniğinin, lisans düzeyinde İngiliz Dili Eğitimi öğrencilerinin genel olarak yazma becerilerini ve özellikle de yaratıcı ve işbirliğine dayalı kısa hikâye yazma becerilerini nasıl etkilediğini incelemektir. Çalışmaya öncelikle öğrencilerin yazma becerilerine ilişkin hazırbulunuşlukları araştırılarak başlanmıştır. Daha sonra katılımcılara yaratıcı ve işbirliğine dayalı tekniklerinin öğretildiği ve kısa hikâye yazma uygulamalarının yürütüldüğü bir eğitim süreci gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu sürecin sonunda ise araştırmanın ana odak noktası olan yaratıcı ve işbirliğine dayalı tekniğin, katılımcıların yazma becerileri ve yaratıcı kısa hikâye yazma becerileri üzerindeki etkileri araştırılmıştır. Çalışma, Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bölümünde okuyan sekiz öğrenci ile nicel ve nitel araştırmaları birleştiren karma yöntem araştırma deseni ile yürütülmüştür. Veri toplama aracı olarak öğrencilerin kısa öykü yazıları ve görüşme soruları kullanılmıştır. Öğrencilerin yaratıcı ve işbirliğine dayalı yazma beceri düzeylerine ilişkin ön ve son testler Wilcoxon testi ile analiz edilirken, son sınıf öğrencilerin yazma geçmişine ilişkin toplanan metinsel veriler tematik içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, kısa sürede bile, yaratıcı ve işbirliğine dayalı hikâye yazma etkinliklerinin yazma başarısını olumlu yönde etkilediğini göstermiştir. Ayrıca bulgular, yazma başarısının grup yazarlığı etkinlikleriyle birlikte yaratıcı yazarlık yaparak desteklendiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: *yaratıcı, işbirliğine dayalı, yazma tekniği, yazma becerileri*

Introduction

Writing skills require more time compared to other language skills and it is a more complicated skill (Huy, 2015). Moreover, as it is a productive skill, it can be challenging to learn and teach. Students who have anxiety about writing, who have problems with writing, and who have low self-efficacy are found to experience serious problems during the writing process (Huang, 2014). Traditional methods of teaching writing are largely outdated and simple, neglecting students' higher order thinking skills. Furthermore, students are constrained

because of factors such as low proficiency levels and the rules of writing, which in turn impairs their writing skills. However, if lecturers can establish effective methods to deepen their students' creativity and imagination through teaching higher order thinking skills, this will consequently boost their writing skills. At this point, the collaborative technique may be beneficial, as it provides students with the freedom that they require. Therefore, in this study, the specific reason for examining writing skills in particular is to raise the awareness among teachers and to provide experience to teacher candidates that will assist them with teaching difficult and complicated writing skills. It is believed that teacher candidates can develop their own writing skills if they participate in implementation exercises related to this issue. Resultantly, candidate teachers who have their own developed writing skills will be capable of teaching their students and can become ideal role models with high quality writing skills. When the literature is examined, it can be seen that there have been numerous studies that show that teachers with adequate writing skills have a positive impact on the development of their students' writing skills (Graham, MacArthur & Fitzgerald, 2013).

As far as academic writing is concerned, students are generally asked to work on their own and collaborative writing is rarely practised. When the literature is examined, it appears that there are problems, particularly in terms of the literary writing skills of students (Root & Steinberg, 2012). The studies show that both children and adults experience problems with story writing in comparison to informative texts (Torrance, 1994). Problems are particularly experienced in establishing a plot, highlighting characters and creating original stories. Despite the abundance of work on creative writing, it has been observed that creative writing does not impact writing skills, due to an understanding of individualism and competitiveness that prevails (Oral, 2014). This research study proposes that, when students work in groups, they will be inspired by their peers. For this reason, particular importance has been given to group and cooperative writing in this study. In order to overcome problems experienced in teaching writing, different dimensions, such as story writing, creative writing and group writing, have been taken as the basis. An experimental working model has been established as the basis in order to conduct original research with candidate teachers.

