The Relationship between Grammar and Vocabulary Levels and Their Writing Skills of Those Who Learn Turkish as a Foreign Language[1]

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2021-02-13 Accepted: 2021-03-22	In this study, it is aimed to examine the predictive effect of grammar and vocabulary variables on writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language and to determine the significance of the variables that affect the writing skills. The study was conducted according to the relational scanning model, one of the quantitative research models. The data of the study were obtained from a total of 100 students with B1 and B2 language levels in Turkish Teaching Centers in the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. In the analysis of the data obtained, descriptive statistics such as mean, t-test, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression and correlation analysis from hypothesis tests were used. As a result of the study, it was observed that the students obtained a result close to the middle level in the grammar test, grammar and writing skills did not differ according to gender, but the probability value calculated for "Vocabulary" changed in favor of men. It has been seen that student at B2 language level get higher scores than students at B1 language level, level of knowledge of the language, vocabulary, and writing skills levels of older age groups that favor change and increasing life expectancy in Turkey in grammar, vocabulary and writing skills has been shown to increase. It has been observed that language and vocabulary have a positive and significant effect on writing skills, and there is a positive, significant, and high relationship between grammar and vocabulary. **Keywords**: Grammar, vocabulary, writing skill, teaching Turkish.

Introduction

Communication is an important factor that facilitates human life. Communication signs include language, gestures, facial expressions, gestures, and the like. The person who speaks or writes during communication shares his/her feelings, thoughts, and knowledge with the other person (Danishauskas, 2017, p.1).

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In order for the communication to be complete and healthy, the people in communication must have a command of the vocabulary that the language has. In this respect, a person who learns a new language, the more he/she is familiar with the words, grammar rules, and vocabulary of the language he/she learns, the healthier communication he/she has. Accordingly, it can be said that writing is a significant communication skill.

Writing is a very important language skill that human life needs in every field. Individual, professional, and social necessities direct people to write. Through writing, mental skills are developed; information is stored and passed on to future generations. In addition, writing reveals the knowledge, life, mental accumulation, and vocabulary and expression power of individuals on the subject they write, and leads them to research, complete their deficiencies and correct their mistakes.

Writing skill is a prominent skill that should be emphasized in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, as it is in every language. Foreigners who learn Turkish, especially business life, will have to use their writing skills in many areas of their lives. On the other hand, there are some points to be aware of when it comes to writing skills. Of these the first one is grammar. Because, in order to complete a correct writing process, it is necessary to know and be able to use grammar rules (Fidan, 2016, p.273). There is a system of stages that should be implemented in activities to be carried out to improve writing skills. According to Köksal and Sarıçoban (2016), these stages are preliminary preparation (brainstorming), preparation stage (research, sorting, and selection), design preparation (editing), writing process (kneading and shaping), self-control (criticizing). It can be said that an individual must have sufficient grammar and vocabulary knowledge in order to have good writing skills.

Grammar teaching can be carried out using induction. In the early stages of education, students are given texts and the grammar patterns are emphasized. More complex grammar patterns are given in later stages. Grammar is important for learning the rules of the language and thus for correct writing and speaking. While teaching grammar rules, the mother tongue is used extensively. In addition, the target language is also used. With the merger of the two languages, translation is performed from the source language to the target language and from the target language to the source language (Memiş & Erdem, 2013, p.300). Since the grammar-translation method aims to translate the target language into the native language, great emphasis is placed on the ability to write. Here, texts are used to translate a text in the target language to the native language and to translate the text in the native language to the target language. Learners are asked to translate the texts in question correctly. It is also important to use grammar rules correctly during translation (Asl, 2015, p. 24-25).

One of the basic conditions of using the language correctly is vocabulary. The meanings of the words should be taught using the native language. It is difficult for students to learn the meaning of words and the emotions they convey. Using a mother tongue to memorize and remember new words can be beneficial for learners (Klodiana, 2012, p.14-15).

