The Evaluation of The Writing Skills of International Students in Terms of Error Analysis[1]

Research Article

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: 14.02.2019 Available online: 28.06.2019	A 960-hour "Turkish Preparatory" programme is being conducted by the Administration for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) under the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the international students who receive scholarship education at the universities in our country, in the frame of "Turkish Scholarships". Within the context of the programme in question, a curriculum regarding A1, A2, B1 and B2 levels (180 hours for each) and a 240-hour education in C1 level are practised. This study has identified the text types (with respect to the free composition method) and the related topics as used by 27 Turkish-scholarship students with a Turkish Certificate in C1 level offered in Turkish and Foreign Languages Application and Research Centre (TÖMER) at Yıldız Technical University (YTU) as well as the grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes they make. The detected errors have been classified in the sense of "Error Analysis Approach". The data collected by the end of the study is believed to be significant in terms of revealing the writing competency of the students granted with a certificate by completing the "Turkish Preparatory" programme. As the outcome of the use of writing skill can be tangibly observed, the writing ability offers a wider field of study compared to other language skills. During the related research, the students were given 40 minutes, equal to one course hour, and asked to make use of the writing skill through the method of free composition upon the subjects they have determined themselves. The final products brought forth at the end of the study were analysed by two domain experts and the relevant data has been reached.

Introduction

Thanks to the project which was initiated by the state of Turkish Republic in 1992 as the "Great Student Project" and has been continuing as "Turkish Scholarships" under the coordination of the Administration for

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Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) since 2012, a number of students from several countries around the world have been offered education in Turkey. 5000 of the 122,000 students who have applied to Turkish Scholarships from 172 countries during the 2016-2017 academic year in order to get their higher education in Turkey have become entitled to receive university education in Turkey. Currently, 16,000 foreign students from 160 countries are having academic education on a scholarship at 105 universities in 55 cities. Apart from the scholarships, this number exceeds 100,000 when the students who study in Turkey with their own means are included. 1425 Syrians have also been granted the opportunity for higher education in Turkey in 2016 by means of the YTB scholarships. Within the context of the programme that played a vital role in making the Turkish higher education system gain qualification, 5000 students on average are offered scholarship every year[1]. So as to go on with their learning process in higher education programmes, the related students are required to have a Turkish Certificate in at least C1 level and have received these certificates from official institutions. This situation increases both the demand for learning Turkish as a foreign language and the number of Turkish and Foreign Languages Application and Research Centres that are named as "TÖMER" and operated within the scope of universities with each passing day. 99 TÖMER are continuing with their practices in teaching Turkish within the structures of universities[2].

Considering the course contents offered during the process of teaching Turkish as foreign language, the education proceeds not through a specific curriculum or programme but in the light of the principles determined by the language teaching sets used in the process. YTB delivers the relevant TÖMERs a work schedule that only serves as a course of action at the start of every semestre. Each TÖMER offering Turkish education make use of either the language teaching sets they prepare themselves or another set which is different from these.

This being the case, the language sets arranged with methods, techniques and contents that differ from one another lead to dissimilarities in practice. Besides, it is estimated that learners getting educated by means of different learning sets acquire distinct vocabulary and concept knowledge.

When writing is taken into consideration as a language skill, it is defined as a whole which expresses the student's narrative ability, is intended for producing, involves the collective use of the most complex and widest range of senses, and makes it easier to evaluate the final product emerging at the end of the process within the context of assessment and evaluation principles. The writing skill used in language teaching is located at the very end of the classification containing the other skills along with it. The reason for this is that a good deal of language learners can make sense of the notions shaped by the symbols and figures in the realm of the target language they have recently accessed into only after an internalization process. While the listening ability develops before speaking in terms of comprehension skills, the reading ability develops prior to writing as far as narrative skills are concerned. A study conducted by Açık at TÖMER in 2008 reveals the fact that foreign students who study Turkish as a foreign language have difficulty mostly in writing (40%) and then successively in speaking (33%), comprehending what they listen (17%) and what they read (16%) (Açık, 2008). Therefore, the text types that make up the subject of this study, the topics used in these texts, the grammar mistakes made as well as the spelling and punctuation errors are not frequently involved in academic studies especially in basic levels. The related themes and other subject headings similar to these are discussed in advanced levels.

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[1] Access gained on the date 12th November, 2018 from https://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr .
[2] Access gained on the date 11th November, 2018 from http://www.dilbilimi.net/tomer_ve_dil_merkezleri.html.

Literature studies regarding the writing skill in teaching Turkish as a foreign language involve the works of Tok (2013), Tiryaki (2013), Şeref (2013), Bozkurt, Bülbül & Demir (2014), Şengül (2014), İşcan (2015), Arslan & Kl ıcıc (2015), Maden, Dincel & Maden (2015), Balcı (2016), Takıl (2016) and Genç (2017).

The collection of data used in error analysis, determination of mistakes, classification of error types, the relative frequency table of error types, identification of the domains of hardship in the target language and the related improvement efforts are the most effective stages of work in the assessment of the products brought forth as a result of the writing ability.

Considering the literary works in which the writing skill is evaluated within the context of error analysis in teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the relevant studies include those of Büyükikiz & Hasırcı (2013), İnan (2014), Boylu (2014), Erdem, Gün, Salduz & Karateke (2015), Çetinkaya (2015), Yılmaz & Bircan (2015), Çerçi, Derman & Bardakçı (2016) and Boylu, Güney & Özyalçın (2017).

Writing Skill

The invention of writing is one of the turning points that changed the direction of the history of humanity. Indeed, the mankind has reached the capability of both expressing the knowledge in his mental realm through concrete conceptions and also handing down something permanent to the next generations by use of writing. "Writing is the process of transferring knowledge, manners, feelings and ideas to others by means of script. As human beings feel the urge to convey what they see, hear, feel, experience, desire and need, they make use of writing in almost every aspect of life" (Topuzkanamış, 2014, p. 275). Writing is a second system that determines the system called "language" and used by mankind to communicate with one another via certain types of signs. In this respect, writing is the form of expressing words with illustrations (Takıl, 2016, p. 301).

The aim of writing skill is to enable individuals to transfer their feelings and ideas to writing in accordance with the language properties and in a planned way. As the ability to write is a something practical, the individual can manifest the acquired knowledge tangibly. Writing is "a significant element in providing feedback for the use of language and identifying the shortcomings of language" (Tiryaki, 2013, p. 38). Among the four basic language skills, writing is the hardest and latest developing one. "Students consume most of their energy for writing in all the language skills" (Schiller as cited in Demir, 2013, p. 6). This is because it is the one open to observation the most as it involves the emergence of a product by means of the other three language skills and the grammar rules of the target language.

Human beings have their comprehension skills developed in the first stage; later on, their ability to express makes progress. The reason behind this is the fact that it is impossible to tell something which is not truly understood. The listening ability which starts to improve while still in the mother's womb is a skill that can be developed by the individual without getting any help. The listening ability that begins to improve with the hearing competence is followed by the ability to speak. Babies listen before their speaking ability develops and learn to speak themselves through various imitations. No problem is likely to occur in the emergence of speaking ability so long as the physical properties are whole and adequate stimuli occupy the individual. Individuals may as well spend their lives simply by using their listening and speaking skills, without receiving education and going to school. However, the reading and writing abilities do not come into being on their own, nor do they start to develop in the mother's womb. Reading calls for particular materials. A teacher is necessary to direct in order to decipher and understand the symbols available in these materials. Writing, on the other hand, is a skill that necessitates more competence compared to reading. The writing ability requires both the learning of the related symbols and developing the expressive process which emerges after comprehension. Such being the case, the emergence of these qualifications, that make up the writing skill, by themselves without the presence of a teacher is certainly not within possibility (Takıl, 2016, p. 301).

Free Composition Method

The basic principle of free composition approach is to help encourage students to write as much as possible. Here, the emphasis is on quantity rather than quality. This approach prompts students to write without the need to worry about making mistakes (Temizkan, 2010, p. 627). In free composition, students write whatever comes to their minds without erasing, correcting and putting the pencil down. Such a technique is a good opportunity for students to narrate their thoughts without any concern about a writing style. Later, students revise their writings and make the necessary corrections (Goodman as cited in Cavkaytar, 2010, p. 136).

