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**AN ACTION RESEARCH ON IMPROVEMENT OF WRITING SKILLS OF A
STUDENT WITH WRITING DIFFICULTY***

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Abstract

This study was carried out with the aim of helping to eliminate writing errors as conducting an action research to improve writing skills by identifying the problems experienced by 4th grade primary school student who has writing difficulties. The study was conducted as an action research, as it deals with the process of a 4th grade teacher in Sulusaray town of Nevsehir province to improve the writing skills of his student who has difficulty in writing. Before starting the research, necessary permissions were obtained by interviewing the family of the student and the authorized persons at the school. After the permissions obtained with the explicit consent of the student's parent, the notebooks in which he wrote other writings, especially the Turkish notebook he used in the classroom were examined. Samples of his written papers were re-evaluated by photographing and re-solving them. Dictation studies were conducted with our child, who will contribute to the action research in this process. Writing programs were prepared for the student by determining the mistakes made by the student in writing.

The duration of this program is determined as 8 weeks. This child showed improvement in the problems he had experienced in his writing skills with the support of his family and the attention

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of his teacher, due to the psychological conditions he had experienced since a young age; The study started to yield positive results earlier than expected. It was observed by both the child, the parent and the researcher that there was a positive development in writing skills and writing legibility. Such studies should be increased so that many primary and secondary school children in this situation do not experience the feeling of failure, and it should be ensured that students become useful individuals for the society in their future lives.

Keywords: Dysgraphia, writing disorder and dictation text

INTRODUCTION

The act of writing has been a form of self-expression since the earliest known human being. We can see them from the works that have survived from ancient civilizations to the present day. Every civilization has its own script. Although some civilizations use common writing, each civilization has its own traces in writing. Although the fonts differ, the common goal is self-expression. From birth, there is a constant effort to learn and put what they have learned into action. The act of writing is the transfer of cognitive, kinetic and motor components in a certain order of harmony (Kodan, 2016).

It is through writing that human being express themselves, express their feelings and thoughts, convey their wishes and desires, in short, reflect their inner world to the outside and communicate and transfer themselves beyond their time. Today's technology can carry people to the future by making audio and video recordings. However, writing is preferred more with the symbols and signs it uses. The writings used by societies show differences. The script family can be considered as the geography of the language in which it is used, its period and the society in which it is used. The script family is the geography of the language in which it is used period and the society in which it is used can be considered as itself. When these communities are examined, it has been seen that people who need handwriting have developed their own unique styles. Thus, characteristic writings emerged (Alkan, 2021).

Children nowadays get acquainted with school at an early age. Even if the first few years of starting school seem to be motor development and socialization, children's writing desires are self-evident by drawing shapes and drawing pictures. The act of writing indicates to us that there is another stage of human communication. Elementary school 1. starting from the classroom, children are enrolled in a voluntary writing program. This process proceeds in a controlled manner within a program. These children at primary school age cannot reach the desired level in writing for some reasons. Crowded classrooms are the reasons that indirectly

affect the child, such as the level of education and consciousness of the family, the experience of the teacher. Direct reasons affecting the child such as physical disability, correct sitting position, correct pen and notebook keeping, and correct learning of the writing directions of letters are among the causes of errors. There are some obvious defects in children in the developmental age. Dyslexia, another name for reading difficulties, is evident in primary school children. In particular, it is the reverse perception of letters and words by mixing them. Although these children recognize sounds, they have difficulty combining these sounds. This difficulty in reading is also encountered in writing, and academic achievement is negatively affected by this situation. Children's development in reading and writing lags behind their peers. Individuals who have difficulties in mathematical perception are diagnosed with dyscalculia. These students first of all have difficulty in perceiving mathematical concepts. Then they have difficulty in doing four operations. It takes longer for them to understand the problem. They confuse symbols and mathematical terms. They do not understand the multiplication tables. They have difficulty memorizing and learning. On the subject of division, they can not perform the mathematical transfer to paper (MEGEP, 2014).

The writing of the student, who is the subject of our study, is slow. He makes letter, syllable and punctuation errors in his writings. Grammar mistakes are common. He does not leave enough space between words in his writings. Students who have difficulty in writing in this way are referred to as dysgraphia when the necessary examinations are applied. With the onset of the primary literacy process, students with dysgraphia and dyscalculia begin to appear among their peers (Alkan, 2021).