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It has been determined that different studies on writing and grammar skills (Costa, 1989; Deniz, 2017; President, 2018; Aydın & Ciğerci, 2020) have been conducted in the relevant literature. However, it has been observed that there are few studies (Yıldız, 2016; Türkben, 2019) on teaching Turkish to foreigners. In the literature, there is no study that predicts the relationship between the writing skills of learners of Turkish as a foreign language and the variables of vocabulary and grammar. In this context, it is aimed to determine the relationship between grammar and vocabulary knowledge, and writing skills.

In this study, the effect of language and vocabulary variables on writing skills was investigated. In this context, it is hoped that the study will fill the gap in the field and contribute to the field of Turkish teaching. Accordingly, the aim of the study is to examine the predictive effect of grammar and vocabulary variables on the writing skill of students who learn Turkish as a foreign language and to determine the significance of some variables that affect the writing skill.

In order to achieve this goal, answers to the following questions will be sought:

1) What are the writing skills of students who learn Turkish as a foreign language?
2) Do writing skills of students vary according to the variables of gender language level, age, and residence time in Turkey?
3) What is the relationship between grammar and vocabulary levels and writing skills?

Method

In this study, which examines the predictive effect of grammar and vocabulary levels of learners of Turkish as a foreign language on writing skills, the relational screening model was used. The relational survey model expresses the relationship between groups with two or more variables. As a result, this model is used to determine whether variables that exist more than one has an effect on each other (Büyüköztürk, KılıçÇakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz, &Demirel, 2014; Tekbıyık, 2014; Karasar, 2013). This model offers the opportunity to make relational predictions based on correlational statistics on the quality, skills, student motivation, and how similar factors affect students' achievement (Tekbıyık, 2014: 102).

Study Group

In the research, two study groups were discussed. The first of these is the working group in which pilot applications in the process of conducting and developing tests developed for vocabulary and grammar success are conducted. The second study group is the study group in which the main application of the research was carried out after the final data collection tools were prepared. This study group, in which applications are carried out in the development process of vocabulary and grammar achievement tests, includes two different student groups. The data of the study were obtained from students at B1 and B2 language levels in Turkish Teaching Centers selected by random sampling in the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic years. The study group of achievement tests prepared for grammar and vocabulary consists of B1 and B2 level students studying in Turkish Teaching Centers (TÖMER) in Samsun, Kayseri, and Istanbul. A total of 150 students, 83

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males and 67 females, from these three centers, participated in the development of grammar and vocabulary achievement tests. 58 of these students' study at B1 level and 92 at B2 level. Details regarding the working group in which the pre-application was carried out are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Study Group for Pre-Practice

	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Vocabulary Achievement Test	67	44.7	83	55.3	150	100
Grammar Achievement Test	67	44.7	83	55.3	150	100

The study group, in which the main application of the research was carried out, consists of 100 students at B1 and B2 levels who are studying at Samsun OndokuzMayıs University Turkish Teaching Application and Research Center, Ankara YıldırımBeyazıt University Language Education Application and Research Center, Erciyes University Continuing Education Center, Yıldız Technical University Turkish, and Foreign Language Application and Research Center in the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. A total of 100 students, 55 males (55%) and 45 females (45%), participated in the study. The details as regards the study group in which the main practice was carried out are given in Table 2.

Table 2. The Study Group in which the Main Practice was Carried Out

Turkish Teaching Centers	Female (N)	Male (N)	Total (N)
1. TÖMER	8	13	21
2. TÖMER	12	14	26
3. TÖMER	14	13	27
4. TÖMER	11	15	26
Total	45	55	100

Data Collection Process

As the research data, achievement tests were initially applied to the study group in which the pilot application was conducted, and then the data were obtained by applying the achievement tests and narrative text completion questionnaire to the study group where the main application was carried out.

Achievement Tests

In the study, it was decided to use the Grammar Achievement Test to determine the grammar level of students who learn Turkish as a foreign language, and the Vocabulary Achievement Test to determine the vocabulary levels of these students. In the process of obtaining the success tests, Güler's (2015) bibliography was taken as a starting point and success tests were created considering the specified test development process steps.

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Narrative Text Completion Form

The Narrative Text Completion Form was used to determine the writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language. In order to prevent any student from reading one of these texts before, four different stories were prepared by the researcher and presented to the opinions of the experts. For scoring the texts written by individuals who learn Turkish as a foreign language, "Sample Analytical Graded Scoring Key for Writing Skill" developed by Boylu (2020) was used.