Free composition, one of the written expression techniques which directs students to write for ten minutes incessantly, is also a writing technique that teaches without challenging students' mental process much. The teacher usually brings a picture, story or any figure into class and asks students to write something about it. In free composition technique, the teacher does not examine the errors students make in their writings; instead, he or she gets students to write frequently by applying this technique three or four times a week. This situation prevents the teacher from covering other courses at the proper time. In free composition technique, the teacher is always required to come to class with a visual material (pictures, stories, novels, objects, films, etc.); that is, a preliminary preparation is imperative. The teacher collects the composition papers in a portfolio and tracks the student's development through this file. The most important aspect of this strategy involves writing a composition swiftly without a break between 10 to 15 minutes and not checking the grammatical and semantical errors in the course of writing. It is due to this characteristic of free composition technique that students are enabled to write without having to worry much about the writing elements such as grammar, structure and punctuation having, thus, their anxiety levels reduced. Scientists criticise this strategy as it does not contain a focus due to successive and separate ideas. In free composition technique, the subject to be told is summarized in one statement or phrase in 5 to 15 minutes' time and in this way, a free flow of thoughts is formed. Within the appointed time, anything that comes to mind, either relevant or irrelevant to the topic, is written down. The essential feature of this technique is its involvement of a non-stop writing process. Going back to see what has been written so far or any repetitions before completing the writing are not allowed at all. Students return to the start of the composition at the end of the time and summarize the subject given in the beginning. In the repetition part, on the other hand, the ideas relevant to the topic are chosen from among the written opinions (İnal, 2006, p. 111-112).

The Writing Skill in Teaching Turkish as A Foreign Language

"Writing is a narration-based language skill. It is an ability which develops last and in the hardest way. The reason behind this is the fact that it is dependent on the development of other skills" (Arslan & Kılıcıc, 2015, p. 170).

Language teaching is a whole when skills are taken into account and each ability helps improve another ability. Considering the meaningful interactions of human beings in both communicational and educational sense, however, it is a known reality that they first listen, secondly speak, read in the third stage and finally write. It is as well stated that they make sense of the rules to be obeyed by means of grammar while utilizing all these skills. That is to say, the mankind understands first, then gives meaning, later on expresses and defines. "The target in developing the writing ability while teaching Turkish as a foreign language is to help individuals transfer their feelings and ideas to writing in accordance with the language properties of Turkish and in an organized way. As writing is an applicable ability, the individual can present the acquired knowledge tangibly" (Tiryaki, 2013, p. 38). Within the frame of teaching Turkish as a foreign language, the writing skill is located in the final stage of the hierarchy of skills as is also the case in the teaching of all other foreign laguages. The writing ability is the final ring of the chain of four basic language skills (Demirel &

Şahinel, 2006, p. 110). It is also possible to explain this condition by means of a figure that involves the diagram of language skills:
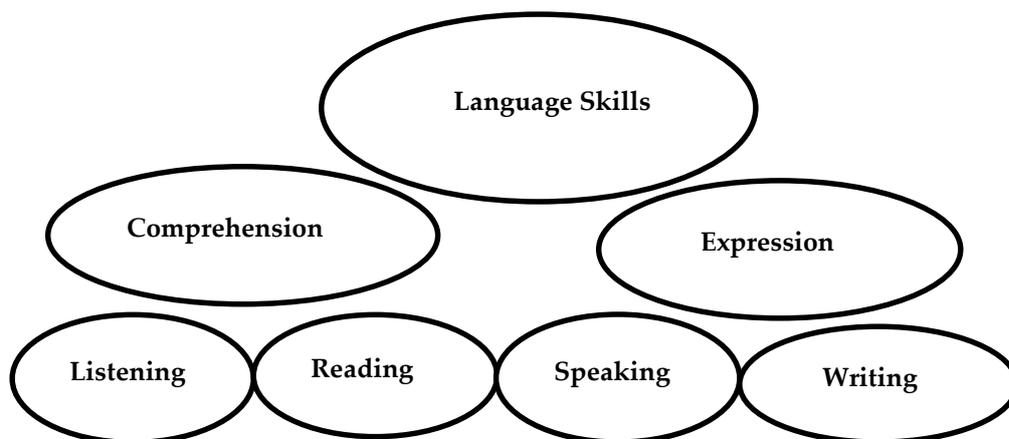
Figure 1. Diagram of language skills

Some focal points need to be taken into consideration so as to develop writing education in the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language. These include:

1. The qualities of the addressed target group (age, native language and cultural structure, etc.) should be taken notice of in order to provide writing education in a foreign language.
2. The guiding person should get to know the target audience and avoid negative transfers.
3. The sentence structure of the native language related to the individuals should carefully be considered. For instance, the syntax is in the form of subject+verb+object in English language whereas in Turkish, this structure is arranged as subject+object+verb.
4. The person who offers writing education in a foreign language should guide the individual in each stage of writing.
5. Writing practices in a foreign language may be taught by use of various narrative styles in different text types. On the basis of levels, the narrative styles in question are as follows: The elementary person is in the first stage of depictions; he or she has deficiencies in organizing and expanding ideas. Those in the advanced level can make better use of depictions than the elementary level learners. Lastly, students in the upper levels can also handle explanation and discussion methods (Way, Joiner & Seaman as cited in Tiryaki, 2013, p. 39).

When the related situation is evaluated with the examples that come to mind specific to Turkish in the first stage, the fact that Turkish is an agglutinating and vocalic (made up of syllables containing vowels) language, the formation of words growing in length by means of suffixes added successively, the vowel and consonant harmonies which involve a number of exceptions, the use of vowels and consonants in additions as auxiliary sounds, the reality that the sound of "Ğ, ğ" has its related symbol but not a corresponding phoneme and a great number of other rules readily invite hardships on behalf of many language learners. Such difficulties are frequently detected as errors made in writing which is among the expressive skills and used as a generative language ability.

Nurlu (2013) states in his study about teaching Turkish in France that the students of Turkishness Research Unit in Paris discussed the details of phonetics and phonology during the Turkish language courses. He also reports that accents and the elements of accentuation were equally taught in the lessons along with the phone-based analyses in Turkish language, the functions of vowels and consonants in the language, phonemes, morphemes and dialects.

Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis

"In relation to the errors made during the process of foreign language learning, there are two approaches called contrastive analysis and error analysis" (Çetinkaya, 2015, p. 167). "Contrastive analysis and error analysis are two complementary methods in terms of their contributions to the teaching of foreign languages. Error analysis points to the fact that all the errors made cannot be regarded as a native language interference. Contrastive analysis, on the other hand, offers information about in which aspects of the native language are errors likely to be made and what type of equivalents between the native and target languages will cause native language interference (Dede, 1985, p. 128).

The differences between contrastive analysis and error analysis are as follows (Khansir, 2012, p. 1029-1030):

1. While contrastive analysis starts with the comparison of the two language structures and only foresees the subjects in which the second language learner will make errors or have difficulty, error analysis starts with the errors made during the second language learning process and focuses on the nature and importance of these errors.

2. In discordance with contrastive analysis, error analysis provides data over proven pragmatic issues. This situation creates resources in the way to help the teacher develop more effective teaching strategies.

3. Error analysis does not conflict such complex theoretic approaches like the equivalence problem presented by contrastive analysis.

4. Error analyses provide feedback for linguists who are concerned with the details of second language learning process, with psycholinguists being in the first place.

    a. Is the native language acquisition process the same as the second language acquisition process?

    b. Do children and adults show similar attitudes in the second language learning process?

5. Error analysis provides evidences which involve complex appearances, such as reviewing the approaches related to the rules of the target language and the student's formation of assumptions as an active participant, directed at the learning process.

6. Error analysis studies both the interlinguistic and intralinguistic errors whereas contrastive analysis only examines the interlinguistic errors.

It is stated that contrastive analysis approach aims rather at finding the types of student errors whereas error analysis approach intends to identify the source of errors so as to learn more about interlingual interference and language development (Mclaughlin as cited in Çetinkaya, 2015, p. 168). Viewed from this point, error analysis approach is used more frequently in language studies (Boylu, Güney & Özyalçın, 2015, p. 189).