The study will aim to answer the following questions;

1. What is the effect of creative and group based short story writing education on the success of teacher candidates' writing?
2. How does creative and group-based short story writing education affect teacher candidates' preconceptions of writing skills?

Theoretical background

In this section, "collaborative writing" and "creative writing" terms are explained and relevant research studies on these topics are presented.

Collaborative writing

Teachers will often make the assumption that writing is an important aspect of learning for their students. The idea that writing appears to be reasonable. A study by Kieft, Rijlaardam and Berg (2006) aimed to establish whether writing facilitates students' learning. They

asserted that students in the Netherlands write in order to communicate; they are taught to write for differing audiences and can differentiate between formal and informal language. Teachers should have the “skills and understanding” to apply collaborative writing in the classroom as well (Wong & Lim, 2014).

However, a research study done by Marshall (1987) concluded that collaborative writing applied language learners stimulates thought and effective learning when related to personal experience. According to Storch (2005), collaborative writing also helps foster “other competencies,” as, needless to say, a written piece is intended to be read, discussed and listened to when recited. Burnett (2001) put forth that “as much as 75% to 85% of writing is collaborative in nature”. While Nelson (2003) asserted that it represents a transferable skill for “professionals”; Spilka (1993) discussed a similar idea – that negotiating skills can be fostered by collaborative writing. Rentz, Arduser, Meloncon & Debs (2009) concluded that collaborative writing facilitates problem solving.

Another significant factor in collaborative writing is that, when putting students together and ‘letting them get on with it,’ teacher talking time is reduced, and the students, particularly if they come from different first language backgrounds, can communicate in the target language as they work on a language task (Ferris & Hedgecock, 2005). Ferris and Hedgecock’s (2005) study also stressed the value of peer review, redrafting and assessment. Bruffee (1999) called this “a continual conversation with their peers”. According to Marlowe (2013), “The crucial foundations of a relationship-driven classroom are the relationships between the teacher and the child and those among the children and the group or unit relationship” (p.7).

Freire (1985) contended that children should be taught to write as an “artistic event” and that the majority of classroom activity is merely “bureaucratic”. Certainly, with teaching directed towards tests instead of “real” education, the artistic element is almost absent. Packwood and Messenheimer (2003) echoed the fact that writing should be creative rather than a meaningless activity for its own sake. All of this indicates a transferral from product to process writing. It can be contended that editing is more practiced with collaborative writing, as learners share a stake in the common written piece – or “ownership of the text” (Bejarno, 1987). Bejarno (1987) conducted a research study of 33 ELT classroom situations, and come up with a conclusion that teacher talking time accounted for 80% of the allotted lesson times. Collins (2004) elaborated further, and wrote of a “control of knowledge” by the teacher to the detriment of the learner in a formal classroom environment, in which the teacher “hands down” the “product” of knowledge. Collaborative writing can remedy this situation. Instead, Jolliffe (2007) suggests “a gradual process aided by a clear teaching programme of small group and interpersonal skills together with tasks and teaching techniques that foster independence”. This suggests that peer feedback is preferable to teacher feedback and, from the teacher’s point of view, less marking is welcome. Furthermore, on collaborative writing, Frederick (2008) suggested that applying tasks in the classroom that have such a high level of difficulty that a student alone could not complete them would constrain the learners to interact. Nonetheless, Frederick (2008) admits that this is a “somewhat crude approach to task design” and clearly this would be extremely challenging to implement.

Creative writing

A proscriptive approach stifles creativity to a certain extent; a story should work itself out. This suggests that the story has a life of its own and the teacher should let the student take it wherever it might go. This also helps to prevent students' preferring form over content (Wong & Lim, 2011). Galbraith (1999) also favoured content in the form of "spontaneous exteriorization of thought". Whelan (2013) held that the content is a primary factor, that writing should be personalised rather than following a template, "there's nothing as interesting as people". However, in a study McCabe and Bliss (2003), favoured set stages, from "openers" to "orientation," "climax" and "resolution". Equally proscriptive were Yang and Allison (2003) with their use of the word obligatory and with their '100%' in relation to various language functions. Ingermanson (2014) also advocated careful planning rather than spontaneity. Wong and Lim (2013) introduced a table to their work incorporating five moves with 19 sub-steps which students can follow in order to produce a short piece of written work.

