

## Fourth Grade Primary School Students' Critical Writing Skill Levels

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### ABSTRACT

In this study, it was aimed to determine the critical writing skill levels of fourth grade Primary School students. This study is a quantitative research and was designed in a scanning pattern. The study group of the research consists of 175 students attending in the fourth grade of three different Primary Schools, which were determined by the purposive sampling method, by taking into account their gender and socioeconomic status. The research data were obtained as a result of the evaluation of the critical writings written by the students in the study group with using the critical writing rubric. The obtained data were presented as descriptive statistics (frequency, min. and max. values, arithmetic mean, standard deviation) with the help of statistical program, and analyzed with independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). As a result of the research, it was determined that the students' scores on critical writing skills were generally at a low level. In general, students are insufficient in the dimensions of planning, presenting evidence and persuading, questioning, and multidimensional thinking of critical writing; fluency and clarity and shape/form dimensions were found to be sufficient. In addition, it was determined that student achievements differed significantly according to socioeconomic level (in favor of high socioeconomic level) and gender (in favor of female students).

**Key words:** Writing, Critical Writing, Critical Thinking, Rubric, Primary School Students.

### INTRODUCTION

The ability of individuals to be a functional member of contemporary society and to meet the demands of the twenty-first century depends on their ability to develop their literacy skills. In order for individuals to develop their literacy skills, they need to have good reading and writing skills. Among these skills, the writing skill has a special place.

Writing is the ability to use the symbols and signs required to express thoughts in accordance with the rules and to produce thoughts legibly (Akyol, 2001, p. 146). The writing skill, in which both physical and mental skills are used, is an active skill area that combines and integrates the conscious and subconscious (Covey, 2006, p. 153) and where cognitive skills are used at a high level in the process of producing a product. Güney (2016, p. 971) states that writing requires a high-level skill and therefore it is the language skill that includes all learning areas and is acquired in last period of learning a language. In addition, he emphasizes that writing is built on all learning areas and this situation puts the writing skill into an intricate structure and states that intricate structure makes this skill most difficult learning area in terms of producing a qualified product.

Researchers state that writing is a skill that requires constant writing and takes time (Flowers & Hayes, 1981; Raimes, 1983; Yalçın, 1998) and state that writing is the most complex

and hardest skill to acquire among the four basic language skills (Byrne, 1988; Calp, 2010; Coşkun, 2014; Demirel, 2003; Demirel & Şahinel, 2006; Espin, Weissenburger & Benson, 2004; Evans, 2001; Flowers & Hayes, 1981; Haris, Graham & Mason, 2002; Karatay, 2011, Kılınç & Tok, 2012; Tekşan, 2013; Temizkan, 2014; Ünal, 2006).

For this reason, the process of writing should not be aimless and methodless on the contrary this process should be consciously and purposefully. which sometimes can be boring for students, should be turned into an activity that students will do willingly and with pleasure. Because students who know what and how to write will do the writing activity lovingly and willingly. For this, first of all, it is necessary to equip students in writing methods and techniques. This requirement is stated in the Turkish Curriculum (The Ministry of National Education, 2005, p. 7) as "The teacher should help students to gain the habit of writing by making writing enjoyable for students with activities by using different methods, and should guide them to write in the genres in which they are successful by determining which types of writing they are capable of" is being done.

For this reason, different methods and techniques should be used as much as possible in the writing process (Demir, 2013, p. 86; MONE, 2005, p. 7; Demirel & Şahinel, 2006, p. 113). In the Primary Education Turkish Language Curriculum (MONE, 2006, p. 70-72), which includes

writing methods and techniques in the most detailed way, these methods and techniques are listed as follows:

Writing by taking notes

- Summarizing
- Fill in the blanks
- Writing by choosing from the pool of words and concepts
- Freelance writing
- Controlled writing
- Guided writing
- Creative writing
- Writing by completing text
- Predicting writing
- Writing a text by reconstructing it in its own words
- Writing by creating a new text based on a text
- Writing from the senses
- Writing as a group
- Critical writing

Critical writing, which is among these writing methods and techniques and is the focus of the research, has a special place in writing education.