Error analysis, that emerged as an alternative for contrastive analysis the essence of which is shaped by behavioural theory, is a method that is based on cognitive theory, looks over the assumptions of comparative linguistics and offers solutions to its restrictions and issues (Dede, 1985, p. 135). The fact that error analysis depends on tangible data not only removes it from the hypothetical and complicated theories of contrastive analysis but also makes it more extensive due to its handling all error types (Sridhar as cited in Çetinkaya, 2015, p. 168).

Errors are divided into two groups as native language-based and intralinguistic. Intralinguistic errors may occur with all learners of target language although the native language of each might differ from one

another. Therefore, this sort of errors are not limited to particular native languages. Such errors come in view as a result of learning the target language incorrectly or faultily. They might happen when a structure learned in the target language affects another structure being learned (Ellis as cited in Çerçi, Derman & Bardakçı, 2016, p. 698).

"There are four factors that lead to intralinguistic errors. The first of these is excessive generalization. The second is the transfer of rules to exceptional cases. The third is the deficient practice of the rules. The last one is the student's inability to understand the rule accurately" (Richards as cited in Çerçi, Derman & Bardakçı, 2016, p. 698).

Students' errors emerge as the use of unnecessary affixes or words, failure in using a required affix or word, the use of a wrong word instead of a necessary one or the aggregation of items in a way which is different from what needs to be (Brown as cited in Çerçi, Derman & Bardakçı, 2016, p. 698).

The method to be used in error analysis is step-wise as follows:

1. The collection of data

2. The identification of errors

3. The classification of error types

4. The relative frequency table of error types

5. The identification of hardships in target language

6. Improvement works (Sridhar as cited in Büyükikiz & Hasırcı, 2013, p. 55).

Problem Status

The problem status of this study has been determined as "What are the errors made in free composition method by the 27 Turkish scholarship students who have Turkish Certificates in C1 level at Turkish and Foreign Languages Application and Research Centre (TÖMER) at Yıldız Technical University (YTÜ)? What are the suggestions aimed at correcting these errors?" The emerging subproblems depending on this problem status are as follows:

1. What are the text types used by the students who have learned Turkish as a foreign language in free composition method?

2. What are the topics of the texts used by the students who have learned Turkish as a foreign language in free composition method?

3. What are the grammar mistakes available in the texts formed by the students who have learned Turkish as a foreign language?

4. What are the spelling and punctuation mistakes available in the texts formed by the students who have learned Turkish as a foreign language?

The Research Model

This study, conducted in the survey model with the aim of presenting the writing skill status of students who have completed their Turkish education as a foreign language, has been patterned in relation to the qualitative method. "Qualitative research can be defined as a study in which qualitative data collection methods like observation, interview and document analysis are used and a qualitative process directed at presenting facts and events in a realistic and holistic way within a natural environment is followed" (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 41). Content analysis, one of the qualitative analysis techniques, has been used in the evaluation of the research data. "The fundamental aim in content analysis is to reach the concepts and

relationships that can explain the collected data. The process basically achieved in content analysis is to unite the data similar to each other within the frame of specific notions and themes, and organize and interpret them in a way that readers can understand" (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 246).

The Collection and Analysis of Data

The papers making up the research data have been read first and then a codification has been fulfilled in a general frame. In addition to the error analysis method, text types and the subjects used in the texts have been defined. Also, the grammar errors made have been classified within themselves as phonetics, morphology and lexicology errors. The spelling and punctuation errors have been divided into sections as well. The final products of the research have been examined by two field experts and the related data have been reached.

Working Group

The working environment is made up of foreign students who have completed their Turkish Preparatory education in Turkey within the context of Turkish Scholarships. As for the sample group, it involves 27 students who have finished their education under the structure of YTÜ TÖMER.

The information regarding the students who have participated in the study is as follows:

Table 1. Gender distribution

Country	f	%
Women	6	22
Men	21	78
Total	**27**	**100**

When Table 1 is examined, 6 of the students attending the research are female students by 22% and 21 of them are male students by 78%.

Table 2. Country distribution

Country	f	%
Moldova	2	7
Sudan	2	7
Yemen	1	4
Nigeria	1	4
Syria	2	7
Palestine	2	7
Albania	1	4
Montenegro	2	7
Malaysia	1	4
Pakistan	1	4
Egypt	2	7
Chad	2	7
Jordan	2	7
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2	7
Somalia	2	7
Algeria	2	7
Total	**27**	**100**

When the distribution of countries included in Table 2 examined, two students for each from Algeria, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Jordan, Chad, Egypt, Montenegro, Palestine, Syria, Sudan and Moldova

participate in the research by 7% while one student for each from Pakistan, Malaysia, Albania, Nigeria and Yemen takes part in the research by 4%.

Table 3. Educational background distribution

Country	f	%
Undergraduate	20	74
Graduate	5	19
Postgraduate	2	7
Total	**27**	**100**

According to Table 3, the status of education regarding the students participating in the research is as follows: 20 undergraduate students by 74%, 5 graduate students by 19% and 2 postgraduate students by 7%.
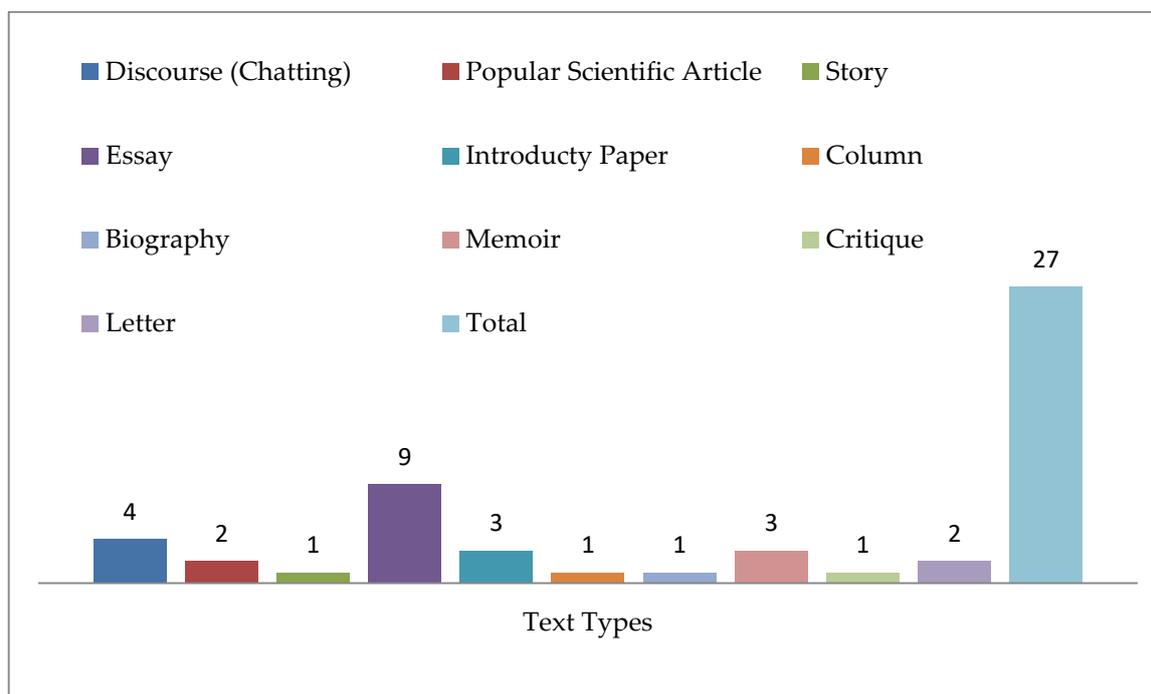
Assumptions

It is assumed that the students that make up the sample group of the study have the C1 level language proficiencies involved in European Languages Education Common Framework of Reference (ADÖOÇM).

