A REVIEW ON READING-SUPPORTED VALUES EDUCATION OF 7TH GRADE STUDENTS (CASE OF KARS PROVINCE, TURKEY)[i]

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Abstract:

As is known, reading is a skill the individual faces throughout his/her life. Reading, which is also one of the four basic language skills, allows an individual to establish a connection with life. So that, self-improvement of the individual, the process of understanding and interpreting what is happening around him/her, expressing himself/herself and communicating with others, achieving success in education process, and living-conveying the culture earn success with correct acquisition and continuity of this skill. Individuals, who read and define themselves and their environment correctly, succeed also in understanding and transferring process of cultural structures. Each individual adopts the culture and value structure of the society where he/she lives. For this reason, it is important for individuals to understand some local and universal values correctly and to exhibit correct behaviors in this process. To do this, education about some value concepts are given to the secondary school students by the National Education. The population of the study consisted of 7th-grade students studying in two secondary schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. While one group was the experimental group, the other one was the control group. While a values education supported with reading materials was given in one of these schools, a values education without any intervention of the teacher in the process was given at the other school. At the end of the specified period, the students in both groups were asked to write a story containing the values they learned. The first three successful students were rewarded. The data were assessed by making document analysis. Students' skills to apply story-writing rules correctly and express the values they learn as well as their

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skills to understand and interpret correctly were examined here. As a result of the study, it was observed that the students who were given the values education wrote more successful stories than the other group.

Keywords: reading, value education, skills, understanding

1. Introduction

Value is the body of rules that individuals in the society believe and accept in every field. For this reason, these rules, which can be gathered under more than one title-national, religious, moral, philosophical, social - determine and shape the lives of the individuals and their perspective on life. According to its most general definition, *"values are our judgments about what is good or what is bad. It is more or less precise and systematic ideas that enable the individual to interact with the environment rather than being the things that we prefer according to our likes"* (Veugelers & Vedder, 2003, cited by Balcı and Yelken, 2010; 82).

According to another definition, *"Value is defined as the tendency to prefer one particular situation to another. Values are understandings that are source for the behaviors and good for judging them. The values also indicate the wishes, preferences, and desired and undesired situations by defining what the individuals see as important"* (Erden, 2003; 56). Based on this definition, it can be asserted that values are the inexplicit rules that society creates in human relations and social life. Mengüşoğlu (1983) expresses the properties of values as follows:

- They are phenomena containing beliefs and thus carrying habits.
- They allow individuals to rationalize and internalize what they do.
- They are the things that are generally interested and desired.
- They are related to every field, but the fields have their specific values.
- Even if they have different sources and contents, they are social in a way.
- Values have the function to determine human events (cited by Demir, 2012: 1065).

Values allowing the societies to recognize themselves and the culture should be learned and transferred by individuals. The formation of social culture and the individuals' acquiring common national identity depend on the correct acquisition of values (Yazıcı, 2006).

"Transferring values and common basic behavioral patterns of the society to individuals make a person to socialize and become a part of that society. A bridge is established between the past and the future, by adding new ones into the values and cultural heritage of the past. The

future life of the society and nation is directly related to the stability and continuity of this bridge. Future of a society and nation that are disconnected from their past cannot be mentioned" (Kolaç, 2010; p.194). *"The values system constituting the backbone of the culture provides communication between people and also protects them from arbitrary practices and behaviors. It also assures the historical consciousness of people living and producing together. From this point of view, it can be said that the institution being common ground of the education and values and meeting the transfer process is schools"* (Cihan, 2014; s.432).

The above-mentioned expressions indicate the place of value concept in the society. Value teaching starts in family and socializes in society. *"When the Elementary curriculum of Turkish lesson (2006) is examined, it is observed that it is aimed to train individuals who know the importance of the language along with the general purposes of Turkish lesson, recognize and adopt national and universal values via Turkish and world's cultural and art works, are tolerant, respectful to human rights, sensitive to the national and world's problems, and attach importance to national, spiritual, and moral values as a result of Turkish language education"* (MEB, 2006, p.3).