Data Analysis

The data obtained in the research were analyzed by using IBM SPSS 21.0 program. Descriptive statistical methods were used to evaluate the data. In the study, for the comparison of grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills between groups, the difference between the two groups was used t-test, when there were more than two groups, the "One Way Anova" test and regression and correlation analysis from the hypothesis tests were used for the intergroup comparison of parameters.

Findings

In this part of the study, levels of narrative writing skills of students, these skills gender, age, residence time, and language level in Turkey (B1-B2) varies according to the variables that were examined. Then, findings on correlation and regression analysis that explain the relationship between grammar and vocabulary and writing skills are included.

Writing Skill Level

Descriptive statistics concerning the writing skills levels of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The Writing Skills Levels of Those Who Learn Turkish as a Foreign Language

The number of participants	Least Score	Highest Score	Average Score	Standard Deviation
100	48	96	74	9

Table 3 includes the average scores of students at B1 and B2 (Medium) language levels without completing the narrative text. These evaluations were created by the scoring of seven experts. Accordingly, an average of 74 points was given, with the lowest 48 and the highest 96. Considering that students can get a minimum of 48 and a maximum of 96 points, it can be stated that the 48–64-point range is low, the 64–80-point range is medium, and the 80-96 point range shows high-level success. Based on these data, it is seen that the writing skills of the students (X = 74) are close to the middle level.

Investigation of Writing Skills as to the Variables of Gender, Language Level, Age and Duration of Residence in Turkey

An independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether grammar, vocabulary and writing skills differ according to the "Gender" variable. Data on independent samples t-test results are given in Table 4.

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Table 4. T-Test Results Regarding Whether Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills Differ According to Gender

The Dependent Variable	Language Level	N	Average	Standard Deviation	t	p
Grammar	Female	55	76,73	10,19	-1,92	.058
	Male	45	80,56	9,55		
Vocabulary	Female	55	82,64	8,38	-2,02	.046
	Male	45	86,00	8,16		
Writing Skills	Female	55	71,71	9,40	-1,79	.077
	Male	45	74,91	8,25		

According to the t-test results obtained for the "Gender" variable, it is seen that the probability values (p) calculated for "Grammar and Writing Skills" are above the significance level of 0.05. According to this result, people's grammar and writing skills did not differ by gender. The probability value (p) calculated for "Vocabulary" was determined as 0.046, and this result means that the vocabulary knowledge of individuals varies according to gender and there is a significant difference between the groups. When the average vocabulary levels of the people are examined, it is seen that the vocabulary knowledge of men is higher than women.

Independent sample t-test was applied to determine whether there is a difference in Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills according to the "Language Level" variable. Data on independent samples t-test results are given in Table 5.

Table 5. T-Test Results Regarding Whether Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills Differ According to Language Levels

The Dependent Variable	Language Level	N	Average	Standard Deviation	t	p
Grammar	B 1	56	73,48	8,58	-6,71	.000
	B 2	44	84,77	8,07		
Vocabulary	B 1	56	81,34	7,89	-4,05	.000
	B 2	44	87,73	7,74		
Writing Skills	B 1	56	69,49	7,73	-5,15	.000
	B 2	44	77,82	8,39		

"According to the t-test results obtained for the "Language Levels" variable, the probability values (p) calculated for "Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills" were determined as 0.000, and these probability values were found to be below the 0.05 significance level. According to these results, it was determined that the grammar, vocabulary and writing skills of individuals vary according to their language level, and there is a significant difference between the groups. When the average scores of the people are examined, it is seen that the grammar, vocabulary and writing skills of the people at the B2 level are higher than the people with the B1 level. It is understood that the biggest difference between the language levels is in the grammar test and the lowest difference is in the vocabulary knowledge.

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"One Way ANOVA" test was applied to determine whether grammar, vocabulary and writing skills differ according to the "Age" variable. F test statistics and probability (Sig.) Values for the ANOVA test are given in Table 6.