Today's world is going through a period in which a rapid change and transformation takes place, and changes occur in every field regarding the production, use and transfer of information. At the center of these changes is "knowledge". In order to access this information, the individual must be well literate. However, in this age called the "information age", the individual is faced with a lot of true and false information, and in order to reach the right information in the face of this information pollution, he must think, question, distinguish and convey his thoughts effectively in written and verbal form. This is possible with the development of reading and writing skills on the basis of a critical perspective rather than traditional literacy. For this reason, it is necessary to acquire critical reading and critical writing skills.

Critical writing is expressed in the Turkish Language Curriculum (MONE, 2006, p. 72) as "a writing method that aims to develop students' ability to evaluation the events and situations objectively around them, to make comments, to produce ideas and solutions". As it can be understood from the definition, critical writing is a writing method in which high-level thinking skills such as critical thinking are used (Graham & Harris, 2000).

For this reason, critical thinking is the basis of critical writing. This type of thinking is a mental and affective process that requires examining the process of obtaining information, questioning in multiple ways, applying thinking processes in an effective, impartial and disciplined way, evaluating and developing new situations and products based on criteria (Akınoğlu, 2001, p. 20). Beyer (1991, p. 124) states that there are some advantageous qualities possessed by inquiring and competent thinking critical individuals with such high-level thinking skills, and lists these qualities as follows:

- Expresses a problem, problem or claim clearly,
- Requires others to use precise language,
- Does not act without thinking,
- Controls their work,
- Be determined to form an idea,

- Investigate and present reasons and evidence supporting the claims made,
- Judgments more with the help of problems, goals and results, not with the help of dogmas and longing ideas,
- Uses prior knowledge,
- Tends to doubt judgment until sufficient evidence is available.

Individuals who have acquired such basic thinking skills develop their writing skills by increasing their expressive power (Göçer, 2010, p. 188). Paul and Elder (2005) stated that using critical thinking skills in critical writing improves individuals' writing and reasoning skills and deepens their knowledge, and stated that good writing should reflect a critical thinking perspective.

A critical essay should include some essential elements as well as critical thinking. When the literature on this subject is examined, some studies in which some definitions of critical writing are made and determinations are made about the elements of critical writing (Alan, 1994; Göçer, 2010; Karabay, 2013; Karaca, 2019; Kurland, 2021; MONE, 2006; Paul & Elder, 2005; Topçuoğlu Ünal & Tekin, 2013; Wallace & Wray, 2008) were found. In line with the information about critical writing in these studies, the dimensions of critical writing; It is expressed as "planning, presenting evidence and persuading, questioning, multidimensional thinking, objectivity, consistency, clarity and fluency, shape and form". These dimensions form the basis of critical writing and guide writers in critical writing.

Even if the elements of critical writing are known, critical writing should be taught in a planned and programmed way. Because, it is possible for educational activities to reach the desired goal by means of a programmatic way, in line with a specific purpose, through teaching programs. In this direction, curricula and curricula are updated and necessary course activities are planned depending on the new approaches developed according to the requirements of the age. In this direction, objectives and achievements for writing skills were determined in the 2005 Turkish Curriculum, activity-based practices were included to achieve these, and various methods and techniques were suggested to be used. Critical writing is a writing method that was first developed with a constructivist approach in 2005 and later included in the 2015 and 2018 Turkish Curriculums. However, explanatory gains and activities related to critical writing were not included in the 2019 Turkish Curriculum. As such, the 2005, 2015, 2018 Turkish Curriculums can be taken into account when evaluating the achievements related to critical writing.

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that there are no acquisitions for direct critical writing at the Primary School fourth grade level in the 2005, 2015 and 2018 Turkish Language Curriculums. Anyhow, with the thought that some acquisitions will indirectly contribute to critical writing skills, four acquisitions in the 2005 Turkish Language Curriculum and one in both in the 2015 and 2018 Turkish Curriculum have been identified.