Value teaching starting from the family continues formally through education period. Therefore, it is required to conduct studies on teaching universal values in the school and encourage the students. Turkish lessons are among lessons that can be quite efficient in this sense. In Turkey, values education is given as a hidden curriculum in Turkish lessons. *"Value components which are wanted to be given to the student in the texts created in some contexts are transferred through words. Turkish lesson is one of the basic lessons in which value transfer is made in the best way"* (Demir, 2012; 1065).

Schools are one of the important steps of value education. The values of love, respect, responsibility, justice, charity, truth, honesty, trust, self-confidence, tolerance, modesty, empathy, austerity, diligence and patience determined by the Ministry of National Education are transferred in the schools within the scope of Social Studies lesson. The effort to transfer these to students attracts attention. This is because the school takes an important place in the life of an individual both in terms of time and of acquiring skills. *"One of the aims of education and school is to train moral people. The aim of moral education is to train people who are freed from external factors and judge and act in their conscience"* (Kaya, 1997: 185, cited by Kulaksızoğlu and Dilmaç, 2000, p.199)

The individual is expected to do the desired behavior during the education process. All kinds of knowledge and experience gained in this process differentiate the individual's character. Individuals who develop at a certain level contribute to the development of the society. However, it is possible to achieve this by primarily making the individuals to acquire the values (Yazıcı, 2006). Because, the learning process in the school which has a significant effect on the continuity of society is guaranteeing the

future of society by making individuals to acquire knowledge and skills as well as moral values (Cihan, 2014)

"School is legislation and learning field built on values. As in all other areas, values have an important place in the field of education management. Since the values are determinant in human behaviors and preferences, examining the values has an important place in human sciences" (Turan and Aktan, 2008, p.230-231).

Especially, reading and understanding education also draws attention in the value education process. Reading is influenced by surrounding situations as a process. Particularly, the structure and culture of the society where the child is raising affect the language development of the child and naturally his/her reading skill (Ürün Karahan, 2016, p. 787).

When taking these statements into consideration, it is seen that the value education and the related activities in schools are very important. Especially education, culture and value concepts should be examined and applications should be made to students with different approaches.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Study

The aim of this study was to look at the value education of secondary school 7th grade students with a different perspective and to support this teaching process with reading materials. For an individual to learn some national and universal values and to express correctly these values to the surrounding people is an important step for the society and the individual. The reading skill is remarkable at this point. A value education that will be supported by a series of good writings determined by the Ministry of National Education allows individuals to recognize both their perspective on value concept and these concepts which are expressed as values and are universal (love, respect, responsibility, justice, charity, truth, honesty, trust, self-confidence, tolerance, modesty, empathy, austerity, diligence and patience) and to give them correct meaning. This allows the individuals to apply these values throughout their lifetime and transfer the teachings from generation to generation. For this reason, it is thought that the study would contribute to both value education and the process of gaining reading habits and skills based on reading skills.

In this respect, it revealed the effect of the value-character education, conducted as a hidden curriculum within the scope of the Turkish lesson, on the written expression studies of secondary school 7th grade students.

3. Method

In this section, the model, sample group, data collection tools used in the study, data collection and analysis process were examined.

3.1 Research Model

The semi-experimental "Static group comparison design" was used in this study aiming to determine the effect of value-character education on written expression studies of secondary school seventh grade students. The static group comparison design is also known as post-test nonequivalent group design. Quasi-experimental design model is applied in the cases when all variables cannot be controlled. In such studies, groups are chosen as unbiased, but participants cannot be assigned to groups as unbiased. The researcher makes selection from the existing groups through unbiased assignment. One of the groups is included in the study as experimental group and the other one as control group. (Karasar, 2005; Creswell, 2005; Büyüköztürk et al., 2015). Table 1 shows the view of the quasi-experimental design used in the study.