The earlier the disadvantaged situations of students with specific learning disabilities are determined and the necessary precautions are taken, the more they can transition to normal learning with the least impact from this process. Especially in the first years of primary school, the corrections made while the physical activities are not yet automatic in writing are at a saving level for the student. In line with this idea, by determining the problems in writing skills of a student going to the 4th grade of primary school and having writing difficulties; It is aimed to do what can be done to develop these skills in a desired way (Başar & Alkan, 2020).

This study was carried out with the aim of helping to eliminate writing errors by conducting an action research aimed at improving writing skills by identifying the problems experienced by this 4th grade primary school student with writing difficulties.

METHOD

The Pattern of Research

The research was conducted as an action research. It is a research conducted to solve the writing difficulty of a 4th grade primary school student and the negativity in the academic process he experiences accordingly. The teacher and his student, who practiced, carried out this study with great pleasure. During the study process, other teachers at the school, the student's parents, and academicians who are experts in their field about the difficulties that may be experienced in reading and writing were consulted.

Participant

During the action research process, the name Ahmet was used as a pseudonym in order not to reveal the real identity of the student who had writing difficulties in the development of writing skills. Ahmet, who is studying in the 4th grade of primary school, in Sulusaray town of Nevsehir province, has been studying as the student of the teacher who conducted the research since the 2nd grade.

Ahmet is a child of a broken family. He lives in the town with his mother, grandfather, grandmother and uncle. He has no contact with his father. Ahmet, who was psychologically injured, was observed by his teacher in the classroom and during recess. His teacher, who is young, is about the age of Ahmet's father. This situation has positively affected the teacher's communication with him. Ahmet loves to spend time with his teacher very much. Ahmet takes part with pleasure both in the classroom and in the activities attended by his teacher in physical education.

Ahmet is a student who has no difficulty in communicating with his peers. He is a child who is loved and valued by other children in the classroom. If we say that her mother, who is a housewife, is devoted to her only asset, her child, would be an appropriate definition. His mother takes care of Ahmet and is able to meet his every need. Their financial situation is moderate compared to the conditions of the town. They earn their living by farming.

While his mother stated that the legibility of Ahmet's writing was very difficult, he shared it with his teacher, thinking that this situation negatively affected his classes. Since it was thought that the study conducted would contribute to Ahmet, he gave the necessary permissions with his consent to participate in Ahmet's research and to take photos of Ahmet's notebooks during the action research process.

FINDINGS

The action research took place in Ahmet's classroom. Work continued in different places and rows in the classroom. Since the school is located in a small town, the socioeconomic status of his classmates is similar. Since the class size is 23 people, the teacher works the daily course flow in a planned and programmed way, taking care of his students and taking into account their individual differences. His classmates show average and sub-intermediate academic achievement compared to a general fourth-year student.

The notebooks and books that Ahmet uses in the course are the most important sources for the research. In order to observe the progress of Ahmet's writing difficulty problem, it was carried out as a step in the studies in the form of before, during and after. Elementary school for writing studies by looking at 4. classroom textbooks were used. Primary school 4th grade textbooks were used for looking writing. Dictation texts, especially the stories in the Turkish book, are used; the text is enriched with the words that the student encounters in daily life and transmitted. Using dictation texts, especially the stories in the Turkish book; The text is conveyed by enriching the words that the student encounters in daily life.

First of all, a special notebook divided by intermittent lines, which is the first reading and writing notebook, was used. When it was seen that the study progressed rapidly, the normal spaced lined Turkish notebook and the squared mathematical notebook were used. The studies of looking at writing were made by selecting from the sections described and read in the course in science and social science books. In this way, it has been tried to make it felt that the student's success in learning these subjects increases by repeating them. The student who feels success has always been more efficient in motivation. During the research process, there was constant interaction with the student. Interviews were held with Ahmet's parents in an informative conversational manner.