Findings

Findings Related to Text Types

The numerical and percentage graphics in relation to the text types formed by the students are shown below:
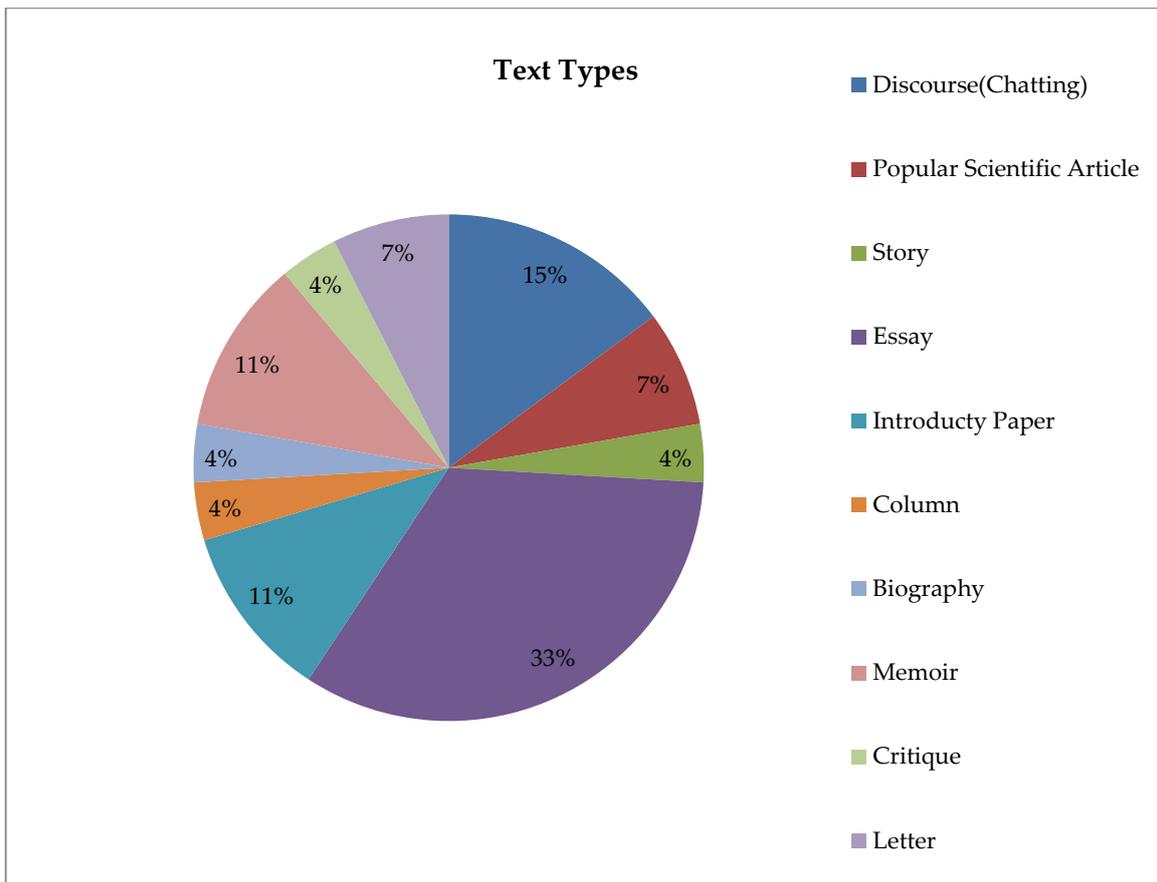

Figure 2. The Number of Text Types

Text Types

- Discourse(Chatting)
- Popular Scientific Article
- Story
- Essay
- Introducty Paper
- Column
- Biography
- Memoir
- Critique
- Letter

15%
7%
4%
33%
11%
4%
4%
11%
4%
7%

Figure 3. The Percentage of Text Types

Findings About the Topics of Text Types

The numerical and percentage graphics with regard to the topics of the text types formed by the students are as follows:
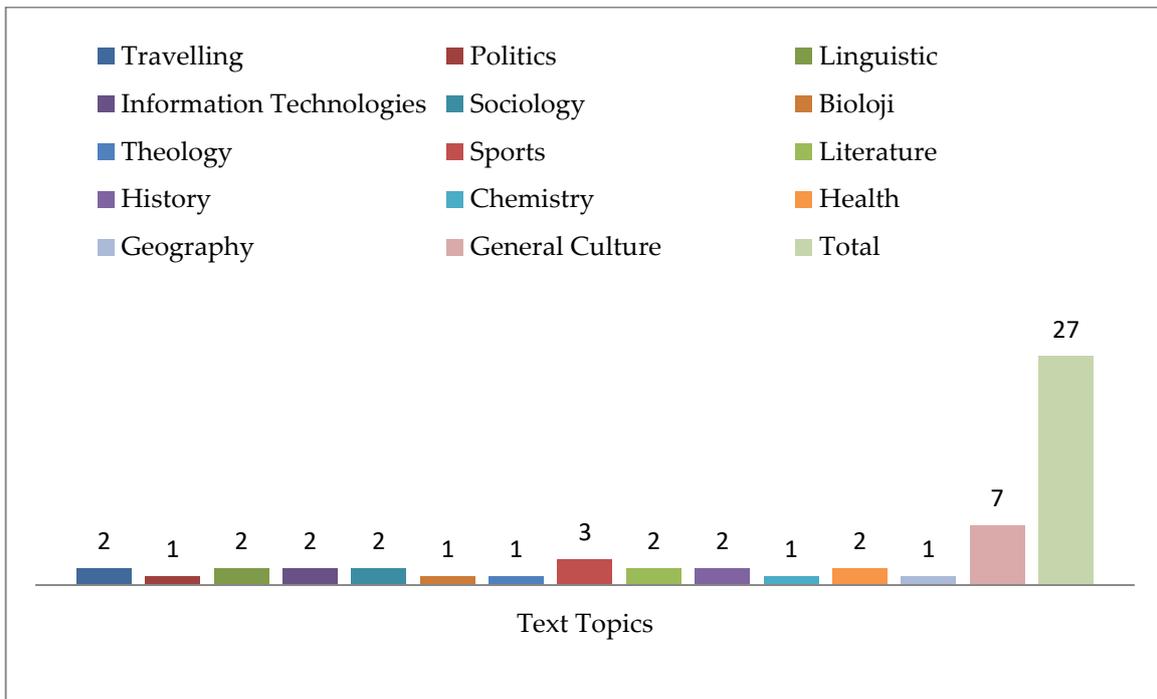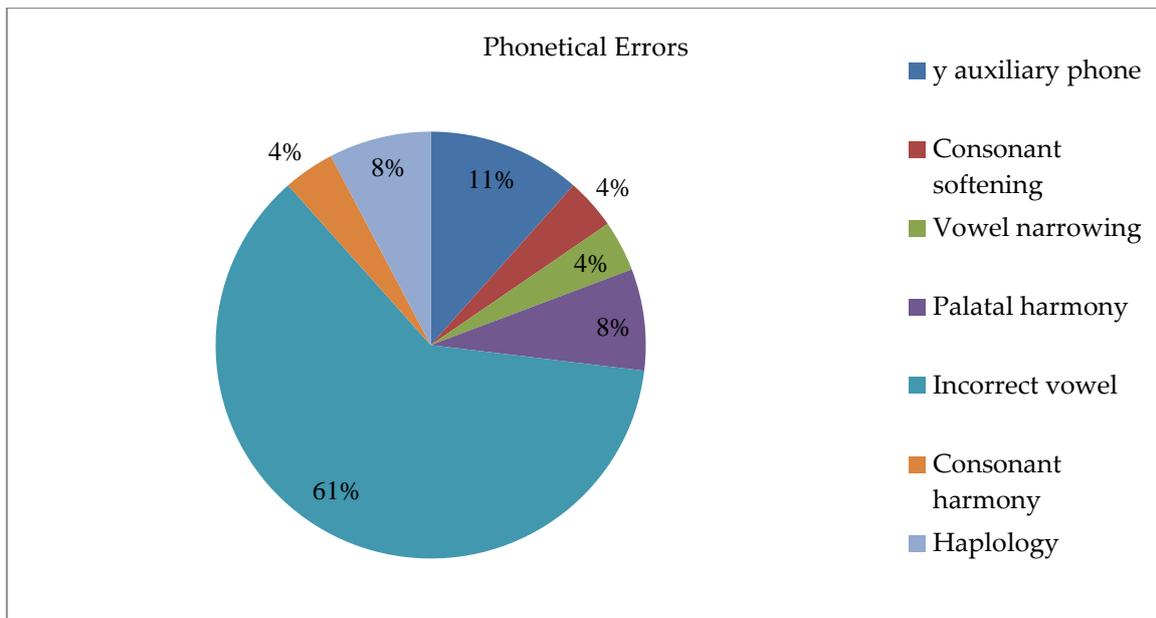
- Travelling
- Politics
- Linguistic
- Information Technologies
- Sociology
- Bioloji
- Theology
- Sports
- Literature
- History
- Chemistry
- Health
- Geography
- General Culture
- Total

Text Topics

2 1 2 2 2 1 1 3 2 2 1 2 1 7 27

Figure 4. The Number of Text Topics

Figure 5. The Percentage of Text Topics

Findings About Grammar Errors

The grammar errors included in the texts formed by the students who made up the sample group of the study have been examined under three main headings: phonetical errors, morphological errors and lexical errors.