Table 1: View of Experimental Design Applied in the Study

Group	Experimental procedure	Post test
Experimental	Reading of the "Fine Writings" series prepared by the Turkish Language Association during the reading hours	Making free written expression activities
Control	Reading of the texts determined by the students in accordance with their own preferences during the reading hours	Making free written expression activities

As it is understood from Table 1, the "Fine Writings" series prepared by the Turkish Language Association were ensured to be read by students in the experimental group during the reading hours allocated in Turkish lessons; no intervention was made to the books read by the students in the control group during the reading hours.

3.2 Sample Group

The sample group of the study consisted of 7th grade students studying in two secondary schools in city center of Kars in the school year of 2015-2016.

Table 2: Distribution of Students in the Sample Group in Terms of Gender

			Boy	Girl	Total
Groups	**Experimental**	N	13	6	19
		%	68.4	31.5	100
	Control	N	5	10	15

	%	33.3	66.6	100
Total	N	18	16	34
	%	52.9	47.1	100

When Table 2 was examined, it was found that 68.4% of the students in the experimental group were boys and 31.5% were girls. 33.3% of the students in the control group were boys and 66.6% were girls. The gender rates of the students was as follows; 52.9% were male students and 47.1% were female students. A total of 34 students participated in the study.

3.3 Data Collection Tools
Written expressions of the students were evaluated using "RUBRIK" as data collection tool (Çetin, 2002: 11). In this scoring key, there are various criterion fields (title, expression structure - introduction, body, conclusion-; expression richness, expression style, compliance with spelling rules, etc.), the properties that will be searched in the written expressions (association of title with the subject, presentation clarity, clarity of main idea, shortness, clarity and accuracy of the conclusion, conformity of the sentence structure to the intention and reader, the naturalness and fluency of the language, spelling, punctuation, etc.), the points required to be given, and the points to be given by the teacher.

3.4 Data Collection
The data were collected in one stage. When the activities of reading the books of the "Fine Writing" series were ended, the free subject writing activity was conducted and the data obtained from these writings were evaluated as the posttest scores. During the application phase of the study, 'Fine Writings' series prepared by the Turkish Language Association were read to the experimental group every week during the reading hours. No intervention was made in the control group about the books they preferred during the reading hours. The study lasted for 9 weeks except for the week when the posttest was administered and the study was completed within 10 weeks in total.

3.5 Data Analysis
In order to evaluate the written expression skills of secondary school 7th grade students; free subject writing activity were taken from the students after the value-character education given to them. While evaluating them, the data were evaluated from three different field experts, one of whom was a Turkish teacher, and then the fourth field expert determined the appropriate score by comparing the obtained three separate

scores with written expressions. In the posttest written expression activity, they were found to be consistent at the rate of 77%.

4. Results

In the study, secondary school 7th grade students were asked to express the information, they obtained as a result of reading supported value education, in written form. In this regard, the criteria in "RUBRIK" prepared by Çetin (2002) were taken into consideration. In accordance with these criteria, title, expression structure-introduction, body, conclusion-expression richness, expression style, and compliance with spelling rules were determined, respectively.