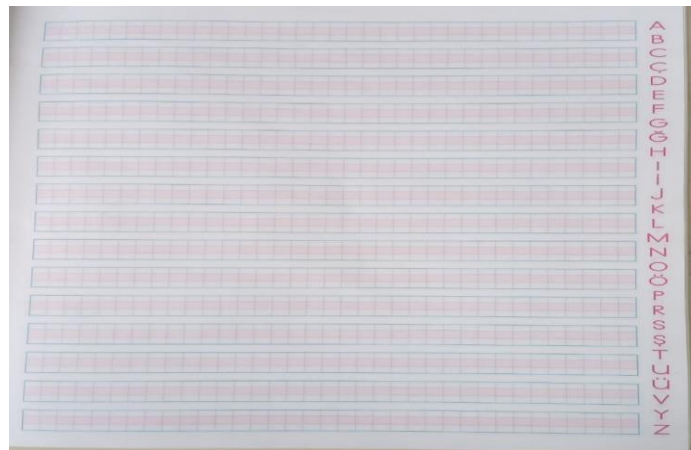


Figure 1. A writing pad with intermittent lines

In order for the sitting position to be correct, a cushion was placed under the normal wooden school desks and the most accurate contact with the notebook was ensured. In order for the light to come in the desired way and to prevent the shadow of the student's hand from falling on the writing area, it is important that it comes from the left and behind. It has been observed that holding the pencil is correct and smooth. It was observed that the student constantly used the eraser in the lessons in which the research was first started. In order to make this habit forgotten, the ballpoint pen is included in the writing teaching process. As the study progressed, it was seen that the ballpoint pen had a positive effect on gaining writing skills to students with writing difficulties. In this way, the student, who tends to use an eraser all the time, reduced the use of the eraser over time and wrote the letters with the desired accuracy.



Figure 2. Correct sitting and writing position

When we sit in the right sitting position, we dominate the area we write. When we hold the pen at the right angle, we can clearly see the shapes, symbols and writings that the pen draws on the paper without shadowing it. When we sit in the wrong sitting position, we get too close to the writing area. Therefore there will be an unnecessary load on our back and neck muscles. Inaccuracies may not be noticed immediately because the writing area is not fully visible.

Implementation steps to be followed in the development of deficiencies in writing skills by identifying the writing errors of a student with writing difficulties:

- ❖ Examining the writings written by the student and detecting the mistakes made by the student.
- ❖ Planning the writing education process suitable for the student

- ❖ Observing student development
- ❖ Determining the progress in the student development process
- ❖ Examining the effect of the study on the student

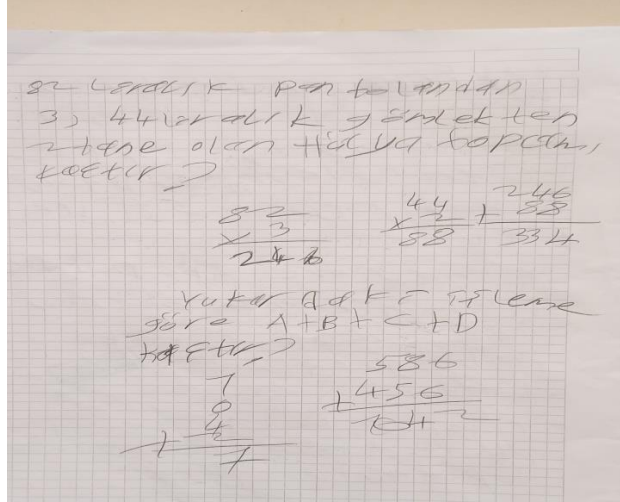


Figure 3. An example from the pre-workout Mathematics notebook

In the math notebook photographed before the research process started, the student;

- ❖ He writes randomly without paying attention to the writing area,
- ❖ It does not specify the beginning of the paragraph,
- ❖ Does not pay attention to the appropriateness of upper and lower case letters,
- ❖ Less legibility of writing,
- ❖ It has been seen that he did not write the numbers and numbers as desired.

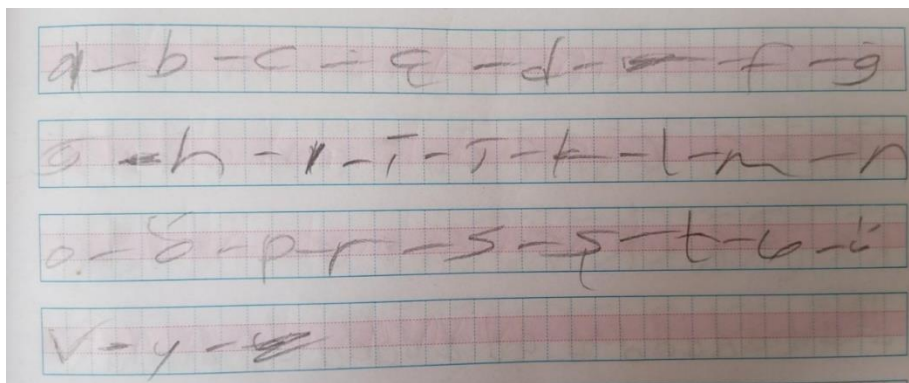


Figure 4. Alphabet written in the primary literacy book (small)

Spelling errors related to the letters in our alphabet written in the writing pad have been detected. First of all, it was asked to write the lowercase letters of the letters in our alphabet in a regular way.