In the scope of this information, it is seen that critical writing skills, which require using high-level mental skills such as to evaluate events and situations impartially, making

**Table 1.** Primary School Fourth Grade Critical Writing Outcomes in 2005, 2015 and 2018 Turkish Language Curriculum

Teaching Programs	Learning output
2005 Turkish Language Curriculum	Can evaluate his/her own writing in terms of meaning and form Can make comparisons in his/her own writings Can write articles explaining why his/her agrees with an idea or not Can write inquisitive articles
2015 Turkish Language Curriculum	Can self-correct, rewrites, and edit erroneous expressions, spelling and punctuation errors that blur the meaning
2018 Turkish Language Curriculum	Can edit his/her writing

comments, producing ideas and solutions, analysis, synthesis, questioning, and discussion, are not given sufficient importance both in related literature and in Turkish Language Curriculum.

However, in our age, individuals need to be equipped with modern literacy types and their skills in addition to traditional literacy in order for social communication to continue between generations and for individuals to lead a life in harmony with contemporary life. In this direction critical writing should be included more in Turkish Language Curriculum, both as an outcome and as an activity, and should be developed by teaching it as a writing method that students can use actively in Primary Schools period. However, when the literature is examined, studies have mostly been found to determine the critical writing skill levels of Secondary School students and to develop these skills (Dal, 2015; Potur, 2014; Söylemez, 2015; Tiryaki & Ateş, 2021; Uzun & Sünter, 2020). There is no study in the literature to determine the critical writing skill levels of Primary School students. For this reason, this study is important in that it is a study to determine the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students and to eliminate such a deficiency in the literature.

In addition, this study will determine the level of critical writing skills of Primary School fourth grade students and will provide ideas for the authors in terms of future studies to improve this skill. Thus, it is anticipated that this study will form a basis for future studies on the development of critical writing skills of Primary School students.

Finally, the increase in the number of studies on the use of critical writing at the Primary School level will increase awareness in this field and will ensure that the achievements and activities related to critical writing are included in the Primary School Turkish curriculum.

That is why, this study aimed to determine the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students. For this purpose, the following questions were addressed:

1. What are the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students?

2. Do critical writing skill levels differ according to gender in Primary School fourth grade students?
3. Do critical writing skill levels differ according to socioeconomic level in Primary School fourth grade students?

## METHOD

### Research Design

In this study, scanning pattern, which is one of the quantitative research approaches, was used. Survey models are research approaches that aim to describe past or present situation as it is. In survey research, the event, individual or object that is the subject of the research is tried to be defined in its own conditions and as it is (Karasar, 2012, p. 77). The data are analyzed statistically and the results are interpreted by considering previous studies (Creswell, 2012, p. 376). For this object, the survey model was used to determine the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students.

### Study Group

There are 5 Primary Schools in the district where the research was conducted. These schools are public, free public schools. For this reason, there are students from every socioeconomic level (low, medium and high socioeconomic level) in these schools. Of these 5 Primary Schools, two Primary Schools are lower; two Primary Schools are Middle and one Primary School consists of students with high socioeconomic status. Due to the fact that the survey model tries to define the subject of the research, the individual or situations in their own conditions, no distinction was made between the Primary Schools in the district and data were collected from the fourth grade students in all Primary Schools in the district. However, in the process of analyzing the collected data, it was ensured that an equal number of data (60 low, 55 medium, 60 high) from each socioeconomic level was analyzed. In addition, it was ensured that the numbers of the gender characteristics of the students were close to each other (90 girls, 85 boys).

In this direction, the study group of this research consisted of a total of 175 fourth grade students studying in the fourth grade in the 2020-2021 academic year, determined by the purposeful sampling technique, taking into account gender (90 girls and 85 boys) and socioeconomic levels (60 low, 55 medium, 60 high).

### Data Collection Tools

Research data were gained by using a rubric (Appendix 1) that was developed by the researchers to evaluate the critical writing products of Primary School fourth grade students. The rubric was developed in line with the opinions of 54 classroom teachers, 12 Turkish teachers, 8 doctoral students continuing their postgraduate education in the field of Classroom Education and Turkish Education, and 16 academicians who are experts in the field of Basic Education.