A. The Use of Title

When examining the data on the use of title, the correct use of the title by the students was pointed out. Short and remarkable titles which also covered the subject were written. Examples of these titles are given below.
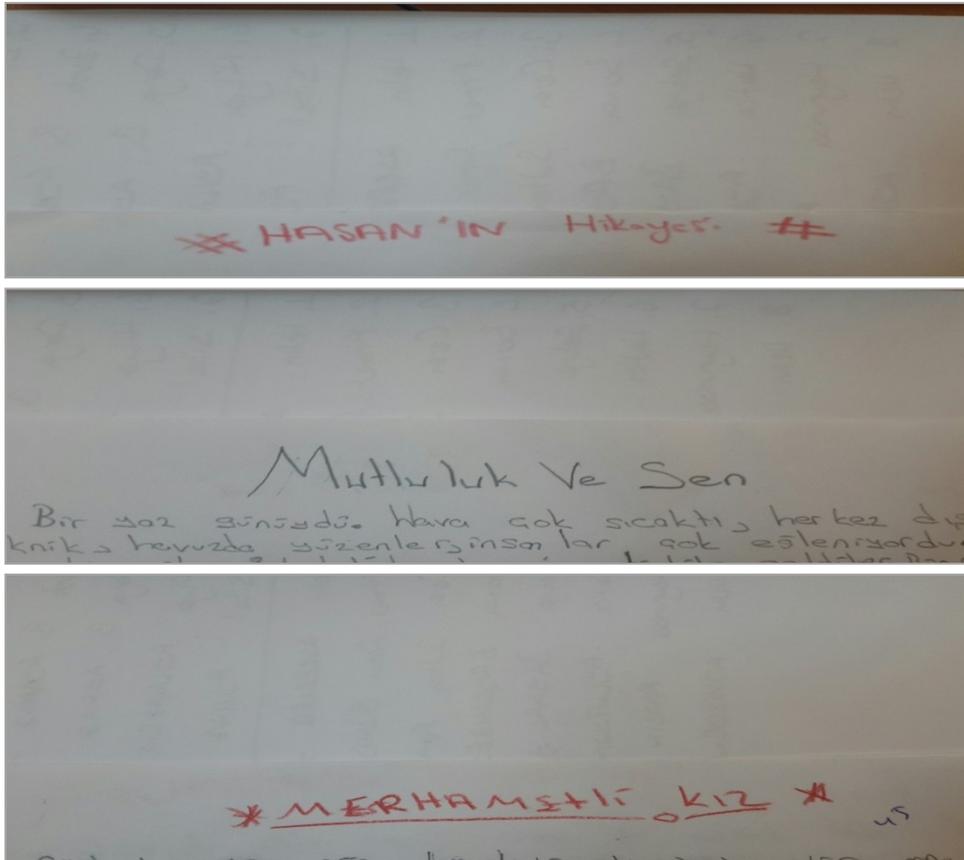
In the context of the "title" criterion in the "RUBRIK" prepared by Çetin (2002), "presence, association with the subject, shortness, expression, and impressiveness" properties of the title were taken into account. In the light of these criteria, it could be asserted that the above-mentioned title examples were successful results for both experimental and control group. It was found that both groups wrote successful titles in terms of this criterion. In addition, it was observed that the values that constituted the basis of the study were used in the correct places and in the right meanings in the titles written by both the experimental group and the control group.

B. Introduction, Body, and Conclusion Sections

Another criterion taken into account in the study is "expression structure". Introduction, body, and conclusion sections were considered under this criterion. The obtained results were given below.

Criteria required to be involved in the introduction section are presence, association with the subject, clarity of presentation, and impressiveness, respectively. In the following examples, the introduction section was examined in terms of these criteria.

When the experimental group was considered, it was noted that the metaphors were used correctly, but there were deficiencies in terms of grammar rules as seen in the given examples. Besides, it was observed that an open and effective expression was used.

It was determined in the control group that the introduction section was very weak in terms of language and expression, expressions were repeated and there was an unrelated structure not showing integrity. In this sense, the experimental group was found to be more successful for the introduction section compared to the control group.

The criteria found in the body section are the presence of the main idea, the clarity of the main idea, the consistency of the chain of thought in reaching the main idea, the presence of supporting ideas, supporting and consistency levels of the supporting ideas for the main idea, respectively. In the examples given below, the body section was examined in terms of these criteria.