Findings Related to Phonetics Errors

The numerical and percentage graphics related to the phonetical errors available in the texts formed by the students are in the following:

Figure 6. The Number of Phonetical Errors

Figure 7. The Percentage of Phonetical Errors

Findings Regarding the Morphological Errors

The numerical and percentage graphics related to the morphological errors available in the texts formed by the students are as follows:
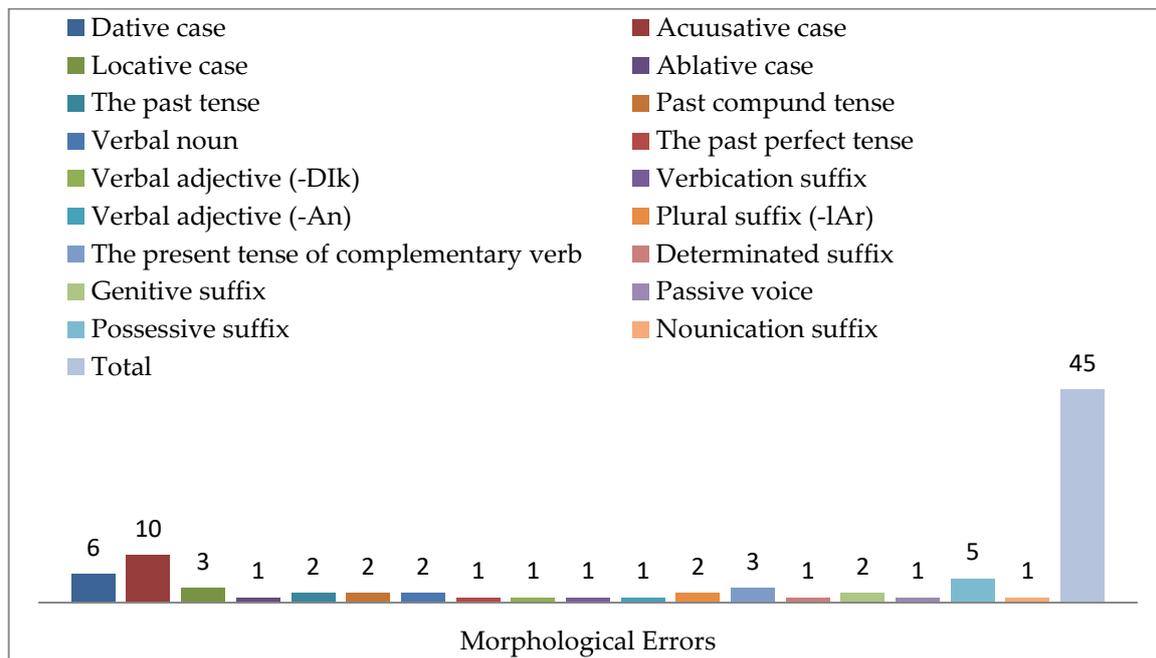

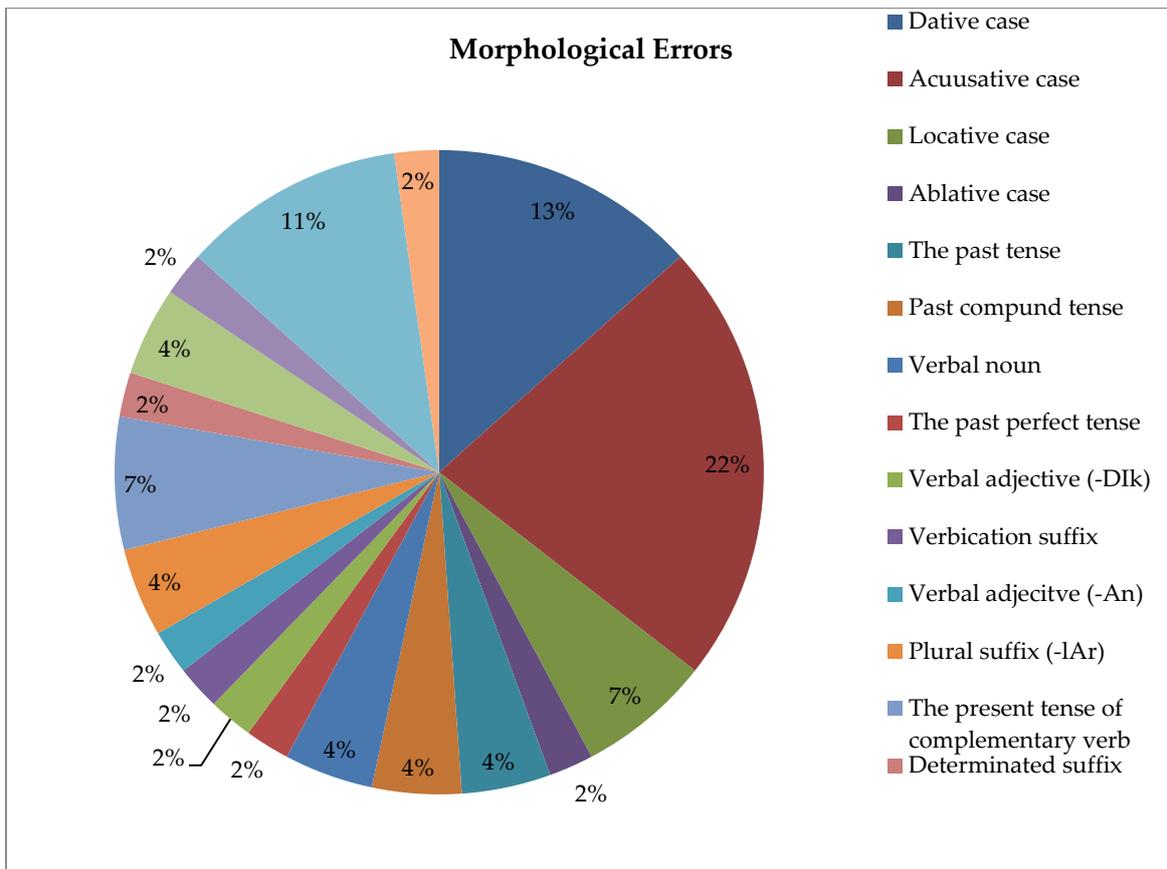**Figure 8**. The Number of Morphological Errors