First of all, a critical article was written to the fourth grade students and the written products of the students were examined by the researchers, and it was determined which situations the students paid attention to or which elements were missing while writing a critical article. Then, the opinions of Turkish teachers and Primary School teachers about which criteria should be included in the evaluation of a critical article were taken. Then, the achievements in the 2005, 2015, 2018 and 2019 Primary School Turkish Curriculums were examined, articles in peer-reviewed journals were read, master's and doctoral theses were examined and an item pool was created by scanning books on critical writing. Finally, a rubric was created for item pools and presented to the opinion of 8 doctoral students continuing their post-graduate education in the field of Classroom Education and Turkish Education, and 16 academicians who are experts in the field of Basic Education. The experts examined the items in terms of content and suitability for the level and finalized the critical writing scoring scale.

This scoring key has 8 dimensions as follow: "planning", "providing and persuading", "questioning", "multidimensional thinking", "objectivity", "consistency", "clearness and fluency", "shape/form", and 19 items. It also consists of 5 levels as follow: "strongly agree", "agree", "partially agree", "disagree" and "strongly disagree".

Since the target audience of the scoring key is Primary School students, it was decided to give 1 point instead of 0 to the students with low levels in scoring in line with the measurement-evaluation practices of the Ministry of National Education. Thus, the lowest score a student can get from the scoring key was determined as 20 and the highest score as 100.

### Data Collection

In the study, it was aimed to determine the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students by considering their gender and socioeconomic status. Therefore, at the stage of data collection, the list of schools to be researched was created especially by considering the socioeconomic levels of the students. To this spot, the researchers determined three Primary Schools with low, medium and high socioeconomic levels in the region where they would conduct the implementation process. Then, the student groups to be implemented in schools were tried to be determined in a balanced way, taking into account their gender characteristics (90 girls and 85 boys).

Afterwards, the students were met and briefed about the aims of the study. Then, in order to create an environment of closer between the students and the researchers, and thus to collect more reliable data for the research, the researchers talked about the contributions of the research to them, and the questions from the students were answered by the researchers.

After determining the study groups and having conversations with the students, the researchers asked the students to list some situations that they observed in their close environment or that they saw as a problem. These lists collected from students would form the subject list of students' critical writings. The researchers examined these lists and

determined the issues that the students saw as the most problematic or that they observed in their environment. The researchers stated that some problems related to the subjects determined by the students (insufficient parks and trees in students' neighborhoods, neighborhood problems related to Syrian refugees, lack of internet cafes) are also included as themes and topics in Turkish textbooks (Ataşçi, 2020, p. 74, p. 119, p. 244). For this reason, the researchers preferred these topics as critical writing topics in the research. These writing topics are as follows:

- Imagine that you are the mayor of the area you live in and express your views on what to do first for the children by writing a critical article.
- Express your views on children's spending time using technological devices such as smart phones, tablets, and the internet at an early age by writing a critical article.
- Please write a critical article to express your views on the living in our country of our Syrian refugees, who had to leave their homes due to some problems in their country.

The researchers asked the students to write a critical article on any of these three subjects during two lesson (30 minute + 30 minute). One of the biggest reasons for the researchers to write critical articles about the situations in the immediate environment of the students is the previous pre-application. The researchers had a different student group write a critical article about a subject that they saw as a problem in their close circle. Positive feedback was received from student writings. Due to this preliminary application, which contributed to the reliability of the research, the researchers benefited from the situations in the students' immediate surroundings in the study.

Finally, the critical writings written by the students were scored with a critical writing rubric. Thus, the data collection process was terminated by the researchers and the process of analyzing the data was started.

### Analysis of Data

The data gained for the first sub-problem of the research are presented as descriptive statistics (frequency, min. and max. values, arithmetic mean, standard deviation). The data gained for the second sub-problem were analyzed by independent samples t-test. Independent sample t-test is a parametric test used to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between two independent groups by looking at the means (Seçer, 2017, p. 59). In this study, Independent sample t-test was used for reasons such as the dependent variable being continuous, the independent variable being categorical (for example, female and male), the normal distribution of the dependent variable in each group (Normality) and the closeness of the variances (Homogeneity).

Finally, the data gained for the third sub-problem was analyzed by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). ANOVA is a parametric test used to test whether there is a statistically significant difference between the means of independent groups (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2014, p. 191) In the study, anova was used for reasons such as the continuous dependent variables, the normal distribution of the samples, and the sufficient sample size for each group.