Kohanyi (2005) contemplated whether creative writing when practiced with children can later produce creative adults. She added that "mood disorders" and "mania" are factors in creative writing. Andreason and Powers (1975) explored in a study the connection between mental health and creative writing. Kohanyi's point was that creative writers are those who underwent stress a lot in their childhood, and who had an "atypically rich imagination in childhood".

Students should be freed from any judgements and should be encouraged to be able to express themselves in the classroom without being intimidated by a judgmental teacher. Certainly, when they are freed from fear, the learning process is enhanced significantly. As far back as 1921, Neil (1960) established Summerhill, a school which sought to eliminate fear from the classroom. "Absence of fear is the finest thing that can happen to a child" (Neil, 1960). This has a relation with creative writing as, the element of choice is present when it comes to all aspects of selection of subject matter. Cremin (2006) echoed this with her journal article on "discomfort." She contended that the "emotional capacity to tolerate uncertainty" is another key factor when referring to creative writing, and that the ability to 'take risks' is crucial in the classroom. This is the essence of the communicative method. More discomfort arises from "growing distrust" (Cremin, 2006).

Methodology design

In this study, a mixed methods research design was employed. Interviews and short stories provided the textual data to be analysed qualitatively and the pre- and post-tests provided the quantitative data. The type of the experimental design is one group pre-test and post-test. After the initial interviews were conducted, the students were expected to write a short story individually. Then, the short stories were evaluated by two external examiners followed by standardization sessions according to the criteria developed by the researchers. Immediately afterwards, the participants underwent a period of intervention. During this period, the creative collaborative short story writing technique was introduced and put into practise. At the end of the intervention period they were asked to write a short story in groups of four, utilizing this new technique. The external examiners were asked to evaluate these stories employing the same criteria. Standardization sessions were then held again, followed by interviews. A semi-structured interview was prepared for the students, where the main

questions were prepared beforehand by the researcher, and additional questions were asked during the interviews. The reason why the mixed methods design was employed is because it enables more effective exploration and explanation of the research questions.

Participants

Convenience sampling was used to recruit the participants from the researchers' place of employment. The participants in this study were eight senior students studying in the English Language Teaching Department at Near East University. Five of them were female and three of them were male. Two of the female students were British, three of them were Turkish, two students were from Cypriot and one participant was from Turkmenistan. The age range was 20-37 years. All students had participated in writing classes and had studied short stories.

Experimental study

Before the experimental data collection, two pilot studies were conducted to ensure the validity of the study and to classify the data under certain themes (such as creative effort (invention), characterization, originality, use of English and sophistication). The first pilot study was conducted with 21 students, whereas the second was conducted with 20 students from the English Language Department in April and May of 2016, respectively. The schedule for the experimental study is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Schedule of the research

Week 1 Interviews

What is your view of writing a short story

Do you have difficulties in written assignments? What kind of difficulties do you have?

What does creative collaborative writing imply to you?

Week 2 Pre-test

Individual short story writing based on a theme that every student wants

Week 3 Creative Writing Activities

The term is defined with quotations from different sources and many creative writing examples are given from different short stories. Discussion about how to write creatively and make activities for distinguishing creative and non-creative texts. Give a topic and let the students write, then initiate a class discussion about the texts that they have written to discuss whether they are creative or not.

Week 4 Collaborative Writing

Let students search about collaborative writing. Encourage the students to sit in groups and discuss what they have found on collaborative writing. The advantages and disadvantages of collaborative writing are its differences discussed compared to individual writing. Collaborative writing practice is performed in the class. At the end of collaborative writing, the opinions of the students are taken.

Week 5 Short Story Writing

An author who writes short stories is brought to the class. Students and the writer share their opinions. Students learn about issues such as creating an impressive fiction and establishing characters. Then, the researcher presents quality short story examples and transfers relevant information. Expression forms are emphasized, such as description and narration. Students are asked to write a short story and bring it to the class in the next lesson.