Figure 9. The Percentage of Morphological Errors

Findings in Relation to the Lexical Errors

The numerical and percentage graphics related to the lexical errors available in the texts formed by the students are as follows:
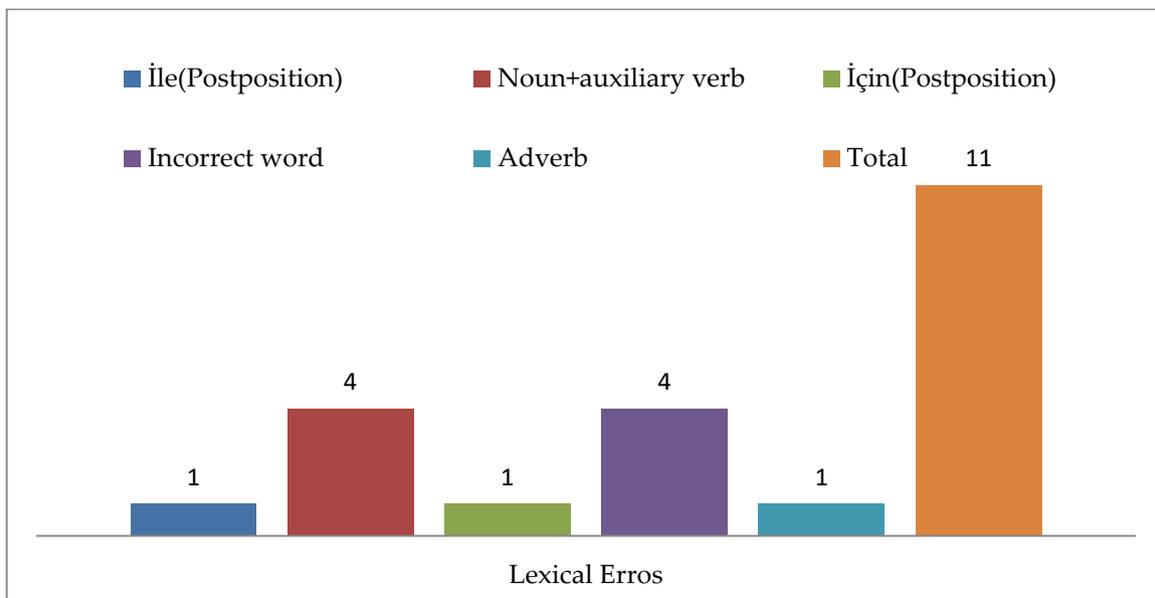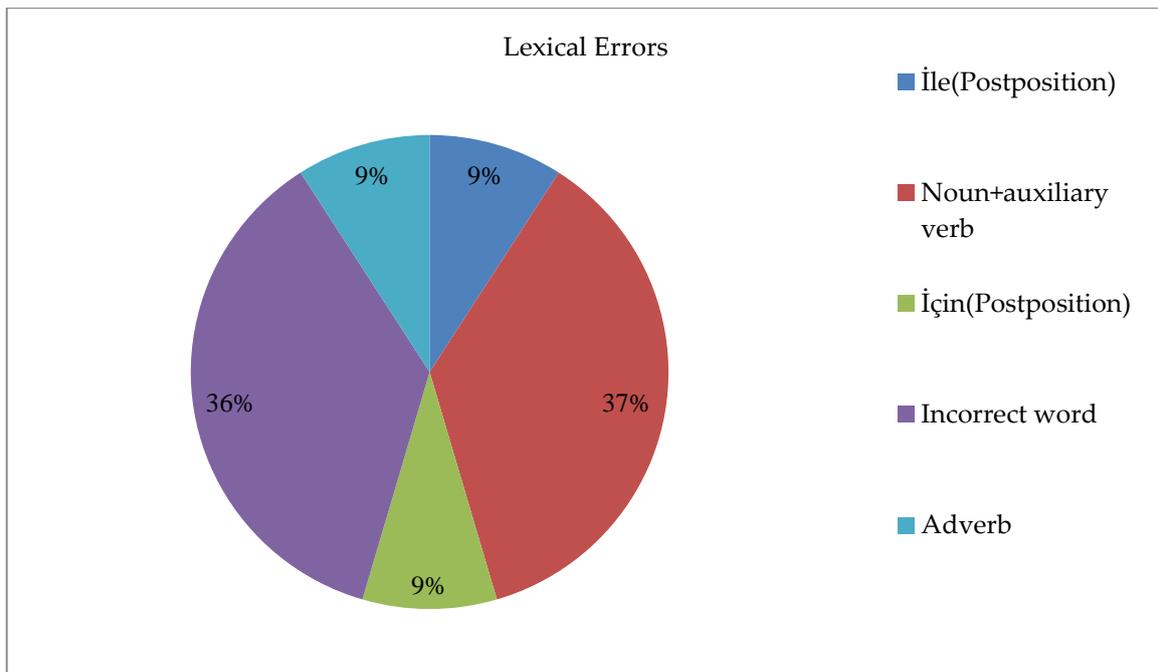

Figure 10. The Number of Lexical Errors

Figure 11. The Percentage of Lexical Errors

Findings about the Spelling and Punctuation Errors

The numerical and percentage graphics related to the spelling and punctuation errors available in the texts formed by the students are in the following:
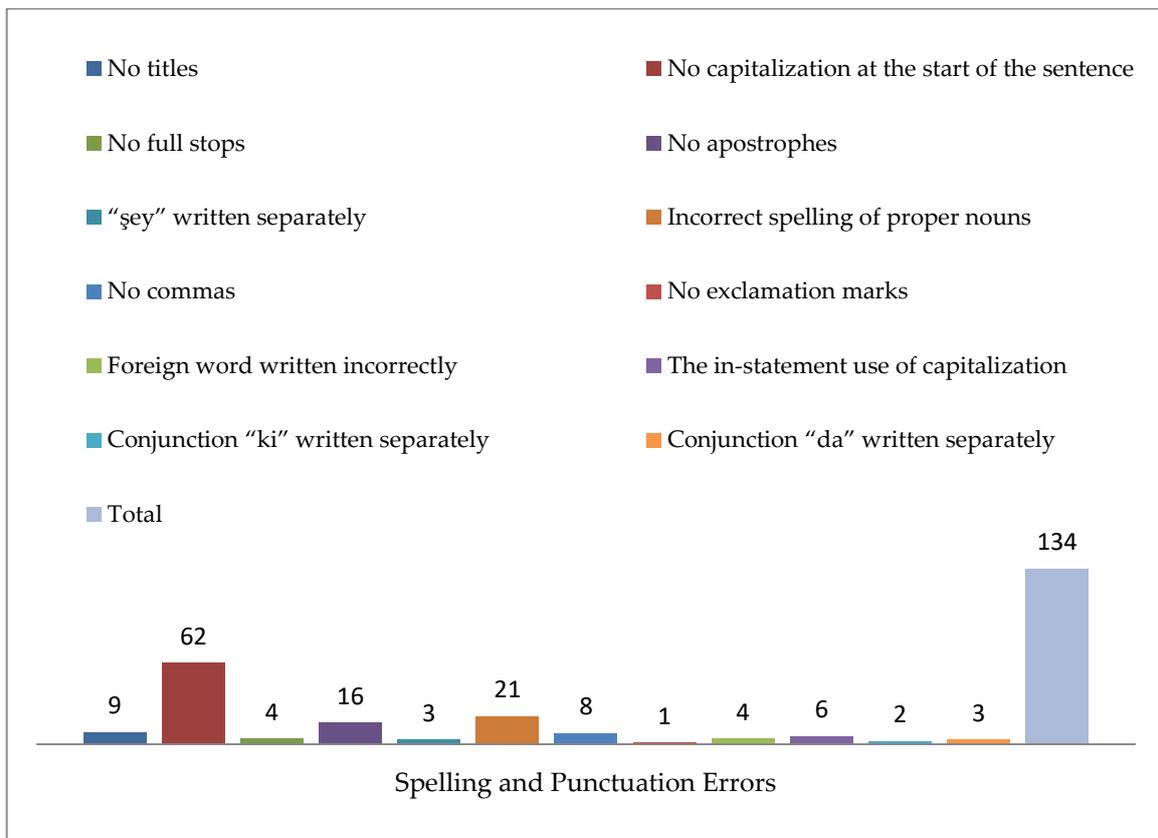