## FINDINGS

In this section, the findings obtained in the scope of the data gained as a result of the research are given. Findings are presented in tables, taking into account the order of the sub-problems in the research.

### Findings Related to the First Research Question

The first research question was, "What are the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students?" The Findings related to the question are presented in Table 2.

In order to determine the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students, a critical writing was written to the students and the written products were evaluated with a critical writing rubric. Findings regarding the evaluation results are presented in Table 2.

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the averages of students' scores in some dimensions are close to the minimum scores. For example, the minimum score in the planning dimension is 2, the maximum score is 7, and the average score is 3.66. The minimum score for presenting evidence and persuading is 2, the maximum score is 6, and the average score is 3.72. The minimum score obtained in the questioning dimension is 2, the maximum score is 6, and the average score is 3.75. Similarly, the minimum score in the multidimensional thinking dimension is 3, the maximum score is 6, and the average score is 3.88.

According to Table 2, it is seen that the mean scores of students in some dimensions are close to the mean of the minimum and maximum scores. For instance; the minimum score in the objectivity dimension is 3, the maximum score is 7, and the average score is 4.06. In the consistency dimension, the minimum score is 3, the maximum score is 9, and the average score is 6.40.

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the average scores of students in the dimensions of clarity and fluency and shape/form are close to the maximum scores. The minimum score in the openness and fluency dimension is 2, the maximum score is 4, and the average score is 3.26. In the figure/form dimension, the minimum score is 2, the maximum score is 5, and the average score is 4.15.

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics of Students' Scores

Category	Dimension Points	N	min	max	M	SD
Planning	10	175	2	7	3.66	1.48
Presenting evidence and persuading	15	175	2	6	3.72	0.79
Questioning	20	175	2	6	3.75	0.80
Multidimensional thinking	15	175	2	6	3.88	0.91
Objectivity	15	175	3	7	4.06	0.95
Consistency	15	175	3	9	6.40	1.11
Clarity and fluency	5	175	2	4	3.26	1.52
Shape/Format	5	175	2	5	4.15	1.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>175</b>			<b>32.88</b>	

### Findings Regarding the Second Research Question

The second Research Question was, "Do critical writing skill levels differ according to gender in Primary School fourth grade students?" Findings related to the question are presented in Table 3.

The results of the independent samples t-test indicated the differentiation of the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students according to gender are presented in Table 3.

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that the skill levels of female students ( $M=36.76$ ) are statistically significantly higher than the skill levels of male students ( $M=31.92$ ) ( $p<.05$ ).

### Findings Regarding the Third Research Question

The third Research Question was, "Do critical writing skill levels differ according to socioeconomic level in Primary School fourth grade students?" Findings related to the question are presented in Table 4.

The results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), which was conducted to determine the differentiation of the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students according to socioeconomic level, are given in Table 4.

According to Table 4, when the socioeconomic levels of the students are considered, it is seen that the highest average is obtained by the students with a high socioeconomic level ( $M=39.25$ ). This is followed by students with a medium socioeconomic level ( $M=35.72$ ) and low socioeconomic status ( $M=28.38$ ). When the results of the analysis were examined, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference in the scores of the students according to the socioeconomic level ( $F=79.846$ ) ( $p<.000$ ).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the study, Primary School fourth grade students were asked to write critical writings and these writings were evaluated with the "Critical writing rubric" developed by the researchers. As a result of this evaluation, it was determined that the students scored below the average in the dimensions of presenting evidence and persuading, multidimensional thinking and questioning, which are the basis

of critical writing. Among the reasons for this situation; It can be shown that the achievements and activities related to critical writing are not included enough in Turkish Language Curriculum. Also, teachers do not allocate enough time for critical writing practices in Turkish language lessons. In addition, the fact that teachers do not have sufficient knowledge and equipment about critical writing and therefore the time allocated to critical writing cannot be spent productively can be expressed as another reason.

In the study, it was observed that the students scored below the average on the dimensions of inquiry and multidimensional thinking. This result is similar to the studies in the literature (Aktaş & Doğan, 2018; Gençtürk & Türkmen, 2007; Muşlu, 2008; Serin & Korkmaz, 2018) in which it was determined that students' questioning and multidimensional thinking skills were low. It can be accepted as a natural result that students with low questioning and multidimensional thinking skills have difficulties in critical writing.