When the experimental group was considered, it was observed that the main idea was present in this section also as is seen in the given examples. However, repeated expressions weakened the clarity of the main idea. There was a construct which was generally not consistent in the writing of students concerning the chain of thought. Especially when the text was extended, it was pointed out that a complexity was sometimes dominant in the subject. The supporting ideas and their usage and consistency were almost none.
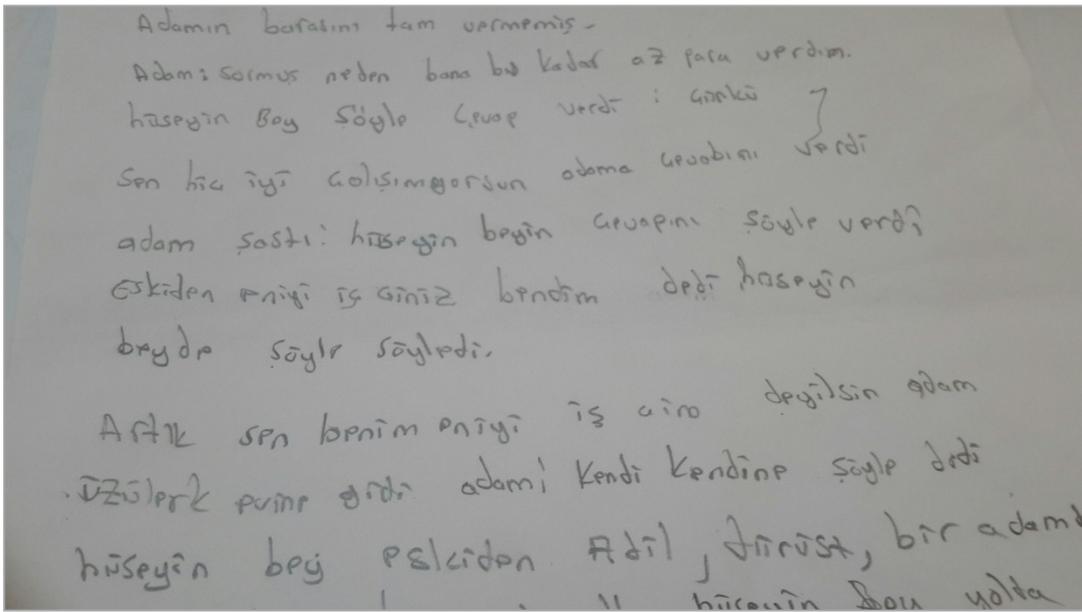
In the control group, worse results were found for the body section. As is seen in the given examples, the language and the expression were very weak, and the main idea and supporting ideas were expressed scarcely any. In this sense, the experimental group was more successful for the developmental section compared to the control group.