Table 6. ANOVA Test Results on the Differences in Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills by Age

The Dependent Variable	Language Level	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Average of Squares	F	p
Grammar	Between groups	5755,04	3	1918,35	43,54	.000
	Within groups	4229,71	96	44,06		
	Total	9984,75	99			
Vocabulary	Between groups	1564,48	3	521,49	9,21	.000
	Within groups	5438,27	96	56,65		
	Total	7002,75	99			
Writing Skills	Between groups	2414,236	3	804,75	13,78	.000
	Within groups	5606,976	96	58,41		
	Total	8021,211	99			

According to the Anova data obtained for the "age" variable, it is seen that the probability (Sig.) Values calculated for "Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills" are below the significance level of 0.05. According to these results, it is seen that grammar, vocabulary and writing skills vary according to the ages of the individuals, and there is a significant difference between the groups. The age group with the highest grammar, vocabulary and writing skills was determined as the 22-23 age group. In order to examine the differences of each age group with respect to each other, the post-Hoc analysis Tukey test was performed.

According to the Post-Hoc results, it was determined that students' grammar levels, vocabulary levels and writing skills had higher average scores in favor of older age groups.

Grammar, vocabulary and writing skills of "None Time in Turkey" according to the variables in order to determine whether they differ "One Way ANOVA" test. In Table 7, F test statistics and probability (Sig.) Values for the ANOVA test are given.

Table 7. ANOVA Test Results Regrading the Investigation of Differences of Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills as to Duration of Residence in Turkey

The Dependent Variable	Language Level	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Average of Squares	F	p
Grammar	Between groups	6877,061	3	2292,35	70,81	.000
	Within groups	3107,689	96	32,37		
	Total	9984,75	99			
Vocabulary	Between groups	2032,953	3	677,65	13,09	.000
	Within groups	4969,797	96	51,77		
	Total	7002,75	99			

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Writing Skills	Between groups	3362,757	3	1120,92	23,10	.000
	Within groups	4658,455	96	48,53		
	Total	8021,211	99			

According to the Anova data obtained for the residence time variable in Turkey, "Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills" for the calculated probability (Sig.) values are seen to be below the 0.05 level of significance. This is according to the results of grammar, vocabulary and writing skills of the people that vary according to the period of residence in Turkey, it is observed that there is a significant difference between the groups. The grammar, vocabulary and writing skills group has been identified as the highest of the people living in Turkey for 4 years. For the residence time in Turkey, Post-hoc analysis to determine the differences between each group Tukey test was conducted. According to the Post-Hoc result, the level of grammar, vocabulary and writing skills has been determined that level is higher than the average residence time in favor of the group of points in Turkey.

The Relationship between Grammar, Vocabulary, and Writing Skill

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to investigate whether grammar and vocabulary have a significant effect on writing skills. The results obtained are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. The Effect of Students' Language and Vocabulary Level on Writing Skills

	B	Standard Error	B	t	p	VIF
Model	-0,53	4,92	-	-0,11	0,91	-
Vocabulary	0,46	0,08	0,43	5,91	0,00	1,81
Grammar	0,45	0,07	0,50	6,92	0,00	1,81

R=0,848,   R²=0,714,   F=124,403,   p☐0,05,   Durbin-Watson test=1,620

Considering the VIF values, it is seen that there is no multiple linear connection problem since there is no value above 10. The Durbin-Watson test shows whether there is autocorrelation in the model. Generally, a value between 1.5 and 2 indicates that there is no autocorrelation (Kalaycı, 2006: 267). As a result of the analysis, the Durbin-Watson test value (1.620) shows that there is no autocorrelation between the independent variables.

Looking at the analysis results, we can say that language and vocabulary have a positive and significant effect on writing skills. Grammar and vocabulary together can explain 71.4% of the change in writing skill. A one-unit increase in grammar causes an increase of 0.449 in writing skills, while a one-unit increase in vocabulary causes an increase of 0.457 in writing skills.