In addition, Ekici (2017) stated that the education level of parents is among the factors that affect students' inquiry skills. Considering that most of the parents of the students who constitute the study group in this research have low and medium socioeconomic levels, it can be said that the students are unsuccessful in the questioning and multidimensional thinking dimensions of critical writing for this reason.

In addition, in the study, the students were not successful enough in the dimension of presenting evidence and persuading. When the literature is examined (Alan, 1994; Karabay, 2013; Kurland, 2000; Wallace & Wray, 2008), it is stated that the dimension of "presenting evidence and persuading" is an important element that is rarely used in other writing types and is specific to critical writing. The fact that the students in the study group did not do activities related to critical writing in the lessons may have caused them not to encounter the dimension of presenting evidence and persuading. This situation can be shown as one of the reasons why students are unsuccessful in this aspect of critical writing.

In line with the findings of the study, it was determined that the students scored above the average in terms of clarity and fluency, shape/form dimensions of critical writing. When the related literature is examined, there are studies (Calp, 2010; MONE, 2015; Raimes, 1993) on the need for a

successful writing to be clear, clear, simple, effective and fluent in general. Additionally, it is seen that students use grammatical rules related to punctuation marks and spelling rules sought in the shape/form dimension of critical writing in other writing types as well (Akyol, 2008; Aydoğan & Koçak, 2003; Demirel & Şahinel, 2006; Göçer, 2005; MONE, 2015; MONE, 2018; Özbay, 2011; Parlatur, 2010). By that, it can be concluded that students' achievement above the average in terms of clarity and fluency, shape/format dimensions of critical writing may be due to the fact that students generally use these dimensions in all writing types.

In this study, it was determined that the critical writing skills of Primary School fourth grade students differed significantly in favor of female students according to the gender variable. When the related literature is examined, there is no study on the differentiation of critical writing skills according to the gender of the students. However, this result of the research is consistent with some study results in which gender has a positive effect on students' writing skills (Argamon et al., 2003; Arıcı & Urgan, 2008; Bahşi & Sis, 2019; Baş & Şahin, 2013; Daly, 1975; Demir, 2011; Deniz & Demir, 2020; Tüfekçiöğlü, 2010) overlap. However, in the studies conducted by Tural and Oral (2015, p. 113) and Worden and Boettcher (1990), it was concluded that the gender factor did not affect writing success. This result contradicts the conclusion of the study that gender has a positive effect on students' writing skills. Based on these results, By reason of girls and boys live different socialization processes (König, 1992), it can be said that they acquire different language forms and communication rules. Besides, it can be concluded that girls complete their language development earlier than boys (Ağın Haykır, 2012) and female students are more confident in writing than male students (Özonat, 2015), making female students more advantageous in writing. It can be said that this advantage puts female students ahead of male students in terms of using comprehension and expression skills in the education-teaching process.

In this study, it was determined that students with high socioeconomic status were more successful than students with low and medium level regarding the differentiation of critical writing skills of Primary School fourth grade students according to socioeconomic level. When the related literature is examined, there is no study on the differentiation of students' critical writing skills according to their socioeconomic status, but studies that have concluded that students' written expressions differ in favor of higher socioeconomic levels (Baş & Şahin, 2013; Çelik, 2012; Demir, 2011; Sallabaş, 2007; Temel & Katrancı, 2019; Yasul, 2014; Yılmaz, 2008). In addition, Huber (2010) states that the

**Table 3. Differences in Critical Writing Conditions by Gender**

Gender	N	M	SD	t	p
Girl	90	36.76	5.70	5.19	0.000
Boy	85	31.92	6.61		

**Table 4. Differentiation of Critical Writing Situations by Socioeconomic Level**

Socioeconomic level	N	M	ss	SD	F	P	Difference
Low	60	28.38	3.48	0.64976	79.846	0.000	(medium-high)
Medium	55	35.72	4.02	0.54084			(low- high)
High	60	39.25	5.07	0.61359			(low- medium)
Total	175	33.44	5.72				

environment in which students grow up affects their language development. Based on these results, it can be said that better education opportunities can be offered to children with the increase in the income level of the family, and this situation has a positive effect on the development of students' language skills (Başkan, 2019).