Criteria found in the conclusion section are the presence, consistency with the main idea, supporting with the supporting idea, shortness, clarity and certainty, respectively. In the examples given below, the conclusion section was examined in terms of these criteria.
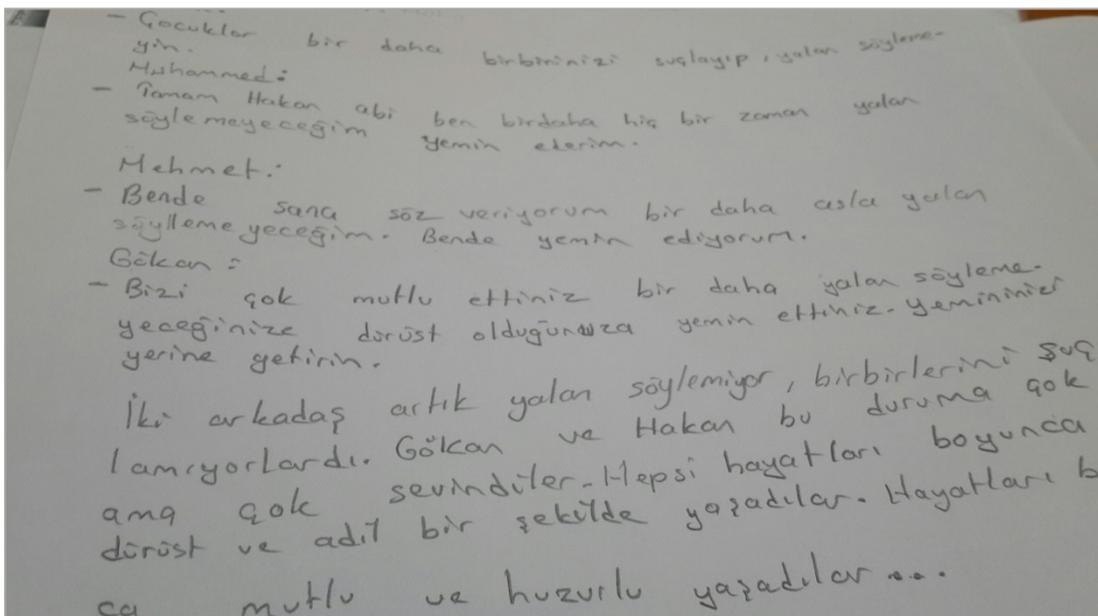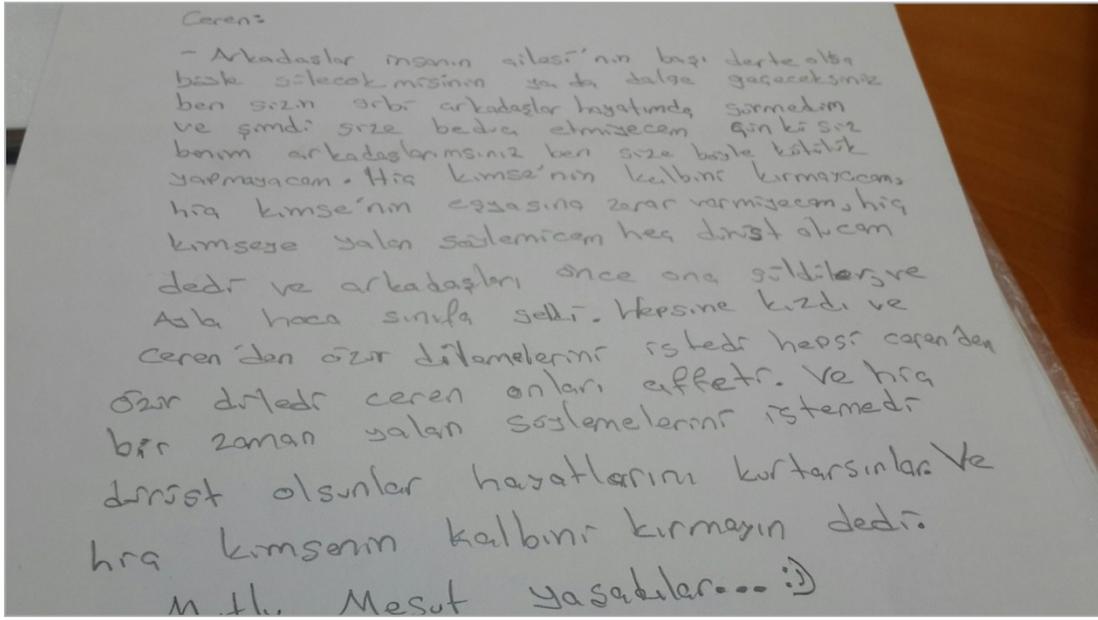
When examining the examples obtained from the experimental group, the conclusion sections, which were consistent with the main idea and included information