Pearson's correlation test was also conducted to test the relationship between grammar, vocabulary and writing skills. The results obtained are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Relationship between Students' Language and Vocabulary Level and Writing Skills

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	Grammar	Vocabulary	Writing Skill
Grammar	1		
Vocabulary	0,669	1	
Writing Skill	0,787	0,762	1

Pearson's correlation test was used to test the relationship between grammar, vocabulary and writing skills. There is a positive and significantly high correlation between grammar and vocabulary ($r = 0.669$, $p < 0.01$). We can say that as grammar increases, vocabulary also increases. There is a positive and significantly high correlation between grammar and writing skill ($r = 0.787$, $p < 0.01$). We can say that as grammar increases, writing skills also increase. There is a positive and significantly high correlation between vocabulary knowledge and writing skill ($r = 0.762$, $p < 0.01$). We can say that as vocabulary increases, writing skills also increase.

Conclusion and Discussion

Within the scope of the research, the level of writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language was examined. After the sex of their writing skills, level (B1 and B2), which appear to show differences in the variables of age and while they were in Turkey it has been examined and the rate at which these differences are. Then, the relationship between grammar and vocabulary variables on writing skills was tested.

It was determined that students obtained a result close to a medium level in the grammar test. Likewise, they got an average score in vocabulary. This shows that there is a significant relationship between vocabulary and grammar.

Independent sample t-test results to determine whether grammar, vocabulary and writing skills differ according to the "Gender" variable, it was determined that people's grammar and writing skills did not differ according to gender. However, when the probability value calculated for "Vocabulary" was examined, it was seen that the vocabulary knowledge of the people changed according to gender, there was a significant difference between the groups and the difference changed in favor of men.

When looking at achievement tests and writing skills scoring, B2 language level students got higher scores than B1 language level students. It shows that students at the B2 language level have better grammar and vocabulary success and writing skills than students at the B1 language level.

According to the Anova data obtained for the "age" variable, the probability (Sig.) values calculated for "Grammar, Vocabulary and Writing Skills" were found to be below the significance level of < 0.05. It was determined that grammar, vocabulary and writing skills vary according to the age of the individuals, there is a significant difference between the groups and the difference changes in favor of the older students.

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When data obtained for the variable of "Duration of residence in Turkey" was examined, it was understood that grammar, vocabulary and writing skills of the individuals vary according to the period of residence in Turkey, where there is a significant difference between the groups and the difference shown to be significantly longer in favor of Turkey.

According to the simple linear regression analysis conducted to investigate the effect of grammar and vocabulary on writing skills, it was determined that grammar and vocabulary have a positive and significant effect on writing skill. Pearson correlation test was conducted to test the relationship between grammar, vocabulary and writing skills. It has been observed that there is a positive and significant relationship between grammar and vocabulary.

When similar studies on this subject were examined, it was found that the contribution of grammar and vocabulary to writing skills was found to be similar. In the study of the President (2018), it was determined as "there is a positive and moderate relationship between vocabulary and grammar". Likewise, a similar result was found in Deniz's (2017) study, where the relationship between these two areas was examined. Based on these two studies, it is concluded that the relationship between grammar and vocabulary is important. In Deniz's (2017) study, "grammar predicts writing skill positively and significantly through vocabulary variables, but it does not have a direct effect on writing skill." It was determined as. This explains that those who learn Turkish as a foreign language and those whose mother tongue is Turkish do not show a parallel relationship. Hajana (2006), in her study on learners of English as a foreign language, concluded that there is a significant relationship between grammar and writing skills. He also stated that word mistakes have a negative impact on grammar and writing skills. A similar result is seen in this study. Grammatical errors and incorrect word choices in students' grammar and vocabulary achievement tests were also reflected in the narrative text completion activity they wrote. The following recommendations have been developed based on the results obtained in the study.

1) Considering the result of "need to be improved" in the writing skills of those who learn Turkish as a foreign language, new researches can be conducted on how to improve students' writing skills.

2) This research was conducted on students at language levels B1 and B2. A wider language level can be achieved by doing it at A1, A2, C1, C2 levels. Results can be obtained by analyzing the differences.

3) In the study, a narrative text completion form was used to measure students' writing skills. Similar studies can be conducted on informative texts and poetry genres.

Conflict of interests

Funding

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