Week 6 Creative Collaborative Short Story Writing

Teachers collect the short stories that students write at home. Later, classical creative story writing is performed in class. Students are asked to criticize the stories they wrote at home and in class. Talk about how collaborative writing makes them feel.

Week 7 Post-Test

To ask for a short story-writing from each group based on a theme that each group desires.

Week 8 Interviews

How did you find creative collaborative short story writing?

Materials

Both handouts and a whiteboard were used during the lecture. The researchers brought four pens of different colours for each group as the groups were each comprised of four individual members. Each student chose a colour and contributed to the collaborative short story writing in his or her allocated colour until the research was completed. Open-ended interview questions had been previously prepared and were used when interviewing the participants.

A marking criteria was developed by the researchers to ensure reliability concerning the marking process and to guide the external examiners. A grade breakdown was prepared in terms of creativity expression, ranging from 0-100.

Two sets of interview questions were used. Both the initial and the latter interviews were semi-structured. The questions in the initial interview were intended to draw data on the participants' previous writing experiences. For this reason, the principal function of the questions in the initial interview within the research agenda was to reveal the participants' understanding and knowledge related to writing in general and short story writing in particular. Resultantly, general questions about their writing experiences were asked. The latter interview comprised more specific questions about the collaborative writing technique as well as its effect on their writing skills in general and on their creative collaborative writing skills in particular.

Data collection

The initial data collection stage involved collecting information through interviews. The study aimed to use semi-structured interviews, as these provided a better opportunity for the researchers to understand the interviewee's point of view than was afforded by purely quantitative forms of data collection. Pre-determined open ended questions were employed, which aimed to provide better opportunities for the researchers to further explore particular themes and responses. In this way, the participants were not limited to a set of pre-determined answers. Each student was interviewed separately about their level of understanding of writing in general, what their opinions of writing are, what difficulties they have, what they do to improve their writing

skills, what creative-collaborative writing means to them, their previous written assignments, and what feedback they have received from their lecturers related to those assignments. After the intervention they were interviewed again about their experiences. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The data gathered from the interviews was analysed qualitatively.

The short stories written by the participants before and after the intervention and marked by the external examiners, constituted the quantitative data. To determine the writing success of the students in the study, two external raters scored the short stories written in the pre-test and post-test between 0-100. To ensure that the raters applied effective and objective scoring, the following criteria were established:

To avoid influencing the raters, they were not told which short stories were written before the experiment, and which were written after the experiment.

- Standardization meetings were held to establish a scoring key and both raters were required to use this key.

Analysis of the data

The Shapiro-Wilk normality test was applied to determine whether the pre- and post-test scores were normally distributed. It was found that the data on the total scores of the test results did not show a normal distribution and therefore non-parametric tests were used in the analysis. Consequently, using the SPSS 19 program, the pre-test and post-test scores of the students were evaluated by Wilcoxon Marked Rank Test. The Wilcoxon Test was used three times in this study. The first implementation was to determine whether there was a difference in the pre- and post-scores of the students according to the first rater and the second was for the second rater. The last use was made to determine if there was a difference according to the average of the scores of the two raters. The level of significance in the study was calculated as $p < 0.05$.

The textual data gathered through the transcribed interviews was analysed qualitatively. Thematic content analysis revealed the codes and categories first, and then they were classified under certain emerging themes. In order to ensure reliability in the data analysis, two of the researchers co-existed in each analytical process and reached a consensus on the themes reached. Disagreements were dismissed by discussion. Confirmatory studies were conducted with another expert investigator to determine whether the resulting themes described the comments in the interviews. Finally, the opinions of the participants have been provided through direct citations to ensure the data analysis validity.

Results

The findings of this research can be classified as qualitative and quantitative. The data in Tables 2 to 3 present the findings of the quantitative research, which are related with creative writing grades. In Table 4 to Table 5, the qualitative findings can be observed.

Quantitative results

According to Table 2, when The Wilcoxon Sign Test results of External Examiner 1 are analysed, it is seen that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test grades of the students. The post-test grades are higher than the pre-test results.

Table 2. Comparing pre-test and post-test results according to External Examiner 1.