that was clear but extensive, were remarkable. However, it was determined that there was deficiency concerning the supporting ideas and support for these supporting ideas.
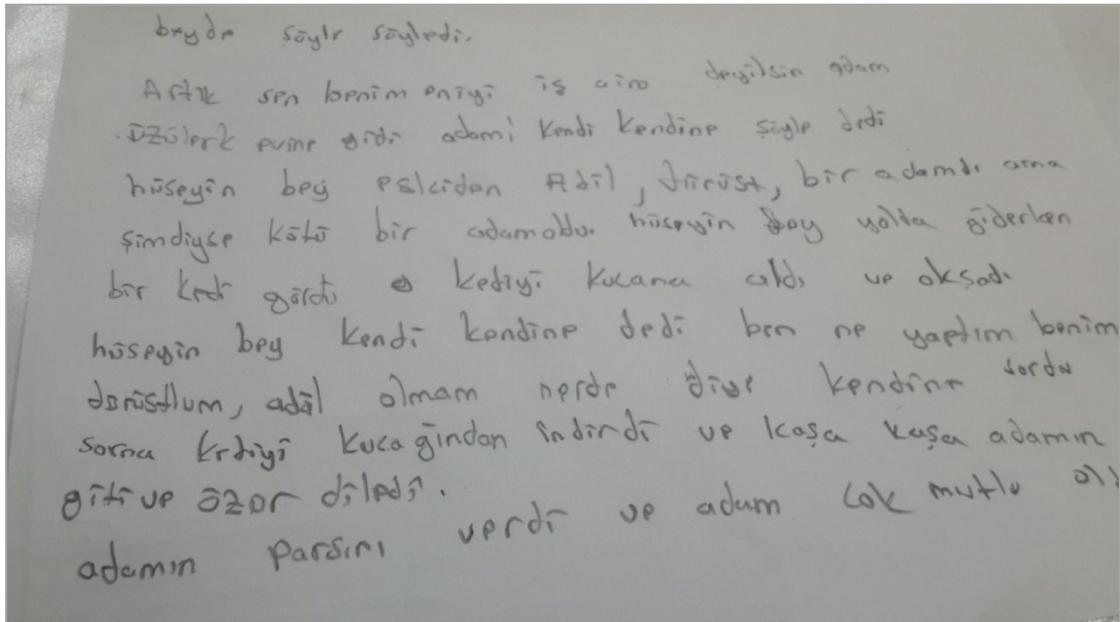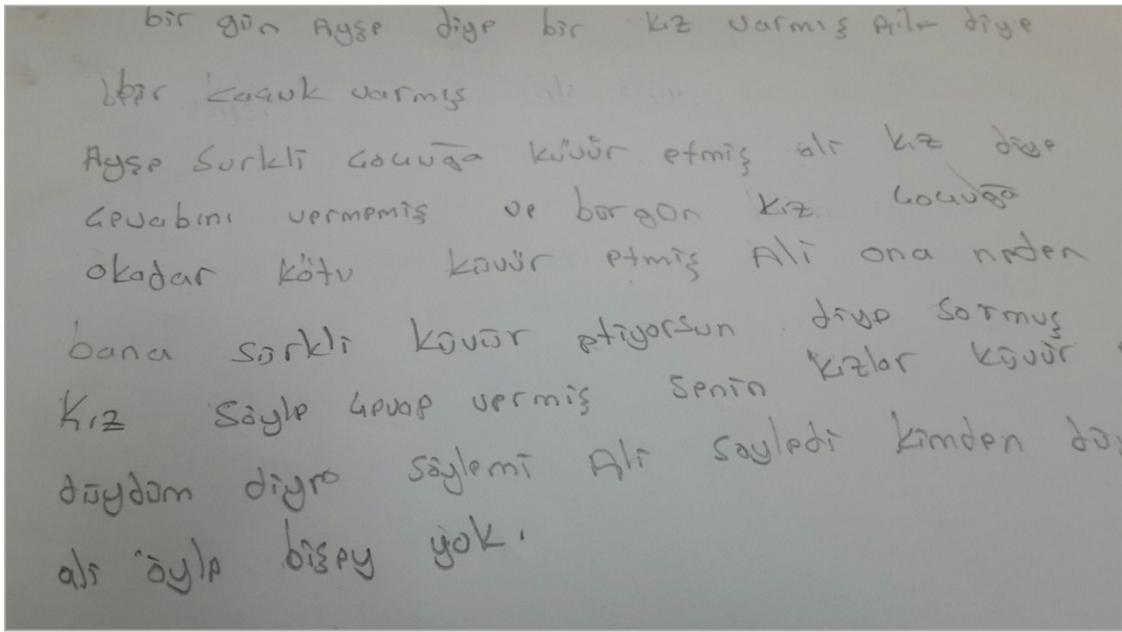
For the control group, short but very weak conclusion sections were remarkable. Moreover, sentences unfinished in terms of meaning also were too many in this group. Consistency with the main idea and supporting idea was observed at some points.