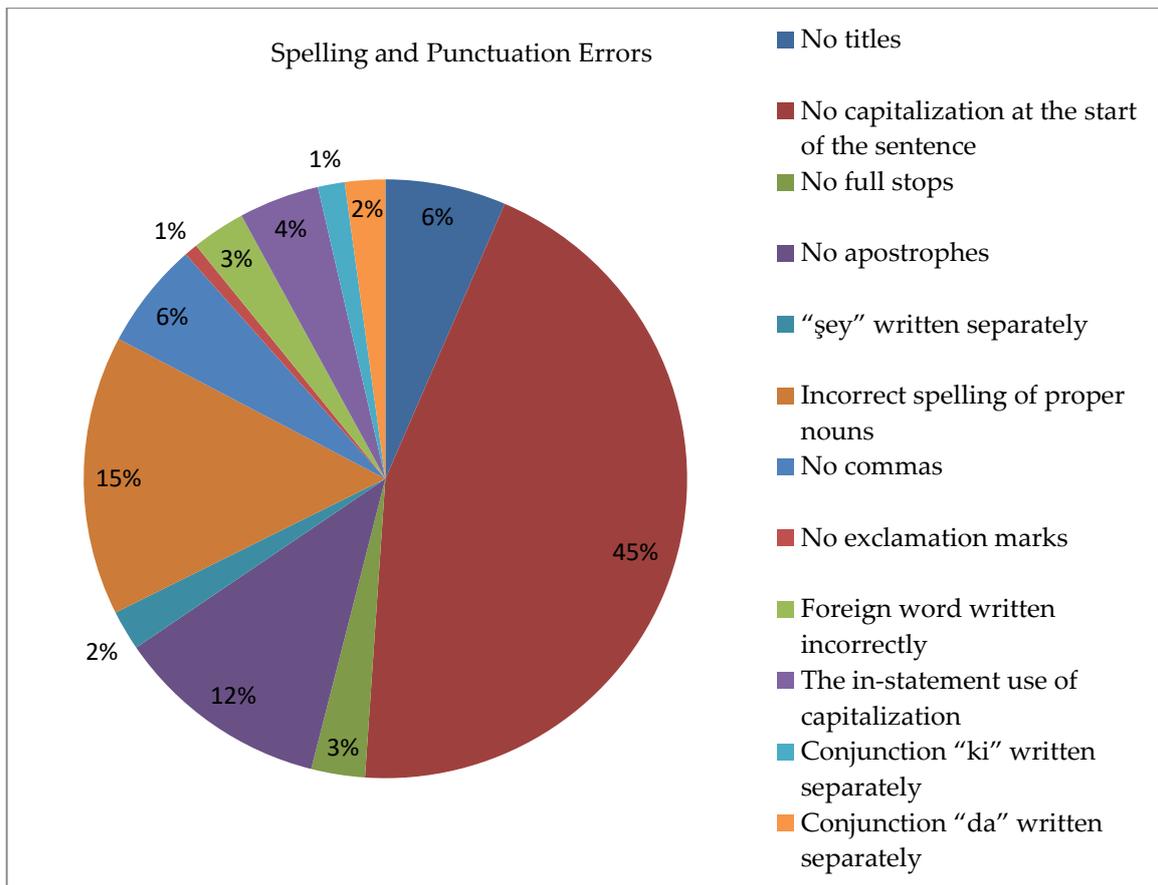**Figure 12.** The Number of Spelling and Punctuation Errors

Figure 13. The Percentage of Spelling and Punctuation Errors

Findings Related to the General Distribution of Errors in Accordance with the Headings

The numerical and percentage graphics related to the analysis headings of the errors available in the texts formed by the students are shown below:
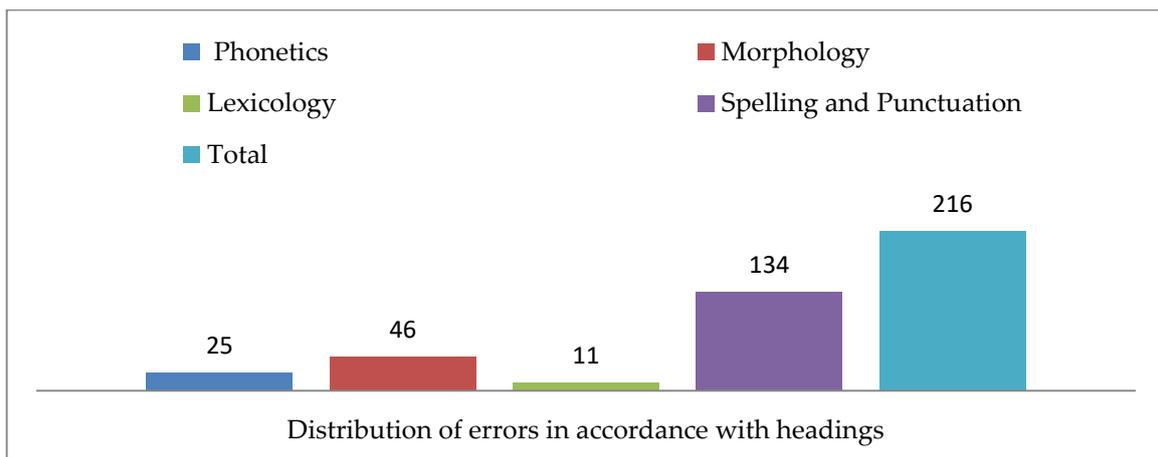

Figure 14. The number of the distribution of errors in accordance with headings

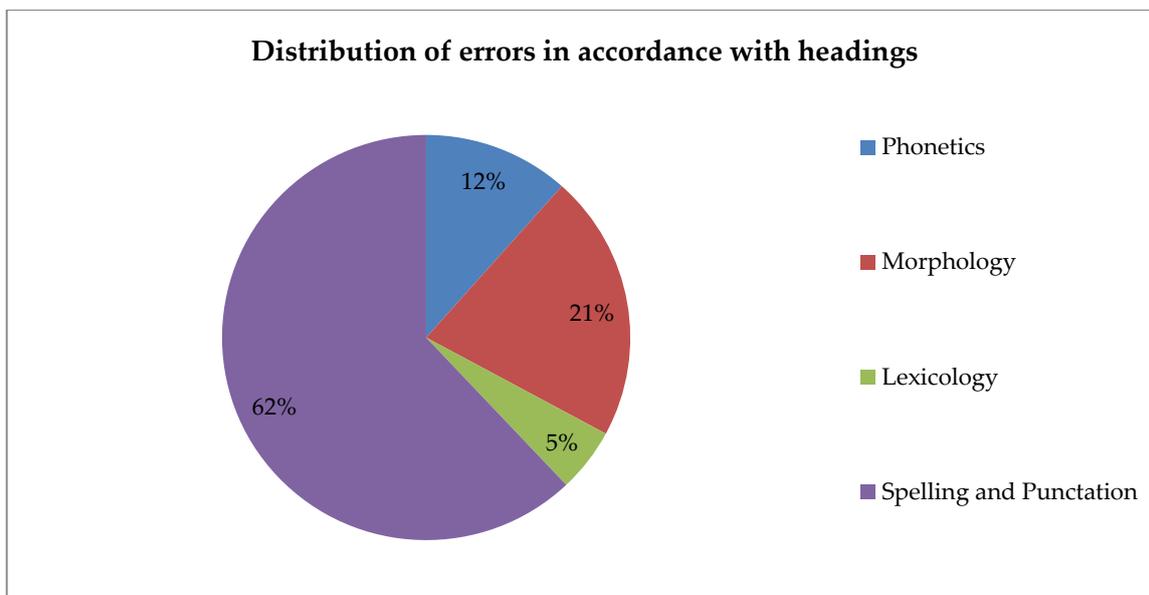**Distribution of errors in accordance with headings**

Figure 15. The percentage of the distribution of errors in accordance with headings

Interpretations

Interpretations about the Text Types

1. The text types composed by the students include (from the most frequent to the least) 9 essays with 33%, 4 chattings with 15%, 3 introductory papers and memoirs with 11%, 2 popular scientific articles and letters with 7% and 1 story, column, biography and critique with 4%.

2. The most frequently written text types are proportionally 9 times different than the least frequently written ones, and this difference is equal to 29% in percentage.

Interpretations about the Text Topics

1. The most frequently used topics among the created texts involve 7 general culture topics with 23 and 3 sports topics with 10%. The least frequently used topics, on the other hand, is 1 political, biological, theological, chemical and historical topic for each with 4%.

2. The most frequently written text types are proportionally 7 times different than the least frequently written ones, and this difference is equal to 20% in percentage.

Interpretations about the Grammatical Errors

Interpretations about the Phonetical Errors. 1. The sequence of phonetical errors detected in the created texts (from the most frequent to the least)is as follows: 16 incorrect vowel usages with 64%, 3 uses of "y" auxiliary phone with 12%, 2 uses of palatal harmony haplology with 8% and 1 usage of consonant softening and vowel narrowing for each with 4%.

2. 6 topic titles related to phonetics have been misused for 25 times. The topic title with the most frequent misusages is proportionally 16 times different than the titles that involve the least frequent misuses, and this difference corresponds to 60% in percentage.