Pre-test – Post-test-	N	Mean	Sum of	Z	p
		Rank	Ranks		
Negative Ranks	1,00	3,00	3,00	-2,10	0,03*
Positive Ranks	7,00	4,71	33,00		
Ties	0,00				

According to Table 3, when The Wilcoxon Sign Test results of External Examiner 2 are analysed, it is seen that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test grades of the students. The post-test grades are higher than the pre-test results.

Table 3. Comparing pre-test and post-test results according to External Examiner 2.

Pre-test – Post-test	N	Mean	Sum of	Z	p
		Rank	Ranks		
Negative Ranks	0,00	0,00	0,00	-2,38	0,02*
Positive Ranks	7,00	4,00	28,00		
Ties	1,00				

Qualitative Results

Table 4 presents the level of knowledge of the students about creative collaborative short story writing before the experimental study took place. Students' views after the experimental study on creative collaborative short story writing are displayed in the last table (Table 5)

Table 4. Perceptions of the students about creative collaborative short story writing before the experimental study

Theme	f
Group work	10
Importance of imagination	8
Positive feelings	7
More developed writing skills	3
Genre	3
Negative opinions	2
Length of text	1
Total	34

In Table 4, it is seen that, according to the perceptions of the students about creative collaborative short story writing before the experimental study, seven different themes arose. These are: group work, importance of imagination, positive feelings, more developed writing skills, genre, negative opinions and the length of the text. Related to these themes, the thoughts of one student are listed below. For the first and the second theme, “*Creative-collaborative writing is using your imagination while writing by working together, as when you work together, you give ideas to each other and so you are more creative*”. In the third theme (positive feelings): “*Writing something in the boundaries of creativity and collaboration is fun*”. In the fourth theme (more developed writing skills): “*It could expand your imagination and develop your writing skills even more*”. In the fifth theme (genre): “*It implies written plays to me - Shakespeare’s*”. In the sixth theme (negative opinions): “*I don’t like to study with other people because it limits me, I would like to study on my own*”. In the last theme (length of the text): “*The text will be longer and more creative because everyone has different ideas and can build on each other’s ideas.*”

Table 5. Perceptions about creative-collaborative short story writing technique post-test

Theme	f
Positive feelings towards writing	13
Comparison of creative-collaborative writing technique with others	5
Knowledge of writing process	4
Being aware of the writing limitations	3
Developed writing skills	1
Total	26

The perceptions of the students about the creative-collaborative short story writing technique post-test are given in Table 5. According to the data in the table, the students shared five opinions. Thirteen students had positive feelings towards writing, saying that they found the task; “fun, they had the chance to share ideas, they were more relaxed, contributed with no pressure, wanted to be original and create something new”.

When they were asked to compare the creative collaborative task with others, the sentences used by the students were; “*I didn’t want to steal ideas from books and I think I managed it. I enjoyed it. More imagination is used. It was fun. Working in a group is better and exciting. I felt freer. Freedom and relaxation, enjoying, it was a very pleasing experience. I felt more confident, No anxiety, no embarrassment, they are not going to only judge me*”. Moreover, in some of the comments the students said; “*It’s much easier, I can write longer stories, it’s easier to produce, I felt more comfortable, it’s easy to write and understand, I am more creative, it was something new (perspective of writing) I never thought about it before*”.

The third theme that emerged was the knowledge of the writing process. Here, students mention about planning; “*We planned it, we created it altogether. First I found it difficult, but when I start writing, it went logically, practicing in class is better than doing it outside*”.

Furthermore, in the being aware of the limitations section, the students first commented on the time; “*We had to finish it in a limited time*”. Then, one student stated; “*Not everybody is creative enough to write*” (S4) and the final comment was on understanding the technique; “to be able to write a good developed story collaboratively, it is important that the members have understood the technique well.” For the developed writing skills, a student said; “*With the help of each other, we will end up with a nice, developed text*” (S1).