In summary in the study, it was determined that the critical writing skill levels of Primary School fourth grade students were generally low and it was concluded that the critical writing skill levels of female students were higher than male students. In addition, it was concluded that students' critical writing skills changed according to their socioeconomic status, and students with high socioeconomic status had higher critical writing skills than students with medium and low socioeconomic status.

### Suggestions

In this study, it was determined that the students had low skill levels about critical writing. Accordingly,

- First of all, teachers should be equipped with critical writing. For this, it is necessary to fill the gap with critical writing in the literature by experts and accelerate the articles and thesis studies on critical writing.
- The results of the studies carried out by the experts should be communicated to the teachers and the teachers should be informed about these results.
- In addition, in line with the results of these studies, the Turkish Language Curriculum should be updated and enriched with achievements and activities related to critical writing, sample critical writing texts should be added, and applications for critical writing studies should be increased.
- Course materials and publications including lesson plans and activity examples on how to do critical writing studies should be produced.
- The study group of this research is Primary School fourth grade students. However, studies on critical writing can be done at different grade levels. Considering the similarity of the achievements in the Primary School third and fourth grade curricula, studies can be carried out especially at the third grade level of Primary School.
- In addition, in this study, the critical writing skills of Primary School students were tried to be developed with the self-regulated strategy development method. Studies can be conducted to improve students' critical writing skills with different methods and techniques.

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**Appendix 1. FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL  
THE KEY TO SCORING CRITICAL WRITING SKILLS**

**Student name and surname:**

Extent	Items	I	I do	I	I	Absolutely	EXTENT TOTAL SCORE
		strongly disagree	not agree	partially agree	agree	I agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	
Planning 10 point	She/He wrote her/his article within a certain plan by creating a draft for writing. <b>(5 points)</b> She/He determined the purpose of writing. <b>(5 points)</b>						
Providing Evidence and Persuasion 15 point	In her/his article, she/he made claims supporting her thoughts <b>(5 points)</b> In her/his article, she/he presented evidence in line with the claims that support her/his thoughts. <b>(5 points)</b> She/he used persuasive expressions in her/his article (Isn't it? Am I not right? We have to admit that it is a fact, although, etc.). <b>(5 points)</b>						
Questioning 20 point	In her/his article, she/he questioned the relationship between thoughts on the subject. <b>(5 points)</b> She/he used interrogative expressions in her/his article. <b>(5 points)</b> She/he outlined a problem that was the subject of her/his article. <b>(5 points)</b> In her/his article, she/he produced solutions to the problem she/he put forward on the subject. <b>(5 points)</b>						
Versatile Thinking 15 point	In her/his article, she/he included expressions that lead to different thinking (but, but, but, nevertheless, or, whereas, etc.). <b>(5 points)</b> In her/his article, she/he included her opinions based on her/his observations and experiences. <b>(5 points)</b> In her/his article, she/he expressed whether she/he agreed with an opinion or not, along with the reasons. <b>(5 points)</b>						
Objectivity 15 point	In her/his article, she/he approached events and situations with an impartial point of view. <b>(7.5 points)</b> She/he used an objective language in her article, not including subjective expressions (I think, if it were me, etc.). <b>(7.5 points)</b>						
Consistency 15 point	She/he did not include contradictory statements in her/his article. <b>(7.5 points)</b> She/he wrote her/his article in logical integrity without deviating from the subject. <b>(7.5 points)</b>						
Clarity and Fluency 5 point	She/he arranged the sentences and paragraphs in her/his article in accordance with the flow of thought. <b>(2.5 points)</b> She/he wrote her/his article in a clear, understandable and simple way. <b>(2.5 points)</b>						
Shape/ Format 5 point	She/he used punctuation marks appropriately in her/his article. <b>(2.5 points)</b> She/he wrote her/his text in accordance with the rules of spelling. <b>(2.5 points)</b>						
GENERAL TOTAL SCORE							