C. Expression Richness

In this section, under the expression richness criterion; the criteria of the diversity of the words used, the appropriateness of words, the suitability of the sentence structure to the intention and the reader, and the appropriateness and diversity of sentence length were taken into account. When the data obtained in the light of these criteria were examined, the experimental group was thought to be more selective. However, it was pointed out that the text was weak in terms of sentence length and diversity. There was excess of repetitions. However, appropriateness and diversity of words used were quite good. In this sense, it could be asserted that words appropriate for the text and the subject were selected and they were used correctly. Sentence structure was appropriate for the intention and the reader. Even, it was pointed out that they mentioned the experiences in their own lives in some places.

The situation was worse in the control group. Because it could be asserted that this group fell into repetitions more than the experimental group, had difficulties for expressing themselves from place to place and they could not show any skill even including spelling rules. There were significant problems in the structure, use, and diversity of words and sentences. In this regard, they were found to display a performance even below than what was desired and expected. The sentence structure was not appropriate for the reader and the expression was very weak.

D. Expression Style

Under the name of expression style criterion, the criteria of naturalness and fluency of language, appropriateness of accentuations, novelty, originality, and effective use of language were taken into consideration. When the data obtained in the light of these criteria were examined;

In the experiment group, it was observed that a fluent and natural expression was generally used even though there were opposites from place to place in the texts. In addition, original and new expressions were also remarkable in the given examples. However, it was found that there were weak character writings in terms of accentuations and effective use of language.

In the control group, it was observed that there were lower level of writings than the experimental group. The texts were weak particularly in terms of fluency and effective use of language. In addition, it was found that originality, novelty and appropriate accentuations were not included in the text.

E. Compliance with Spelling Rules

In this section, the criteria of spelling, syntax/grammar, punctuation, and suitability of paragraph organization were taken into account. When the data obtained in the light of these criteria were examined;

It was observed in the experimental group that, the students were generally weak in their texts in terms of spelling, grammar and punctuation and there were wrong uses of punctuation and spelling in this sense. It was found that there were occasionally incomplete transitions between paragraphs, and the usages that lead to impair the content integrity.

In the control group, paragraph writing and organization were almost none. Additionally, it was found that the use of punctuation and spelling was at poor level, and grammar rules were rarely used.

5. Conclusion

In the study, students were asked to state the reading supported value education and the experiences and knowledge they learn from this education in written form. Two groups were formed in this respect. The data were collected by providing reading materials for the experimental group and no intervention was made to the control group. In the light of the obtained data, the experimental group was found to be more successful than the control group in terms of reading-supported value education. It was determined that the experimental group was more successful than the control group in

terms of spelling rules, skill of written expression and self-expression skill and skills of telling and expressing correctly the value concepts they learned. As a results of the applications, it was revealed that reading-supported education with different materials was more successful.

For future works, education can be enriched by giving additional materials to the textbooks to the students. As a result of supporting the taught subjects with different sources or three-dimensional materials, it is possible to enrich the learning environments. It is possible for the teachers to determine the deficiencies of students in writing and spelling subjects and perform applications related to them. Conducting such studies with different sample groups may help to eliminate future deficiencies.

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