Discussion and conclusion

When the quantitative findings of the study were examined, differences were found in the pre- and post-test scores of the two external evaluators. It was also found that the final test scores were higher when the two evaluators’ scores were averaged. Even though the experimental practice period only covered the relatively short period of two months, it was observed that the creative and collaborative story writing activities had a positive effect on writing success. Aktaş (2009) found a similar result in his study. In his study creative writing activities in particularly seemed to influence the writing skills of university third grade students. Moreover, it was also seen that the students’ imagination improved, the examples they created increased, their writing concerns decreased and their writing desires have increased.

In this study, it is believed that writing success has been supported by the implementation of creative writing with group writing activities. Compared to individual writing, writing in groups seems to increase the students’ use of vocabulary. For this reason, it is thought that the writing success is also affected by the situation. Additionally, rather than creating a recruitment-based environment, a collaborative environment has been created, and also students have reduced their grammar mistakes through the process of peer review. Hence, it can be said that with the increased richness of vocabulary used and the reduction of grammatical errors improves the level of success. In the literature, there are research examples on how group activities further enhance creativity (Yeh, Yeh & Chen, 2012).

Raising different opinions creates a positive atmosphere within the group; therefore, the individual is able to write freely and boldly. Thus, the quality of the text that emerges in group writing activities increases. If a self-criticism of the research findings is to be made, it is not possible to clearly predict which application is effective in ensuring writing success in the experiment group, whether it is creative writing, writing in groups or writing in a story. Thus, it is not clear which application is most influential in writing success; however, further research will be conducted in greater detail to determine which application is the most influential on writing success. According to the observations of the researchers, it was seen that writing in groups in particularly motivated writing success.

In the literature, Pardede (2011) noted that students fundamentally found short stories interesting because of the sense of self-enjoyment. Pathan and Al Dersi (2013) also indicated that short-stories are enjoyable and attractive for students, particularly when learning English. Collie and Slater (1991) added that short stories are practical for the teachers and are also not complicated for students. Therefore, due to these facts, it is not surprising in this study to find that creative and group writing activities facilitated writing stories and increased writing success. As the students in the experimental group were thought to have limited

experience in writing stories in their previous school experience, it is important to observe that their success in writing short stories increased in a short time and they also became more interested in writing. This result may have occurred because they enjoyed themselves while participating in the process.

The qualitative findings of the research show that the opinions of the students about short story writing were more prevalent in the affective dimension before the experimental application. However, as a result of the application, writing a creative-group short story made the students more aware of the writing process and also made it easier for the students to perceive writing difficulties. This result is important in terms of expressing that learners are more planned and fluent in the writing process.

It has been underlined that it is significantly important to receive instructor guidance in the class environment rather than being outside the classroom and alone when completing writing assignments. This is important because, as a requirement of group writing, giving instant feedback makes the writing process easier for the students and could increase the level of writing success. The students who participated in the study realized that time was important in the writing process. For this reason, it should be taken into consideration that if it is aimed to have qualified text in writing education, there may be negative consequences if students are required to write in restricted time frames. According to Fink-Chorzempa, Graham and Harris (2005) the time allocated to students for writing can affect their writing success. They added that, with less time allocated in the writing process, the students' creativity was blocked and they were only focused on filling their papers.

In the literature, individual differences in creativity have been researched in relation to many variables. Kim, Cramond, and VanTassel-Baska (2010) noted that individual differences in creativity occur due to different levels of intelligence between individuals. Reaves (2012) attempted to explain the individual differences in the context of environmental conditions. On the other hand, Jauk, Benedek, & Neubauer (2014) emphasised the differences related to personality traits. Whatever the underlying cause of creative difference between people, another important point in this study is also that, consistent with the above literature, the creative potential of each student is different. Moreover, in the study, the students realized this fact; therefore, through collaboration during group writing activities, they increased their potential for creativity and reduced the problem of non-creativity.

In the qualitative research findings, it is seen that there are some differences between the emotions before and after the experimental application. At the beginning of the experiment, it was observed that general expressions (e.g. fun, interesting) were used, but after the experiment, it was seen that emotions were diversified and elaborate (e.g., I am very relaxed, there is no pressure, I do not have to steal from other texts, I can achieve, like a satisfying process). This result is thought to be due to the experience gained in the experimental practice. When the qualitative findings were examined, it was also seen that, before the experimental application, students had problems stemmed from their language educators. For example, it was emphasized that there was insufficient guidance and the directions/guidelines were inadequate. Other problems were related to how hard it was to work together and write short articles. At the end of the experimental application, it was seen that these problems were not

expressed and the students even enjoyed working together. The elimination of bad writing habits (e.g., unable to write in noisy environments, not in the writing mood, unable to start writing) is also an important result of the study.