It was observed that the place and direction of Ahmet was written incorrectly when writing the letters "a, e, ğ, k, m, u, z". It was observed that the student wrote the size of almost all the letters incorrectly and did not position the letters on the line as desired. During this article, our student realized some of his mistakes and used an eraser.

Ahmet wrote some letters in two rows according to the letter order in our alphabet in the desired field in the writing notebook. In the writing activity here, the letter sizes do not match. The size of each letter differs from the previous one. The letters Ahmet used were either too small or too large to be written in the space between the lines.

With this preliminary study done before the research, Ahmet's:

- ❖ He does not know the alphabetical order and has difficulty in passing from letter to letter,
- ❖ The writing direction of the letters is mixed,
- ❖ He does not know proportionally the size of the letters,
- ❖ He does not know on which line and on which line the letter should begin and end,
- ❖ He does not write clearly and legibly,
- ❖ Adds extra lines to letters,
- ❖ Forgetting to add the lines that should be in the letter symbols,
- ❖ It has been seen that some letters resemble numbers.

With this control made before the research, preliminary detection of Ahmet's mistakes was ensured. Ahmet is shown his mistakes in writing. In this way, Ahmet saw that the from, location, direction and size of some the letters he wrote were wrong. Seeing the spelling mistakes, Ahmet continued to work programmatically to learn the correct expression of the letters. The act of writing, which Ahmet saw as a troublesome process before; afterwards, learning to write began to turn into an enjoyable pastime with the programmatic learning. Voluntary and enthusiastic participation in studies has been observed.

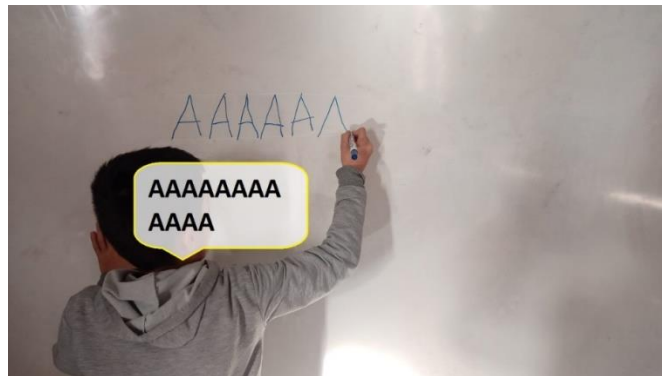


Figure 5. Applied writing of letter directions and forms on the board

The writing area has been created by determining the guide lines on the blackboard. Enough work has been done by showing the correct writing rules for each letter one by one. Ahmet, who was willing to write on the blackboard, grasped the spelling direction of the letter by writing the letters he was forced to write in the air with his hand. After the blackboard, he did similar work in a writing pad and a striped notebook.

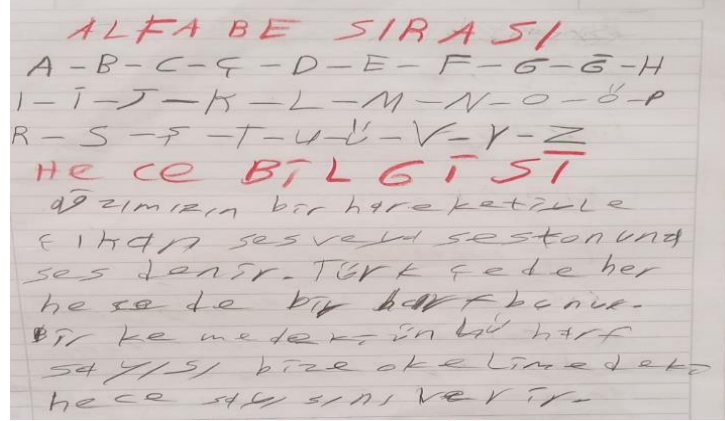


Figure 6. The work he made on the lined notebook

Ahmet first wrote the capital letters of the Turkish Alphabet in his Turkish notebook. The alphabetical order it is written in is correct. According to previous studies, the writing area has been tried to be used correctly. He identified the letters he wrote wrong and said it himself. Although the directions of the letters were written correctly, errors were detected in their places and sizes. Ahmet stated that he wrote the letters “Ç,J,K,M,N,O,Ö,Ş,Ü,V” incorrectly and listed what he needed to do to write them correctly.