Interpretations about the Morphological Errors. 1. The most common mophological mistakes identified in the texts contain 10 dative cases with 22%, 6 accusative cases with 13%, 5 possessive suffixes with 11%, 3 location cases with 7% and 3 present tense uses of the complementary verb with 7%.

2. 19 topic titles related to morphology have been misused for 46 times. The topic title with the most frequent misusages is proportionally 10 times different than the titles that involve the least frequent misuses, and this difference corresponds to 20% in percentage.

Interpretations about the Lexical Errors. 1. The sequence of lexical errors detected in the created texts (from the most frequent to the least)is as follows: 4 noun+auxiliary verb errors with 37%, 4 incorrect uses of words with 37% and 1 misuse of "ile" (postposition), "için" (postposition) and adverb for each with 9%.

2. 5 topic titles related to lexicology have been misused for 11 times. The topic title with the most frequent misusages is proportionally 4 times different than the titles that involve the least frequent misuses, and this difference corresponds to 28% in percentage.

Interpretations about the Spelling and Punctuation Errors

1. The most commonly made mistakes detected in the created texts include the following three: 62 cases exemplifying no use of capitalization at the start of the sentence with 45%, 21 incorrect spellings of proper nouns with 15% and 16 in-statement uses of capitalization with 12%. The least identified errors, on the other hand, involve 1 exclamation mark with 1%, 2 incidences of the conjunction "ki" written separately with 1%, incidences of the word "şey" written separately, 3 incidences of the word "şey" written separately and the conjunction "da" written separately with 2%.

2. 12 topic titles related to spelling and punctuation have been misused for 134 times. The topic title with the most frequent misusages is proportionally 62 times different than the titles that involve the least frequent misuses, and this difference corresponds to 44% in percentage.

Interpretations about the General Distribution of Errors in accordance with the Headings

1. 216 errors in total have been made in in line with the classification given in Figure 13. The sequence of these errors is marked by 134 spelling and punctuation, 46 morphology, 25 phonetics and 11 lexicology mistakes. The title with the most frequent misusages is proportionally 12 times different than the title that involves the least frequent misuses.

2. In accordance with the classification of percentage distribution given in Figure 14, a proportional distribution of 62% spelling and punctuation, 21% morphology, 12% phonetics and 5% lexicology has been detected. The title with the most frequent misusages is by 57% different than the title that involves the least frequent misuses.

<div align="center">

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

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1. The fact that the students have not been exposed to any type and topic restrictions by means of free composition method enables the 27 students to write texts in 10 different types. One out of three students on average has created a different text type. Free composition technique increases type diversity. As can be seen in the graphic given in *Figure 1*, the number of text types based on the generated idea is more than the event-driven text types. It has been detected that the proficiency phrases included in ADÖOÇM C1 level definer have been achieved to a large extent: "S/he can make use of the language in his/her social and professional life, education and training in an effective and flexible way. S/he can express opinions about complicated subjects precisely, orderly and in detail. Meanwhile s/he can bind texts to one another by use of various linguistic tools appropriately" (MEB, 2009).

2. 14 different text topics have been formed by means of free composition method. One out of two students on average wrote in a different topic type. In this way, a rich sample has been constituted in terms of topic types. As can be visible in the graphic given in *Figure 3*, the preferred topics have been selected in accordance with the definitions included within the C1 level writing skill proficiency phrase: "I can express

myself precisely and in a well-structured way in written language and explain my opinion in detail. I can write letters, compositions and reports on complicated topics and highlight, meanwhile, the points that I regard as important for me. I can choose a tone in accordance with the readers' profile I define in the texts I write" (MEB, 2009).

3. It has been detected that the most common mistake made in the texts is the incorrect use of vowels and that the sounds "ı-i, u-ü and o-ü" available in Turkish language are mostly confused with each other. Arslan and Klıcıc (2015) observed in the study they conducted that individuals come across different sounds and symbols when they start learning this foreign language, have difficulty in pronouncing the Turkish letters "ğ,ı,ö,ü" and cannot easily learn to spell them either. In accordance with the data obtained in his research, Şengül (2014) reached the conclusion that the majority of students find it difficult to spell the sounds/letters "a, e, ı, i, o, ö, u, ü, c, ç, ğ, l, ş, y" contained in the Turkish alphabet. Similarly, Tiryaki (2013) states that the first stage of the writing process is teaching the alphabet. Maden, Dincel ve Maden (2015) argue in their studies that students who learn Turkish as a foreign language feel anxious most often while writing. Balcı (2016) points out in his study that when viewed from the phonetical angle, student errors stem from the fact that they cannot comprehend the suffixes in Turkish change in accordance with the characteristic of the preceding phone or sound besides their inability to know the functions and differences between the vowel and consonant letters in Turkish. Boylu, Güney & Özyalçın (2017) identify in the research they carried out that 15,52% of the students made mistakes regarding the issue of phonetics.

In order to get rid of this error, it is required that the places of articulation concerning these sounds are taught well and dictation practices related to the words which abundantly involve such similar sounds are frequently fulfilled as in the examples of "umut-ümit, ömür-omur, ılık-ilik, etc". Another title that comes to the forefront in relation to phonetical errors is the use of "y" auxiliary sound. It needs to be emphasized with a number of examples, especially in the teaching of derivational affixes and inflectional suffixes in A1 level, that two vowels cannot come side by side in the joining of the word stem and suffixes; instead, an *auxiliary sound* or, in the case of noun phrases, *the pronominal "n"* will come in between. Related examples might include *dışarı-(y)a, masa-(n)ın,* etc.

4. With regard to the morphological errors, errors in relation to case suffixes have been identified as the most commonly made mistakes. With reference to his study, Balcı (2016) states that the related errors were successively made in case suffixes, noun phrase suffixes, subject and persona coherence, plural suffixes, possessive suffixes, personal endings, modal suffixes, gerundive errors and voice errors. Bozkurt, Bülbül ve Demir (2014) point out in their study that individuals who learn Turkish as a foreign language mostly have difficulty in comprehending the grammar. It has been detected that the lexical errors most commonly involve word patterns formed with noun+auxiliary verb. Again, Arslan ve Klıcıc (2015) highlight in their research that students make syntax-related errors such as tense and suffix incoherence, grammar mistakes and subject-object-verb incoherence. Boylu, Güney & Özyalçın (2017) emphasize in their study that 28,34% of the students make mistakes in grammatical sense. As they made evaluations in all language levels in their research, Çerçi, Derman & Bardakçı (2016) identify that the students made errors in grammatical issues by 45,43% in C1 level.

In order to get rid of the errors made in relation to nominal case suffixes, the student needs to make sense of all usages of these suffixes on the basis of the context. From this point of view, the teaching of case suffixes should involve the use of as many texts as possible. Besides, in sentences where commonly used verbs function as predicates, which case suffixes the verbs are used with should be indicated. For instance, the verb "-çık" is used with "–dan" or "–a" case suffix: *Kedi odadan çıktı. Öğrenci üst kata çıktı.*

The texts offered during the education should involve, for B2 level where the use of compound structures is taught, contexts in which noun+auxiliary verbs with literal meaning are used, and for C1 level, these texts should include contexts rich in noun+auxiliary verbs with figurative meaning mostly.

5. The most frequently made errors in spelling and punctuation are the ones related to the misspelling/misuse of capital letters in various ways. İnan (2014) states in his study that the most distinct spelling error in the examined composition papers is the breaking of the rule that necessitates the capitalization of proper nouns in Turkish and the most notable punctuation error is the violation of the rule which calls for the use of apostrophe in the case of joining suffixes to proper nouns. Boylu, Güney & Özyalçın (2017) identify in their study that 10,86% of the students make mistakes in relation to punctuation. As they made assessments in all language levels in their research, Çerçi, Derman & Bardakçı (2016) detect that the students made errors in grammatical points by 27, 03% in C1 level.

Issues related to spelling and punctuation need to be studied under a separate topic title in course books. Spelling and punctuation rules should be offered in all levels by means of an arrangement from the most to the least commonly used rules and indicators. Poetic and dramatic texts should be made use of in teaching spelling and punctuation rules.

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