There have been studies in the literature which have shown that student-centred practices (Chao & Lo, 2011) class writing (De Smedt, Van Keer, & Merchie, 2016) and teacher guidance (To & Carless, 2014) are significantly important in the writing process. It also appears that time and the pressure of writing long texts concerns students in relation to their writing and distracts them from the act (Ghanbari, Karampourchangi & Shamsaddini, 2015). For this reason, the increase in the students' achievement and their interest in writing through the elimination of all of the above-mentioned negative situations is a significant result of this study.

References

- Aktaş, M. (2009). The effect of creative writing on achievement and on writing skill in foreign language teaching. *Dil Dergisi*, 145, 7-27.
- Andreason, N., & Powers, P. (1975). Creativity and psychosis: an examination of conceptual styles. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 32, 70-73. <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1001/archpsyc.1975.0170190072008>
- Bejarno, Y. (1987). A cooperative small-group methodology in the language classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(3), 483-501. <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.2307/3586499>
- Bruffee, K. (1999). *Collaborative learning: Higher education, interdependence, and the authority of knowledge*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Burnett, P. (2001). Praise and feedback in the primary classroom: Teachers' and students' perspectives. *Australian Journal of Educational & Developmental Psychology*, 10, 145-154.
- Chao, Y.C.J & Lo, H.C. (2011). Students' perceptions of Wikibased collaborative writing for learners of English as a foreign language. *Interactive Learning environments*, 19(4), 395-411.
- Collie, J. & S. Slater. (1987). *Literature in the language classroom: A resource book of ideas and activities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Collins, P. (2004). *The ascendancy of the scientific dictatorship*. London: Iuniverse.
- Cremin, T. (2006). Creativity, uncertainty and discomfort: teachers as writers. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 36(3). <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1080/03057640600866023>
- De Smedt, F., Van Keer, H. & Merchie, E. (2016). Student, teacher and class-level correlates of Flemish late elementary school children's writing performance. *Reading and Writing*, 29(5), 833-868. doi:10.1007/s11145-015-9590-z
- Fink-Chorzempa, B., Graham, S. & Harris, K. R. (2005). Instructional adaptations for struggling writers in primary grade classrooms. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 37, 60-63.
- Frederick, T. (2008). Facilitating better teamwork: Analyzing the challenges and strategies of classroom-based collaboration. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 71, 439-402. <http://dx.doi.org/10.177/1080569908325860>
- Freire, P. (1985). *The politics of education*. London, Macmillan.
- Galbraith, D. (1999). Writing as a knowledge-constituting process. *Studies in Writing*, 139-159.
- Ghanbari, N., Karampourchangi, A. & Shamsaddini, M. R. (2015). An exploration of the effect of time pressure and peer feedback on the Iranian EFL students' writing performance. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(11), 2251-2261. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0511.08>