The idea of using a ballpoint pen to minimize Ahmet's mistakes while writing and to reduce his use of an eraser was presented by his teacher. Making an effort to learn, Ahmet wanted to try it immediately by adopting his teacher's idea. Although he finds the use of ballpoint pens strange in his first writing activities; his progress in the writing activity in accordance with the rules accelerated his adaptation to the situation.

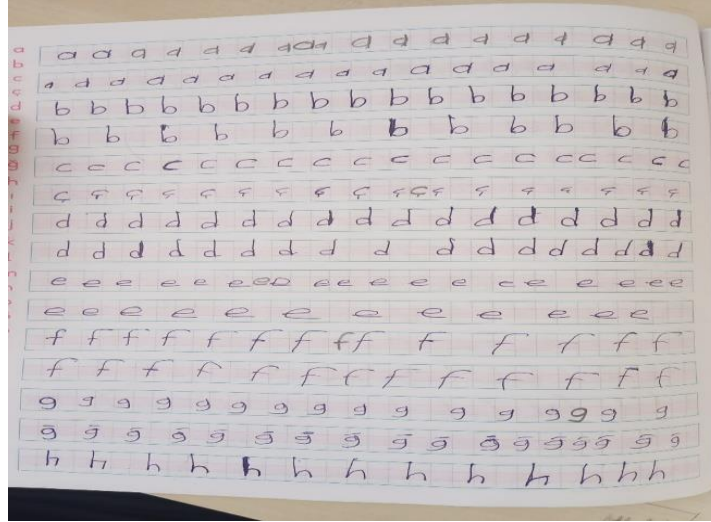


Figure 7. Work using a ballpoint pen

During the student's notebook check conducted before the action research, the mistakes made by Ahmet were identified. These errors were shared with both the student and the student's parent. By obtaining the necessary permissions, the parent, who gave explicit consent for his child to participate in the study, increased the student's motivation by stating his happiness that he was informed about the process. The information was collected after the literature review for the student with writing difficulties. An educational program has been prepared for the development of writing skills by taking into account the information collected after the literature review, interviewing experts in the field and taking into account the observed and detected situations of the student.

The prepared training program is kept in a place where the student can see during the day, so that he can see the areas where he is developing for himself. The daily education flow planning was reviewed together with the student and the rapid progress in the program was followed.

Table 1.

Training Program for the Development of Writing Skills

Weeks	Plans
	Teacher Detection of Spelling Errors
	Student Detection of Spelling Errors
	Doing hand exercises
	Sitting Position
	Pencil Holding Exercises
	Writing Position

1. week	Notebook Selection
2. week	Making Line Studies Understanding the Spelling Direction of Wrong Letters in the Air Showing the Correct Spelling of Letters Using the Fine Writing Notebook
3. week	Comprehension of letter shape and form studies
4. week	Writing the Letter Size on the Board Writing letters in the notebook Examining the Rules of Spelling with the Student Spelling the desired word by looking
5. week	Correct Spelling of the Desired Word in the Notebook Correct Use of the math notebook Writing Sentences with the Dictation Method Writing small texts correctly by looking Capitalizing the Letter Beginning the Sentence
6. week	Writing Correctly Using a Two-line Notebook Writing the Text in a Turkish Book by Looking Using Correct Spelling in Assignment Sheets Dictation Text Writing
7. week	Participation in Writing Studies with Peers in Class Participation in Dictation Practices in the Classroom Recognizing Errors and Making Necessary Corrections Making On-Demand Writing Studies
8. week	Participation in writing activities suitable for Grade Level

The action study aimed at developing writing skills lasted for eight weeks. Two course hours were studied for three days each week.

1. Week: Ahmet did not fully believe that the ugliness in his writing could be corrected. When he shared with his teacher that he thought that this process would be difficult and that he would not succeed, in the first days; He had already learned the spelling rules of some letters and corrected them. Seeing that the correct sitting position, which he did not care about before, works from the first lesson hours; It has been observed as the motivating power of being successful in this regard.

2. Week: By making an intensive study with line works; before the directions of the letters were fully grasped, hand fingers and wrist exercises were performed and they participated in the preparations. Afterwards, the writing directions of the letters were shown and the work continued on the beautiful writing notebook.

3. Week: In the lessons held during this week, letter writing was done intensively. In the studies, the deficiencies in the wrong letters were eliminated and necessary corrections were made. He noticed and corrected the correct and incorrect examples in the words he wrote.