- Graham, S., MacArthur, C., & Fitzgerald, J. (2013). *Best practices in writing instruction*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Huang, Y. W. (2014). Taiwanese graduate students' voices on language anxiety over writing academic papers. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(6), 1219-1228. doi: 10.4304/jltr.5.6.1219-1228.
- Huy, N. T. (2015). Problems affecting learning writing skill of grade 11 at Thong Linh high school. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*, 3(2), 53-69.
- Ingermanson, R. (2014). *How to write a novel using the snowflake method*. Hoboken: Wiley Publishing.
- Jauk E., Benedek M., & Neubauer A. C. (2014). The road to creative achievement: A latent variable model of ability and personality predictors. *European Journal of Personality*, 28, 95-105. doi:10.1002/per.1941.
- Jolliffe, W. (2007). *Cooperative learning in the classroom*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Kieft, R., Rijlaardam, B. & Berg, V. D. (2006). Writing as a learning tool: Testing the role of students' writing strategies. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, XXI, 18-19. doi: 10.1007/BF03173567.
- Kim, K. H., Cramond, B. & VanTassel-Baska, J. (2010). The relationship between creativity and intelligence. In J. C. Kaufman, & R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 395-412). Cambridge University Press.
- Kohanyi, A. (2005). Four factors that may predict the emergence of creative writing: A proposed model. *Creativity Research Journal*, 195-205. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2005.9651479>.
- Marlowe, M. (2013). *Teaching children who are hard to reach*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin.
- Marshall, J. D. (1987). The effects of writing on students' understanding of literary texts. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 21(1), 30-63.
- McCabe, A. & Bliss, L. (2003). Patterns of narrative discourse: A multicultural, life span approach. *The Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 1, 1-2.
- Oral, G. (2014). *Yine yazı yazıyoruz [Writing Again]*. Ankara: PegemA Publications.
- Pardede, P. (2011). Short stories use in language skills classes: Students' Interest and Perception. *Conference: 4th Annual International Seminar Faculty of Language and Literature*. Satya Wacana Christian University, At Salatiga. Retrieved from <http://www.researchgate.net/publication>
- Packwood, A. & Messenheimer, T. (2003). Back to the future: Developing children as writers. In E. Bearne, H. Dombey & T. Grainger (Eds.), *Classroom interactions in literacy* (pp. 144-156). Buckingham, Open University Press.
- Pathan, M., & Al-Dersi, Z. (2013). Investigating the role of short-stories in overcoming the problems faced by the Libyan EFL learners in reading comprehension skill. *The Criterion An International Journal in English*, 12, 1-8.
- Reaves, Angela C. (2012). *The role of the environment in the individual difference and creativity relationship*, Master Thesis, University of Florida International. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/etd/686>
- Rentz, K., Arduser, L., Meloncon, L., & Debs, M. B. (2009). Designing a successful group- Report experience. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 71, 421-438. doi: 10.1177/1080569908330373.
- Root, R. L. & Steinberg, M. (2012). *The fourth genre: Contemporary writers of/on creative nonfiction*. 6th edition, Boston: Pearson.
- Spilka, R. (1993) Collaboration across multiple organizational cultures. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 2, 125-173. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10572259309364529>

- Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 14*, 153-173. doi:10.1016/j.jslw.2005.05.002
- To, J. & Carless, D. (2015). Making productive use of exemplars: Peer discussion and teacher guidance for positive transfer of strategies. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 40*(6), 746-764. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2015.1014317>
- Torrance, E. P. (1994). *Creativity: Just wanting to know*. Pretoria, Republic of South Africa: Benedic Books.
- Whelan, B. (2013). *Back to creative writing school*. London: James Sneathe.
- Wong, V.F., & Lim, J. (2013). Linking communicative functions with linguistic resources in Short stories: Implications of a narrative analysis for second language writing instruction. *System 45*, 147-162. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2014.05.008>
- Yang, R., & Allison, D. (2003). Research articles in applied linguistics: moving from results to conclusions. *English for Specific Purposes, 11*, 365-385. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906\(02\)00026-1](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(02)00026-1)
- Yeh, Y. C., Yeh, Y. L., & Chen, Y. H. (2012). From knowledge sharing to knowledge creation: A blended knowledge-management model for improving university students' creativity. *Thinking Skills and Creativity, 7*(3), 245-247. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2012.05.004>.

Online references

- [1] King's College London. (2015). *Creative Writing Undergraduate Marking Criteria*. Retrieved in May 2018 from <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/english/study/handbook/Aassessment/creative.pdf>
- [2] University of Leicester. (2016). *MA in Modern Literature (and Creative Writing) Student Handbook*. Retrieved in June 2018 from <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/english/existing-staff-and-students/MAinModernLiteratureandCreativeWriting201516v1.2.pdf>
- [3] University of Southampton. (2013). *MA Creative Writing Handbook*. Retrieved in May 2018 from https://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/imported/transforms/content-block/UsefulDownloads_Download/5F9E552D283C4072803FA38B45FEC3BE/cw_handbook_2012-13.pdf