4. Week: Ahmet is progressing faster than expected. Activities related to the spelling rules of all letters have been completed. He wrote the desired words correctly in his notebook both in the dictation method and in the writing activities by looking. He also showed a successful performance in writing activities on the board.

5. Week: Ahmet made fewer mistakes in looking writing activities. In sentences written using the dictation method; it has been observed that he made the letter writing direction mistakes he made in the past due to his fast typing action, although not always. Ahmet is aware of this positive progress in himself. This progress is the biggest factor in the increase of Ahmet's academic success in his classes.

6. Week: Ahmet, who used what he learned in homework sheets and other lessons, realized that he used the eraser less in his studies. Because they now express that they think with understanding and more carefully.

7. Week: This positive progress in the classroom was first noticed and appreciated by his classmate. Other classmates are also aware of Ahmet's change. For some children, this development demonstrated the power of study.

8. Week: Ahmet participates in every work in the classroom in a self-confident way. Ahmet, who is no longer afraid of writing, expresses himself more comfortably. This has accelerated both his academic and social progress in the classroom.

In the activity, they were asked to sort and write correctly for the question asked. Despite paying attention to the order, Ahmet continued to write, ignoring the spelling rules. But when he wrote the desired ones in accordance with the rules without rushing, he showed a better result.

After the 8-week implementation period of the action research was completed, it was observed that Ahmet used what he learned in his independent writings. He states that he is no longer afraid to write. The researcher assumed the role of a student to see what other studies I could do. With this program, which was prepared and applied for eight weeks, it was seen that the letters were more legible and the sentences were written more clearly. It has been observed as a positive effect of the program that the letters are written more proportionally than each other and aesthetics is given importance in the notebook layout.

DISCUSSION, RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

After determining the causes of spelling mistakes of a student with writing difficulties, the action process was completed at the end of the 8-week practice aimed at improving the writing skills of this student. After this action process, Ahmet's desire to write increased and he gained a more legible writing. The study, which was carried out as an action research, was successfully completed both as a result and as a process. The training program prepared for the detection of errors and the acquisition of writing skills by correcting these errors was acted upon. The steps prepared during the training program progressed according to the weeks, and the desired progress was achieved.

It has been observed that the weak aspects of the students with learning difficulties can be strengthened by taking the necessary precautions at an early age. It was observed that the student who was not diagnosed with dysgraphia wrote the letters without paying attention to their direction. It has been observed that the word is completed by changing the letters in the syllable or by adding or missing letters, since the writing direction is wrong, and the hand does not move flexible enough while writing the letters after it. This situation, which causes the writing to be ugly, prevents the reading of the word and creates meaningless sentences. Bařar, Sezer and Karasu (Bařar, řener, & Karasu, 2016) in their studies; they named the typing error by changing the syllable where the typing error was made the most. Children with dysgraphia are more likely to misspelled words. In the study, it was seen that the student made fewer spelling mistakes in the texts he wrote by looking at the dictation method. It has been observed that trying to make fewer mistakes in looking writing increases the time spent. Compared to

other peers, the time to write the same text was measured to be longer. When the student was asked to finish this period at the same time with his other friends, it was noticed that he wrote the words on top of each other. Due to the student's fast writing, he could not complete the sentence by leaving some letters halfway. When dictation participated in writing, the letters that were below the line or completely in the air created a problem in regular writing. It was observed that the student did not understand the text he wrote. While writing the letter "J", it has been noticed that the letter is either very italic or written completely like the letter "İ" or "I". It has been seen that this situation affects the academic success of the student because it makes the words meaningless. Since he was careful while writing the texts, it was noticed from his participation in the class that he understood the sentence better and answered the questions about the subject of the text correctly.

The parents were interviewed about the fact that Ahmet could not complete the rounded letters from the writing samples he gave when he started working. When the parent was asked whether he had a physiological disorder in his fingers and wrist, he stated that he did not have any discomfort. When it is noticed that the student cannot fully use his hand while writing letters such as “a, o, ö, g, ğ, b”, by doing lots of exercise; this problem has been overcome. Ahmet, who also had difficulty in reading his own writing, happily welcomed the increase in his reading speed as he applied the writing rules. He has tasted the feeling of success with his regular work every day.

As it can be seen, the person who works diligently and in a planned manner has improved his writing skills by overcoming the points where he has difficulty in writing. He has been understood the importance of working with a regular plan and program in order for the positive gains in writing skills to become permanent and permanent.

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